

Financial Security

An Interview with Jonathan D. Niemeyer, Senior Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer and General Counsel, Western & Southern Financial Group

EDITORS' NOTE Jonathan Niemeyer joined Western & Southern in 2001, became Vice President and Associate General Counsel in 2004, was promoted to Senior Vice President and General Counsel in 2010, and was promoted to Senior Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer and General Counsel in 2016. He leads Western & Southern's Law Department, including Compliance and Government Relations, and the Insurance Operations, Finance, Actuarial, Controller, Risk Management, Tax and Treasury functions.



Jonathan D. Niemeyer

Niemeyer was previously with Squire, Sanders & Dempsey LLP, and Graydon Head & Ritchey LLP, in Cincinnati, where he concentrated on corporate law, mergers and acquisitions, private equity and securities. He began his legal career at LG&E Energy Corp. in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1993. He served on the editorial board of the Kentucky Law Journal and is a member of the Cincinnati and Kentucky Bar Associations. He is the immediate past president of the Association of Life Insurance Counsel (ALIC), where he continues as a member. Niemeyer is a member of the Cincinnati Art Museum board and the board of directors of Bethesda, Inc., a major funder of healthcare transformation and co-sponsor of TriHealth, the leading integrated health delivery system in Southwest Ohio. He is also a member of the United Way's Tocqueville Society. He previously served on various boards and committees at the Salvation Army of Greater Cincinnati, Montgomery Community Church, Doug Pelfrey's Kicks for Kids and David Pollack's Empower Foundation in Cincinnati. Niemeyer earned a BA in political science, with distinction, from the University of Kentucky, and graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Law, Order of the Coif, with distinction. Niemeyer is licensed to practice law in Kentucky and Ohio.

COMPANY BRIEF Western & Southern Financial Group (westernsouthern.com) is a Cincinnati-based diversified family of financial services companies with assets, owned and managed, of nearly \$112 billion. Western & Southern is one of the strongest life insurance groups in the world with \$13 billion in capital. Over the last 30 years, it has grown from a \$5 billion regional life insurance company into a highly-respected national financial services enterprise.

How do you define Western & Southern Financial Group's purpose?

Our ultimate purpose is to help our customers with their financial needs. Since our founding in Cincinnati as The Western and Southern Life Insurance Company in 1888, as a modest door-to-door business during America's industrial age, we have endured and thrived because we have never lost sight of our purpose – to provide financial security to our customers. We aim to provide our customers and clients with financial solutions that help create peace of mind backed by our top-notch financial strength and capital.

We are a human institution serving human needs, committed to helping our customers live the life they want to live with secure financial futures. We do that by taking our responsibility to our customers and our communities very seriously.

In addition to our commitment to our customers, we pride ourselves on being a good corporate citizen, and that means taking an active role in improving our community through generous commitment of both our treasure and our talent. Our aim is to make Cincinnati the best place to live, work and celebrate life.

What have been the keys to the strength and leadership of Western & Southern Financial Group and how do you define the Western & Southern difference?

I think what makes Western & Southern different is our unique culture. It's a culture that stresses excellence and accountability in all we do. We are a company of hard-working, bright business professionals driven to serve the best interests of our customers, our associates and our communities with a sense of urgency and purpose.

We focus on providing solutions that serve the financial needs of our customers. When customers realize they can take advantage of the multiple financial solutions we offer, and

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We work hard to be the very best we can be in each of our businesses. We are an incredibly diverse company for our size, offering life and annuities through every distribution channel available to meet our customers where they are, whether it be through our own agents, third parties and/or digitally. Our asset management businesses – Fort Washington Investment Advisors, Touchstone Investments and Eagle Realty Group – are a real differentiator for us versus other life insurers.

Will you provide an overview of your role and areas of focus?

I am the Senior Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer and General Counsel of Western & Southern Financial Group. I joined Western & Southern as a staff lawyer in 2001 after working for two large law firms concentrating in mergers and acquisitions. I was appointed general counsel in 2010 and worked to consolidate our disparate compliance functions under one roof. With our complex financial services offerings, our law and compliance departments have to be world-class. We have a great team and great leaders who are among the best in our industry.

In 2016, I was named Chief Administrative Officer in addition to my law and compliance responsibilities as general counsel, and I am now responsible for the Finance, Actuarial, Controlling, Risk Management, Tax, Operations and Treasury functions. I consider law and compliance to be my “day job” and spend every waking hour trying to learn more about my other areas of responsibility in order to get

better every single day. I report to John Barrett, Western & Southern’s Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer. Outside work, I am involved with several nonprofit organizations in Cincinnati, including the Cincinnati Art Museum, Bethesda, Inc. and TriHealth.

How critical is it for Western & Southern Financial Group to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?

Our unique culture helps us create value for our customers, associates and the communities we serve. We hire and develop associates who are driven to excel, make sensible decisions, and possess an uncompromising work ethic. Equally important is a common commitment to treating all associates with dignity and respect, an insistence on keeping our egos in check, and a recognition that to build something bigger than ourselves, we must collaborate effectively. Many of our greatest ideas come from a rich and diverse mix of minds, backgrounds and experiences, and we are committed to maintaining a work environment that provides equal opportunities to all of our associates. We know that talented people want to work together and win together, and we believe that by living our culture, we will all succeed together.

What do you see as Western & Southern Financial Group’s responsibility to the communities it serves?

We take very seriously our responsibility to the communities we serve. We believe that as our business grows, our community must grow too, and that we have a responsibility and important role in making that happen. This makes us different from many companies. The dimension, complexity and variability of the challenges facing any metropolitan area simply demand that businesses get and stay involved.

We are particularly interested in supporting and fostering the growth and quality of life in the Cincinnati area given our 134-year history here and the fact that the vast majority of our associates work in downtown Cincinnati. We and our associates are deeply invested both financially and with our time in order to make Cincinnati one of the best cities to live, work and celebrate life.

We also believe that if we are going to attract and keep the best possible people, we need a community with a combination of wonderful places to go, things to do, interesting things to see, great restaurants, a vibrant downtown, and great educational and arts institutions, as well as top-rated medical facilities. Cincinnati is already such a place, but we continue to work hard to help Cincinnati continue to thrive.

We want to attract Fortune 500 companies to relocate to Cincinnati, but we also want to get local young people to come back here after college or after a job outside of Cincinnati and make it their home.

Through community sponsorships, funding for medical research and financial support of numerous local organizations, we focus our efforts on economic development, human services, healthcare, education and the arts, all of which impact the quality of life for the citizens of the communities where we live and work.

What do you tell young people about the type of career the insurance industry offers?

We believe that our company gives young people an opportunity for a career, not just a job. It also gives them a “mission” to help people with their financial needs. What better way to feel good about your job when you go home after a day at work than to think about how you helped people with their financial future? Maybe it is about helping a family rest assured, knowing they will be taken care of if the unimaginable were to happen. Maybe it is the comfort that comes with knowing one’s retirement income is guaranteed. We are in the business of offering peace of mind to our clients, and that is an attractive proposition to many young people.

You joined Western & Southern Financial Group in 2001. What has made the experience so special for you and did you imagine in the early days that this would be a place that you would spend over twenty years of your career?

I found a rewarding career in an industry that offers meaningful work at a company with unmatched financial strength and an unbeatable corporate culture. Our industry is unlike others, but I believe our company is even more unique. We have an extensive choice of insurance, investment and retirement solutions to help people achieve peace of mind with their financial security. We can help people with a guaranteed income for life. We can provide their loved ones a death benefit to make sure they are whole. Most people worry about their financial security, and our job is to get in front of them and let them know that we have solutions to help them. ●