



Alicia Boler-Davis

Award ‘Trumpets’ Boler-Davis

Alicia Boler-Davis, senior vice president, Global Connected Customer Experience, General Motors, was named the 2016 Corporate Executive of the Year during the 24th Annual Trumpet Awards.

Boler-Davis was recognized for the work she’s accomplished at GM, and for the impact she’s had on the automotive industry in creating new opportunities for women and minorities, said GM spokesman Daniel Wallace.

Boler-Davis’ career with GM, which began with a manufactur-

ing engineer role in 1994. During her time at the company, she has held many positions of increasing responsibility in Manufacturing, Engineering and Product Development.

Her work on continuous improvement and focus on putting the customer at the center quickly propelled her to the top, Wallace said, including becoming GM’s first African-American female plant manager, where she led a number of significant

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Buick’s First Super Bowl Ad – the Cascada

This year’s Super Bowl is Feb. 7, and the annual sports event is known for attracting up to 100 million viewers, making it a prime target for advertisers. And Buick is going to be a part of that action for the first time.

Buick’s first-ever Super Bowl ad, said Buick spokesman Stuart Fowle, will bring the brand’s award-winning “Experience the New Buick” campaign to the biggest night in TV advertising. The campaign launched in 2014 and challenges any false perceptions consumers’ have of the Buick brand.

The 30-second spot, scheduled to air during Super Bowl 50, Fowle said, features Buick’s new Cascada luxury convertible and stars New York Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. and actress/model Emily Ratajkowski.

The spot will be the first new Buick commercial to air in 2016, a year where the brand will launch three new products, Fowle said.

The Cascada, Buick’s first convertible in 25 years, arrives in dealerships in the coming weeks. Fowle said.

It features a design that is supposed to be both athletic and shows off sculptural beauty that also delivers a distinctive profile, whether the top is up or down.

Along with the “perception-shifting” Cascada, Fowle said the

Buick showrooms will soon feature in 2016 a redesigned LaCrosse sedan and the new Envision, a compact crossover. Both go on sale sometime this summer.

“With sales surpassing 1.2 million vehicles globally for the first time ever in 2015, the Buick brand has never been stronger,” said Duncan Aldred, vice president, Global Buick Sales, Service and Marketing. “Super Bowl 50 represents a perfect opportunity for us to showcase our newest vehicles in a spot that delivers a mix of light-hearted humor and star-power to a global audience

of millions of consumers.

“We wanted talent that represented attributes of the Buick brand and design philosophy. For Buick, Odell Beckham Jr. represents unique talent and commitment to excellence that mirrors Buick’s commitment to performance. Emily Ratajkowski brings style which aligns with the Cascada’s design and adventurous spirit.”

The “Experience the New Buick” campaign was awarded the best luxury car campaign by Nielsen for the last two years. It is nominated again this year, Fowle said.



Odell Beckham, Jr. and Emily Ratajkowski, with the new Cascada.



A 1909 Buick racecar won the first race at Indianapolis.



The “Dynaflash 8” engine made the 1938 Buick Century special.

Buick’s Strong Performance Heritage Continues Today

Buick’s 2016 Avista concept car was honored with EyesOn Design Award for Design Excellence – Concept Car, at the 2016 Detroit Auto Show.

But, said Buick spokesman Stuart Fowle, that doesn’t mean that Buick’s history of excellent performance has been forgotten.

Performance has been part of Buick’s DNA since its earliest days, Fowle said, when stripped-down chassis and powerful Buick engines pushed the pioneers of motorsports to victory. Racing success helped forge the brand’s reputation for durability.

Now, more than a century later, that legacy of performance complements the refinement for which Buick has always been known, Fowle said. And that history also deserves recognition.

