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Newly formed tech alliance aims to help companies go green

Austin Business Journal - by [Laura Hipp](#) ABJ Staff

The newly formed Green Technology Alliance in Austin plans to prove to corporate technology executives that being green can save some green.

Husband and wife founders Heath and Michelle Naquin created the organization in May to spur the adoption of energy efficient, or green, technology in the information technology sector. The alliance officially launches June 18.

"There's a way to bring people together and form high-value conversations and drive revenue results," says Michelle Naquin, who is vice president of business development at **Synchron Advanced Technologies Inc.** "If you lose the business-value proposition then you will not be able to see the results."

The alliance has 11 community leaders on its "launch team" ranging from Carol Dwyer, business development director at the **Austin Technology Council**, to Ryan Confer, investment manager at the state's **Texas Emerging Technology Fund**.

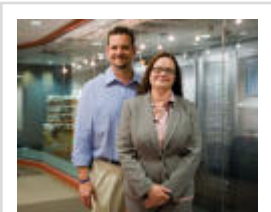
Membership has topped 1,000 people through word-of-mouth and a Web site, Naquin says.

She plans on the alliance becoming a center for education and support for green IT.

"We try to give people tips that they can use today," Naquin says. "We're in a tight time window. We have to stop this rapidly escalating energy usage now."

The alliance was established as a for-profit entity and will generate revenue from certification fees once that process is established. The Naquins formed a nonprofit foundation to eventually operate a business accelerator to help clean-technology startups.

The tech scene needs an organization that creates standards for energy efficient operations and products, says Steve Roberts, managing director of Austin's **Green**



Nick Simonite

Husband and wife team Heath and Michelle Naquin created the Green Technology Alliance, which launches June 18.

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Canary Sustainability Consulting. The firm is a unit of **Tuerff-Davis EnviroMedia Inc.**

"The challenge is, how do you build the credibility?" says Roberts. "Staying independent is one of those keys."

The alliance can reach out to large technology corporations to build their reputation but shouldn't let those industry leaders dictate the standards, he says.

"It's a very fine line," he says. "The best way to build that reputation is being authentic and true to what you say and following it up with real action and not just words."

One major data center supplier, Santa Clara, Calif.-based **Hitachi Data Systems**, is a member of the alliance.

The Green Technology Alliance provides immense opportunity to improve data center operations, says Mark Goldenberg, regional field marketing manager for Hitachi Data Systems, a unit of Hitachi Ltd. (NYSE: HIT).

Participation also falls in line with Hitachi's efforts to promote its "green" products and other initiatives, he says.

"We've got to be concerned about our environment," Goldenberg says. "Thirty percent of operating costs in a data center are attributable to heating and cooling costs."

Cristala Mussato-Allen, executive director of Native Workplace, joined the alliance to spread the word about her own organization. Native Workplace provides job training in the renewable energy industry for Native Americans.

"We want to promote what renewable projects are going on in Indian country so we can act as a liaison for companies in renewables," Mussato-Allen says. "The work we're doing is going to depend upon strategic alliances that we make."

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