

Your Resource for GM Women in Automotive Retail

## WRN LINK

## NEW LEADERS BUILD ON MOMENTUM



GM

**HOLLY MARTIN***Read more about  
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WDAC

**LISA REBOWE***Read more about  
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WRN

**CHRISTA LUNA***Read more about  
Luna on page 4*2018 Starts with Changes  
in **GM, WDAC, WRN**

GM, the WDAC and WRN are pleased to announce three new leadership changes that started in January 2018:

- Holly Martin is named GM's new head of WRN and operations manager of Dealer Development
- Lisa Rebowe becomes WDAC chair. She had served as vice chair and WRN Scholarship chair. She represents the South Central Region
- Christa Luna is WRN's new Scholarship chair and WDAC vice chair. She represents the Southeast Region

Martin, who has extensive automotive experience, including 13 years of retail prior to GM, Buick GMC Zone Manager, and various GMAC positions, replaces Celeste Briggs, who was GM's director of WRN for seven years. "I am excited to work with this group of amazing women and build on the momentum Celeste has built," said Martin. "I look forward to leading efforts to grow WRN market share and increase women retailer representation."

Rebowe succeeds Marianne Ballas, who had served as WDAC chair.

"We thank Celeste and Marianne for their leadership and contributions to WRN and the WDAC," said Mark Rainey, director, Dealer Development. "Their commitment helped the GM and WRN partnership grow to greater heights, and become recognized as the industry leader in women retailer relations."

Save the Date

WOMEN'S RETAIL NETWORK

**DRIVEN 2018**

September 18-19

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## HOLLY MARTIN TO HEAD WRN FOR GM

When most young girls were playing with dolls, Holly Martin was either building model cars or working on the real thing. With those roots, it's no wonder that she is GM's new WRN lead, committing her career to vehicles, dealerships and everything automotive.

"The first vehicle I owned was a project car I helped restore with my dad," said Martin.

"I guess I always had the love of cars. I went to work at the local GM dealership after school my senior year of high school, continued throughout college and then stayed after graduating with a teaching degree."

Martin was a bit of a rarity in 1986, working at Curry Buick Cadillac Pontiac GMC in Bloomington, Indiana. But like many of the industry's female pioneers, her success at the dealership began to change others' perceptions of women's abilities and aptitudes.

After 13 years at Curry, Martin joined GM. She has worked extensively in the field as a district manager, zone manager and field operations manager and has held positions with GMAC as well. She has also managed a variety of projects from Detroit, including the Dealer Business Plan, Performance Optimization Program and Market Plus Program. It was in that role Martin first crossed paths with WRN. She managed the POP Lite sessions at the first DRIVEN conference in 2015, as well as in the following two years.

Martin's first assignment in her new role was attending the 20 Group sessions held in Scottsdale in January 2018.

"That was a fabulous experience for me," she said. "The women were amazing and had remarkable depth of knowledge. What struck me was their willingness to help one another."

Martin looks forward to her role, in part, because of the history she shares with women in the network, having worked in dealerships when being a woman wasn't necessarily an asset. She comes into her job with a toolbox of skills she's ready to put to work.

**"In 25 years with GM, I've built relationships I can leverage to support WRN," she said. "I know how the system works and where resources are and how we can use them to benefit WRN."**

Martin's vision for WRN: Make a good thing even better. That means building on the work of Celeste Briggs, Marianne Ballas and other WRN leaders in support of areas such as the WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship, Fixed Ops sessions and 20 Group programs. Her priorities:

- > **Increasing WRN profitability**
- > **Increasing WRN sales effectiveness**
- > **Increasing engagement of WRN with GM and the programs offered to support them**

Martin said of her new role. "I want to help WRN dealers sell more cars and improve profitability. I know what it was like to be a woman in a dealership. I want to do all I can to make a difference."

**"My vision for WRN is to make a good thing even better."**

## LISA REBOWE: New WDAC Chair

A fourth-generation dealer with a keen eye for the bottom line, Lisa Rebowe is the perfect fit to become the WDAC's new chair.

