



Applied Ventures Invests in Solar Wafer Manufacturer Solaicx

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SANTA CLARA, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 20, 2006--Applied Ventures, LLC, the venture capital fund of Applied Materials, Inc., today announced that it has invested \$3.0 million in Solaicx, a private manufacturer of cost-effective, single-crystal silicon wafers for the solar photovoltaic (PV) industry. Solaicx plans to use the investment to expand its business with a second U.S. manufacturing site, scheduled for 2007 operation.

Solaicx's technology is based on proprietary, continuous Czochralski (CZ) crystal growing methodology that enables the high-volume manufacturing of cost-effective, high-quality ingots for conversion into solar wafers. The Solaicx crystal growing equipment is expected to be up to five times more productive than traditional CZ systems that were designed primarily for the semiconductor industry.

"Our investment in Solaicx aligns well with Applied Materials' solar strategy and enables Applied to expand its presence in the solar value chain," said J. Christopher Moran, vice president and general manager of Applied Ventures. "Applied is committed to providing the solar industry with technology and process innovations to reduce the cost per watt of solar power. Solaicx meets these requirements -- offering improved manufacturing technology to facilitate the streamlined manufacturing of solar cell wafers."

Solaicx has a proven management team that includes Bob Ford, president and CEO, Bill Yerkes, chief technical officer and solar industry pioneer, and John Sedgwick, vice president and co-founder. Michele Klein, an investment manager with Applied Ventures, will join the Solaicx board as an observer. "Having Applied Materials as an investor and a willing resource as we execute our manufacturing expansion is extraordinarily valuable," said Bob Ford. "Solaicx plans to use Applied Materials' equipment and manufacturing expertise to assist in fully capitalizing on our market opportunities."

Solaicx manufactures silicon wafers for the photovoltaic industry with proprietary equipment optimized for the high-volume, continuous manufacture of high-performance, single crystal silicon ingots. This technology provides cost and quality advantages that can be passed through the value chain of silicon-based solar cell manufacturing. For more information about Solaicx, visit www.solaicx.com.

Applied Ventures, LLC (www.appliedventures.com) invests in high-growth, early stage companies pursuing technologies that provide a natural extension to Applied Materials' core business, and innovations that stimulate the growth of applications for semiconductors, displays and related products and services.

Applied Materials, Inc. (Nasdaq:AMAT) is the global leader in Nanomanufacturing Technology(TM) solutions with a broad portfolio of innovative equipment, service and software products for the fabrication of semiconductor chip, flat panels, solar photovoltaic cells, flexible electronics and energy efficient glass. At Applied Materials, we apply Nanomanufacturing Technology to improve the way people live. Learn more at www.appliedmaterials.com.

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