

Your Resource for GM Women in Automotive Retail

WRN LINK

INTERVIEW:

WRN Director Recaps 2017, Sets Sights on 2018

Despite changing customer demands, changing technology and a hanging market, **Celeste Briggs**, director, Women's Retail Network and Diverse Dealer Programs, remains a stalwart supporter of WRN's singular objective: Changing the face of automotive retail. Reflecting on 2017, Briggs acknowledges the many milestones achieved and challenges ahead.

1 How would you rank WRN's performance in 2017?

"Closing the year, we are pleased to report a growing, profitable network, including:

- **252 GM women dealers; 400+ executive and general managers; 450 women named as successor dealer operators**
- WRN dealers on track to sell 130,000+ GM cars and trucks in 2017
- Total dealership sales of almost \$11B new and used vehicles and service and parts
- Growing dealer appointments
- Average WRN dealers sales higher than the national average
- WRN dealer earnings on par with the national average"

"This success has come from hard work and focus on attracting customers for life. That will remain our focus. But the reality is 2018 still holds many challenges Customer expectations will increase, the market is more competitive and buyer demographics are changing rapidly."

Continued on next page

WRN Members: Driven to Succeed in 2017



CHANGING THE FACE



OF AUTOMOTIVE RETAIL

2 Will WRN change its direction to address these challenges?

"Growth, retention and profitability

continued as the WRN pillars in 2017; they will remain the pillars going forward, supported through a variety of initiatives such as:

- WRN 20 Groups
- GM Women's Service & Parts Forum
- WBENC Certification
- Drive to Succeed Scholarship Program
- DRIVEN4
- Business Builder Sessions

We will not stray from our foundation. In fact, we're going to double down on it. WRN has a mandate to make our business more inclusive, and that is what we'll deliver."

3 How is WRN addressing women's increasing buying power and presence in the market?

"Women are today's powerbrokers, decision-makers and wealth holders. That's why "Changing the Face of Automotive Retail" remains our priority. In 2017, WRN focused on helping dealers reach female buyers and create customers for life through a variety of sales and service training and resources. In addition, female managers and technicians continued to join GM dealerships to help create an environment that mirrors the communities we serve. But numbers are only a part of the solution. WRN also focused on developing a dealership environment where women are heard and respected, and diversity and inclusion are the norm."

4 How did WRN help dealers secure Connected Customers in 2017?

"Connecting with the Connected Customer was a big part of DRIVEN3, our annual WRN conference. There, we reviewed the enhanced service lane process and previewed many of the new elements coming in 2018 — such as changes to the Customer Owner Center and the MyBrand app. Creating a seamless connection between the dealer, customer and vehicle is the goal and will continue to be the goal in the coming year. Look for the Connected Customer to be an even greater focus of WRN in 2018."

5 Is there one word you would pick as aspirational for WRN in 2018?

"GROWTH. For 16 years, WRN has worked to grow a network of successful female dealers and retail professionals. In 2018, we'll extend our reach to those dealers who aren't yet connected, by promoting our value proposition. This means highlighting the tangible personal and professional outcomes and bottom-line benefits that result from getting involved in WRN."

"By simply clicking the '**BECOME A MEMBER**' icon (pictured below) on the WRN homepage, you are on your way. Don't let another year pass without becoming part of the network."

 | WOMEN'S RETAIL NETWORK |





Gutierrez, WDAC South Central Region, Puts Priority on LISTENING

Liz Gutierrez, dealer principal at Lynn Smith Chevrolet in Burleson, Texas, is exactly the type of person you want representing WRN dealers to GM leadership. She's worked in her store for more than 20 years and has learned just about everything there is to know about automotive retail having worked in every department. When she took over the family business three years ago, Gutierrez was an already established leader in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, and a member of a robust WRN 20 Group.

With those impressive credentials, Gutierrez was a natural to serve as a member of the WDAC, representing the South Central Region.

"Women in my region needed someone to speak on their behalf," said Gutierrez. "So I threw my hat in the ring. I try to be their voice with GM leaders on all dealership issues, especially those affecting the female consumer."

Gutierrez has already met with GM three times in Detroit. Reflecting on a recent session with brand marketing Senior leadership teams, she said everyone was

interested in what really happens on the floor of a dealership.

