

Your Resource for GM Women in Automotive Retail

# WRN LINK

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Page 1**

**DRIVEN 2:** WRN business meeting focuses on winning customers for life by turning the service lane into the retention lane.

**Page 2**

**A Message from WDAC Chair:**

WRN celebrates 15 years of active participation. Learn how to get more involved in the network.

**Page 4**

**New 20 Group:** New fixed ops-specific 20 Group is being formed to focus on service and customer retention.

**Page 4**

**Dealer Picks 20 Group:** WRN dealer picks 20 Group and NADA University over retirement.

**Page 5**

**Distinguished Women Award:**

WRN women receive Northwood University's highest honor for women.

**Page 6**

**GM Service Development Process:**

SDP helps improve service and your bottom line.

**Page 7**

**Fixed Ops Tip:** Onsite cafés enhance the customer experience and up the ante for fixed operations.

**Page 8**

**Briefs:** New and noteworthy

**Page 9**

**Expansion:** Germany joins WRN.

**Page 10**

**Winners:** Meet the 2016 WRN Drive To Succeed Scholarship winners.

**Page 12**

**WRN Scholarship:** More dealers, record contributions mark 2016 program.

**Page 14**

Dealer Development and WDAC Regional representatives



## DRIVEN2 Shatters Records, Welcomes WRN Germany

Over two days, WRN dealers and S&P managers networked, participated in general sessions, toured Vendor Ally and joined five Profit Enhancement Sessions at 2016 WRN DRIVEN2. Previous attendance records were smashed as enthusiastic women committed to securing customers for life joined together in Detroit. "Retention through the service lane" continued as this year's overarching theme. Participants learned new ways to leverage service department opportunities using In-Vehicle Technology, BDCs, Satisfaction Surveys, Mobile Trends and Customer Care Clinics.



continued on page 3



Marianne Ballas

## WRN Shows What Women Can Do

*“You are what you **do**.”*

*And women involved with the WRN are **doing** a lot. Nowhere was that more evident than our 2016 DRIVEN2 meeting. With overall attendance setting new records, it’s clear that more of our women are doing whatever they can to enhance the customer experience, improve their core competencies and secure customers for life.*

*Participation in every facet of the WRN is up: attendance at our events, with our vendors, in our 20 Groups and S&P Network, and supporting our Scholarship program. We have more women dealers, more female S&P managers and more candidates in the pipeline ready to begin automotive retail careers.*

*All this didn’t happen overnight. For 15 years, WRN has been **doing**. Because of that, our organization has a seat at the table. Our female*

*dealers have closed the profitability gap. We’re representing the female retail experience at the highest levels of GM. And we’re welcoming new countries into our network.*

*Today, participation in WRN is growing throughout GM, and we’re tremendously excited. Support is increasing from Sales & Service, Customer Care and Aftersales, In-Vehicle Technology, Marketing, Women in the Field and others. These women are contributing to the operational success of our dealerships, and boosting the aptitude of all women in our retail network.*

*The result of this participation: We’re attracting more women into retail careers, and more female buyers into our stores.*

*As we begin the 2017 WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship Campaign, let me again acknowledge the importance of **doing**. Already, we’ve raised \$10,000 for the 2017 program, thanks to women attending DRIVEN2. It’s time for more dealers to start doing, through contributions, mentoring and promoting the campaign.*

*On behalf of WRN and WDAC, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone aligned with our network—all the women and men helping us reach our goals and lending their talents to advance women at every level. We welcome your continued involvement in the coming years.*

*Here’s a virtual toast to 15 years of participation: To everyone and everything we do to change the face of automotive retail. Cheers! *



# How Do You Sum Up 2016 WRN DRIVEN2 In One Word? MORE

“We want GM to be the dealership of choice and the career choice for all women by 2020. We are creating a diverse dealership workforce that reflects the communities we serve.”

— Celeste Briggs

“We had more attendees, more vendors and more CCA support for the meeting,” said Celeste Briggs, WRN director. “We raised more money for scholarships, gained new 20 Group members and welcomed Germany into the WRN. We smashed every record.”

“The turnout proves that female dealers and service managers are very excited about growing their market share and creating the ultimate dealership experience,” said Mark Rainey, director, GM Diversity Dealer Development. “WRN lets women know they have a place at the table and a voice in our organization. We want women in retail operations to succeed. The WRN network is here to help them.”

Reinforcing the “Customers for Life” theme, speakers from GM CCA and In-Vehicle Technology, as well as Google, ProActive, J.D. Power and CDK presented a variety of practical methods to improve dealership Fixed Ops through aftercare, trends in mobile, BDCs and more.

While Fixed Operations are the key to dealership growth and profitability, DRIVEN2 also focused on building customer relationships. Briggs said that is a skill women are exceedingly good at.

“Connecting with today’s customers requires both technology and interpersonal aptitude,” said Briggs. “Women are especially skilled at personalizing the customer experience and treating each buyer as an individual—not a transaction. In this digital age, we must remember to satisfy each customer’s unique needs.”

