

Wayne Johnson, Ph.D. '01 - Department of Chemical Engineering
Age: 35

Dr. Wayne Johnson is currently Vice President of Technology for Kopin Corporation, a NASDAQ-listed nanotechnology company with market cap of >\$250M. His previous accomplishments include leadership in the growth of a start-up semiconductor company and fundamental contributions to gallium nitride (GaN) electronic device technology. Wayne has published more than 120 journal articles and conference presentations, has co-authored 2 book chapters, and holds 6 U.S. patents.

After receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Florida in December 2001, Wayne joined Nitronex Corporation, an early-stage semiconductor company in Raleigh, NC. At Nitronex, he led the progression of GaN technology from basic materials research through product development and release of the world's first commercial GaN-on-silicon power transistors. From 2002-2005, as Process Development Engineer, Wayne patented multiple aspects of device design and fabrication that led to 20% increase in output power, 10x reduction in leakage current, and 50% improvement in device reliability. In 2005, Wayne and collaborators developed and published the first GaN-on-Si monolithic microwave integrated circuit. To help commercialize these breakthroughs, in 2006 he was promoted to Product Development Manager, responsible for company-wide product design and development activities. In this role from 2006-2010, Wayne managed a team of design, packaging, and test engineers and a total development budget of >\$10M, resulting in successful launch of Nitronex's first 13 products. These products have been used to reduce energy consumption of cellular base stations and to protect U.S. soldiers in foreign conflict zones by extending the range of electronic protection units.

In early 2010, after helping to grow Nitronex from lab demonstrations into a well-known company with multi-million dollar annual revenue, Wayne accepted a position as Director of New Business and Product Development at Kopin Corporation in Taunton, MA. In August 2010, after only 6 months at Kopin, Wayne was promoted from Director to his current role as Vice President of Technology. In this capacity, he leads a team of Ph.D.-level scientists and engineers responsible for all technology and product development, funded R&D, and new business development for the company's III-V Product Group. The technology developed by Wayne's team at Kopin is contained inside most major smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices and has been integrated into more than 1 billion handsets worldwide.

Wayne remains closely tied to UF through the Alumni Association, volunteer activity with local Gator Clubs, and active collaboration with researchers from the College of Engineering. Since beginning his professional career, Wayne has co-authored over 25 journal articles with UF faculty from the Depts. of Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Materials Science and Engineering.

In his North Carolina community, Wayne volunteered time to local youth through reading programs in elementary school classrooms and by coaching various basketball and football leagues. Since moving to Massachusetts 6 months ago, Wayne became involved with Personal Best Charity, a local organization that sponsors an annual 'Turkey Brigade' to provide Thanksgiving dinner to members of the community in need. Last year, Wayne and his family helped raise money for the charity through fundraisers and a local 5K race. Wayne and his family also helped assemble the meal baskets and, on Thanksgiving Day, delivered meals to several underprivileged families within the community.

Wayne lives in Easton, MA with wife, Traci, and sons Max (9) and Sam (6).