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## Smaller firms feed off cleantech investment

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Tagged: **CREDIT SUISSE**, **INNOVATION FUELS INC.**, **KAREN JOHNSON**, **LYRICAL PARTNERS**, **RNK CAPITAL**

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Giant corporates and VC firms are the driving force behind cleantech sector investing, and smaller companies are growing as a result. New York biodiesel refinery Innovation Fuels Inc. is riding their coattails, **recently hiring** Karen Johnson as vice president of business development.

Just under a year ago, Innovation got financing from Credit Suisse Customized Fund Investment Group, RNK Capital LLC and Lyrical Partners LP, and now it's ready to make a footprint. Johnson is tasked with managing sales and marketing relationships with customers and other partners on the local, regional and national level for the firm's biodiesel products, as well as building alliances in the public sector.

Johnson comes in from Dallas-based Crossmark where she managed distribution, marketing and sales for Dannon Inc. in the New York/New Jersey metro area. Prior to that she worked in operations for Whole Foods Markets Inc. (NASDAQ:WFMI) and was a sales and marketing exec for Coca-Cola Enterprises Inc.

Innovation Fuels says its biodiesel is produced using a variety of plant oils derived from soy, canola/rapeseed, sunflower and palm, as well as used vegetable oil. There's still controversy with this method as some argue that the amount of energy it takes to grow, transport and convert these crops into biofuels offsets a lot of the greenhouse gas emission reduction from using the fuel in vehicles. Perhaps Innovation should look into algae-based solutions.

### Movers & Shakers

**Karen Johnson**  
*Innovation Fuels Inc.*



- ▶ **KAREN JOHNSON**, *Innovation Fuels Inc.*
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