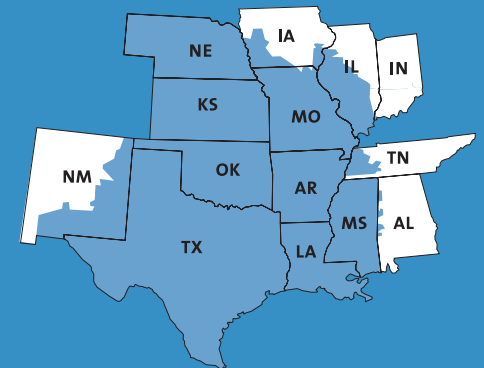
"I see that GM and dealers are just trying to connect with people," she said. "I think we're seeing that happen, especially in ads featuring real people — women, minorities, families — and not actors. We are all recognizing the role women have in buying vehicles and service. By working together, we can reach women in a more organic way."

"As a WDAC member, a big part of my role is improving the relationship between dealers and GM," she said. "I believe it comes down to listening. The more I listen to the female dealers in my region relate their concerns to GM, and vice versa, I think the better we can accomplish our shared goal of attaining customers for life."

Gutierrez said she looks forward to developing relationships with all the dealers in her region. She encourages women to contact her at lizgtz2001@yahoo.com with their suggestions, issues and items to take forward to the Council. In return, she commits to sharing what she learns with her region.

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LIZ GUTIERREZ
SOUTH CENTRAL REPRESENTATIVE





SCHOLARSHIP IS ULTIMATE WIN-WIN

Marianne Ballas and Madelyn Hamilton are a perfect match. Ballas is a two-time Named Dealer Sponsor and Hamilton is a two-time recipient of the WRN Drive to Succeed Scholarship. Without Ballas, president of Ballas Buick GMC in Toledo, Ohio, Hamilton may not have had the opportunity to continue her automotive studies at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan.

“Changing the face of automotive retail takes time and money,” said Ballas. “We need to invest in young women by providing tuition assistance so they can pursue careers in auto-related fields. We need to also invest our time in mentoring them, and in visibly promoting the rewarding, lucrative careers available in GM dealerships. **We owe it to the next generation of dealers to get involved.**”

Six dealers joined Ballas to provide Named Scholarships in 2017. Total contributions, including sponsor donations from four GM business partners, came to \$35,000. Since 2011, the program has provided 61 individual scholarships totaling \$194,000.

Debbie Crispin, vice president, Bill Crispin Chevrolet in Saline, Michigan, is an advocate of the scholarship program. Crispin nominated Hamilton as a scholarship candidate, and now Hamilton is working between semesters at Crispin’s dealership.

“The scholarship is the ultimate win-win,” said Crispin. “Dealers benefit from the skills and education from scholarship recipients, and students are able to pursue an education and a lifelong career.

Becoming a Named Dealer Sponsor is a grassroots opportunity to elevate your brand with women and throughout your local community. Exceptional female employees increase customer loyalty and overall profitability, and attract other women into our industry.

For more information:
www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com/business-priorities/scholarship
CMS Foundation: wrnscholarshipinfo@gmsac.com
WRN Scholarship Chair Lisa Rebowe: lrebowe@lesonchevy.com



Marianne Ballas
Named Scholarship **DONOR**



Debbie Crispin
Scholarship Winner **EMPLOYER**



Madelyn Hamilton
Scholarship **WINNER**

As WRN officially kicks off the 2018 Drive to Succeed campaign, please consider becoming a Named Scholarship dealer. This provides a tremendous opportunity to showcase your dealership’s commitment to women, education and employment in your community. For only \$2,500, you can become an official Named Scholarship dealer.

Named Scholarship or general fund donations are easy to make at: gmsac.com

In addition to contributing to the scholarship fund, it’s important to build awareness of the scholarship in your community and encourage and nominate interested women to apply. Watch for promotional materials coming to your dealership soon. Please place them throughout your dealership and community and help make a dream come true.

WRN 20 GROUPS MEET IN JANUARY — Plenty of Room for **NEW** Members in GMW3 —



Current WRN1 and WRN2 20 Group members, and those looking to join the newly formed WRN3, are invited to start the New Year in Scottsdale, Arizona.

As always, the 20 Groups will discuss a variety of topics focused squarely on improving dealership operations and the bottom line.

