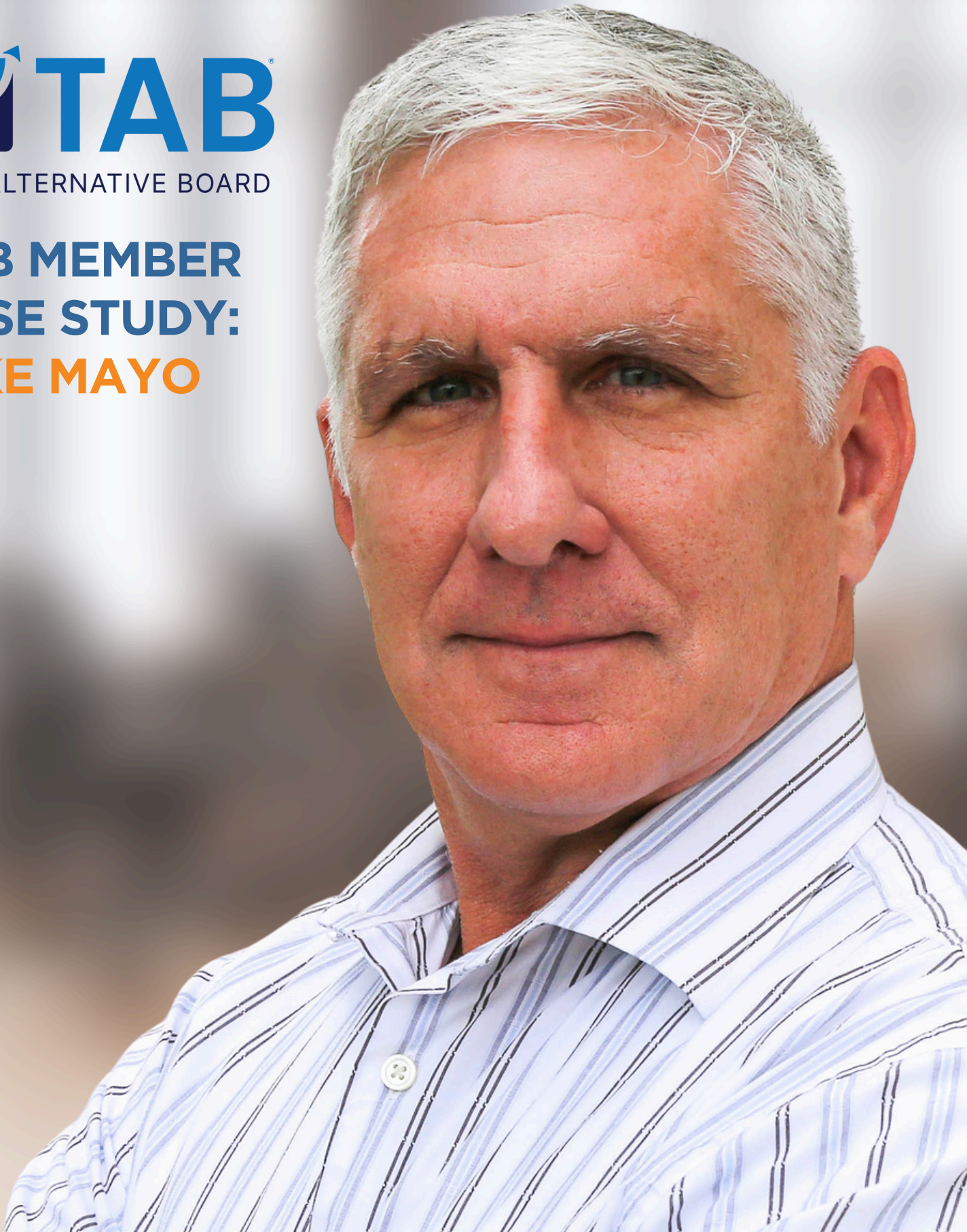




THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD

**TAB MEMBER  
CASE STUDY:  
MIKE MAYO**



**MIKE MAYO IS THE CO FOUNDER & PRESIDENT OF NANOHMICS,**  
an R&D company primarily focused on solving difficult early stage technical problems for  
government and commercial customers. With a history of extraordinary success and notable  
clients like NASA, what on earth would drive this business leader to join a TAB Board?



## Mike Mayo and his business partner launched

Nanohmics, an Austin, Texas based R&D company, in 2002. Mayo and his team are innovators of advanced technologies that allow their clients to fulfill a strategic vision to commercialize new products. It is dynamic and diverse field.

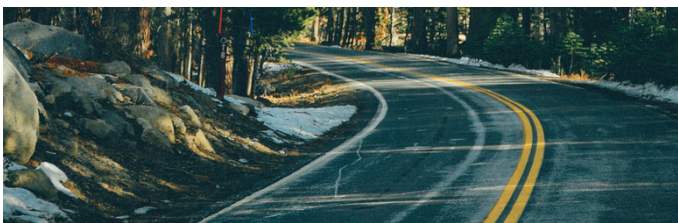
"We are not singularly focused on any one piece of technology," Mike says. "Right now we have 32 ongoing research projects, including a NASA program to develop an adaptive optics system that improves image quality on small platforms like cubesats and drones. We are also developing a rapid COVID test strip for home consumer use that can also detect influenza A and B, as well as streptococcus. And a program with the Department of Transportation that would embed antennas in road striping that can extend the communication between vehicles and roadside infrastructure for autonomous vehicle navigation."

Not to mention Nanohmics' work with NASA's Langley Research Center that includes making a small, lightweight hyper spectral sensor that is currently flying on the International Space Station.

Here on earth, Nanohmics grew somewhat organically. As a startup, Mike and his partner initially wore many administrative hats.

**"My partner and I pretty much DIYed everything. We learned how to do accounting, we learned how to do all the HR stuff. When we were less than 20 people, we could handle all those things. I could keep track of every program in my head. Running the business part back then just didn't take much time at all."**

Now 45 people strong and with many great hires along the way, even success can present some obstacles. Mike's TAB board has helped him navigate his ever evolving role as a business leader.



**"For me the challenge is really delegating a lot of the things that I now spend my day doing."**

Mike says that his TAB board and facilitator have been helping him create more of a strategic vision for running the business and managing his time.

"They have helped me look introspectively. Identify what I am good at. More importantly, maybe what might be better aligned to someone else on the team. So it starts to point out some roles that I probably should not be doing as the president of the company."

By better defining his leadership role and how he wants it to evolve, Mike says he realizes it's time to start developing Nanohmics' next set of leaders.

**"The idea is really to keep this kind of technology incubation going and provide an opportunity for people to work on challenging problems with people they like and respect. To come into work and be excited about what they do and have a good lifestyle."**

Mike says his TAB board and coach have helped him think about his business in a totally new and forward-thinking way.

"Up until joining my board, I was almost exclusively focused on problem solving for individual projects. I wasn't really looking at the big picture. TAB has helped me think about my business more like a business rather than a series of completed contracts."