"I am honored to follow in the footsteps of past Chair Marianne Ballas and the many outstanding women who've built a strong foundation for women in retail automotive," said Rebowe. "My goal is to build on WRN's tremendous body of work and increase our capacity to help our dealers achieve great success. First and foremost is growing the number of women working in our field. It also means elevating our priorities of profitability, retention and growth through Fixed Ops, the DRIVEN Business Meetings, the WRN Scholarship and our 20 Groups."

Rebowe is approaching her new position with WDAC much like her role at Leson Chevrolet. That means building on what works, and finding new ways to become even more effective.

Rebowe said she is proud of the progress occurring to make dealerships a more transparent and balanced environment.

"Women enter a dealership and want to feel welcome and valued," she said.

**"With more women working in dealerships, we're able to offer an environment that is safe, representative and genuine."**

Often when interacting with a female customer, a male employee will bring me over to say, 'hello.' It may not sound like much, but it can build trust."

With a background as the dealership's controller and then General Manager, Rebowe is focused on ways to help dealers boost their bottom lines.

**"Our biggest challenge today as dealers is profitability," she said. "With slim margins on sales, Fixed Operations become even more critical to everyone's success."**

Rebowe is already working with GM on the service technician shortage, which is cutting into all dealers' Fixed Ops profits. She urges everyone working in automotive retail to promote dealership careers, and help women and men attain technical degrees. Rebowe believes the WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship is part of the solution; Leson's been a Named Scholarship dealer since the program began.

Rebowe urges every WRN dealer to become a Named Scholarship dealer, and to take a more active role in recruiting the next generation of dealers.

"We all need to be part of a grassroots effort to build our capabilities," she said. "We have our work cut out for us with the evolution of electric and autonomous vehicles and other advanced mobility technology. We need the best and the brightest on a career path into GM dealerships."

Rebowe invites WRN members to contact her with ideas and feedback, and welcomes suggestions to WRN LINK content. She can be reached at: [lrebowe@lesonchevy.com](mailto:lrebowe@lesonchevy.com)



**"My goal is to increase our capacity to help our dealers achieve great success."**



## CHRISTA LUNA: New Scholarship Chair

**G** REASE MONKEY OR SURGEON? The latter is how Christa Luna describes a modern-day automotive technician.

For that reason, Luna, owner of the Gilbert Family of Companies, which includes Gilbert Chevrolet in Okeechobee, Florida, is working hard with educators and counselors at the high school and college level to promote the role of today's service techs and help develop the training students need for success in the field.

It also makes Luna the perfect WDAC vice chair and Scholarship Subcommittee chair and champion for the 2018 WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship campaign.

"School counselors are guiding students into STEM careers without including automotive service in that equation. With the advanced electronics and computer-driven systems on vehicles, students need science, technology, engineering and math aptitude. Vehicles are precision machines required to run safely with zero exceptions. Educators' perceptions need to change to reflect the times," said Luna.

Luna is on a crusade to do just that. Active in WRN's Scholarship program since its inception, Luna has offered a Named Dealer Scholarship and contributed to other WRN Scholarship funds. She also works very closely with Okeechobee High School's Automotive Vocational program as well as the Indian River State College, where she sits on the Board of Trustees. She was selected by Florida Governor Rick Scott because of her passion for education and support for vocational training. Recognizing the vocational job needs, the College is launching a multi-million-dollar

manufacturing and vocational program. She says it's a great way to staff her dealership with highly qualified and vetted employees.

"Being at high schools and colleges affords me the opportunity to talk with students and educators and get a feel for what students are focused on," Luna said. "It also gives me the opportunity to engage other guiding decision-makers and invite them into my store to see firsthand the career opportunities available in automotive retail."

**Even in 2018, Luna says people automatically think "men" when they hear the words "automotive retail." She wants to mobilize GM's entire dealer network to change that perception among educators.**

"Somewhere we lost career paths for people who love to work with their hands," said Luna. "These are very well-paid and rewarding jobs for people with critical thinking skills. They offer a great deal of satisfaction and security. It is a career to be considered when young people are making decisions about their futures."

Luna said of her new role, and the role of all dealers, is to educate and advocate.

"It's nice to write a check for a scholarship, but we need folks meeting with teachers and counselors, finding new candidates and promoting dealership careers," she said. "It's a lot of hard work, and it's going to take a combined effort and the involvement of GM and the WRN."

