



J. Buckner Hightower

Co-Founder, Acting CEO, Executive Vice President

Mr. Hightower has more than 25 years executive management experience in multiple industries and a 30-year background of investment entrepreneurialism and capital formation.

Mr. Hightower's top level teaming with Art Dula began in the 1980s including as Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Space Commerce Corporation, which formed the historic first Soviet-American joint venture in aerospace. Hightower's partnering with Dula led to various NASA related endeavors including leadership to Excalibur Almaz Incorporated (EAI), the U.S. based arms-length contractor to EA. His advisory services to U.S. startup firms includes Ad Astra Rocket Company, contracted to NASA for future deep-space projects. He has strong professional relationships and a positive history of business negotiations with global aerospace entities including Lockheed Martin, UK Space Agency, NPO Mashinostroyenia (NPOM), Sea Launch Inc., United Space Alliance (USA) and Space Flight Operations (SFO), JAXA (Japanese Space Agency), EADS Astrium, RSC Energia, Japan Manned Space Systems (JMSS), Yuzhnoye State Design Organization (YSDO) and MDA of Canada. He possesses business development expertise in Russia beginning with the USSR in 1988 and subsequently expanding internationally to Japan, Canada, the European Union, the Ukraine and the U.S.

Mr. Hightower's many professional recognitions are reflected by the Gagarin Medal of the Russian Federation of Cosmonautics, and involvement with academic and community activities. He holds positions on boards of trustees including The International Space University and The Robert A. Heinlein Prize Trust, which awards significant accomplishments in commercial aerospace. Mr. Hightower holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from The University of Texas at Austin, plus additional professional credentials through ongoing executive education.