

Board of Directors

Chris Behnke

Co-Founder and COO of Choose Growth

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As an experienced executive, entrepreneur, and expert in digital education, marketing, and big data, Chris emits a contagiously powerful energy and enthusiasm that is evident once you meet him in person. He has over 18 years of executive management experience including 10 years serving at ComScore (SCOR) where he led the design and development of every major new product from 2001 to 2011. An extraordinary talent for business showed itself at a very early age when Chris co-founded Avalon Technology Group, a small technology company in Portland, Oregon, when he was just 19 years old.

Then, just two years after marrying his high school sweetheart, Alice, Chris helped develop a web-based “thin-client” technology that paved the way for venture funded startup, Hyperling Technologies, his second major business venture. In 2001, Chris began working at ComScore (Rentrak) where he helped develop and launch the successful theatrical measurement software suite, “Box Office Essentials.” By late 2003, Chris and Alice had been blessed with two children and were craving a new challenge. So they moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma to help Cookson Hills Christian Ministries, a nonprofit K-12 school and children’s home.

During their two-year sabbatical in Oklahoma, Chris was able to help implement a campus wide network, a new IT system architecture, and was a powerful change agent for a significant evolution in their approach to fundraising and overall business operations. After coming back to the Pacific Northwest in late 2005, Chris returned to ComScore, as the Vice President of IT. Working hand in hand with key players from major movie and television studios and media brands, he led the successful launch of every major new product developed for the company including Ondemand, Stationview, Digital, Mobile, and National TV measurement services.

Chris and Alice now have four children. And if you live in their neighborhood, you’ll see that this is one very on-the-go family! Chris sees his mission as living life with passion and purpose, and teaching his kids to do the same, so he also includes them in his businesses as much as possible. Chris is passionate about giving 100 percent to everything in life and purposefully casting contagious vision. He currently serves on the board of Kilns College and Delta Ministries.

Rick Gerhardt

President of Sage Science/Professor

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Rick Gerhardt is president and owner of Sage Science, a small ecological research company in Central Oregon. He has traveled throughout much of North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean both conducting research of owls and hawks and presenting the results of those studies. He has lived in Central Oregon for the past 17 years with his wife, Dawn, and their four kids, now aged 19 through 12.

Rick has an M.Sc. in Raptor Biology from Boise State University and an M.A. in Christian Apologetics from Biola. Rick is a volunteer apologist for Reasons To Believe, Director of Apologetics and an elder at Antioch Church in Bend, and serves on the Board of Directors of Kilns College and of the (Bend) Apologetics Guild.

Kip Jones

Associate Pastor

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Kip Jones grew up in Bend, Oregon and is a graduate of Bend Senior High. He studied business at COCC and OSU Cascades and is currently an Elder and the Community and Media Pastor at Antioch Church. His passion for gadgets and design has led him to develop proficiency in photography, cinematography, film editing, motion graphics, graphic design, live audio, home entertainment systems, and computer

technology. He is known around Bend as an Apple Guru and loves to help people get the most out of their iOS devices. Kip lives in Bend with his wife, Kristin, their son Asher, and their shih-tzu Maple.

Jay Mathisen

**Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Strategic Planning with Bend-La Pine Schools,
Graduate Adjunct Professor**

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Jay was raised in rural northern Indiana. He moved to Oregon in 1991 to attend college. After earning a bachelor's degree in social studies education from Western Baptist College (currently Corban University), he began teaching and coaching in a rural high school on the McKenzie River in the fall of 1995. He completed a Master's Degree in education from Western Oregon University in 2001. During that stretch of years as a teacher, he and his wife, Shannon, spent a summer in the South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu working with start-up schools in a primitive developing world setting.

After eight years of full-time teaching and coaching, he took on the role of principal of McKenzie High School in 2003. Jay served in that capacity for two years before he, Shannon and their young daughters, Daisy and Molly, moved to Central Oregon and settled in Bend. Jay began as an administrator with the Bend-La Pine Schools in 2005 as an assistant principal at La Pine Middle School. Following two years in that role, he was selected as the principal at La Pine High School. During his five years as the principal at LPHS he was selected as the High School Principal of the year in the state of Oregon in 2011. In 2010 Jay began the pursuit of a doctorate in Educational Leadership as a student at George Fox University. 2010 also marked his first visit to the East African nation of Rwanda. Post-genocide education reform in Rwanda became the focus of his doctoral studies, culminating with a dissertation titled: "Education Reform in Rwanda: Impacts of Genocide and Reconstruction on School Systems". He earned his doctoral degree from George Fox in 2012.

Currently, Jay is serving as the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Strategic Planning with Bend-La Pine Schools. He is a graduate level adjunct professor for George Fox University and Corban University, specializing in teacher preparation courses as a member of the education department faculties of those universities.

Jay annually leads teams of educators from Central Oregon to Rwanda to continue working with a local NGO there that trains teachers in best practices in engaging students in their learning. The role of education is increasingly recognized as an integral component in long-term comprehensive development models. This current work in Rwanda is based on a thoughtful local development model that supports local teachers and school leaders in a sustainable capacity building effort. George Fox School of Education has a framework made up of three elements: 1) Think Critically, 2) Transform Practice, and 3) Promote Justice. Those elements define this work in Rwanda.

Jerry Schulz (Board Chair)

Extended Learning Dean at COCC

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Jerry is an innovative administrator with a focus on workforce development and career opportunities for students of all ages to benefit our local community and region. Jerry holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of California at Santa Barbara and is active in graduate and continued learning courses at other institutions. Jerry serves on the Board of Directors for Seventh Mountain Resort in Bend, Oregon as well as an advisor to After School Buddies nonprofit mentorship program in Bend. Before becoming the Extended Learning Dean at COCC he previously served as the Director of Continuing Education at the same institution. With more than 20 years of public and private higher education management experience, Jerry has held diverse positions including instruction, middle management and executive level roles. His entrepreneurial endeavors and practical leadership experience give him the knowledge and skills to lead teams to successful outcomes. Jerry and his wife Char currently reside in Bend, Oregon.

John Wytsma

Retired

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From 1967 to 1992, John was with the Department of the Navy, culminating in the rank of Captain. He managed every aspect of a large Navy workforce, including human resources, recruitment, compensation, benefits, performance appraisals, equal opportunity, and labor relations for an organization with 1,800 military and civilian employees. John also served as a primary flight instructor, a ground school instructor, an Instrumental Flight instructor, a standardization instructor and developed numerous training media packages for replacement pilot training.

From 1994 to 2007, John was with FCBS, serving as a Vice President. He has a BA in International Relations from California State University, an MS from the University of Southern California in Systems Management and an MS in National Mobilization Planning from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.