ARU Appoints Joseph Strickland III as CEO to Lead Next Phase of Growth

ARU names Joseph Strickland III as CEO, succeeding founder Will Johnson; Strickland to lead continued growth, innovation, and diversification.

WINSTON-SALEM, NC, UNITED STATES, November 17, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- ARU, the U.S. leader in specialty Property insurance product development, underwriting, loss control, and technology, announced today the appointment of Joseph “Joe” Strickland III as Chief Executive Officer, effective January 1, 2026. Strickland previously served as the company’s Chief Underwriting Officer, and he will succeed founding CEO William G. “Will” Johnson III, who will continue to serve on the Board and lead special projects. In his new role as CEO, Strickland will drive ARU’s continued growth and product diversification, while maintaining the company’s market-leading underwriting results.

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Joseph "Joe" Strickland III, New CEO at ARU

“This is an outstanding fit for both Joe and ARU,” Johnson commented. “ARU originally launched as a Farm and Agribusiness writer, and we will always maintain a specialization in those areas. With that said, we have steadily diversified our business mix, and Commercial Property has been our fastest growing segment for the last several years. Joe has decades of underwriting and distribution leadership experience in the commercial property and overall specialty spaces, both in the U.S. and Europe, and he has successfully grown profitable underwriting portfolios in all the various flavors of insurance market cycles.

“Perhaps even more importantly, Joe brings a hands-on, entrepreneurial approach that is critical to leading ARU, and he continues a long tradition of the company promoting from within. It is an exciting time for ARU, and I am confident our best days lie ahead under Joe’s leadership,” continued Johnson.

Over his 30-year insurance career, Strickland has held leadership roles across organizations ranging from rapidly growing startups to established multinational conglomerates. Since joining ARU, he was instrumental in developing the company’s national Farm, Ranch, & Rural Estates product, which launched earlier in 2025 in conjunction with a proprietary modern technology platform. He also advanced ARU’s Commercial Property capabilities to include ground-up, primary, and lead quota share lines for a wide range of high-hazard occupancies in agribusiness, manufacturing, retail, and wholesale sectors. During his tenure as CUO, ARU earned multiple industry award wins, including Insurance Insider’s 2025 MGA of the Year and PropertyCasualty360’s Risk Management Innovation award, among others recognizing the company’s growth and workplace excellence.

Strickland said, “Will’s unmatched ability to build and lead companies has taken ARU from his early vision, through execution and several waves of successful evolution, and now into position to continue to raise the standard of excellence in the insurance industry. I’m honored to step into the role of Chief Executive Officer and lead our talented team of innovators and problem-solvers.”

More About Joseph Strickland

Prior to joining ARU, Strickland served as CUO at GuideOne Insurance, where he oversaw underwriting strategy and execution across the company. His professional history also includes executive positions at American International Group, Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty, and U.S. Aviation Underwriters. Strickland attended law school at Seton Hall University and was admitted to practice in Connecticut and New York. As a nationally recognized subject matter expert, Strickland has been featured in various mainstream media outlets, including USA Today and The New Yorker, and has appeared on Wall Street Journal Television. Under Strickland’s leadership, ARU will continue to accelerate its expansion into new markets, strengthen carrier and broker relationships, and drive innovation across its product and technology portfolio.

More About ARU

ARU was founded in 2016 and quickly established itself as the U.S. leader in poultry confinement product development, underwriting, loss control, and technology. From there, the company has steadily added occupancies and expanded into serving larger and more sophisticated risks, both on a ground-up and shared and layered basis. ARU’s underwriting and loss control harnesses fundamental scientific principles, granular weather metrics, proprietary technology, and niche expertise to maintain a sustainable and profitable portfolio of historically challenging risks, all while providing a superior experience to policyholders. ARU’s products and services serve a diverse network of retail producers, wholesalers, and carriers, providing not only traditional underwriting and loss control services, but also technology, product development, operational support, and reinsurance capacity.

ARU has been widely recognized for its innovation and workplace excellence, earning honors such as Insurance Insider’s 2025 MGA of the Year, PropertyCasualty360’s Risk Management Innovation Award, Insurance Business America’s Top 2025 Insurance Employers, and Business Insurance’s Best Places to Work in Insurance Award.

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