Here’s a look at 10 milestone models that helped establish and advance Buick’s performance heritage:

- 1909 Buick racecar. In 1909 – two years before the first Indianapolis 500 – the 2.5-mile-long oval at Indy was inaugurated with the Prest-O-Lite Trophy. The 250-mile race was won by Bob Burman, driving a Buick and averaging more than 53 mph. Of the nine cars that finished the race, three of them were Buick models.
- 1910 Buick 60 Special “Bug.” The 60 Special, or “Bug,” was built by the Buick racing team and had a unique nosecone – a feature designed more for aesthetics than aerodynamics. A huge, 10.2L (622 cubic inches) four-cylinder engine propelled the Bug to 110 mph. Buick built two 60 Special racecars, one for Prest-O-Lite Trophy winner Bob Burman, and a second for another racer of note: Louis Chevrolet.
- 1938 Buick Century. Buick introduced straight-eight engines in 1931, but it was the 1938 Century model that established a



Only 547 examples of the 1987 Buick GNX were built.

new performance benchmark. Dubbed Dynaflash 8, the 5.2L (320 cubic inches) inline engine featured new, domed pistons that contributed to an 11-hp increase over the 1937 engine. It was enough power to pass the “century mark” at 103 mph, making the Century one of the fastest cars of its day.

• 1954 Buick Wildcat II concept. The Buick V8 engine – nicknamed Nailhead for its unique valve arrangement – was introduced in 1953 and powered the Wildcat II concept vehicle a year later. Using a quartet of sidedraft

carburetors, engineers coaxed 10 percent more horsepower from the engine than regular-production models, giving the Wildcat II the power to back up its sporty styling.

• 1963 Buick Special. In 1961, Buick introduced an innovative, lightweight all-aluminum V8 to power its new midsize Special model line. Displacing only 3.5L (215 cubic inches), it was lauded for its high power density. The engine achieved its peak in the 1963 Special, with its 200-hp output

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IHS Honors GM With Award for Customer Loyalty

General Motors was recognized by IHS Automotive on Jan. 12 with its Overall Loyalty to Manufacturer award.

The IHS Automotive Loyalty Awards are presented annually to companies and brands that demonstrate the ability to retain owners over repeat buying cycles, said GM spokeswoman Ryn-dee Carney.

“GM’s commitment to putting the customer at the center of everything we do is absolute and we know that is key to building owner loyalty,” said Alan Batey, president of General Motors North America.

“Our brands have done a tremendous job of drawing customers back to our showrooms by earning their trust with exceptional products and ownership experiences.”

In addition to the overall manufacturer award, Carney said the Chevrolet Corvette topped the Luxury Sports Car Segment for the second year in a row while the Chevrolet Colorado was recognized as the top Non-Luxury Mid-Size Pickup and the GMC Yukon Denali XL as the top Non-Luxury Full-Size SUV.

According to IHS Automotive, loyalty is determined when a household that owns a new vehicle returns to market and purchases or leases another new vehicle of the same make, model or manufacturer, Carney said.

The Automotive Loyalty Awards recognize automotive manufacturers and brands for customer retention and conquest efforts during the 2015 model year (October 2014-September 2015).

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Boler-Davis Gets Executive of the Year Award

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launches for the automaker.

“Throughout my career, I was pushed to try new things – things that I hadn’t done before, and things that I couldn’t have imagined doing,” said Boler-Davis. “I truly believe that each of us can put our talents to use to change the world if we are willing to be bold, to take risks, and to write the books that need to be written.”

Her resume includes a number of firsts, Wallace said, including her current role where she is responsible for leading GM’s global efforts to provide customers with the best overall service and experience in the industry, as well as market-leading connectivity and infotainment products and services.

Her scope includes GM’s nearly 20-year-old OnStar safety, security and services brand, which recently passed 1 billion customer interactions. She also leads GM’s Urban Active team, which is developing solutions to capitalize on the future of personal mobility, including car sharing.