### ADVOCACY LEADS TO NOMINATIONS

It's easy to remember this year's WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship application deadline, just ask Uncle Sam. Candidates must have their paperwork submitted by

**April 15, 2018.**

That includes signoff by a GM dealer or general manager.

Unfortunately, several students began the application process in 2017, but they never completed the work. Despite being strong candidates, only students with completed applications can be considered for selection.

Promotion and nomination are critical elements of the yearly campaign. Consider using social media channels to reach potential candidates and educators. Heightening awareness of the program increases the candidate pool. But it doesn't stop there. As Christa Luna recommends, meet with counselors and teachers to educate and advocate for dealership careers.

For more information, please contact program headquarters:

CMS Foundation:  
[wrscholarshipinfo@gmsac.com](mailto:wrscholarshipinfo@gmsac.com)  
630.428.2412

# Named Scholarship Dealer ADVOCATES TECH CAREERS for Women



EVE KNUDTSEN is a third-generation Chevrolet dealer, wife, mother, and advocate of women. She's also a second-year Named Dealer Sponsor of the WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship.

"If all of our dealers established a Named Dealer Scholarship, we'd soon have thousands of young women joining our ranks and truly changing the face of automotive retail," she said. "Diversity drives revenue, plain and simple. Customers prefer doing business in places they see themselves. In my community, the population is 53 percent female."

**"Not having women working as technicians in my dealership is a business deterrent. Until our dealerships become completely inclusive, we won't enjoy a reputation as a trustworthy place women want to do business."**

A graduate of Northwood University and Gonzaga University, Knudtsen understands the value of education. She works with academia at all levels to ensure all students have proper career tracks into automotive fields.

"We need to be engaging students in 8th grade," said Knudtsen. "Not all students are interested or equipped for four years of college. Offering a vocational track provides a lucrative alternative to college, improves graduation rates and provides businesses with a pipeline for young talent."

In addition to offering a WRN Named Dealer Scholarship, Knudtsen was instrumental in developing Kootenai Technical Education Campus, where juniors and seniors can earn high school credit, as well as valuable technical, professional and employability skills. Students at KTEC participate in internships and worksite learning, and can earn certifications and licenses. By promoting technical education through KTEC, Knudtsen is working to mentor women into technical course at North Idaho Community College.

Eve Knudtsen is not only an automotive ambassador with academia, Knudtsen Chevrolet employs women in sales, service and the front office. A certified ABRA auto body and glass repair shop, her Post Falls store employs women in logistics and as estimators. Her ABRA body shop in Spokane is run by women.

"Females are well suited for technical careers," said Knudtsen. "Women will follow the trouble tree and are root-cause minded. Generally, we are more detail oriented and have fine motors skills. There's no reason not to employ women in every dealership discipline."

Knudtsen is looking forward to one day passing the torch to her daughter as the fourth generation dealer. Until then, Knudtsen is growing her business and employing women in integral roles.





## Veteran 20 Group Facilitator Becomes WRN Legend

**S**heila York has come full circle with WRN's 20 Groups. She launched GMW1 in 2003, and in January, she kicked off the network's third group at that same facility in Scottsdale. In those 15 years, York has helped hundreds of dealers become more profitable by putting every facet of their operations under a microscope. From service to sales and everything in between, York has discovered hundreds of best practices that dealers across the country are now profiting from.

"I'm very proud to have been the first moderator of GMW1," said York. "And while the specifics have changed, much about 20 Groups has not. It's still about efficiencies and profitability. It's still about sharing and helping fellow members. And it's still about securing customers for life."

York has worked for years facilitating 20 Groups for NADA, and as a dealership general manager. Her career of hands-on automotive retail experience helps her moderate WRN's 20 Groups. She said she's honored to work with GM, and credits the company as the industry's best in supporting minority and women dealers.

"A dealer can't know everything that is going on daily/hourly," York said. "The benefit of the 20 Group comes in the variety of experience members share. What works well at one dealership just might work at another. Another set of eyes on your operations might see something you're missing or provide that answer to managing specific aspects of a department or the dealership."