Mary Jo Wheeler-Schueller, dealer, Wheeler’s Chevrolet of Medford, Wisconsin, and WDAC representative for the North Central Region, said her Fixed Ops toolkit is full of new ideas, thanks to DRIVEN2.

“From the moment I arrived, I was swept up in the enthusiasm,” she said. “The meeting offered the perfect balance of networking with peers and very specific operational instruction. I left with concrete ideas I’m going to try in my dealership.”

“We encourage our participants to implement the tools they learned at DRIVEN2 in their own dealerships and let us know the results,” said Briggs. “We’ve broken down the presentations into easy-to-use steps you can implement right away and see measurable results.”

DRIVEN2 presentations and takeaways are posted at [www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com](http://www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com). ■



More than double  
DRIVEN1 attendance

23 vendors in Vendor Alley

Two WRN/NADA  
20 Groups

New WRN Fixed Operations  
20 Group coming

U.S., Canadian and German  
dealers represented

\$10,000 raised for 2017  
WRN Drive to Succeed  
Scholarship

Greater partnership  
with CCA

Celebrating 15 years  
of WRN



# WRN Fills GMW2, Adds S&P 20 Group

**MORE** continued as the theme for DRIVEN2's WRN 20 Group sessions, with new members joining on the spot and a fixed ops focused 20 Group in the works.

In 2013, WRN partnered with NADA to form the industry's first all-female 20 Group. Thanks to its overwhelming success, a second WRN 20 Group was added last year. Now, WRN is forming a 20 Group exclusively for female S&P managers dedicated to maximizing fixed operations.

Sheila York, NADA Dealership Consultant and a 30-year fixed ops veteran, knows the importance of operational acumen, but also of creating a safe environment for sharing.

"We teach S&P managers to look at their departments in an algebraic format to learn exactly how to run all aspects of the business," said Sheila. "And we do it in an environment that is supportive. When fixed ops managers are with their peers they are more comfortable asking questions and being open to new ideas. Women come to the table wanting help and want to help one another."



WOMEN'S RETAIL NETWORK



"We know how to put the service department together so that dealers can make money..."

—Sheila York, NADA Dealership Consultant

WRN Director Celeste Briggs said WRN-sponsored 20 Groups provide an enormous benefit to dealers—the only expense to them is the cost of membership and travel. She said the new fixed ops 20 Group is born out of the WRN S&P Network, the industry's only support system exclusively for women in automotive retail service positions.

What makes this new S&P 20 Group so special?

"NADA has been using comparative data since the 1950s to identify the best ideas from profitable dealers," said

Sheila. "We know how to put the service department together so that dealers can make money. We make it simple for S&P managers to understand—not just the cost structure—but how to improve the overall customer experience."

For more information on how to join WRN S&P Network, please visit [www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com/2016-priorities/fixed-operations](http://www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com/2016-priorities/fixed-operations). To join WRN Fixed Ops 20 Group, please contact Sheila at [syork@nada.com](mailto:syork@nada.com). □

## Dealer Picks 20 Group Over Retirement

**Sharon Drinkard Smith** might not look like your typical college student. But looks can be deceiving.

When Sharon's husband passed away two years ago, she had a choice: hit the beach or hit the books. For her, the choice was obvious.

"My friends thought I should prop my feet up and retire," said Sharon, dealer, Mitch Smith Chevrolet in Cullman, Alabama. "But that's not who I am. I went to NADA University and joined a 20 Group."

Even though Sharon grew up in automotive retail—her father opened the town's first Chevrolet dealership in 1955—she says it didn't equip her to run her own dealership.

"When I started NADA U I walked into a world of young men," said Sharon. "It was quickly recommended that I join a WRN 20 Group. I had no idea what that was," she said. "I was completely blind. Now I'm learning from women who are exceedingly good

at what they do, compassionate and helpful.

Sharon participated in GMW2 at 2016 WRN DRIVEN2. She says she's putting to use all the tools she's been given to optimize her dealership operations.

"Much of what we do in our composites is based on the mathematics I've learned at NADA U. But comparing it in the way we do in our 20 Group is much more intense. First, we study each other's metrics online so we know right where we stand—it points out what we're doing well and where we need to do better. That way we come to the meetings prepared to ask a lot of questions.

"I'm very serious about running a successful business. I'm enjoying myself through my work, making new friends and even helping others. It's truly amazing what the 20 Group has done for me and my dealership." □



# Briggs, Schumacher-Tilton and LaFontaine Receive Northwood Honor



GM WRN Director Celeste Briggs and former WDAC Chair Judy

Schumacher-Tilton have received Northwood University's highest honor for women: The Distinguished Women Award. The award recognizes women's commitment to free enterprise, the partnership to arts and business, and the management of global commerce.

The 47th annual award will be presented November 5, 2016. Seven women receive the honor in 2016, including GM Dealer Maureen LaFontaine.

Keith A. Pretty, Northwood University president and CEO, said Northwood celebrates leading women who espouse the very values demanded of Northwood students.

"These honorees serve as role models for Northwood University students and alumni," he said. "They truly offer dedication to the principles of both higher education and a global, free-enterprise society. We are pleased to recognize their achievements and true leadership in the community and business world."