“Each year, we look for individuals who overcome significant challenges, who achieve excellence in their respective areas, and Alicia has certainly done that as one of the highest-ranking African-American women in the auto industry,” said Xernona Clayton, founder, president and CEO, Trumpet Awards. “Despite the global size and scope of her current job responsibilities, her ongoing commitment to the next generation of diverse talent sets an example that we are proud to recognize today.”

Individuals such as R&B singer-songwriter Ne-Yo, global humanitarian and advocate Princess Basmah Bint Saud of Saudi Arabia and comedian George Wallace were also recognized during the awards ceremony.

Chrysler Hourly To See \$4,000 in Profit Sharing

Fiat Chrysler will make profit sharing payments up to \$4,000 to eligible UAW-represented employees as a result of the company’s 2015 financial performance. Approximately 40,000 employees will receive the payment on Feb. 19, 2016.

The payment represents a 45 percent increase from the \$2,750 payment UAW-represented employees received last year, said Fiat Chrysler spokeswoman Jodi Tinson.

As negotiated in the 2015 UAW-Fiat Chrysler Collective Bargaining Agreement, future profit sharing payments will be based on the EBIT margin performance of the North American region reported in the FCA N.V. financial results beginning with 2016 calendar year performance, Tinson said.

Buick’s Strong Performance Heritage Continues Today

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representing a horsepower-to-liter ratio of 0.57:1. Versions of the engine were used in Indy racing cars.

1970 Buick GSX. At the height of the muscle car wars, torque was king and no competitor could dethrone the 510 lb.-ft. (678 Nm) of twist generated by the GSX’s available 455 Stage I V-8 engine. In a 1970 road test, Motor Trend went from 0 to 60 mph in 5.5 seconds and covered the quarter-mile in 13.4 seconds. The GSX’s combination of raw power and Buick’s signature luxury prompted many to describe the car as a “velvet hammer.”

1976 Buick Century Indianapolis 500 Pace Car. Buick’s turbocharging legacy was established with this purposeful pace car. Engineers leveraged the recently revived, more-efficient 3.8L (231 cubic inches) V6 engine that was supplanting larger V8 engines in many production models. They filled it with 22 psi of turbo-fed boost – resulting in 306 horsepower from the com-

pact powerhouse – and reset expectations for Buick performance.

1984 Buick/March IndyCar. When Buick began its dalliance with turbocharging, few could have predicted it would lead from pacing the Indianapolis 500 to racing in it a few years later.

It culminated at the 1984 race, when driver Scott Brayton drove his Buick-powered March racecar to a 204.638-mph one-lap speed and a 203.637-mph four-lap average, setting new records for a racecar using a production-spec engine block.

By the mid-1990s, a more powerful version of the Buick turbo V6 helped Eddie Cheever turn the fastest race lap ever at the Brickyard: 236.103 mph during the 1996 Indy 500.

It’s a record that still stands 20 years later.

1987 Buick GNX. During the resurgence of high-performance in the 1980s, Buick ditched the conventional V8 playbook and continued to cultivate its turbo V6 program, which was manifested in the Grand National. Buick

marked the end of the car’s production in 1987 with the limited-production GNX.

It was a Grand National on steroids, with a larger turbocharger, a higher, 276-horsepower rating and all-black attire. Only 547 were built and they became instant collectibles.

2012 Regal GS. The GS returned to Buick’s lineup and advanced its turbocharging heritage with one of the most sophisticated

and power-dense engines in its segment – a 270-hp 2.0L delivering 135 hp per liter. It also reintroduced a manual transmission to Buick and matched power with sophisticated driver technologies such as the Interactive Drive Control system.

The 2012 Regal GS was potent enough to make collector car insurer Hagerty’s list of the 10 most collectible Buick models of all time.



The 2012 Buick Regal’s 2.0L turbo engine was rated at 270 hp.

World Got to See the 2017 Chevrolet Bolt at Auto Show

The 2017 Chevrolet Bolt made its Detroit debut at the 2016 North American International Auto Show in downtown Detroit last week.

