

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 21, 2016
Contact: Tia Capps // [423.618.5073](tel:423.618.5073) // tia@colab.is

CO.LAB Executive Director Mike Bradshaw to Head International Engineering Company, Pass Leadership Role to Lamp Post Group Co-Founder Jack Studer

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (September 21, 2016) – Following three successful years of leadership at The Company Lab (CO.LAB), Executive Director Mike Bradshaw will depart from the organization to lead a new Chattanooga office for Jensen Hughes, an international safety engineering and consulting firm. Jack Studer, co-founder of venture incubator Lamp Post Group, will step in as executive director.

Over the next few months, CO.LAB's board of directors will work with the community and CO.LAB's leadership team to refine CO.LAB's strategic plan and develop the job description that the board will use to conduct a national search for the person who will provide the long-term executive leadership of CO.LAB.

The transition will take place effective immediately, though Bradshaw will continue to serve the organization as a consultant through the end of 2016. During that time, Bradshaw will advance key projects that were developed under his leadership at CO.LAB. During the transition period, CO.LAB's board, community leaders and senior staff will work closely together to refine the organization's strategic plan to take into account new developments and opportunities in Chattanooga's entrepreneurial community.

“Mike has brought to CO.LAB, first as entrepreneur-in-residence and then as executive director, an outstanding entrepreneurial spirit, great insight into the journey that young businesses travel, and a genuinely caring attitude and approach to his work,” said Rick Hitchcock, chairman of CO.LAB's board of directors. “He has developed an outstanding staff and has led them well as they have worked to fulfill CO.LAB's mission as a high-growth startup accelerator, as a champion for broader community access to entrepreneurial training and resources, and as Chattanooga's front door for entrepreneurs seeking to start or grow their business.”

Over the course of his tenure, Bradshaw introduced a number of initiatives that have altered the fabric of entrepreneurial life in Chattanooga. In 2013, he championed the adoption 3D printing technologies at a time when public awareness about the concept was low and public access to the machines was virtually nonexistent. In 2014, he led the effort to launch the nation's first 3D printing startup accelerator in Chattanooga through GIGTANK. Bradshaw also helped launch the Chattanooga Mini Maker Faire, a festival that celebrates the do-it-yourself culture of making things. In addition, he has played an integral role in developing plans for an Advanced Manufacturing Application Center in Chattanooga.

Aside from his leadership in the 3D printing movement, Bradshaw has deepened ties between CO.LAB and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, has helped develop a formal resource-sharing partnership with LAUNCH Chattanooga, and has overseen the relocation of CO.LAB from Main Street to the Edney Innovation Center. Through his ongoing service as CO.LAB's

entrepreneur-in-residence, Bradshaw has mentored hundreds of entrepreneurs who have launched dozens of new businesses in Chattanooga.

“While we will greatly miss Mike’s full-time leadership, he has graciously agreed to provide continued assistance on some key projects that will impact the growth of Chattanooga’s entrepreneurial community,” said Hitchcock. “In addition, his new office at Jensen Hughes is located in the Edney Innovation Center, placing him in close proximity to many of the entrepreneurs and community members his work has nurtured.”

Among the projects Bradshaw will continue to support are the establishment of an Advanced Manufacturing Application Center that will pursue innovations in 3D printing, as well as the completion of a study on new ways to measure the impact of entrepreneurs on community and economic development.

“I first walked into CO.LAB in 2011 as a volunteer to help aspiring entrepreneurs,” said Bradshaw. “It turned out to be a calling that led to a period of personal growth and satisfaction as unexpected as it was profound. I am inspired everyday by the people from all walks of life who have the dream of building a business and are ready to work.”

Bradshaw has worked with Jensen Hughes since 2009 when it acquired a tech startup he helped found. Today, that startup is bringing a division of the world’s largest privately-held fire protection engineering and life safety company to Chattanooga. As the director of the Jensen Hughes Academy, Bradshaw said he believes the opening of this new office in Chattanooga is a testament to the attractiveness of the city’s Innovation District.

“I am deeply grateful for the extraordinarily generous support of the people and organizations on whom CO.LAB’s work depends,” said Bradshaw. “Volunteers are CO.LAB’s secret sauce, and I am looking forward to rejoining their ranks as we continue the work to make Chattanooga the best place in the world to start and grow a new venture. I believe every CO.LAB volunteer will join me in urging people across the city to join in and become part of CO.LAB’s journey.”

Over the course of Bradshaw’s tenure at CO.LAB, a number of major developments have begun to reshape Chattanooga’s entrepreneurial environment and the opportunities available therein. The establishment of the city’s Innovation District and the growing number of tenants within its anchor building at the Edney Innovation Center are chief among them. CO.LAB’s relocation into the Edney in October 2015 has had a dramatic effect on the organization’s work, particularly with regard to its accessibility and its approach to partnering with other organizations and individuals who value entrepreneurial innovation. Other developments, such as the retooling of The Enterprise Center to focus on innovation and digital technology, the creation of The Jump Fund, and the launch of Lamp Post Group’s Dynamo logistics accelerator, make the next six months an ideal time for CO.LAB to identify new needs and opportunities that are emerging in tandem.

“With a front row seat, I have watched Chattanooga establish a remarkable entrepreneurial ecosystem, creating a model for other cities trying to grow in this important space,” said Studer.

“CO.LAB’s work with young companies to develop business ideas, find mentors, and connect to funding sources has helped propel Chattanooga into the national discussion. I am thrilled to help shepherd CO.LAB into the next stage of its journey.”

Studer is a co-founder of Lamp Post Group, a local venture incubator that has created over 100 jobs and tens of millions of dollars in local economic impact since launching in 2010. He is also a co-founder of the Chattanooga Renaissance Fund, an angel investment fund established in 2011 for entrepreneurs in the Southeast. Most recently, Studer co-founded Torch in 2014, which is a local company that has created a Wi-Fi router with built-in parental controls. After studying Operations Research and Financial Engineering at Princeton, his career began on Wall Street at Credit Suisse, where he found success working on corporate finance and mergers and acquisitions with major companies such as Google, Oracle, Omniture and YouTube. A Chattanooga native, Studer is a graduate of the Baylor School and currently serves as the chairman of Erlanger Health System’s board of directors.

About The Company Lab

[The Company Lab \(CO.LAB\)](#) is a nonprofit organization that supports entrepreneurial growth in southeast Tennessee. Established as the region’s front door for entrepreneurs, CO.LAB works to increase the viability of startups and strengthen the ecosystem of support behind them. In doing so, the organization helps entrepreneurs refine their business models, test their ideas with customers, pursue capital and partnerships, and connect with a community of mentors, peers and business experts. Additionally, CO.LAB works to create environments that inspire entrepreneurial activity, open doors within the business community and promote job creation. The companies CO.LAB supports range from street-corner mom and pop shops to tech startups scaling into major markets. To learn more, visit colab.co.