With years of both dealership and consulting experience, York can share a wealth of information with 20 Group members. Here are a few "York-isms" to consider:

- The service department is the economic driver of today's dealership. Winning customers in the service lane will win their future new and used car purchases
- Employee turnover comes at a tremendous cost. A recent NADA workforce study showed that employees are not truly productive until year three. HR, compliance, attraction and retention are a big part of 20 Group discussions.
- Ongoing training is a must. Lifelong learning is critical for every job, not just dealers. Service, parts and sales managers should get the same opportunity to share with their peers and learn from each other
- 20 Groups are the cheapest board of directors any company can have. More opinions are always beneficial. You'll always leave a 20 Group with an idea that will pay for the meeting

## 2018 20 GROUP CALENDAR

### GMW1 & GMW3

Jan 21-23 • Scottsdale AZ  
May 6-8 • Dallas TX  
Sept 17-21 • Detroit MI

### GMW2

Jan 23-25 • Scottsdale AZ  
May 8-10 • Dallas TX  
Sept 17-21 • Detroit MI

## Hutchins Leads GMW3, Encourages Others To Join

**Kristin Hutchins** has gone from 20 Group newbie to 20 Group leader in no time at all. The dealer principal at Ruge's Chevrolet in Millbrook, New York, was nominated for the position of WRN's newest 20 Group at the session's first meeting in Scottsdale in January.

While Hutchins might be new to 20 Groups, she's certainly not new to the automotive landscape. Her grandfather started Ruge's in 1935; it's now one of the oldest and largest family-run companies in New York's Hudson Valley. She is, however, new to the Chevrolet brand. That makes her participation in WRN's 20 Group #3 a win-win.

"I have a lifetime of dealership experience I can share with other women in my group," Hutchins said. "But I need to learn about GM, Chevy and the many ways WRN can help my business."

GMW3 grew out of increasing demand for an additional 20 Group for GM's female dealers. While the third group had its official start only months ago, Hutchins said she already feels very comfortable with her fellow dealers.

"The group is comprised of the perfect makeup of women," she said. "Some are newer dealers, some have much longer experience and some have participated in other 20 Groups. Right now, the group is rather small, so it allows us to get to know each other very quickly. I can foresee these women becoming a very important part of my life."

Since the initial 20 Group meeting, Hutchins said members of her group have been exchanging best practices and implementing new ideas. She said she's already noticing areas that can be improved in her store.

Because of GMW3, Hutchins is using a new tool at Ruge's Chevrolet to help manage the process for used vehicles. And she says it's making a positive impact.

"One of the dealers shared an interactive spreadsheet that details every step in the process," said Ruge. "We modified it for use in our shop and already it's creating efficiencies. I understand now why dealers that are 20 Group members are more profitable than the average. I encourage all WRN members to join a 20 Group. After your first meeting, you'll be convinced."



# SERVICE & PARTS FORUM 2018 Q1 WEBINAR



## GOOD-BETTER-BEST FORUM

**A thorough Multi-Point Vehicle Inspection (MPVI) is paramount. MENUS are a MUST! Are you offering Good-Better-Best options?**

**I**s your pricing value driven? Not all customers want the same thing — not in tennis shoes, or dinner selections or even in the service lane. That's why it's critical that your dealership provides a quality multi-point vehicle inspection and a menu that includes Good-Better-Best offerings. The first allows you to build a relationship with the customers and identify opportunities to address potential service issues. The second gives customers value-based options for service and repair.

Good-Better-Best recognizes that each customer has his or her own value perceptions. It allows that customer to choose from a menu of options based on

those values. Not everyone wants the top of the line shoe or the biggest steak. Good-Better-Best helps customers understand the available services in an easy-to-understand way.

Recognizing that every customer is unique, with varying levels of needs and wants as well as price thresholds, opens a world of opportunity for dealers. First, it begins to build trust. It also increases your profit potential because not every customer is forced into only best offerings that can mean lost sales.

The Q1 S&P webinar explored a consistent MPVI process and the benefits of offering

a Good-Better-Best portfolio to your customers. It focused on ensuring that every option (good-better-best) is appropriately priced with a customer's value expectations and optimizing the MPVI. For additional information or the full presentation, contact [holly.1.martin@gm.com](mailto:holly.1.martin@gm.com) [yvonne.g.mckee@chevrolet.com](mailto:yvonne.g.mckee@chevrolet.com)

### 2018 S&P CALENDAR

**Skype**  
March 14  
May 16  
July 25  
Nov 14

**Meeting**  
Sept 17-21 • F2F  
Detroit MI



## AUTO INDUSTRY COOL AGAIN WITH KIDS »

MICHauto's recently released 2017 **Automobility Career Perception Survey** showed that the auto industry is gaining popularity with today's youth. The study gathered feedback from 900 respondents, consisting of youth (ages 17-24) and adult influencers both inside and outside of Michigan.