"I am extremely honored to receive this honor on behalf of GM and WRN," said Briggs. "Northwood shares our passion for creating meaningful opportunities for students. It is the only university in the U.S. to offer a complete dealership educational experience.

"Northwood is a pioneer in recognizing the value of women in all fields," said Schumacher-Tilton. "It offers superior opportunities and resources to students aimed at careers in the automotive industry. Women leave Northwood with the education they need to be successful in business and in life." ▣

"These honorees serve as role models for Northwood University students and alumni."

—Keith A. Pretty, Northwood University president and CEO



**Celeste D. Briggs** is director, GM WRN, a position she has held since January 2011. She is responsible for the profitability, growth and retention of the network and leveraging its resources to increase GM's market share among women consumers. She won the Women's Automotive Association International Spirit of Leadership award in 2015.



**Judith Schumacher-Tilton** is president of Schumacher Chevrolet Auto Group, New Jersey's largest-volume Chevy dealer. She was nominated as the 2012 TIME Dealer of the Year, and served as WDAC chair.



**Maureen LaFontaine** is the owner of LaFontaine Automotive Group with her husband, Mike. She became owner of the first LaFontaine Cadillac Pontiac GMC store in Milford, Michigan, in 1984. She has served as president of the Cadillac Dealers' Association.

## Northwood, GM, WRN Form Powerful Trio

A Northwood University student has been among the winners of the WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship program every year since its inception in 2011. This year, three female students from Northwood received the honor, bringing to 14 the total number of Northwood students who have won the award.

"Northwood University, GM and WRN enjoy a special relationship that benefits students, the auto industry and ultimately our customers," said WRN Director Celeste Briggs. "Women graduating from Northwood are positioned far ahead of their peers from other programs

because their education was earned in the classroom of real-world business knowledge."

WRN works closely with Northwood's faculty and administration, serving as a template for how academia and private industry can develop a workforce ready for the challenges of global competition. This includes offering internships at GM dealerships to minority and female students.

"With every scholarship we award, we are investing in our future," Briggs said, "as well as helping make a dream come true. Our dealers are already benefiting from the skills Northwood Scholarship winners bring to the workplace." ▣

# Service Development Process (SDP) Helps Dealers Increase S&P Profitability and Service Retention

“A similar service performed by an outside vendor would cost more than \$5,000. Our dealers pay nothing for SDP.”

—Rhenea Culp, Service Development Manager (SDM), CCA-North Central Region

For the past decade, **Rhenea Culp** and many managers like her have been helping dealerships improve their fixed operation performance and customer retention using GM’s Service Development Process. Culp, Service Development Manager (SDM), CCA-North Central Region, facilitates dealerships through SDP and has an impressive track record growing their S&P profitability.

Today, GM has 15 SDMs that perform consultative reviews of dealerships’ fixed operations and deliver individualized plans to take their Service & Parts to the next level. These GM managers are trained by ATCon (now M5) and adhere to a standardized process of analysis. In turn, the SDM’s success is evaluated using financial metrics: dealership fixed ops sales, gross profit and service department profit/loss.

Culp encourages female dealers to take advantage of SDP, saying the program complements other WRN resources such as 20 Groups and the S&P Network.

“A similar service performed by an outside vendor would cost more than \$5,000,” said Culp. “Our dealers pay nothing for SDP. To date SDMs have engaged hundreds of dealerships with this process. We know what works and have the results to prove it.”

“The journey begins with the dealership’s receptiveness to implement proven processes,” said Culp. “It’s all about accountability and results. Without the willingness to change, we can’t be effective.”

Once the SDM determines that there is a good fit with the dealership, they start a deep dive into the store’s financials and assign pre-work to the service manager. The actual consultation is conducted during a five day, onsite visit. The review includes a pro forma with the dealers and fixed ops management team to gain their buy in and to establish their specific action plans.



“We want to recognize the dealership’s strengths and then identify areas for improvement,” Culp said. “Then I outline their financial performance, shop productivity and service retention. The dealership team determines their action plans and timeframe for implementation.”

Action items can include: process for special order parts; posting CSI SSS scores for service advisers and technicians; developing objectives and tracking of technician productivity; digital fixed dealership website presence; effective utilization of Service BDC; advisers’ training and—of course—a common electronic MVPI/Menu process.

“Based on the agreed upon action plan, I call the dealership every week to discuss progress and roadblocks,” Culp said. “I also visit the store every month to help with additional implementation. The goal is to have all of the actions in place within six months.

