

## Aybike Doganci Crott '99: Founding a Good Business with Green Values

For Aybike Doganci Crott '99, her long work days as operations manager and partner of Solectria Renewables, LLC, bring her a lot of contentment. "It feels so good to go to work every day and know that I'm doing something good for the environment," she explains.

Founded in 2005 by Aybike and her three partners, Solectria Renewables—which is based in Lawrence, Mass.—is a leader in the development and manufacture of a wide range of inverters for renewable power applications. Solar inverters convert the direct current electricity produced by solar panels into the alternating current (AC) that homes and businesses receive through the electric power grids that serve our nation. In homes and businesses, AC power is used to operate tools, equipment and appliances. If consumers generate more electricity with their renewable sources than they use, they can sell the excess power back to the electric companies and zero out their electricity bill or, in some states, make a profit.

With its passion for "good business with green values," Solectria Renewables has as its goal the preservation of the world's natural resources. As operations manager, Aybike primarily is responsible for production management, cost reduction efforts, purchasing and inventory control, although additional responsibilities at times come her way. "As part of a small company, we all end up being a jack-of-all-trades," she explains. For Aybike, the most fulfilling aspect of her job is contributing to the direction of the business. "It's exciting to have decision-making powers and to have control of the company's direction," she says.

Before forming the company, she was the technical support manager at Solectria Corporation, a position in which she supervised a team of technicians and maintained a global engineering schedule for her department. In this role, she directed projects valued at up to \$400,000, including the first assemblies of 13kW to 75kW photovoltaic inverter prototypes. It was at Solectria Corporation—which merged with Azure Dynamics in 2005—where she became connected with her current partners.

Aybike says that she came to Elizabethtown College as an industrial engineering major knowing that this would be the field she would pursue. "I was interested in this kind of work even before I started at the College," she recalls. "The experience at Elizabethtown helped me affirm this decision. My mentor, Professor Ferruzza, was particularly supportive, helping me observe the environment in which I would be working someday."

She fondly remembers her time with her mentor, particularly how he helped her feel at ease far away from her home country of Turkey. "As an international student, I had no idea what to expect about college life in the United States," she says. "Everyone did their best to accommodate the international students who studied here. They helped us through the culture shock."



In 2005, Aybike Doganci Crott '99 (back row, right) and her three partners founded Solectria Renewables, a leader in the development and manufacture of a wide range of inverters for renewable power applications.