- 53 percent of Michigan youth indicated that they would consider a career in the industry, an increase of 14 percent from 2014
- Perception that the automotive industry is "growing with opportunity and advancement in manufacturing, skilled trades and for those with advanced degrees" is rising among youth (68 percent) and influencers (71 percent), an increase of 12 percent and 19 percent respectively
- 42 percent of influencers are very likely to recommend a career in automotive, compared to 23 percent in 2014

MICHauto is an economic development initiative of the Detroit Regional Chamber. Learn more at [www.MICHauto.org](http://www.MICHauto.org)

## 2018 WBENC NATIONAL CONFERENCE AND BUSINESS FAIR »



Detroit is the host city for the April 19–21 National Conference and Business Fair — the largest conference of its kind for women business owners in the U.S. Senior executives and procurement representatives from Fortune 500 companies and the U.S. government, as well as select partner organizations, attend the conference for

three days of robust programming. This year's conference features lectures and presentations from today's thought leaders, engaging panel discussions, 1:1 MatchMaker sessions, networking receptions and a notable Business Fair. WBENC calls Detroit a city full of energy, enthusiasm and evolving infrastructure, and an excellent backdrop to *Discover the Difference* that the WBENC community makes for women owned businesses. Learn more at [conf.wbenc.org](http://conf.wbenc.org).

## EDUCATION TAKES CENTER STAGE IN TORONTO »



The annual Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto is known for exhibits and displays that focus on automotive education and automotive careers. At the 2018 show held in February, the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association (TADA) highlighted many of those careers, along with the educational requirements and guidance for landing a job in the auto industry. The association's booth featured a variety of interactive and engaging career-focused programming, including "Women on Wheels," an evening learning and networking event focused on increasing awareness of career

paths, challenges and successes for women in the industry. TADA also partnered with Centennial College, Automotive Business School of Canada, Conestoga College, University of Toronto, McMaster University and the University of Waterloo.

## BRIGGS KNOWS "WHAT DRIVES" WOMEN »

The recent Chicago Auto Show hosted the second annual "What Drives Her" industry networking event and panel discussion. Speakers discussed the integral role women play within the auto industry as contributors, consumers and drivers of purchasing decisions. GM's Celeste Briggs, Susan Keenehan, NCR GM Fleet and Kelly Webb Roberts of Webb Chevrolet all participated in the panel. The event was held on Women's Day of the show, and was one of many opportunities brands such as GM had to connect with local women at the show interested in automotive-related careers.





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.

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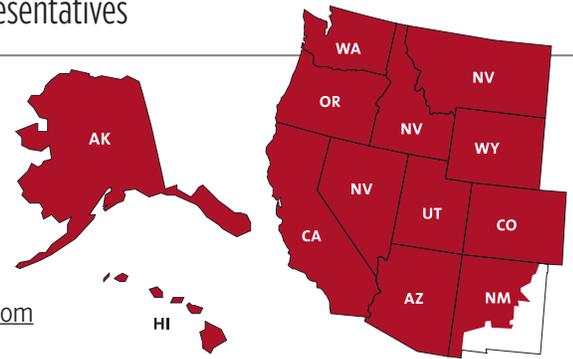
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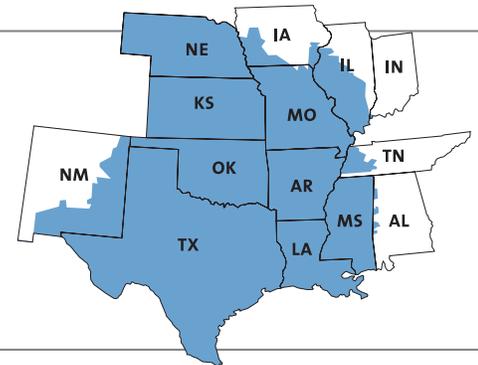
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