“You start to feel like you’re part of their team,” she said. “I am very invested in the dealership’s success. I can’t encourage our WRN dealers enough to contact their CCA DMA or MA zone team member for a SDP pre-consultation today.” ■



# WOMEN'S RETAIL NETWORK |

## SERVICE & PARTS

A PREMIER ORGANIZATION OF PROFESSIONALS

### Formulate Current and Potential Department Pro Forma, Based On:

- Technician counts
- Hours worked
- Technician utilization
- Technician productivity
- Effective labor rates
- Gross profit retention
- Expenses
- Net profit before and after transfer

### In-Dealership Fixed Operation Analysis

- In-Depth Financial Analysis
- Technician Productivity Study
- Competitive Market Analysis
- Pricing Strategies and Grids
- CP Repair Order Survey
- Expense & Asset Management
- Development of Service Menus
- On-Site Consultant Training
- Parts Dept. Pricing & Procedures
- Facility & Equipment Analysis
- Pay Plans & Job Descriptions
- Advanced Production Systems

# TIPS



### Pancakes with Oil Change Boosts SSI

Perhaps the best way to win a customer's heart is through his/her stomach. More dealers are adding café services to their growing list of amenities, such as posh waiting rooms, free WiFi and nail salons. Hubler Chevrolet in Indianapolis features a full-service, onsite kitchen complete with trained chef and staff. The café offers fresh meals, beverages and snacks all free of charge. Customers schedule their morning appointments knowing they will receive a full breakfast and leave with fresh baked cookies, along with a free car wash. General Manager Brooke Hubler said the café is an important customer retention tool, because it fills unwanted down time with a complementary meal, which everyone loves.

In Daytona Beach, Jon Hall Chevrolet recently completed service lane construction updates that included a re-launch of their café. Service Director Tony Gayne said the café has been a dealership staple for more than 30 years, one customers have grown to love. The full kitchen serves both breakfast and lunch—from eggs and pancakes to meat loaf and mashed potatoes. Gayne said today's customer has a much higher expectation when it comes to service and that's why the café is so important to Hall. He calls it a vital satisfaction tool that demonstrates just how far the dealership will go to enhance the overall customer experience. ▣



## Marketing Pro Uses Man/Machine Mix

Friendly is an apt name for the Chevrolet dealer in Fridley, Minnesota. Internet Sales Manager Margie Martin uses a combination “data-driven/personal approach” in her community marketing, reports *Automotive News*. She pairs an automated tool that detects when prospects are in the market with her deep understanding of the people and businesses in her community. While Martin swears by data-driven tactics to pull in potential buyers, she says the key is connecting with customers on a personal level, and not viewing them as blips of data. “Analytics are great,” she said. But she adds that being able to read customers and understand what they’re interested in is also critical. She believes digital tools show you *who* to target, but personal interaction tells you *how*. “You need to know how customers work and what really makes them happy.” □

## RSLE Newsletter Highlights Best Practices

According to the August, 2016 issue, Greenwood Chevrolet in Youngstown and Hubbard, Ohio are now using full-time “floaters” that work in both the service drive and quick lube bays. In the quick lube bay, the floater performs an MPVI on the vehicle, allowing the service advisors to focus on other tasks. Floaters also work with a dedicated technician to inspect the brakes, rotors or any additional services a customer may need. The newsletter also reports that Sam Taylor Cadillac-Buick-GMC in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, is using service advisors serve as cashiers. This provides a more effective redelivery of the vehicle: service advisors are better able to communicate the service(s) performed and customers are not forced to travel around the dealership from the service advisor, to the cashier to the vehicle pick-up area. This boosts CSI numbers and is easy to do with today’s technology like mobile credit card readers and wireless processing terminals. □

## 3 YEAR RETENTION RATE

45% dealership VS 67% overall U.S.

## Employee Turnover Continues to Worsen

According to NADA’s 2016 Dealership Workforce Study, the three-year employee retention rate at dealerships reached a new low last year. Turnover at dealership is 45 percent compared to 67 percent in the overall U.S. (non-farming) private sector, *Automotive News* reports. That means only one in three sales consultants celebrated a three-year anniversary—the time at which employers actually start seeing a ROI. The median tenure for car dealership employees has steadily declined from 3.8 percent in 2011, to 2.4 percent in 2015. As a result, NADA says dealerships are experiencing “reduced productivity, reduced median and average earnings and reduced dealership profitability.” □

## Dealership Hiring: Millennials Up, Women Flat

The same NADA study showed that millennial (age 18-34) hiring was up 3 percent and now represents 60 of all new hires. Unfortunately, women accounted for only 20 percent of all new employees in 2015, up only one-tenth of one percent compared to 2014. Pundits blame the industry’s outdated, male-dominated image for the female hiring lag. For all dealership positions, turnover for women exceed that of men. Sales consultants had the highest turnover rate, 65 percent for men, 88 percent for females. According to NADA, women represented only 7.8 percent of employees in the nine key positions the study tracked, down from 8 percent in 2014. About 17 percent of service advisers, and 16 percent of finance and insurance managers were women in 2015, and only 1 percent of service technicians. □

## GM BOD 50/50 Gender Split

With the election of Jane Mendillo to its boards in June, 2016, GM became the first major industrial corporation with an equal number of men and women on its board of directors. According to Equilar, women account for 21 percent of board seats at S&P 500 companies, up from almost 17 percent in 2012. The research firm reports only five S&P 500 companies, including GM, have an evenly split board. Mendillo’s election is yet another step showing GM’s commitment to gender equality: Mary Barra remains the industry’s only female CEO. In addition to Barra, four of GM’s corporate officers are women: Jill Sutton, Dhivya Suryadevara, Victoria McInnis and Alicia Boler-Davis. □

# Germany Adopts WRN Opel Dealers Enthusiastic

It takes just one bold action.

