Keith Gordon is a recently retired Naval Aviator and ETC's Director of TechFire. Prior to retiring from active duty Keith worked directly for the Chief of Naval Operations as his senior technology Fellow in the CNO's Strategic Studies Group.

Dan Roche is one of TechFire's entrepreneurs-in-residence and TechFire's "software technology" client mentor. He is a prolific software entrepreneur, and Harvard Business School graduate. He has started several software companies that have gone public.

John Sullivan is one of Techfire's entrepreneurs-in-residence and our 'hardware technology' client mentor. He is a prolific inventor and patent holder with 50 patents to his name.

Theresa Ohle serves as TechFire's Coordinator—orchestrating the daily activity in the innovation network, while supporting marketing and entrepreneur recruitment efforts.

ETC has engaged the following incubator, communications, and Economic Development professionals, as consultants:

Ann Lansinger is a former President of Baltimore's Emerging Technology Centers—Baltimore's successful technology incubator.

Shirley Collier is past Chair of the Board of the Howard County Economic Development Authority, responsible for the Maryland Center for Entrepreneurship.

Gene Lauer served over 30 years in local government and as Charles County Administrator from 1996-2004.

Kim Mozingo is President of The Conwell Group, Inc. and has 30 years of communication experience.

TechFire Team

One Year In
Bob Kavetsky, President of Energetics Technology Center

It's hard to believe that a little over a year ago, the idea for an incubator in Southern Maryland was only a gleam in our eye. Fast-forward to today, and we have a fully operational incubator, *TechFire*. The key element to getting this off the ground was hiring the right people, and I feel very fortunate to have been able to retain Keith Gordon and Theresa Ohle (see their bios on page 4) to take a pretty challenging vision and make it a reality. These two talented and capable people have worked incredibly hard to bring our idea to fruition. Today we have 7 companies in incubation, 3 companies in the application process, and 12 others in various stages of our pipeline. We have also started working with Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology Division (NSWC IHEODTD), Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWC AD), Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) and Army Research Laboratory (ARL) tech transfer offices to commercialize some of their more exciting intellectual property.

The second "thank you" is to the Charles County government, and the Economic Development Office, for their confidence in us by their awarding

ETC grant funding for two years now. This funding has been absolutely critical to us being able to make the progress we have.

The third "thank you" is to our Entrepreneurs- in-residence, Dan Roche and John Sullivan, who provide critical early stage advice to our TechFire clients. Lastly, I want to thank the consultants on our team, specifically Ann Lansinger, Gene Lauer, and Shirley Collier for their insightful help in the very early stages of this initiative. They brought a collective expertise to our start-up that has proven to be invaluable. As we all know, any initiative is only as good as the people involved, and I am deeply thankful to all those who have had a role in helping us successfully launch TechFire. Stay tuned for more exciting news!

Top 6 Reasons to Call an Expert
Kim Mozingo

How do you expand, or find, your market when the rules of the game keep changing? There are many reasons smart business owners like you walk through the doors of TechFire.

1. You have a great solution, but before you pour your heart, soul, and money into it, you want to make sure you will have paying customers. The answer is a customer discovery process, but that can take an extraordinary amount of time and money. TechFire knows this process and has walked many new ventures successfully through it; they're standing by to help you.

2. You're selling your product in one market, but want to take business to the next level. Reduce risk by working with experts at TechFire as you prepare to make the leap.

3. You're working a particular market segment and turning a small profit, but the legal or regulatory environment is changing quickly and to maintain credibility and future viability, you need to keep pace with change. TechFire has been there and understand the most credible sources of information to save you time, money, and possibly your credibility.

4. You're ready to hire employees. That requires a whole different level of knowledge and understanding. TechFire can guide you to resources that will help you make the right decisions for your business.

5. You have a general concept but haven't begun to think about how to monetize it or if it's even viable. This is the perfect time to enter TechFire where entrepreneurs are supported from ideation through innovation, customer discovery, incubation, and a graduation program.

6. You have a viable product or service, an interested market, but you're not hitting the mark with advertising and communication, and it's costing you time and money. TechFire can help you hone your skills, establish good social media habits, and have important conversations with your customers and clients.

No matter where you are in the process of creating something the world needs, TechFire should be a resource for you. No business is one size fits all and neither are solutions. TechFire programs are flexible and designed to meet your needs. Connect soon to learn how TechFire can accelerate your success.

Where We Are Now
Keith Gordon, Director of TechFire

TechFire is no longer just a small campfire – it's grown into a bonfire for our community! In our inaugural year we have undergone many updates, changes and expansions, and we are quickly gaining altitude in these first months of our second year. We have new companies we are mentoring, new additions to our professional network, new co-working members, and the word is getting out about the positive changes our initial companies are experiencing with their business growth. While we have not yet graduated our first company, we are on the brink, with the help of TechFire Entrepreneurs-in-Residence. The truth rests with our companies who are hiring, approaching new markets and being accepted into accelerator and other VC programs! Congratulations to them all!

We are also particularly thankful to have new partnerships, such as an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with both UMD, through their Mtech incubator system, as well as a new MOU with the College of Southern MD! These partnerships not only facilitate engagement for students and faculty alike, they create rich educational and entrepreneurial endeavors with local businesses and our colleges. We have and continue to actively participate in DC I-Corps, a National Science Foundation funded program that is designed to successfully incorporate innovations into viable products. We have mentored one of our TechFire teams through the process, and our entrepreneurs-in-residence continue to mentor other teams in the third cohort of this cutting-edge curriculum. We've even adopted the Lean Startup and DC I-Corps customer discovery and business model generation methods as a standard approach and vernacular for our TechFire clients.

Good things are happening at TechFire that enhance the Southern MD experience. We are happy to be part of the technology growth and economic diversification of our region. Set up a visit, and standby for announcements of our next networking event! We'd love to see you at the bonfire!