

## BUSINESS PROFILES

**N.C. Defense & Economic  
Development Trade Show**

# Dan Robertson

*Partner,  
Progress Solar Solutions, Apex*

### **Furnishing the FOBs:**

Progress Solar sent 20 of its portable light towers to Afghanistan, and more orders are pending.

**A green giant:** The company has doubled in size every year since its start in 2008. It has locations in Apex and Raleigh and moved into a larger facility to keep up with growth.

**W**hen Dan Robertson traveled with a solar lighting demo unit to showcase Progress Solar Solutions' capabilities, people took notice of the portable solar technology.

"We kept having people look at the mobile unit and said, 'We want that,'" Robertson said. "It was obvious that there was a need there we could fill."

So the company, which originally started with LED street, parking and area lights and photovoltaic systems installation, added portable light towers to the mix.

The result was staggering: the Pentagon ended up calling and now stations the towers at security gates around the building, erasing the need for towers that run on diesel, gas or generators.

When generals visit the Pentagon, they ask about the towers and take the idea back to their installations. Robertson says federal customers now make up 25 percent of business.

"We've not lost a single customer since we started the business," he said. "They're buying routinely as they need it."

Progress is looking to release new models in 2013 and focus on the Department of Homeland Security as well as agencies that respond to natural disasters.

Its international market is also growing, and the company now exports to eight countries.

"We're proud to be doing something that is cutting-edge," Robertson said. "We think it's the right thing to do."