Ask Heike Herzog. Her bold action is changing a nation. At least for the women who buy and sell Opels.

More than a year ago, Herzog, Opel regional manager of sales, was attending the GM Global Women's Leadership Summit when she heard GM CEO Mary Barra challenge women to develop initiatives they could implement on their own.

"Mary told us to take one bold action," said Herzog. "So I did. I had just met (WRN Director) Celeste Briggs at the women's conference. I was so impressed by the work of WRN I knew what I had to do."

Herzog's idea: Bring WRN to Germany. On her own time and using whatever resources she could gather, Herzog started recreating WRN by inviting female Opel dealers to attend workshops with expert presenters. She also reads *WRN LINK* for best practices to share with dealers.

## Positive Opel Reception

Herzog said the initial reception by Opel dealers is very good. Just like in the U.S., female dealers most enjoy the opportunity to connect with each other and share ideas. Her colleagues in the field are also excited to support WRN there.

"We had our first WRN meeting in September 2015," said the 26-year Opel veteran. "We started with 15 female dealers. By our second meeting we had 25 dealers. We are looking forward to our next meeting in October and continuing to see our numbers grow."

## Similar Priorities

Herzog said female dealers in Germany have similar priorities regarding retention, profitability and growth. They also embrace women as a strategic advantage, both as employees and customers.

Herzog attended the 2016 DRIVEN2 meeting in Detroit along with Kirsten Gatz, owner of Opel Autohaus Waltershausen, located near the Opel Eisenach plant in Germany. Gatz was one of the first women in Herzog's sales region to show interest in the transplanted WRN. Her dealership was already engaged in many of the practices used in the U.S. to attract female shoppers, such as female customer clinics and "lady's shopping night."



Heike Herzog (left) and  
Kirsten Gatz



Gatz inherited her dealership in 2008 after the sudden passing of her father. The business has been in her family since 1958, starting as an auto repair shop, then becoming an Opel dealership after the Berlin Wall fell in 1990.

"I currently employ seven women at my dealership, and I'm committed to extending that number," she said. "Selling more cars to women is our objective, because women promote the businesses they like using word-of-mouth. Women also want to see other women working in dealerships."

## New Ideas for Germany

"Our brains are full of new ideas take back," said Herzog of DRIVEN2, "especially regarding aftersales, staying close to the customer, retention and the use of social media. We are even thinking about how we might one day implement a Scholarship program.

Herzog encourages women in other countries to adopt the WRN process, but underscores the hard work and dedication required.

"You have to be committed," she said. "I stayed true to the mission, just as Mary Barra instructed. It wasn't easy, but we're already showing real results. There's endless opportunity to when it comes to prioritizing women. And the benefits are limitless as well." □



Two of this year's winners – Norma Benavides (far left) with her Named Scholarship Donor and WRN Scholarship Chair Lisa Rebowe, Leson Chevrolet, and Courtney Morley (far right) and her Named Scholarship Donor Mary Jo Wheeler, Wheelers Chevrolet Buick GMC.



**JANETTE AGUILAR**

Home Tyler, TX  
 Award \$2,500 Hall Buick GMC, Tyler, TX  
 \$2,500 WRN  
 Attending Tyler Junior College  
 Tyler, TX  
 Area of Study Business, Human Resources  
 Dealership Hall Buick GMC, Tyler, TX  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ I am grateful for the WRN Scholarship and its effort to attract more women into the automotive industry. Because of this opportunity, I am becoming a good role model for my two daughters.”



**MINDY BROWN**

Home Pomaria, SC  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Ballas Buick GMC,  
 Toledo, OH  
 Attending Greenville Technical College,  
 Greenville, SC  
 Area of Study Automotive Technology: GM ASEP  
 Dealership Stokes Trainor Chevrolet Buick  
 GMC Cadillac, Newberry, SC  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ I took an automotive technology class at the local career center and fell in love with this field. Someone once said to me, ‘If you’re so smart, why don’t you become a doctor?’ I replied, ‘I could, but I love being an auto mechanic.’”



**ALISON BANNON**

Home Wantage, NJ  
 Scholarship \$5,000 Epsilon  
 Attending Northwood University,  
 Midland, MI  
 Area of Study Automotive Marketing and  
 Management  
 Dealership Royal Buick GMC, Sussex, NJ  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ Working as a sales and leasing consultant has propelled me to set new career goals. Thanks to my dealer and the WRN Scholarship, I’m pursuing my lifelong goal of obtaining a bachelor’s degree in Automotive Marketing & Management.”



**NOELLE CAREY**

Home Athol, ID  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Knudtsen Chevrolet,  
 Post Fall, ID  
 Attending Brigham Young University Idaho,  
 Rexburg, ID  
 Area of Study Business Administration  
 Dealership Knudtsen Chevrolet, Post Fall, ID  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I am committed to being an entrepreneur. I want a career without limitations and to see the fruits of my labor. It is important that my success be determined by my own personal determination and hard work.”