Bolt lead development engineer Todd Brudder said this EV should answer a lot of questions people have about EVs in general.

Engineers developed the Bolt EV’s propulsion system to offer more than an estimated 200 miles (based on General Motors estimates) and a driving experience more akin to a compact sports sedan than a small utilitarian crossover.

“Being the leader in range and affordability means nothing if the car isn’t going to excite you each time you get behind the wheel,” said Josh Tavel, Chevrolet Bolt EV chief engineer.

“That’s why the team was tasked with delivering a propulsion system that would also make the Bolt EV an electric vehicle that owners would love to drive.”

Like most EVs on the road, the Bolt EV’s drive system uses a sin-

gle high-capacity electric motor to propel the car, Brudder said. But it’s the smooth, powerful and quiet motor design, gear configuration and shift-by-wire system, he said, that separates it from the pack.

The engineering team designed the Bolt EV’s electric motor with an offset gear and shaft configuration tailored to meet efficiency and performance targets – most notably more than an estimated 200 miles of range, Brudder said.

The motor is capable of producing up to 266 lb.-ft. of torque and 200 hp of motoring power. Combined with a 7.05:1 final drive ratio, he said, it helps propel the Bolt EV from 0-60 mph in less than seven seconds.

Power delivery is controlled by Chevrolet’s first Electronic Precision Shift system. This shift

and park-by-wire system sends electronic signals to the Bolt EV’s drive unit, said Brudder, to manage precise feel and delivery of power and torque, based on drive mode selection and accelerator inputs.

A by-wire shifter requires less packaging space than a traditional mechanical shifter, resulting in more interior space and improved interior layout.

“It’s the 200-mile range that’s important,” Brudder said. “Most people rarely drive 200 miles or more in a single trip, so a single charge should handle most people’s driving in just about any situation. And if you have to drive more than 200 miles, the Bolt can be charged at a fast-charge station in 30 minutes. This will give the vehicle an additional 90 miles of range.”

Having more than 1.3 billion

miles of EV experience from the Chevrolet Volt helped Bolt EV battery engineers and strategic partner LG Electronics to develop a new cell and battery pack to offer more than an estimated 200 miles of range, Brudder said.

Battery system preliminary specifications include 60 kWh lithium-ion battery pack, 288 lithium ion cells, five sections, 10 modules, 96 cell groups – three cells per group and 960 lbs. total weight.

“You usually have a battery cell that delivers either the desired levels of energy or power, but not traditionally both. With this cell design and chemistry, we were able to deliver a battery system with 160 kilowatts of peak power and 60 kilowatt hours of energy,” said Gregory Smith, Bolt EV battery pack engineering group manager.

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MCC's Warren campus Building C has been refurbished.

MCC Reopens Refurbished Building at Warren Campus

Macomb Community College's newly renovated C Building on its South Campus in Warren has re-opened with the start of winter semester.

The \$8.5 million renovation of the 48-year-old building was funded with \$4.25 million from the State of Michigan, along with a match by the college through its capital projects fund. While state capital outlay appropriations are typically sought to support new construction projects, Macomb's focus on renovation is designed to maximize the impact of fiscal resources while preserving the investment the community has made in the college's infrastructure.

"MCC is committed to be a good steward of the resources that the community entrusts us with," said James Jacobs, PhD, president, Macomb Community College. "While making the most of limited funds, maintaining affordable tuition and continuing to invest in leading-edge education and training to connect our students to sustainable careers may seem to be incompatible priorities, Macomb makes this work, relying on the power of

collaboration to stretch use of resources and magnify results."

Overall, the 60,000-square-foot building's electrical upgrades have reduced its energy consumption by approximately 60 percent, Jacobs said.

Improvements made to maximize efficiency include variable frequency controllers on the air handling unit, demand-control ventilation carbon dioxide sensors in classrooms, a variable frequency controller for hot water heating and chilled water system pumps, and high-efficiency bathroom fixtures that reduce water consumption. The new windows installed in the building improve glass energy performance by up to 30 percent as compared to current commercial building energy standards and reduce internal glare.

