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CLEVELAND, OH – Cobalt Group, a Cleveland-based national private consultancy to leaders in the public, nonprofit and private sectors, is announcing that Mark Smith has joined the practice as a Partner. Mr. Smith is joining Cobalt Group after 28 years of experience providing leadership in large, high growth and entrepreneurial start-up organizations.

For the past four years Mr. Smith has served as an Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EIR) for JumpStart, Inc., a venture development organization whose mission is to accelerate the growth of early stage businesses in Northeast Ohio. During the 1980s and 1990s, Mark served in executive management roles for prominent Cleveland companies Progressive Insurance and Invacare Corporation. He has since served on the management teams of start-up endeavors in Chicago, San Francisco and Cleveland.

“I am excited to become a part of the rich history of Cobalt Group as we expand our services further into the private sector,” stated Mr. Smith. “Since 1997, the focus of Cobalt’s work has been in priority areas with broad social and economic impact, all of which work together to improve the quality of life and viability of a region.” President and Founder, Patti Choby, explained further, “Simply put, Cobalt Group helps leaders identify opportunities, build capacity, achieve outcomes and measure results. With the addition of Mark’s experience with large high growth companies and entrepreneurial endeavors, Cobalt Group can bring a greater wealth of services to leaders in any size/stage company. Mark’s expertise will greatly expand our ability to serve a broad base of clients, regionally and nationally.”

A resident of Cleveland, Mr. Smith serves as board member and Vice President of Marketing for the Cleveland International Film Festival. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Physics from Michigan State University.

### **About Cobalt Group, Inc.**

Cobalt Group is a nationally recognized private consultancy to leaders who are committed to excellence in their organizations, their communities and their lives. They serve as advisors and resources to leaders of organizations, corporations and communities who want to culturalize change, build capacity and promote sustainability. Founded in 1997, Cobalt Group built its practice around a broad range of initiatives in housing, business development, job creation, workforce development, education and health services.

The Cobalt Group Practice Model transcends traditional organizational, cultural and disciplinary boundaries, and is effective in enabling leaders of all walks to make sustainable change. The Model emphasizes the importance of working alongside leaders and stakeholders to help develop and leverage relationships, manage complex partnerships, and create convergence of resources and opportunities to achieve results.

Cobalt Group is uniquely qualified to provide services for public-private partnerships, corporate and entrepreneurial endeavors, and complex economic development initiatives.