

John Campbell to Lead AccelNow

8-County Regional Business Accelerator

Effective October 1, 2014, John G. Campbell has become the new Executive Director of AccelNow, a business accelerator supporting technical entrepreneurs and start-up companies across the eight-counties of Northeast Tennessee and beyond. AccelNow is funded by Launch Tennessee and the Appalachian Regional Commission and is supported by the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce.

“John has a passion for our region and a proven track record of supporting business growth as City Manager for both Kingsport and Johnson City,” said Susan Reid, AccelNow Leadership Council member and Executive Director of the First Tennessee Development District. “We wanted an Executive Director for AccelNow with a high level of credibility and an extensive network across our region. John is a natural for this position.”

Campbell takes over for AccelNow Interim Executive Director Kanishka Biddanda who is relocating to Nashville. Biddanda has worked closely with entrepreneurs throughout the region to provide mentorship, connections to investors and referrals to business advisors. “Kanishka is a tireless entrepreneur and has effectively led AccelNow since late 2013. Kanishka developed our vision, focusing on the technical strengths of our region, including manufacturing and product development, resulting in job creation and increased investment in Northeast Tennessee.” said Gary Tucker, AccelNow Chairman. “Kanishka will continue to provide key support to our entrepreneurs. John will be able to step directly into the Executive Director role and continue to build on our strong momentum.”

John Campbell shares, “I believe the Launch Tennessee initiative and the network of nine regional accelerators has been a major component in Governor Haslam & Commissioner Hagerty’s comprehensive economic development strategy. They understand the importance of facilitating entrepreneurship and the development of new businesses. Startup companies create more than 65% of all new jobs. I am excited to work with the leaders of this region to ensure that we have a dynamic environment for the creation of quality jobs.”

AccelNow helps existing businesses and new startups within Northeast Tennessee grow and was established by Governor Haslam and Launch Tennessee as part of a network of nine business accelerators across the state. For more information about the services of AccelNow, contact Kanishka Biddanda or John Campbell at the Kingsport Chamber of Commerce, 423-943-5906.

Launch Tennessee is a public-private partnership focused on supporting the development of high-growth companies in Tennessee. Its goal is to make Tennessee the number one place in the Southeast to start and grow a business.
