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Knowwn Appoints James Aylward as Interim Chief Executive Officer, Kayla Pennington as Chief Revenue Officer

The new position and new hire will help expand enterprise pipeline, accelerate strategic deals and build high-impact healthcare distribution partnerships

James Aylward, Interim Chief Executive Officer and Kayla Pennington, Chief Revenue Officer

CINCINNATI, OH, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Knowwn, the healthcare-focused "Retention Through Recognition"™ platform, today announced that James Aylward has been named Interim Chief Executive Officer, with Kayla Pennington joining the company as Chief Revenue Officer, as Knowwn enters its next phase of growth.

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>
> *James Aylward, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Knowwn*

Aylward joined Knowwn earlier this year as Chief Revenue Officer following a new round of funding led by Relevance Ventures. He provides more than three decades of healthcare technology leadership and a proven track record of building, scaling and exiting enterprise SaaS businesses, including Sy.Med Development, MedCenterDisplay, and Preferral.

"Knowwn has built a strong foundation, and I'm excited to lead the company through this next stage of growth," said Aylward. "As we sharpen our focus on retention through recognition, we have an opportunity to help healthcare organizations think differently about the role recognition can play in strengthening their workforce and culture, while reducing employee turnover."

Pennington brings 15 years of healthcare SaaS experience at HealthStream, with a career focused on building relationships with healthcare organizations, understanding the challenges facing healthcare leaders and bringing solutions to market that support their people. She also has experience building and operating her own company.

Knowwn logo

“Kayla brings a rare combination of deep healthcare experience, entrepreneurial drive and an understanding of what it takes to build meaningful relationships with healthcare organizations,” explained Aylward. “She is the right leader to take Knowwn’s story to market, accelerate revenue growth and help healthcare organizations rethink how they recognize and retain the people delivering care every day.”

Healthcare organizations continue to face significant workforce challenges, particularly burnout and retention. Research has associated nurse burnout with increased patient safety risks, making the employee experience more than a workforce issue. It can also impact the delivery of care.

Knowwn helps healthcare organizations address retention through more meaningful and consistent recognition across the employee journey, from hire to retire. The platform automates traditional milestones such as birthdays and work anniversaries while also enabling organizations to recognize moments that matter specifically to them, including onboarding, earned certifications, HCAHPS achievements, safety goals, departmental accomplishments and other meaningful contributions.

“I’ve spent the majority of my career in healthcare, and the experience of the people delivering care has always been incredibly important to me,” said Pennington. “Healthcare professionals spend their careers taking care of everyone else. I couldn’t be more excited to help bring a solution to market that helps organizations make sure those employees feel seen, valued and recognized for the work they do every day.”

As Chief Revenue Officer, Pennington will lead Knowwn’s revenue strategy, customer growth, strategic partnerships and go-to-market efforts as the company expands its footprint across healthcare organizations nationwide.

About Knowwn
Knowwn is a healthcare-focused Retention Through Recognition™ platform helping organizations strengthen engagement, culture and retention from hire to retire. By combining automated milestones with meaningful, organization-specific recognition moments, Knowwn helps healthcare leaders create a more consistent and personalized employee experience for the people who care for their patients every day.

For more information, visit Knowwn.co.

About Relevance Ventures
Relevance Ventures is one of the only Native American privately owned and operated venture capital firms in the United States. With over $100 million under management, the firm backs some of the brightest entrepreneurs addressing the most pressing problems in human health. The firm's investment thesis centers on physical health, mental health, and access to technologies, goods, and services. Founded by Cameron and Dean Newton, Relevance Ventures is headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, with a presence in Atlanta, Charlotte, Denver, and Santa Fe. Relevance Ventures also continues its impactful work through the Native American Capital and Investment Alliance ("NACIA"), a nonprofit designed to bridge the gap between Native American entrepreneurs and capital providers. NACIA ensures underserved communities have access to venture capital and the tools they need to thrive in the growing wellness sector. For more information, visit www.relevanceventures.com.

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