

Name

reThought Insurance Corporation

Years in Present Position: 2

Current role at CPCU Society: Chapter President

Alma Mater: University of Lynchburg

Degrees and Certifications: CPCU, ARM, AIS, CBIA



A & B: How did you come to work in the insurance industry? For me, it was a family connection. My father passed away when I was just 9 years old, but when I was in college people in the industry still remembered him and gave me an internship. After visiting a couple of people with claims and turning one of their worst days around, I was hooked.

A & B: What is the most challenging aspect of your job? Helping to drive a young tech forward company in an area of the industry that is just now coming into its own (flood). This requires wearing many hats and looking for new answers that have to be created, not just copied or researched.

A & B: What aspect of your work as a broker do you find the most rewarding? Helping people. That is what got me to join the industry. I was a retail broker for a decade helping people on the front lines. Then, I got the chance to help fix a devastating national issue. Over 70% of people impacted by a major flooding event have no insurance. That means financially starting over for many families and businesses!

A & B: How has COVID-19 affected your work life? I am lucky that I was already working from home when the pandemic began. There have been a few small changes, but for the most part work life is the same. I am curious how many other companies will keep a bigger work-from-home role after we are closer to normal again.

A & B: How has COVID-19 affected your home life? My wife and kids are home. That is both a wonderful thing and a challenge at the same time. My kids love spending time with me, which is awesome.... except when there is still work to be done.

A & B: How has COVID-19 affected your clients? Again, I have been very lucky here. While many other sectors of the industry are waiting to see the extent of COVID-19's impact (customer's reduced revenue, payroll, auto usage) I have not seen a change in business.

A & B: In your opinion, what are the biggest impacts of COVID-19 in the future? I think that there has been a bit of a stigma on working from home and some telework in general. It will take a long time to work through the psychological and economic impacts of COVID-19, but I think that we will see lasting changes persist. At the very least, companies that can have work-from-home as an option will have a system in place to do so. Ideally, in my opinion, many businesses will have a smaller office space that employees can use, but will primarily be work-from-home. This will save on overhead, minimize potential for widespread disruption through distribution, and be seen as a benefit by many employees.

A & B: What do you consider the most important short- and/or long-term issues facing the agent/broker community? I think that right now the biggest short-term issue facing the agency system is revenue. Many current customers will not be reopening due to the pandemic. Those that do will have much lower premiums this year if not for some years to come, and, on top of everything, you can't get in front of people right now to market yourself.

Long term, I think that it is the aging out of agency owners. The average age of the industry is getting close to retirement age and agency principals are no exception. This leaves many local agencies open to acquisition by large firms and will change the makeup of our sector of insurance. Additionally, the generally more veteran agency owners have a tendency to resist the technology that will help take them to the next level. The experience these veteran owners have is a tremendous resource, but it is up to use to make it an asset and not a drag on the agency model.

A & B: When & why did you become a volunteer leader at the CPCU Society? I had wanted to be more involved in my local CPCU chapter for a long time before I actually jumped in. I was talking about that very fact with a local chapter leader when they said why wait here are three ways to get involved now. I took that easy step and have not stopped since then. It has provided great leadership experience and networking ever since.

A & B: Has your involvement in the CPCU Society helped your career? If yes, explain. Yes, CPCU has helped my career greatly. There is not enough space in this profile to detail how, but I will give a few top points. The education set me on the path to sell on expertise and knowledge. This protected me from competing on price and was a huge boost to confidence and sales. When dealing with larger businesses, risk managers often recognized the CPCU and ARM designations and set me in a good position from the beginning. CPCU helped lead me to the connections that resulted in my current role.

A & B: What is your greatest accomplishment so far? Two handsome young boys.

A & B: What is the most unusual/interesting place you have ever visited? British parliament. It was a very interesting and informative trip with some very cool architecture along the way including the Lloyds building.

A & B: How do you balance the responsibilities of yourself, family, work and CPCU? That is a tough one. I focus on the last three and drink a lot of coffee to help me keep up. After years of trying, I have also piqued my wife's interest in insurance and now that insurance is a shared interest family, work, and CPCU can occupy a bit more of the same space!

A & B: What advice do you have for agents/brokers considering earning the CPCU Designation? It is a lot of investment to get the CPCU, but like most things worth doing you get back many times what you invest. Also, once you get the designation that is the beginning, not the end. Take full advantage of the learning, leadership and networking opportunities.

