

PHOENIX Business Journal



Rick & Laura Burgis



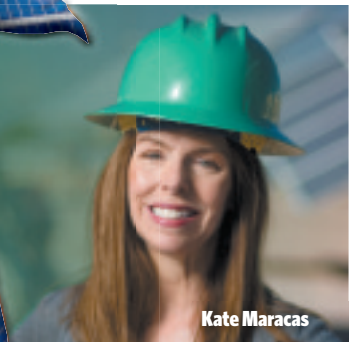
Sean Seitz



Derrick Mains



Raymond Wiley



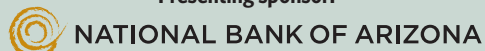
Kate Maracas

green pioneers

Lighting the way

Solar advocates become force
in region's green movement

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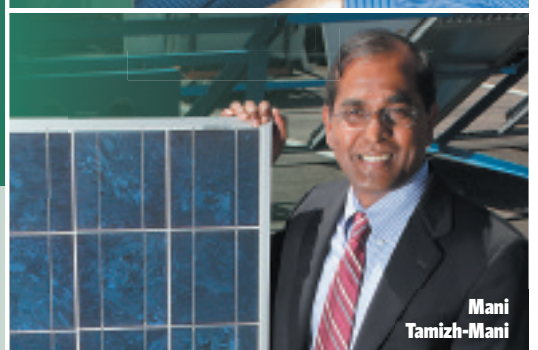
Donna Marie Bertault



Craig Hughes



Roger Ferland



Mani
Tamizh-Mani



Lane Garrett



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RICK & LAURA BURGIS | Owners, Burgis Envirolutions

Burgis Envirolutions began seven years ago as a one-person startup. Today, it provides custom-designed waste and recycling systems to a variety of Valley clients.

Engineer Rick Burgis started the company and was joined three years ago by his wife, Laura, former CEO of the Pat Tillman Foundation. Burgis Envirolutions now has five full-time employees and outsources work to a half-dozen other people.

To become more competitive in the marketplace, the company is focusing on supplying customers with hard numbers for the return on investment as clients deploy their recommendations. It also is identifying manufacturers that can provide the best prices for waste management and recycling equipment such as compactors and balers.

Q&A

What initially got you interested and working in the green industry? A desire to be self-employed, and a commitment to create products and services

with true value proposition for clients where they experienced return on investment. The environment space was where we could make a difference.

What is your proudest accomplishment in the green industry? Helping to conceive, design and build what we believe is the region's first airport recycling center at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. We also have exciting technology in research and development and beta testing with waste bioreactors for water re-

newal. From the community perspective, we are proud of our contributions to the Phoenix Green Chamber of Commerce and the new Center for Sustainable Solutions. These organizations are standardizing what it means to be green, using robust metrics, innovative implementation tools and the ability to apply them spanning all industries and companies, regardless of size.

How has the green industry changed since you started in it? Mainstream now — great! It has also become annoying that everything is green this and green that, because there are so many organizations trying to grab the coat-tails. We'd like to see green become so natural we can avoid use of the terms "green" and "sustainability."

What is the biggest challenge facing the green industry, and how would you fix it? There is a lot of noise out there about sustainability and what it means. Boards and CEOs will have to demonstrate they are meeting the 21st century agenda for greater environmental, social and financial accountability, but reliable and universal tools don't exist. Further, current accounting methods measuring the financial health of an organization fail to measure the socio-environmental impacts incurred in the regular course of conducting business.

What is the single thing the industry needs to do better to help Arizona become a green or sustainable leader? Diversify. We built our economy on real estate. Now we are looking to solar to be the savior of the Arizona economy. What about water resource usage and renewal? As a desert community, it should be top of mind. More broadly, we need to think about the new (and green) economy in terms of the future businesses yet to be developed, and skills that will be required for our future work force.

— Jan Buchholz



Rick & Laura Burgis

JIM POULIN PHOTOS | PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL

EDUCATION: Rick — undergraduate work in marine engineering, U.S. Coast Guard Academy; bachelor's degree in industrial and manufacturing systems engineering, Iowa State University. Laura — bachelor's degree, Augustana College; post-graduate work, Northwestern University and Loyola University; master's degree and doctorate, Arizona State University

YEARS IN INDUSTRY: 7

RESIDENCE: Tempe

HOMETOWN: Chicago

FAMILY: Daughter, 11; son, 8; two rescue pups, Otis and Milo

YEARS IN ARIZONA: 17

FIRST JOB: Rick — manufacturing engineer, Motorola. Laura — account representative, GE Capital

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: Rick — member, AZ Recycling Coalition and Phoenix Green Chamber of Commerce; den leader, Cub Scouts. Laura — founding member and past chairman, Phoenix Green Chamber of Commerce; president, Shirley G. Schmitz Foundation for Entrepreneurship; trustee, Girl Scouts-Arizona Cactus-Pine Council; co-founder, Center for Sustainable Solutions. Both — Heard Museum, Desert Botanical Garden, All Saints Catholic Newman Center

CRAIG HUGHES | CEO, Total Transit Inc.

Craig Hughes, CEO of Total Transit Inc., is doing what he can to make the transportation industry green.

His company has the largest Prius hybrid fleet in North America, with 218 cars. Its offices in Glendale are powered by 400 solar panels generating a total of 92 kilowatts.

On Earth Day this year, Hughes had hoped to break the cab company's one-day record of 10,182 dispatched trips, donating \$1 for every cab run to Homeward Bound. While the company fell short of its goal, with 7,225 dispatched trips, it still donated the promised \$10,182 to the nonprofit to help families facing homelessness and domestic violence.

Q&A

What initially got you interested and working in the green industry? Although our industry isn't traditionally considered green, we're making strides

to change that perception. You can credit my daughter Danielle for challenging me to clean up the industry.

What is your proudest accomplishment in the green industry? Without question, having the largest Prius hybrid fleet in North America. We also operate the

largest solar panel array of any private transportation company in the country.

What is the biggest challenge facing the green industry, and how would you fix it? The biggest challenge is unity in support of an agenda. You can't support compressed natural gas vehicles for two months or solar for two years, and then pull the plug. The green industry can only flourish if there's a consistent and well-thought-out referendum that doesn't change on a whim.

What is the single thing the industry needs to do better to help Arizona become a green or sustainable leader? For the transportation industry, it would be to increase the tax on gasoline. Higher-priced fuel makes everyone consider alternative vehicles. The fuel tax would reduce demand, and the price of oil would be hurt. We'd control our fate, instead of the oil producers.

— Angela Gonzales

AGE: 56

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degrees in transportation and marketing

YEARS IN INDUSTRY: 27

RESIDENCE: Scottsdale

HOMETOWN: Blytheville, Ark.

FAMILY: Wife, Christine; daughters, Alison and Danielle; sons, Jordan and Jacob

YEARS IN ARIZONA: 32

FIRST JOB: Bicycle-powered paperboy

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: Serve on the boards of Valley Forward, Homeward Bound and the Total Transit Foundation

WEB: www.totaltransit.com



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