



Kenneth R. Hall, Ed.D.

Kenneth Hall refers to himself as an *Organizational Entrepreneur*, and since October of 2007 has been earning that distinction as one of the founders of startup Exsol Labs, LLC, a technology-based reclamation and recycling company based in Georgia, with operations in Asheville, North Carolina. Along with brothers Rob and David Barnett, both Atlanta based, and chemist Jon Snover, Exsol Labs, LLC is quickly distinguishing itself as one of the premier refiners of metallic-core catalytic converters in the country. With the target objective of reclaiming platinum group metals from spent catalytic converters, Exsol Labs, LLC applies chemistry and process technologies to recover platinum, rhodium, and palladium metals utilizing an environmentally sustainable and safe methodology.

For most of his thirty year career, Kenny has worked with early stage and/or growth industries where he is most able to put into practice his undeniable love of innovation and systems-based solutions. He has been consulting or working with domestic and international organizations since the 1980s while developing his ideas and observations on organizational systems and behaviors, and the unique role that interpersonal values play in organizational dynamics. He calls this theory - *Strand Theory*. The underlying research of this theory can be found at www.strandtheory.org. He holds a BS in Computer Science and Information Systems, an MBA from Massey Graduate School of Business, Belmont University, an MA in Advanced Leadership Studies from Indiana Wesleyan University, and a doctorate in Organizational Management from Oakland City University. He has taught on an adjunct basis at Lambuth University and Austin Peay State University, both in Tennessee, and has been a guest lecturer at Belmont's Massey School. He spoke at the national convention of Independent Insurers at Opryland Hotel, and created a *change* curriculum for a series of classes offered to employees of Columbus-McKinnon Corporation.

Kenny has served in a variety of executive positions with an extensive and diversified background. He began his career as a systems programmer with J. C. Bradford & Co., a regional brokerage firm based in Nashville, Tennessee. With J. C. Bradford & Co., he assumed a variety of roles and project responsibilities, later becoming the firm's VP of Computer Services, responsible for all fixed income trading technologies. He served as the Director of IT for Willis Group and G. A. Sullivan & Co., working frequently in the UK and the Netherlands on internet-based technology solutions. In 2001, Kenny became the CEO of Global Trade Technologies, Inc., a Sterling, VA based bond trading software company. At GTT, he and his management team sold a minority equity interest in the business to Merrill Lynch & Co., financially underwritten by Jefferson Capital of Richmond, VA and Lovett-Miller of Jacksonville, FL.

During his tenure as the company's CEO, the tragic events of September 11, 2001 occurred, forever changing his perspective of the true purpose of work and the importance of establishing deep and abiding relationships through organizational community. Kenny was at ground zero of 911 ten days after the event; an experience that radically changed his perspective of his own life pursuits and purpose. As in the lives of thousands of others so personally affected, this tragedy became the turning point to seek greater significance in both his personal life and his work, and spurred his renewed interest in greater learning opportunities and academic study at mid-life.

After working feverishly for 18 months to salvage GTT after 911, he consulted independently with several family-owned businesses, and ultimately consulted with Merchant Management, a distressed debt trading company based in Brentwood, Tennessee and co-owned by longtime friend Kurt Beasley. The company had raised capital utilizing a little known business structure called Registered Limited Liability Partnerships (RLLPs), which were challenged as being securities by the Securities and Exchange Commission in *SEC versus Merchant Capital* filed in 2002. Kenny testified as an expert witness in the trial on behalf of Merchant. Despite five consistently favorable rulings over a nine year period by Federal District Court Senior Judge Marvin Shoob, the SEC continued to file appeal after appeal, and Merchant Capital was eventually found guilty of selling securities without registration. This experience demonstrated from a very personal perspective the capabilities of governmental overreach, judicial bias, and the role of power and its ability to skew moral equity. Several other firms utilizing the exact capital structure, but with greater financial resources, were not pursued by the government.

After the collapse of Merchant Management, the existing debt portfolio was sold to Titan Management of Duluth, GA and Kenny was retained as the portfolio manager and EVP of Titan. There he worked to establish a collections center in Marion, Indiana, working with the state's Business Development Board on an incentive package for the company. Kenny was instrumental in the company's pivotal acquisition of Federated Department Store's \$2 billion distressed credit card portfolio in 2005. His responsibilities included the development of a mortgage division for Titan, where he met his now business partner, Rob Barnett, who was hired to manage this division for the firm. Both men left Titan in the fall of 2007 and established Exsol Labs, LLC. The company originally formed a research partnership with Western Carolina University and where they utilized the professional services of Chemistry Professor Jon Snover, a Princeton graduate with a specialty in surface chemistry applications. Jon later became an employee of Exsol Labs, and the company moved to join the technology incubator with sister college Asheville-Buncombe Technical College located at the Enka Campus in Candler, North Carolina. In 2010, the company significantly expanded its facilities, move out of the incubator, and formed a research partnership with the school. This relationship continues today.

In 2010, Kenny completed his Doctorate of Education in Organizational Management from Oakland City University in Indiana. His dissertation was titled, *Being or Doing: An axiometric evaluation of Servant Leadership values and the Informing-Rendering agency of Competence*. This study focused on the myriad of attributes associated with the predominantly relationship

oriented theory of Servant Leadership and the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of leader competence. He continues to research the role of value priorities within organizations from the perspective of axiometric, or value science, rankings. His continued research and writings are formulated under the general construct of *Strand Theory*, and can be accessed at www.strandtheory.org.

Kenny continues to research and write on organizational dynamics, and is a strong proponent of socially progressive organizational responsibility. He works closely with friend and colleague Professor Danny M. Powell of the University of Saint Francis. Through this work, Kenny hopes to increase organizational social sensitivities and values awareness by highlighting his experience-based disdain for overbearing government and motionless bureaucracies. He strives to be an example of his Christian faith and competence-based expectations. Most of all, Kenny works hard to be a good friend, a faithful and supportive marriage partner to Pam, and a worthy father and grandfather to his three children and granddaughter.