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# Power Player

INVENERGY'S **MAGGIE PAKULA** IS BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE THROUGH SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS.

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**MAGGIE PAKULA ('08) always wanted to work in the energy field, but she wasn't sure where to focus her studies.** When her brother, David Pakula ('02), introduced her to Northwestern Engineering, she recognized it was the perfect fit.

Across disciplines, there were opportunities related to energy and climate change, which is exactly the direction Pakula wanted her career to take. "It felt like a hardcore engineering space," she says. "Tech was this awesome old building that had labs throughout, and I felt like I was getting a real world-class education."

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Today, Pakula serves on the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering advisory board and talks to engineering students about her role as senior vice president of strategy at Invenergy, a privately held global developer and operator of sustainable energy solutions.

"I was always a high performer, but I don't think I had the natural inclination to accelerate up the corporate ladder," she says. "But here I am, and I think it's a good example to show students what they can do with their degrees."

## THE LATITUDE TO LEARN

Pakula earned a master's degree in civil and environmental engineering at Stanford University and planned to go into academia until the opportunity to join Invenergy as a performance analysis engineer in 2010 set her on a new path.

"I liked that the company was small, but still a big player in the space—one of the top wind energy developers in the United States," Pakula says. "We had almost a gigawatt of wind turbines, and we had just started collecting data from all the assets. It was a blank slate, and that's why I stayed. It was an exciting opportunity to build something from the ground up."

In addition to establishing the company's Performance Analytics Program, which is responsible for large-scale analytical data processing to identify performance and operational anomalies in Invenergy's wind and solar assets, Pakula helped develop the commercial and market analytics group. She considers these achievements "a nice legacy to look back on."

Then, just as she began to look for a new challenge, the company offered her the chance to engage with market policy as director of regulatory affairs. That experience led to her position as senior vice president of strategy. In that role, she uses the analytical and collaborative lessons she learned at Northwestern to examine new market opportunities for advancing Invenergy's goals to build a sustainable world. She also serves on the board of Evergreen Climate Innovations (formerly Clean Energy Trust), a nonprofit supporting early-stage cleantech startups.

Invenergy has scaled considerably since she joined, from a staff of approximately 300 to more than 1,500, with 191 projects in wind, solar, and natural gas power generation, as well as advanced energy storage. Each time Pakula has sought a new challenge, the company has offered opportunities to expand her skills. "It's been great to be given the latitude and the trust to just go out and learn," she says.

SARA LANGEN