**NORMA BENAVIDES**

Home Laredo, TX  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Leson Chevrolet,  
 Harvey, LA  
 Attending Northwood University, Midland, MI  
 Area of Study Automotive Marketing and  
 Management  
 Dealership Escamilla Chevrolet,  
 Hebronville, TX  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I am excited by the rapidly changing dealership culture that welcomes females. I want to inspire young women to follow their dreams. As women, we must learn to prioritize ourselves. Thanks to the WRN, I can.”



**JESSICA COREY**

Home Barrie, Ontario, Canada  
 Scholarship \$2,500 GM Financial  
 \$2,500 GM of Canada  
 Attending Georgian College, Barrie, Ontario  
 Area of Study Automotive Management  
 Dealership O’Regan Chevrolet Buick GMC  
 Cadillac, Halifax, Nova Scotia  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I have held co-op positions at three car dealerships. These jobs have confirmed my passion for the automotive industry. The WRN scholarship will help turn my life-long career dream into reality.”

# 2016 WINNERS



## WOMEN'S RETAIL NETWORK

GM AUTOMOTIVE DRIVE TO SUCCEED

SCHOLARSHIP for WOMEN



### ANNA HAGLER

Home Grand Blanc, MI  
 Scholarship \$5,000 Patsy Lou Chevrolet, Buick GMC, Flint, MI  
 Attending Kettering University, Flint, MI  
 Area of Study Engineering  
 Dealership Patsy Lou, Chevrolet, Flint, MI  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I grew up admiring cars and the mechanics that make them work. From a young age I knew I wanted to work in retail automotive and to one day own my own dealership. Thanks to the WRN, I can accomplish my dream.”



### MADelyn HAMILTON

Home Manchester, MI  
 Scholarship \$5,000 WRN 20 Group-1  
 Attending Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI  
 Area of Study Automotive Management  
 Dealership Bill Crispin Chevrolet, Saline MI  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I'm a member of several groups that encourage the study of science and technology, and that develop future automotive leaders. I'm thankful to the WRN for helping me continue my education and for welcoming more women into the automotive field.”



### SARAH KOEPSSELL-SCHMIEG

Home Shakopee, MN  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Borcharding Buick GMC, Cincinnati, OH  
 Attending Dakota County Technical College, Rosemount, MN  
 Area of Study Automotive Technology: GM ASEP  
 Dealership Lenzen Chevrolet-Buick, Chaska, MN  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ People are always asking why my hands are so dirty. I'm an apprentice auto technician. It's part of my identity. How many girls buy a 1962 Corvair for their 18th birthday? Or want to be an S&P Manager? ”



### ELIZABETH KRUSE

Home Freehold, NJ  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Yes I Can Fund (Established in honor of Karen Miskimins, first WRN Scholarship Chair)  
 Attending Brookdale Community College, Lincroft, NJ  
 Area of Study Automotive Technology: GM ASEP  
 Dealership Gold Coast Cadillac, Oakhurst, NJ  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I've been passionate about cars since the day I welded floor panels into my brother's Nova. From that moment, my heart has been dedicated to cars. WRN is helping further my education and getting me closer to my dream.”



### SAMANTHA LEONARDI

Home Eastpointe, MI  
 Scholarship \$2,500 GM Financial  
 Attending Macomb Community College, Warren, MI  
 Area of Study Automotive Technology: GM ASEP  
 Dealership Merollis Chevrolet, Eastpointe, MI  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ I have a life-long passion for cars. I've been working on cars since high school, and before that with my father. Thanks to the WRN Scholarship, I will be able to work on vehicles to my heart's content.”



### COURTNEY MORLEY

Home Wisconsin Rapids, WI  
 Scholarship \$5,000 Ally  
 Attending Northwood University, Midland, MI  
 Area of Study Automotive Marketing and Management  
 Dealership Wheelers Chevrolet Buick GMC, Marshfield, WI  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ The Wheeler family has encouraged me to pursue my dreams. I'm working as a customer experience manager. My job is to ensure all of our customers are fully informed, and that their every need is met during each visit.”



### TARA RODGERS

Home Belleville, IL  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Agency 720 \$2,500 WRN  
 Attending Southern Illinois University of Carbondale, Carbondale, IL  
 Area of Study Automotive Technology  
 Dealership Jack Schmitt Chevrolet, O'Fallon, IL  
 Status Full-Time College Student

“ I am excited to work for a company that puts its customers and employees first, is on the cutting edge of technology, and strives to better the environment. I thank WRN for this scholarship and the opportunity to work in automotive.”



### JACALYN SUTTON

Home Okeechobee, FL  
 Scholarship \$2,500 Gilbert Chevrolet, Okeechobee, FL  
 Attending Indian River State College, Ft. Pierce, FL  
 Area of Study Business Administration & Marketing  
 Dealership Gilbert Chevrolet, Okeechobee, FL  
 Status GM Dealership Employee

“ Our dealer is giving me opportunities to learn the entire business—sales and service, and the importance of giving back to the community. Thanks to WRN, I'll be able to give back to the community that gave to me.”

