

From the President's Desk

Time has come to hit the ground running

Last fall at the 2025 Global Conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I delivered a three-part message about the future of Primerus that doubled as a metaphor to the greatness of a horse-racing legend.

The thoroughbred went by the name of Secretariat, who won the coveted Triple Crown in 1973 by shattering records in the Kentucky Derby, Preakness, and Belmont Stakes.

Affectionately known as “Big Red,” Secretariat was a colt owned by Smith College alumna Penny Chenery who fulfilled her late father’s wishes producing a Kentucky Derby winner. Secretariat won the first leg of the Triple Crown in record-setting fashion, repeating the triumphs in each succeeding race by jaw-dropping margins. He capped his Triple Crown feat with an astonishing 31-length victory at the Belmont.

For those of us who witnessed the Belmont win on television in real time or relived it in the 2010 Disney movie starring Diane Lane and John Malkovich, Secretariat’s legacy as a “super horse” and cultural icon can serve as an inspiration to all as we embark on the next chapter in the history of Primerus.

That chapter – or first leg – began in earnest earlier this year when we announced that South Carolina attorney Christian Stegmaier, who most recently has served as managing partner of the Collins & Lacy, P.C. law firm, has been named Chief Operating Officer (COO) and President-elect of Primerus.

As planned Christian will spend the next year transitioning into the role of President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as well as the Chairman of the Board of Primerus. The plan would offer him the time to wind down his busy law practice at Collins & Lacy, which is based in the South Carolina capital of Columbia, and to become fully acquainted with the day-to-day operations of our global organization.

This allows me the opportunity to transition into retirement on February 1, 2027 upon the 35th anniversary of the founding of Primerus, which I have guided as President and CEO since its inception. The changing of the guard – from one leader to the next – will officially raise the curtain on Act II for Primerus, ushering in an era that will carry the promise of revitalization and growth.

Fortunately, we have found someone in Christian who possesses the talent, temperament, and enthusiasm to lead Primerus in our next chapter, where the second and third legs of our version of the Triple Crown will be run. Foremost, Christian has proven to be an outstanding lawyer with an impeccable character who has been actively involved in Primerus for many years and passionately believes in our mission. He has all the skills, experience, and vision to take Primerus to the next level in the years ahead.

This promise has become evident during Christian’s first few months on the job, as he has offered strategic insights



to improve our outreach, visibility, and workflow, while also identifying innovative ways to expand our recruiting efforts in markets big and small.

His knack for recruiting new members has been on full display during the past two months, as he has brought a new energy to accelerate our growth as a global entity that supplies the infrastructure for independent firms to compete on an equal footing with the giants of the legal world.

Recruiting, of course, is the lifeblood of an organization, ensuring that it has the resources necessary to sustain innovation, performance, and long-term growth. It also helps build culture by attracting like-minded members who share our values, commitment to quality, and mission to uplift the legal profession for decades to come.

Our culture is embodied in the Six Pillars, which serve as the soul of Primerus, reflecting the importance of the time-honored qualities of honesty, integrity, value, competence, civility,

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and community service. The Six-Pillar principles have served as our guideposts and have helped propel our growth on a global scale.

The strength and stability of Primerus can be seen in our membership rolls where a sense of belonging has been cemented over 5, 10, 15, 20, and even 30-plus years. Some of our most senior members, who have been instrumental in fueling our growth, continue to remain active even after ceding their frontline involvement to the next generation of leaders at their respective firms.

Now, as we prepare to pass the torch to the next president of Primerus, we enter a defining moment in our history – one that calls for more than optimism; it calls for ownership. The future of Primerus does not rest solely in its leadership, but in the hands of every member who believes in its mission. Each of us has a stake in what comes next.

We invite all members to step forward not only as ambassadors of the organization, but as stewards of its future. Growth, innovation, and continued excellence will require active

participation, shared responsibility, and a collective commitment to strengthening the Primerus community.

By embracing this mindset, and by continuing to champion our identity as “Good People Who Happen to Be Good Lawyers,” we position ourselves to carry forward a legacy that is not only sustained – but elevated – for generations to come.

Best regards,

Jack Buchanan, President