The WRN NADA 20 Groups will be meeting at the beautiful

**Fairmont Princess in Scottsdale, AZ,
January 21-23 and January 23-26, 2018.**

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WOMEN'S RETAIL NETWORK

NADA 20 GROUP

Revolutionizing the Service Lane Experience is an invaluable tool in GM dealers' ability to earn and retain customers for life. Developing and sharing best practices in each of the RSLE zones has been a priority for WRN through its DRIVEN meetings, WebEx seminars and other Fixed Ops-focused material. As the DRIVEN3 keynote speaker, Paul Copses, Executive Director, Customer Care and Aftersales, discussed how RSLE is about to evolve.

"Consumers' demand for connectivity is driving the next phase of RSLE," said Copses. "For the connected customer, this means encouraging owners to rely on technology like the brand app, owner center and the in-vehicle screen to deliver the most trusted guidance. At the center of that will be Online Service Scheduling, the only customer-facing scheduling tool in 2018."

Copses emphasized that in order to gain the trust of the connected customer, we must achieve the perfect intersection of vehicle telematics, the dealer's service lane and the customer.

"It's all based on integration," Copses said. "Integration allows us to receive and leverage OnStar telematics data, offer seamless service visit tracking via text messaging or alerts on customers' MyBrand app, and provides customers access to their vehicle's service history through the MyBrand app. It also allows service appointment scheduling directly from a customer's car."

To enable the transformation, GM is investing in integrated technology and processes that allow personalization and creates an experience that lives up to customers' expectations. Doing that, said Copses, is what creates customers for life.

"By knowing our customers, their vehicles and committing to the needs of both — pre-visit, at visit and post-visit — we can truly create a service experience that builds advocacy and loyalty," said Copses. "We need to honor the connected customer by leveraging advanced data, advanced technology and a business development culture that creates customers for life."



During the next 18 months, dealers will experience the RSLE transformation in these services:

- Service Visit Tracking
- In-Vehicle Scheduling Appointment/Welcome Boards
- Online Payment
- OnStar Diagnostic/Prognostic Data
- Post-Visit Booklet

Watch for more information on new RSLE services and benefits in the coming issues of *WRN LINK*.

Integration is Key

While technology is important to the connected customer, trust is the key factor in retaining customers for life. A triangle of trust results from the seamless integration between the vehicle, the customer and the dealer, and nothing less than a transformative experience.

Customers' Connectivity Needs



The RSLE infinity loop understands the customer's needs and desires throughout the customer's journey. Each zone process is designed to improve customer retention and build loyalty.

For the connected customer, RSLE places additional focus on:

- Managing communications in a way that is welcoming and honors their preferences
- Maximizing vehicle data to drive service repairs, convenience, understanding and transparency
- Bridging customers to technology like the brand app, owner center and the in-vehicle screen



Connected Service Experience: NEW FEATURES IN SERVICE WORKBENCH

Launched in December, dealers now receive the integrated benefits of Online Service Scheduling via the MyBrand app. This includes: vehicle diagnostic data; recall information; maintenance schedules; and dealer-specific National Retail Plan pricing and offers.* Customers scheduling service via the OSS tool on the MyBrand app will get the following benefits:

- Service recommendations specific to their vehicle.
- National Retail Plan service offers (starting with oil and battery) that correspond with their service recommendations
- National Retail Plan offers with their preferred dealer's specific pricing
- The opportunity to select both the service recommendation(s) and aligned offer(s) and send to their preferred dealer via Service Workbench
- The opportunity to view and select other (non-service recommendation-aligned) offers that are available

* Certain restrictions apply.

The new services offer benefits to both the customer and dealer:

- Customers receive services relevant to them consistently displayed in a convenient manner, increasing trust and loyalty
- Dealers know customer service selection in advance, increasing efficiency and consistency

WebEx Features Service Retention Through BDCs



EARNING CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE

The Q4 WRN Service & Parts Forum focused on increasing service retention through highly effective Business Development Centers. Participants were encouraged to call in with their questions related to any BDC topic. Using this more open format, CCA experts Jim Pianello and Pete Mazzara helped provide answers as well as deliver a brief review of service leads and other BDC activities.

A list of the questions and answers from the webinar are located at:

www.gmwomensretailnetwork.com/business-priorities/fixed-operations/

Questions ranged from the very general — *What is the BDC dashboard and how does a dealer get access to it?* — to the slightly more complicated — *Is a BDC Calculation Summary available?*

To be included in future BDC updates and receive a variety of resources and tools, send your email address to dave.coval@gm.com. You can also contact the Lead Management help desk with any additional questions at 888.462.8976.