# More Dealers, Record Contributions Mark 2016 GM WRN Scholarship Program

**MORE** GM dealers and business partners contributing more financial support to the GM WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship program means a record 14 female candidates will share a total of \$52,500 in tuition assistance to study automotive retail this year.

“Our dealers and suppliers are more committed than ever to growing the number of women working in our field,” said Celeste Briggs, GM WRN director. “As a result, the program has provided 51 individual scholarships totaling \$157,000 to women enrolled in auto-based curriculum since 2011.”

Two of this year’s winners—Norma Benavides and Courtney Morley—were recognized at the 2016 DRIVEN2 meeting in September. Both women attend Northwood University and are studying Automotive Marketing and Management.

Benavides has worked for three summers at the Used Car and Truck Center of Escamilla Chevrolet GMC near her hometown of Laredo, Texas. She plans to graduate from Northwood in the spring, and continue working at the dealership. That is, until she becomes a dealer herself.

“I grew up in a largely Hispanic community where men worked and women were expected to stay home and do the cooking and cleaning,” said Benavides. “Today, I am excited by the rapidly changing dealership culture that welcomes females. By getting a college degree and pursuing an exciting career, I want to inspire young women to follow their dreams.

Benavides received a \$2,500 Dealer Named Scholarship from Leson Chevrolet, Harvey, Louisiana.

“The Scholarship program is a great opportunity for dealers to create awareness in the community of the tremendous careers available for women in automotive retail,” said Lisa Rebowe, dealer/operator, Leson Chevrolet and WRN Scholarship Committee chair. “It is a win for the student and a win for the dealer, as we seek to increase the number of qualified women in all roles and create a dealership workforce that is diverse, inclusive and reflective of our customers.” □

## Nine Dealers/Groups Award Named Scholarships

As part of this year’s program, WRN offered GM dealers the option to provide one or more scholarships directly in the dealership’s name. For 2016, nine dealer/dealer groups have established Dealer Named Scholarships, providing them a grassroots way to showcase their commitment to women in their communities.

“The Dealer Named Scholarship is a perfect fit for us,” said Pam Hall, dealer – Hall Buick GMC. “It’s one more initiative that demonstrates our dealership’s overall support for women and our community.

“We’re successfully taking a national program to the local level and giving dealers the opportunity to make it their own,” said Scholarship Chair Lisa Rebowe. “We encourage dealers to mentor candidates, bring them into the dealership, offer internships and coach them academically. It is a very rewarding process—I encourage all dealers to get involved.”

The Dealer Named Scholarship will again be offered for the 2017 campaign. Interested dealers can contact Lisa Rebowe, at [lrebowe@lesonchevy.com](mailto:lrebowe@lesonchevy.com), or visit [www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com/2016-priorities/scholarship/donate/](http://www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com/2016-priorities/scholarship/donate/).

### 2016 NAMED SCHOLARSHIP DEALERS

\$2,500 Ballas Buick GMC, Toledo, OH

\$2,500 Knudtsen Chevrolet, Post Fall, ID

\$2,500 Hall Buick GMC, Tyler, TX

\$2,500 Leson Chevrolet, Harvey, LA

\$2,500 Yes I Can, Schumacher Chevrolet

\$5,000 GMW1 20 Group

\$2,500 Gilbert Chevrolet, Okeechobee, FL

\$2,500 Borcharding Buick GMC, Cincinnati, OH

\$5,000 Patsy Lou Chevrolet, Buick GMC, Flint, MI

“The Dealer Named Scholarship is a perfect fit for us. It’s one more initiative that demonstrates our dealership’s overall support for women and our community. Women shoppers like seeing women working in sales and service—it provides a level of comfort and reassurance. I’m hopeful that one day soon I’ll have a scholarship winner employed at my store!”

— Kim Borcharding, owner of Borcharding Buick GMC in Cincinnati, Ohio



## WRN Launches 2017 Scholarship Campaign

WRN dealers have already raised more than \$10,000 toward the 2017 WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship program. The funds were spontaneously donated at DRIVEN2 by attendees eager to launch the 2017 campaign.

“Our 2017 goal is to reach \$60,000 in contributions,” said Lisa Rebowe, WDAC South Central Region. “We’re also hoping to have more Dealer Named Scholarships and more corporate donors. Every dollar we raise goes to helping better a young woman’s life. This is an opportunity for dealers to create an awareness of just how rewarding a career in automotive retail can be.”

Promotional materials for the 2017 campaign are coming soon.

### Here’s how you can get involved:

- › Encourage candidates to apply
- › Contribute financially
- › Ask a supplier for its support
- › Create awareness in your community
- › Offer a Dealer Named Scholarship
- › Mentor a candidate
- › Cover all the bases: promotion, nomination, contribution

The **WRN Scholarship** provides a path for women to achieve their academic and career goals, and helps GM and its retailers fill the pipeline with qualified female employees.

