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For Immediate Release

Coca-Cola UNITED Board Chairman Conrad W. Rafield III to Retire After 47 Years of Service

Pending Shareholder Approval, John H. Sherman III Elected to Serve as Board Chairman, Christian T. Brown Appointed to Serve as Lead Director, Grant Rafield Nominated for Board Election

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (March 6, 2026) – After 47 years of service, Conrad W. Rafield III will retire from the Board of Directors of Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc. (UNITED) effective April 28, 2026, cementing a legacy that includes serving as Board Chairman since 2023. Rafield, who was appointed to the Board in 1979, is the longest-serving director in UNITED’s 124-year history.

Rafield’s time at UNITED began in 1969, when he worked summers at Birmingham Coca-Cola Bottling Co. and gained early exposure to the private, family-owned business. At the encouragement of his late uncle, Allen Johnson, a third-generation family member who served on the Board for more than 40 years, Rafield began a decades-long tenure that led to his service as Board Chairman.

“It has been an honor to serve alongside so many dedicated directors and leaders, and to ultimately have the privilege of serving as Board Chairman. Coca-Cola UNITED has been a defining part of my life, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the company’s enduring legacy,” Rafield said. “As I prepare to step away, I am excited for our future. I want to thank my fellow directors, our President and CEO Mike Suco, our executive leadership team and our 10,000-plus associates who work hard every day to move UNITED forward.”

UNITED today announced the election of John H. Sherman III to serve as the company’s next Board Chairman, pending approval at the company’s annual meeting of shareholders on April 28, 2026. Sherman, who currently serves as Board Vice Chairman, retired as UNITED’s President and CEO in 2022 after 32 years with the Birmingham-based bottler and more than 40 years with the Coca-Cola System. Sherman’s election marks a historic milestone for the company, as he would become the first non-Johnson family member to hold the Board Chairman seat.

During Sherman’s tenure as President and CEO, UNITED completed a multi-year expansion that more than tripled the size of the company. Today, UNITED has more than 50 facilities throughout the southeast and employs more than 10,000 associates.

“John is a deeply respected leader who has been an important voice for our company for many years. I can think of no one better to carry this responsibility forward, and I am very pleased that he has been elected to serve as our next Board Chairman and continue the legacy of leadership that defines UNITED,” Rafield said.

“I am very grateful to Conrad for his many years of service and leadership, which have been so valued to UNITED. I am also extremely appreciative of the advice, guidance and counsel he has provided me as CEO,” Suco said. “Our company has long benefited from John’s experience and the perspective he brings to the business. We are very fortunate to elect him as our next Board Chairman.”

“I am humbled and honored to be elected to serve as UNITED’s Board Chairman as we approach the company’s 125th anniversary,” Sherman said. “I’ve had the privilege of working with Conrad over the years, and I’ve come to value his insight, counsel and friendship. I know my fellow directors will join me in saying it has truly been an honor to serve alongside him.”

UNITED also announced the appointment of Christian (Christy) T. Brown to serve as the Board’s Lead Director, effective April 28, 2026, pending shareholder approval. Brown, who was elected to the Board in 2020, is managing director of NOLA Holdings, LLC, a private equity investment firm he founded in 1997. Brown also serves as Board Chairman of McIlhenny Company, the maker of TABASCO® Sauce and TABASCO® brand products. He is a graduate of Tulane University, where he earned his bachelor’s and juris doctorate degrees.

In addition, UNITED announced the nomination of Grant Rafield for election to the Board, effective April 28, 2026, pending shareholder approval. Rafield, who has served as UNITED’s Vice President of Manufacturing Operations since 2024, is responsible for manufacturing and quality and systems compliance. He began his UNITED career in 2010 as a junior management trainee working a variety of jobs in Birmingham.

In 2015, Rafield assumed the role of Product Innovation and Lifecycle Manager in Chattanooga, Tenn., and in 2018, was named Director of Lifecycle, Innovation and Demand Planning. Rafield earned his bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Richmond and his master’s degree in business administration from the University of Alabama.

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About Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc.

Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc. (UNITED), founded in 1902 and headquartered in Birmingham, Alabama, is among the largest bottlers and distributors of Coke products in the U.S. Now with its fifth generation of family working in the business, Coca-Cola UNITED has more than 10,000 associates located in more than 50 facilities across six southeastern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee). Historically significant franchises in our Coca-Cola UNITED family include Chattanooga, the world’s first Coca-Cola bottler; Atlanta, home of the worldwide Coca-Cola System; and Columbus, Georgia, development site of the original Coca-Cola formula.

Coca-Cola UNITED is engaged in the production, marketing, and distribution of a diverse portfolio of leading sparkling (Coca-Cola®, Diet Coke®, Coke Zero Sugar®, Dr Pepper®, Sprite® and Fanta®) and still (smartwater®, vitaminwater®, Dasani®, POWERADE®, BODYARMOR®, Fairlife®, Gold Peak®, Monster® and Minute Maid®) non-alcoholic brands under exclusive franchise agreements principally with The Coca-Cola Company®, Keurig Dr Pepper® and Monster Energy Company®.

For more than 120 years, Coca-Cola UNITED has remained true to its foundational core values of Quality, Excellence, Integrity and Respect. Local relationships, personalized customer service and strong community engagement have been the foundation of our business for more than a century. Each year, millions of dollars are invested in our local communities, supporting education, community development, sustainability and nonprofit organizations that empower and impact those in need. Learn more at cocacolaunited.com and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).