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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rick Knop Named Chairman of the Board of Advisors for the Global and National Security Institute

Successful Washington, D.C. economic and academic leader, as well as veteran of government and defense contracting industry, to help lead GNSI strategic development.

TAMPA, FLORIDA, January 10, 2023 – The newly formed Global and National Security Institute at the University of South Florida has named longtime financier and investor J. Richard “Rick” Knop, as the first chairman of its Board of Advisors.

Knop is a lawyer turned investment banker and private equity principal, primarily focused on national security. His career began on Capitol Hill and migrated to international corporate law before he co-founded The Windsor Group in 1992. As CEO at The Windsor Group, Knop built the first investment bank focused on the government/defense contracting industry. Knop led the acquisition of The Windsor Group by BB&T Bank (now Truist) in 2005 and led BB&T Capital Markets/Windsor Group until 2009. In 2010, Knop co-founded FedCap Partners with his wife, Leslee Belluchie, a senior executive in the defense industry. FedCap Partners was a private equity firm that focused on Federal technology, cybersecurity, and national security companies.

Knop was a longtime member of the Board of Trustees of The George Washington University and chairman of The George Washington University Center for Cyber & Homeland Security. He’s currently a member of the Board of Advisors of the McCrary Institute for Cybersecurity & Critical Infrastructure, member of the Board of Advisors of Cyber Florida, member of the Board of Trustees of the London Town Foundation and a board member of several government/defense companies.

“I’m excited to be working with GNSI to help them take the next step in their journey to become an internationally recognized thought leader in the global and national security environment,” said Knop, a graduate of Indiana University and The George Washington University Law School. “GNSI is focused on real-world solutions to global security issues and the location at USF and Tampa offers a unique opportunity to the GNSI team.”

General (Ret) Frank McKenzie, Executive Director of GNSI, believes the addition of Knop to this leadership position will pay enormous dividends.

“I’m eager to engage Rick on ideas to grow GNSI,” McKenzie said. “There’s a great opportunity in front of us and Rick is a key piece to our strategic development. He’ll help us make the right decisions, have the right conversations with the right people, and stay focused on the right ideas. He’s going to be a tremendous advocate for GNSI as we seek to grow our influence and the USF brand in the global and national security environment.”

Knop has won numerous awards, including the Greater Washington Technology Financier of the Year, the Association of Corporate Growth Dealmaker of the Year, the Technology Good Scout Award from the Boy Scouts of America, and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the George Washington University.

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About GNSI

The Global and National Security Institute at the University of South Florida is dedicated to the idea of providing actionable solutions for 21st century security challenges, focusing on the intersection of science and technology, human behavior and social dynamics, and cybersecurity. GNSI brings together the proven academic and research excellence of USF and connects them with expertise across government and the private sector to serve decision makers and leaders at the local, state, national, and international levels. GNSI will utilize outreach and engagement, continuing education, and research and support to lead USF towards a more prominent leadership role in the global and national security environment. Learn more at www.usf.edu/GNSI.

About USF

The University of South Florida, a high-impact global research university dedicated to student success, generates an annual economic impact of more than \$6 billion. Over the past 10 years, no other public university in the country has risen faster in U.S. News and World Report’s national university rankings than USF. Serving more than 50,000 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee, USF is designated as a Preeminent State Research University by the Florida Board of Governors, placing it in the most elite category among the state’s 12 public universities. USF has earned widespread national recognition for its success graduating under-represented minority and limited-income students at rates equal to or higher than white and higher income students. USF is a member of the American Athletic Conference. Learn more at www.usf.edu.