The programs housed in the building are business administration, information technology (IT), health and humanities programs, Jacobs said. From a teaching and learning perspective, the renovations focused on creating meaningful improvements in classrooms and labs, facilitating student engagement.

GM to Update its Renaissance Center HQ

by Jim Stickford

GM's recent efforts to remake the company into something beyond just an automobile manufacturer extends to even the look of its world headquarters.

On Jan. 22, GM unveiled plans to remake the exterior and common spaces of the Renaissance Center. The plans show a more modern and brighter exterior.

"We've had a busy couple of weeks to kick off the New Year," said Tim Mahoney, GM's chief marketing officer of Global Marketing Operations. "Where our brands have demonstrated their innovation and leadership with new product and technology announcements like the Bolt EV from Chevrolet, the Avista Concept from Buick and the rear-seat reminder in the new Acadia from GMC. And as a company, GM has shown it has a vision and a plan for how to build on today's core vehicle business and lead with transportation solutions for the future, like with our new partnership with Lyft."

As GM moves into the future, Mahoney said, it will be important for the company to tell the story of that journey, showing strides "that our brands, our people and our industry have made, and how we will continue to move forward."

One big opportunity for GM to celebrate its achievements and showcase its innovations is in the Renaissance Center – GM's home and a centerpiece of the



How the atrium of GM's headquarters will look after it's been upgraded.

city of Detroit, Mahoney said.

Grace Morgan, GM's director of Global Marketing Operations, will be the person overseeing the project.

"This is more than an update of the Renaissance Center's public spaces," Morgan said. "It's about creating a new kind of consumer experience."

Morgan said she got the assignment because her job at GM spans a wide variety of functions, including maintaining the GM brand. Part of her job is to put a lot of displays and events, and GM's headquarters can be considered the biggest display of them all.

"A building isn't just a building these days," Morgan said. "It can be seen as the exterior display of a brand. And the Renaissance Center is so iconic in Detroit and can be used to show off GM and

show that the company is more modern."

Mahoney said the work will be done with the help of GM design and designers at Neumann Smith Architecture and EWI Worldwide. The result will be reimagined key public spaces inside the Ren Cen as well as the exterior of the People Mover station. Mahoney said work will include:

- Exterior updates that will serve as a beacon to draw people to the building.
- Interior updates to the central area create a more open and inviting gathering space.
- Curated spaces that will feature rotating vehicles displays – mixing heritage models, concepts and current products.
- Interactive experiences with physical and digital elements teaching about GM brands and design and engineering.

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Fiat Chrysler to End 200, Dart Production Will Focus on Its Jeep and Truck Brands

DETROIT (AP) – Fiat Chrysler says the worldwide SUV craze is here to stay, and it's leaning heavily on the Jeep brand to improve its fortunes.

The Italian-American carmaker predicts Jeep sales will nearly double to 2 million worldwide by 2018, fueled by low gas prices and new models. To keep up, Fiat Chrysler plans to cut production of small cars in the U.S. so it can build more Jeeps.

The world's seventh-largest carmaker raised its Jeep sales targets Jan. 27 after releasing disappointing full-year earnings for 2015.

Fiat Chrysler reported 2015 net profit of 377 million euros (\$409 million), down from 632 million euros a year earlier and lagging analyst expectations.

Fourth-quarter net profit for Fiat Chrysler fell 40 percent to 251 million euros.

Jeep was the bright spot. Fiat Chrysler sold 1.3 million Jeeps worldwide in 2015, up 21 percent from the previous year.

Without Jeep's very strong sales in 2015, Fiat Chrysler's sales were lackluster. The company sold 4.6 million vehicles, which is overall, up slightly from 2014.

