

Top Company: new energy

Namaste Solar

By Karen Mitchell Posted 11.06.2009

For a few moments in February, the clichéd notion of 15 minutes of fame was far surpassed for Blake Jones.

The Boulder-based CEO of Namaste Solar gave a rooftop tour of Namaste's solar panel installation at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science to President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden before introducing the president as he signed the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.



"The rooftop tour was an amazing experience; this was the 15 minutes I'd always dreamed of," Jones says. "I was able to talk with the president and vice president about my favorite subject and explain how solar works and discuss global solar market trends."

Jones, a self-described "energy patriot," is passionate in his belief that green industries will be some of the most important of the century.

"Unfortunately, we're behind right now," he says. "We're not putting into place the right policies to ensure we'll be a world leader in green industries. We risk being stuck with our over-dependence on fossil fuels

and an outdated energy infrastructure while competing countries such as China and Germany take the lead and compete better."

On the home front, Namaste has grown quickly in five years and was awarded the No. 56 spot on the 2009 Inc. 500 fastest-growing private U.S. companies list. "About this time last year the economy tanked, and we were affected with lower sales and commercial projects being put on indefinite hold," Jones says. "We had a tough fall and winter with a sales backlog but no new sales. We worried until the (Recovery) act passed in February, providing a much-needed injection of optimism."

Boulder County's ClimateSmart program, which will be replicated by Denver County and other municipalities, boosted Namaste's residential sales, he says. "A perfect example of the commercial market resurrection is our recent installation at the Eldorado Artesian Springs bottling/distribution facility in Louisville, which was put on hold last fall."

Things are going well considering the economy, Jones says. "We're not growing at our previous rate, but we're feeling very fortunate. We're moving into a new, expanded Denver office in mid-November. Colorado was fast out of the gate, but now we're at a critically important crossroads and we need to establish bold, long-term goals to ensure that the renewable energy market in Colorado continues to grow long into the future.

"I was ecstatic to see that the president is taking it seriously," he says. "It meant a lot to know he understands the big picture of what's happening on a global level."

Enjoy this article? [Sign up](#) to get ColoradoBiz Today, our e-mail newsletter that delivers exclusive editorial material, video interviews of area newsmakers and executives, and original business articles straight to your inbox.

- **Page 1**

Last updated on Nov 10, 2009 at 01:02 PM