

Heartland Credit Union Selects Aaron Rios as New CEO

For Immediate Release: March 9, 2026

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Springfield, IL— Heartland Credit Union has selected Aaron Rios to serve as its new Chief Executive Officer. He was placed by [DDJ Myers](#), the well-known executive search and leadership development firm.

“We are excited to welcome Aaron as our next CEO,” said Jane Kiel, Board Chair. “His extensive experience in financial services and proven leadership make him well-suited to guide Heartland Credit Union into its next chapter. We are confident he will continue the strong tradition of service while identifying new opportunities to support our employees, our members, and the communities we serve. We also want to thank Tom Lex for his remarkable 45 years of service to Heartland Credit Union and to the credit union industry. His leadership and dedication have made a lasting impact on our organization and the community.”



Rios brings more than 23 years of leadership experience in the financial services industry to the CEO position, having served in key executive roles at Citigroup, Global Bank, Midland States Bank, QCR Holdings, and most recently as Chief Operating Officer at Merrick Bank, where he helped lead their operations transformation.

Throughout his career, Rios has overseen operations across branch banking, risk and regulatory relations, back-office efficiency, financial management, digital transformation, and people development. His deep understanding of the client journey, from front-line experience to executive leadership, has helped organizations drive growth, strengthen culture, and enhance community impact.

“I want to thank Jane Kiel and the entire Board of Directors for their trust and confidence. My family and I are excited to make Springfield our new home, and I’m grateful for the opportunity to work alongside the talented team at Heartland Credit Union. I look forward to building relationships with our employees, serving our members, and becoming an active part of the community,” said Rios.

Outside of work, Rios enjoys spending time with his wife and their three children. Their son plays golf at Upper Iowa University, their eldest daughter plays softball at the University of Illinois Chicago, and their youngest daughter is a freshman at Eastern Illinois University and a member of the softball team. In his spare time, Aaron enjoys golf, coaching basketball, and supporting local youth sports.

About Heartland Credit Union

Heartland Credit Union was founded in 1946 and is a full-service financial cooperative in Springfield, IL with several local branches. Dedicated to helping members make healthier financial decisions, Heartland offers loans, savings, and more with a focus on serving their community, offering personalized service and providing more affordable financial solutions. Visit www.hcu.org to learn more.

About DDJ Myers, an ALM First Company

For more than 30 years, DDJ Myers has served as a trusted advisor to high-performing organizations, guiding them through complex challenges such as leadership alignment, cultural transformation, and governance excellence. Recognized as industry thought leaders in change management and leadership development, the team is committed to cultivating the next generation of visionary leaders.

DDJ Myers joined forces with ALM First, a strategic partner that offers depositories an array of financial advisory services, in 2022 to provide expanded educational opportunities and solutions to help clients optimize both people and financial performance. Learn more at www.ddjmyers.com or visit our parent company www.almfirst.com.