Distinguished Women

WDAC DEALER WINS NORTHWOOD AWARD »

Katie Bowman Coleman, president and owner of Bowman Auto Group, was included in the group of women receiving this year's Distinguished Woman Award from Northwood University. Recipients of the 48th annual award represent the values Northwood, including a commitment to free enterprise, the partnership of arts and business, and the management of global commerce. Judy Schumacher-Tilton, Maureen LaFontaine and Celeste Briggs were among the 2016 awardees. Bowman Auto Group includes Bowman Chevrolet, Bowman Isuzu Commercial Truck and Bowman Auto Center, all located in Clarkston, Michigan. As president, Coleman oversees a team of more than 130 employees, selling nearly 5,000 vehicles per year. □



DEALER TOUTS GOOD DEALERSHIP JOBS »

At the *Automotive News Leading Women Conference*, **Michelle Primm** encouraged all females working in the industry to educate and nurture young women at the beginning of their careers, when they first show interest in the industry. "I am especially talking to our younger people here today and listening online, because you are the future of the industry," said Primm, managing partner at Cascade Auto Group, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. She also addressed the *Automotive News*' Project XX, saying, "If more women of my age had stood up sooner, maybe our employment numbers would be higher. I stand in solidarity with many women across the industry who feel frustrated. You are not alone." □



POWER UP YOUR SERVICE CUSTOMERS »

Chevrolet, Buick and GMC dealers are developing new ways to provide power for waiting service customers to charge their personal electronic devices. It's common for customers of all ages to use their wait time to make calls, work on laptops or scan through tablets. All that typing and swiping requires power. RSLE standards recommend providing amenities, like available power, to increase customers' satisfaction and decrease their perceived wait times. A variety of customer lounge amenities are available at www.gmbfm.com. □



WRN DEALER JOINS CHEVROLET DEALER COUNCIL »

Congratulations to **Christy Gilleland**, dealer, Gilleland Chevrolet in St. Cloud, Minnesota, who was recently elected to the Chevrolet Dealer Council. Gilleland represents the approximately 3,000 Chevrolet dealers in the U.S., along with 12 other Chevrolet dealers that comprise the Dealer Council. She is currently the only female Council member. Gilleland says she fell in love with the dealership business at age 10 when her father, Duane, purchased the dealership in 1986. Gilleland is a leader in the St. Cloud Rotary Club, Area Chamber of Commerce and Youth Hockey Association. She was selected as part of the *St. Cloud Times* "5 Under 40" class of 2015. □



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.

gmwomensretailnetwork.com

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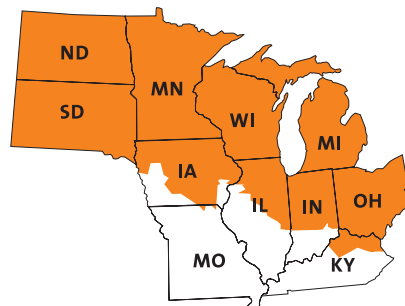
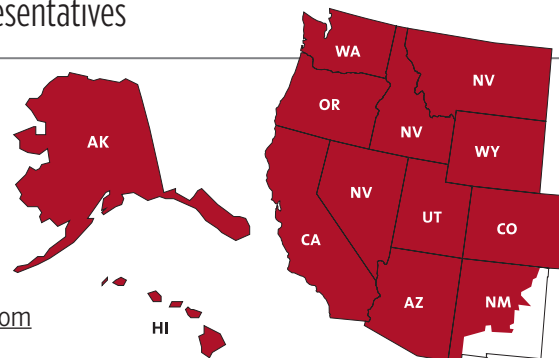
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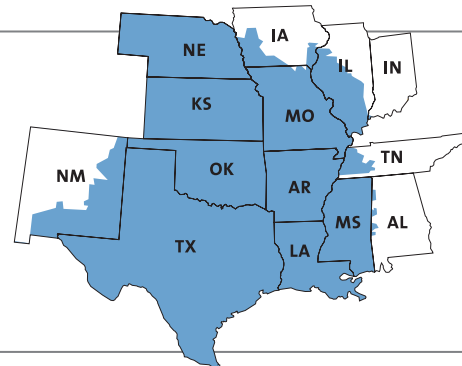
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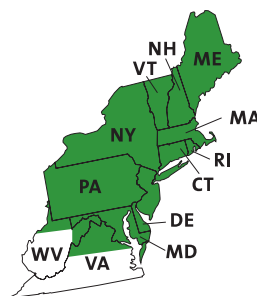
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