North American revenuesaw a strong increase, jumping 33 percent to 70 billion euros (\$76 billion). Jeep sales rose 25 percent in the U.S., where Fiat Chrysler says low gas prices are now a "permanent" fixture and more customers are gravitating to SUVs and trucks.

Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne said the company wants to find a partner to build small cars like the Dodge Dart and Chrysler 200 so it can make more Jeeps at its U.S. plants.

Marchionne said Jeep plants are currently running at a very high production pace that is "unsustainable."

Marchionne didn't say which U.S. plants could start making more Jeeps. But last year's contract with the United Auto Workers union promised new vehicles for the Belvidere, Ill., and Sterling Heights plants that now make the Dart and 200. The Belvidere plant is shut down this week because of slow demand, while the Sterling Heights plant is scheduled to close for six weeks this month.

"Whatever we put in place will deal with demand and unmet demand as we see it today," Marchionne said.

Europeans also bought a record number of Jeeps last year, helping Fiat Chrysler's European revenue rise 13 percent to 20 billion euros (\$22 billion).

But Fiat Chrysler's revenue slumped by 25 percent in Latin America, hurt by economic weakness in Brazil and Argentina. Revenue also fell 22 percent in Asia, pressured by price competition from Chinese automakers and an interruption in shipments after the Tianjin port explosion.

"Brazil came out of left field and left most of us staring at uncertain market conditions," Marchionne said in a conference call with analysts. "It's very difficult to call the bottom of this market."

A slowdown in demand for imported cars in China was also an unexpected thing that happened in 2015, Marchionne said.

As a result, the company is refocusing its plans for Alfa Romeo's growth on North America and Europe and away from China.

The rollout of new Alfa vehi-



Sergio Marchionne

cles by Fiat Chrysler will slow, but the company will stick to its plan of offering seven new models, including two utility vehicles, by 2020.

Full-year net revenue for Fiat Chrysler was 113 billion euros (\$123 billion), up 18 percent, and slightly beating analyst forecasts of 112 billion euros as compiled by the information company FactSet.

Fiat Chrysler said it expects net revenue of 110 billion euros and a net profit of 1.9 billion euros in 2016.

In 2014, Fiat Chrysler set a target of selling 7 million vehicles per year by 2018. On Jan. 27, Marchionne shifted away from that volume target and said the focus should instead be on hitting financial targets like revenue and net profit, which were revised upwards.

The 2015 results included Ferrari, which was spun off from its mass-market parent at the start of this year.

Ferrari net profit, overall, dropped 4 percent in the year 2015.

State Universities Pay Off

Michigan's University Research Corridor (URC) contributed \$17.5 billion to the Michigan economy, an increase of \$700 million over the previous year, according to the ninth annual Economic Impact & Benchmark Report released on Jan. 26 by URC.

The URC also ranked highly in the transfer of research and development, surpassing its five-year average for the number of patents issued, licensing and options activity, and invention disclosures, for the third straight year, said URC spokeswoman Clare Liening.

The report also noted that every region in Michigan benefited from economic activities tied

to the URC, including spending on operations, student spending and incremental alumni earnings, Liening said.

The URC's \$17.5 billion net impact in Michigan is up from \$16.8 billion in 2014 and \$12.9 billion in 2007, Liening said. For every dollar invested in the three URC universities – Wayne State, Michigan State and the University of Michigan – the state saw \$22 in economic benefits.

Liening said the URC is one of the nation's top research clusters and the engine for innovation in Michigan and the Great Lakes region, increasing economic prosperity and connecting Michigan to the rest of the great world.

Ford Enjoys Very Strong Financial Year in 2015

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) – Higher sales in most of the world helped Ford Motor Co. achieve a record pretax profit in 2015, but investors remain skittish that the good news won't keep coming.

Ford's pretax profit jumped 48 percent to \$10.8 billion, the highest in its 112-year history.