**GM and its dealers** continue as the only manufacturing/retail partnership in the industry to offer scholarships to women pursuing academic degrees in automotive fields.

**Women enrolled** in undergraduate, graduate or recognized non-traditional institutions offering accredited programs in automotive management/service fields are eligible.

**Scholarship winners** represent all sales regions in the U.S. and Canada. Candidates include full-time and non-traditional students, dealership employees and women from all walks of life.

**A growing number** of the winners are enrolled in automotive technology courses. This is especially important as dealers seek to integrate women into all areas of the business, and establish a workforce reflective of the communities they serve.



The GM Women's Retail Network (WRN) is comprised of dealers, dealer management staff and stakeholders working together to improve dealer quality and profitability by leveraging the mutual support systems that benefit its members.

[www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com](http://www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com)

## Dealer Development Regional Representatives

### WESTERN REGION

**Rick Sitek**

805.540.9462

[rick.sitek@gm.com](mailto:rick.sitek@gm.com)

### NORTH CENTRAL REGION

**Licia Price**

630.961.6703

[licia.price@gm.com](mailto:licia.price@gm.com)

### SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

**Yvette Guyton**

469.417.7070

[yvette.guyton@gm.com](mailto:yvette.guyton@gm.com)

### NORTHEAST REGION

**Tia L. Hardeman**

203.790.3728

[tia.hardeman@chevrolet.com](mailto:tia.hardeman@chevrolet.com)

### SOUTHEAST REGION

**Valerie Weaver**

678.240.9918

[valerie.j.weaver@gm.com](mailto:valerie.j.weaver@gm.com)

WRN LINK is published by the Women's Retail Network (WRN) for the GM women's dealer network. For information about WRN, contact:

Celeste D. Briggs, Director  
Women's Retail Network  
313.667.9691  
[celeste.briggs@gm.com](mailto:celeste.briggs@gm.com)

Editorial and design:  
Meg Lopé & Associates, LLC

## 2016 WDAC Regional Representatives

### WESTERN REGION

**Angie Alexander**

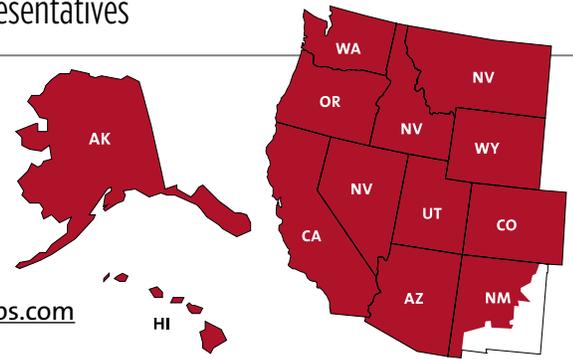
805.988.2200

[ang710@gmail.com](mailto:ang710@gmail.com)

**Katy Moore**

509.837.5501

[katymoore@speckdealerships.com](mailto:katymoore@speckdealerships.com)



### NORTH CENTRAL REGION

**Marianne Ballas (Chair)**

419.535.1000

[mballas@ballasbuickgmc.com](mailto:mballas@ballasbuickgmc.com)

**Mary Jo Wheeler-Schueller**

715.748.2371

[maryjo@wheelergm.com](mailto:maryjo@wheelergm.com)

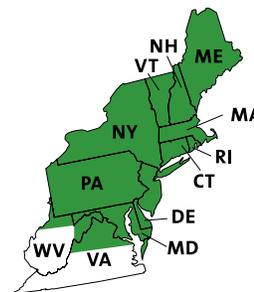
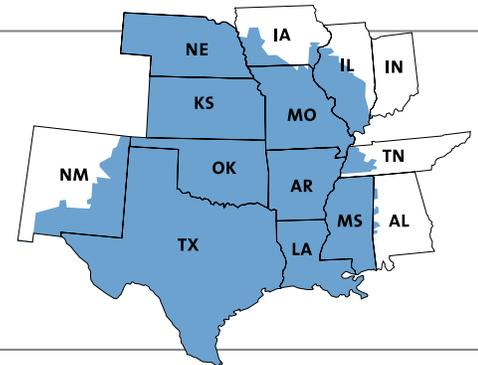
### SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

**Lisa T. Rebowe (Vice Chair)**

504.366.4381

[lrebowe@lesonchevy.com](mailto:lrebowe@lesonchevy.com)

Open Seat



### NORTHEAST REGION

**Amy Cram**

315.539.9272

[acram@billcramchevrolet.com](mailto:acram@billcramchevrolet.com)

**Lori Guitson**

570.414.1000

[lori@sunbpg.com](mailto:lori@sunbpg.com)

### SOUTHEAST REGION

**Lori A. Davis**

304.252.5396

[ldavis@beckleyautomall.com](mailto:ldavis@beckleyautomall.com)

**Christa Luna**

863.763.3154

[christa@gilbertchevrolet.com](mailto:christa@gilbertchevrolet.com)



### CANADA

**Mary Nurse**

905.668.3304

[mary.nurse@marynurse.com](mailto:mary.nurse@marynurse.com)