

John N. Stewart
President, Talons Ventures, LLC
Angel Investor / Board Member / Startup Whisper
Anti-Poaching Advocate



(fmr) SVP, Chief Security & Trust Officer, Cisco



John is the founder and President, Talons Ventures. Stewart works with disruptive startup companies, venture funds, consults to midsize to large businesses on government relations and cyber, and gives back in philanthropic efforts on education, equality, and anti-poaching. Talons invested in 360Privacy, Arcanna, Anomali, Balkan.ID, Cequence Security, Dedrone, Heatseeker, Privoro, Splx.ai, Theom, Uniphore, Vaultree, VirSec, and Xeris.ai, and Stewart is on the Board of Directors for 360 Privacy, Lastpass, QuantumXchange, SpyCloud, TrustMAPP, and Vaultree, is a special advisor to the Board of Directors for Obsidian, serves on the Technical Advisory Board for RedSift and CypherGenics, and sits on the Dean's Advisory Council for Syracuse University's School of Engineering. Stewart and his family founded the Nicol-Stewart Scholarships aiding high school students into community college, and he actively supports Rhino 911, the Game Rangers Association of Africa, the Wildlife College, multiple animal orphanages and reserves in South Africa, and serves on the Board of Earth League International.

His motto is simple: make a positive impact.

Prior to founding Talons Ventures, Stewart served as SVP, Chief Security & Trust Officer at Cisco Systems. During his 15+ years at Cisco, Cisco established its leadership in national security matters, the enterprise security market, privacy, and trust - leadership the company carries on to this day. Under Stewart's leadership, the Security & Trust organization was formed, protecting Cisco's public and private customers, enabling and ensuring Cisco Secure Development Lifecycle and Trustworthy Systems efforts across the company's portfolio, and establishing world leadership in data protection and privacy, trust and assurance, and cybersecurity efforts with governments globally.

Stewart's career includes wide ranging security initiatives from IT design for elementary schools to national security programs. Stewart served on the Australian Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Cyber Security Review panel, the Cybersecurity Think Tank at the University of Maryland University College, and the CSIS Commission on Cybersecurity for the 44th United States Presidency. Stewart also served on the Board of Directors for Fixmo, Koolspan, the National Cyber-Forensics and Training Alliance (NCFTA), RiskSense, Shadow Networks, and Shape Security, and he has advised Akonix Systems, Anomali, Area 1 Security, Cloudshield Technologies, Finjan, Ingrian Networks, Nok Nok Labs, Riverhead Networks, and TripWire.

Stewart received numerous awards throughout his career, including RSA's Excellence in Information Security, the Golden Bridge CISO of the Year, the CSO 40 Silver Chief Security Officer of the Year, the 'Stevie' Innovator of the Year in Computer Services, Security Magazine's Most Influential Security Executive, and is a Fed100 Recipient. His team was the Golden Bridge Awards IT Team of the Year and Management Team of the Year, and the InfoSecurity Products Guide Global Excellence Award for Security Organization of the Year.

Prior to his time at Cisco, Stewart was CISO for Digital Island, had his first tour at Cisco, and worked at NASA Ames Research Center. Stewart holds a Bachelor and Master of Science degree in computer and information science from Syracuse University.