The company's U.S. sales hit their highest level in a decade, and the F-Series pickup remained the best-selling vehicle in the U.S. for the 34th straight year. Ford reported a profit in Europe for the first time in four years, and profits in Asia jumped 29 percent. A change in the way Ford accounts for its pension costs also boosted pretax results.

Bob Shanks, Ford's chief financial officer, said on Jan. 29 that 2015 was the "break-through year" Ford promised after it spent heavily in 2014 to build new plants in Asia and bring a new, aluminum-sided F-150 pickup to market in the U.S. The company expects this year's pretax profit to be equal or higher.

Shanks said he agrees that the U.S. market – which saw record new-vehicle sales of 17.5 million last year – is plateauing, but it could stay at that high level for several years. Low oil prices, low interest rates and a growing housing market all bode well for continuing strong sales.

Shanks said Ford's growing business outside the U.S. should also comfort investors. He said more than half of the \$1.3 billion increase in Ford's operating profit in the fourth quarter came from regions outside North America.

"We have a very strong, robust structure, so if and when there will be a downturn – and at some point there will – we're very well prepared to manage that and continue to be profitable and continue to pay our regular dividend and continue to invest in the business," Shanks said.

Shanks said one metric – cash flow – will fall this year because of increased engineering costs and the expense of bringing a

new aluminum-sided Super Duty truck to market. He also said Ford will be spending more on mobility projects such as experimental ride-hailing services.

Ford's full-year net income jumped to \$7.4 billion from \$1.2 billion in 2014. Excluding one-time items, such as \$600 million in employee separation payments, Ford earned \$1.93 per share.

Analysts polled by FactSet were expecting full-year earnings of \$1.73 per share. Ford's revenue rose 4 percent to \$149.6 billion in 2015, also beating forecasts. Global sales rose 5 percent to 6.6 million.

Ford also said it will make a record profit-sharing payment of \$9,300 to each of Ford's 53,000 U.S. hourly workers.

Efraim Levy, an analyst with S&P Capital IQ, reiterated his "strong buy" rating on Ford stock and said investors were overreacting. Even if U.S. auto sales slow this year, he said, buyers are likely to favor SUVs and trucks, which helps Ford and other Detroit brands. He also expects sales growth in Europe and China.

Still, Levy lowered his target price on Ford's stock by \$2 to \$17 to reflect the plateauing market. Traditionally these companies look cheap at the top and expensive at the bottom.

North America drove Ford's results, with a full-year pretax profit up 26 percent to \$9.3 billion. Ford's full-year operating margin for North America reached 10.2 percent, up from 9 percent in 2014 and within Ford's ideal range of 8-10 percent.

Ford reported its highest-ever full-year pretax profit of \$765 million in its Asia Pacific region and eked out a \$259 million profit in Europe and a \$13 million profit in the Middle East and Africa.

South America remained weak, with an \$832 million loss, but Shanks noted that even in that volatile region, Ford managed to command higher prices.

"We really started to see the international operations start to come forward," Shanks said.



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Actress Ellie Kemper is featured in Buick's online ad campaign.

Buick's Cascada Goes Digital

Buick is launching a digital-only campaign for the new Cascada convertible starring "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt" star Ellie Kemper.

The campaign, said Buick spokeswoman Crystal Wilson, is a series of ad vignettes and a YouTube film that features Kemper in a series of what are meant to be lighthearted, humorous scenarios. Also, a "between the scenes" short shows Kemper attending a yoga class and sharing tips on how she stays camera- and convertible-ready.

This latest campaign launch follows Buick's recent confirmation that it will air its first-ever Super Bowl commercial during

next month's Super Bowl 50.

"Our Ellie Kemper series invites viewers to join her in discovering the new Cascada and today's modern, approachable Buick brand," said Duncan Aldred, U.S. vice president of Buick and GMC Sales, Service and Marketing. "This innovative digital-only campaign is another example of how Buick surprises consumers and reach audiences in exciting new ways."

