

The March to a Green Existence

BY LYDIA W. THOMAS, PH.D.

The success of NVTC and its member companies has always found its roots in progress and innovation, so it is no surprise that technology companies in our area are leading the business community's march to a new "green" existence. And since NVTC members have expressed a strong interest in seeing this organization play a more active role in highlighting best practices and helping to set the region's energy agenda, NVTC recently established the Green Technology and Energy Task Force, led by myself and Co-Chair Tony Maull of Ernst & Young. Already, members of the task force have found that NVTC member companies are getting involved in the green space. This issue of *The Voice of Technology* highlights and pays tribute to the accomplishments of our member companies that have reported to us on their green initiatives.

While the new task force analyzes and perfects its role, its members realize the importance of going green. And as NVTC member companies and their employees are demanding progress toward a more responsible and environmentally friendly existence, the task force will be providing education in this area. And because NVTC also appreciates the significance of regional green success, the organization and the task force are also collaborating with the Greater Washington Board of Trade on green initiatives.

As a Trustee of Noblis, I can assure you that Noblis is an environmentally responsible member of our community and adheres to the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Protocol developed by the World Resources Institute. When other companies come to us to learn how they can improve their business operations from an environmental perspective, we help them manage resources, set reduction goals, implement new procedures and processes, and purchase new equipment to reduce emissions and conserve valuable natural resources.

Noblis also has developed other approaches to help companies achieve their green goals. One innovation is an enterprise model for emissions

reporting, analysis and logical decision making. By creating an analytic framework for individual companies and a scaleable approach for regional roll-up and assessment, Noblis can provide companies with a realistic path towards success. Our approach helps companies that work with us to reduce energy intensity, greenhouse gas emissions, and water and/or power consumption; implement new renewable energy sources for lower required renewable energy usage; and implement best practices to reduce waste generation and maintain cost-effective waste recycling and waste prevention programs.

I am honored that Virginia Governor Tim Kaine, upon NVTC's recommendation, recently appointed me to represent NVTC and its member companies on his newly established Commission on Climate Change. The Commission will work to reduce the Commonwealth's contributions to global warming and embrace our great state's role as a green leader—an important title for our state and our region, as the engine that powers the economy of the Commonwealth.

All of this just represents the first steps in the march to a green existence for our Council, our member companies, our region and our state.

ICF International Chairman & CEO Sudhakar Kesavan spoke at the January 2008 NVTC Titans Breakfast about his company's plans to fully offset carbon emissions from its 23 offices worldwide by this April. Despite an ironic power outage that almost forced us to cancel Kesavan's presentation, the breakfast attracted nearly 500 business executives—a huge turnout that further illustrates our tech community's commitment to progress in the green arena.

I highly encourage you to read this issue of *The Voice of Technology* from cover to cover to learn more about the incredible accomplishments of your fellow NVTC member companies in the green space and perhaps to get inspired to enact positive changes in your own company's operations sooner versus later. As Kesavan said: The time to go green is NOW. **nvtc**



NVTC member companies and their employees are demanding progress toward a more responsible and environmentally friendly existence.

Lydia W. Thomas, Ph.D., is immediate past President & CEO of Noblis and a Member of the Board of Directors of the Northern Virginia Technology Council.