



## For Immediate Release

### 19<sup>th</sup> Annual RBTC TechNite Awards Ceremony Speaker Announced

*Roanoke, Virginia, February 26, 2018:* The Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council is pleased to announce that the 19<sup>th</sup> annual TechNite awards ceremony will be held in Blacksburg, at the Inn at Virginia Tech, for the first time in the history of the event. Along with an exciting change of venue, we are also elated to announce that our Guest Speaker for this year's event will be the esteemed U.S. Senator Mark R. Warner.

The first in his family to graduate from college, Mark Warner spent 20 years as a successful technology entrepreneur and business leader in Virginia before he was elected Governor in 2001. As an early investor in the cellular telephone business, he co-founded the company that became Nextel and invested in hundreds of start-up technology companies that created tens of thousands of jobs. Leaning on his background in technology and state government, Senator Warner uses his position in the Senate to promote policies that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship and bring the federal government into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

“I’ve been saying for years that there’s no reason you should have to leave your hometown to find a good-paying, high-tech job. With all of the talent and innovation that’s fueling Southwest Virginia’s growth tech scene, that’s never been truer. I’m looking forward to joining TechNite 2018 and highlighting all that the region’s technology community has to offer,” said U.S. Senator Mark R. Warner.

Our Master of Ceremonies for TechNite 2018 will be Elizabeth Hord. Elizabeth works as the Senior Relationship Manager for VOLATIA Language Network, one of the companies from the inaugural RAMP-in-Residence Cohort. Elizabeth grew up in rural Virginia on a dairy farm where she saw first-hand the positive effects that technology could have on her family’s business.

Elizabeth shares that, “Advancements in technology continue to change every sector (i.e. agriculture, medicine, entertainment, education, transportation, etc.) and open up a new world of opportunities. I am honored and excited to be involved in announcing the achievements of our local technology companies and being a part of the advancements our community will bring to the ever-changing technology world.”

Nominations are being accepted through May 30<sup>th</sup> for seven award categories for the 2018 TechNite awards ceremony. Award recipients will be determined prior to the 2018 event on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Nominations can be submitted, and more information about TechNite 2018 is available, online at <https://rbtc.tech/technite>.

#### ABOUT THE ROANOKE - BLACKSBURG TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL (RBTC)

The Roanoke - Blacksburg Technology Council is a non-profit, member-driven association of businesses and organizations in the greater Roanoke - Blacksburg region, working together to promote the growth and success of the region's technology sector. Its membership includes more than 250 organizations. The RBTC is the leading resource for the region’s growth and success. It exists to connect and unite the region’s technology community, develop and educate thought-leaders, mentors, and the technology workforce, and improve access to talent. To learn more, please visit <http://www.rbtc.tech>.

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