The Cascada, Buick's first convertible in 25 years, arrives in dealerships in the coming weeks, Wilson said. It features an athletic and sculptural beauty that delivers a distinctive profile, whether the top is up or down.

Ford Puts Materials Through the Wringer

In this day and age when automakers boast of all the new technology in their vehicles, the people at Ford believe that it's important not to forget about the fundamentals, such as fabrics and materials that are used in a vehicle's interior, said Deeptie Sethi, Ford Quality Communications manager.

Throughout a vehicle's lifetime, it's inevitable that the materials inside a car show signs of wear and tear, Sethi said. Imagine the frequent sitting on car seats, leaning on arm rests, gripping the steering wheel and fiddling with the instruments. So what does Ford do to help make sure all vehicles are up to this challenge?

To help guarantee the durability of these fabrics, leathers and plastics, Sethi said Ford engineers subject every material used inside Ford vehicles to a series of meticulous and unrelenting tests where they are stretched, scratched, snagged, sniffed and even splashed with the likes of grease, dirt and hot coffee, to see how they will stand up against the test of time and the normal wear and tear every vehicle goes through.

These tests are done to help ensure it takes a lot more than a spilled cup of coffee, the graze of a sharp edge or any accidental scrapes and scuffs to break down these materials.

Some of the unusual ordeals Ford materials need to go through include:

- The Five-Finger Scratch Test, which is used to scratch samples of different plastics to see how much abuse they can take.
- The Soil and Cleanability Test, which splashes different substances on seat fabrics to evaluate how well they can be cleaned afterwards, testing their overall stain resistance.
- The Resistance to Dye Transfer Test, which rubs materials of different colors (i.e. those dreaded new blue jeans, long-term destroyer of white leather sofas around the world) against the leather used for car seats to see if any stains are left behind.
- The Mace Snagging Test, which spins seat fabrics on rotating rollers roughly 600 times while they're repeatedly struck by a spikey iron ball to test how strong they are.

In addition, a team of examiners smell various samples of materials used inside Ford vehicles and rank them to help the engineers create different vehicle interiors that are free of disturbing odors.

Sethi said the meticulous na-



Mace Snagging Test – spinning seat fabrics by spikey iron balls.

ture of these tests is a testament to Ford's unwavering commitment to delivering quality vehicles that remain at their peak throughout the long cycle of their lives to customers and going the extra mile to ensure standards of comfort and durability are met.

Check these links to see these

tests in action:

- SNIFF: A Story about Car Smells – <https://youtu.be/n9YnEEXhrJE>.
- SNAG: A Story about Mighty Materials – <https://youtu.be/J9gyq9dGnUE>.
- SPLASH: A Story about Surprise Spills – <https://youtu.be/i7DrgKeZaEY>.

Ford Gives HD Truck Fans Chance to View Testing

What baseball fan wouldn't take the opportunity, if offered, to work out with the Tigers at Comerica Park? The same holds true for truck fans. Thanks to Ford, some lucky truck fans will be playing in the big leagues.

Five real-world heavy-duty truck customers have that opportunity. Ford is granting five people an all-access insider pass to see how the -new Super Duty lives up to its Built Ford Tough promise, said Ford spokesman Mike Levine.

These truck customers will witness torture testing of the all-new F-Series Super Duty before anyone else in the six-part We Own Work video series, Levine said.

The first video – to be posted sometime this month at ford.com – will introduce these truck customers and provide background on their businesses and how they use their fleet of Super Duty trucks.

"We're taking these customers behind the scenes to witness what goes into development and testing of the new Super Duty," said Craig Schmatz, Ford F-Series Super Duty chief engineer. "Every day these customers work hard and rely on our trucks. They know better than anyone what it takes to get the job done and how Super Duty can make that happen."

Each participant represents an industry where workers trust F-Series Super Duty more than any other truck to get the job done, Levine said, including forestry; manufacturing; heavy construction; electric, gas and sanitation; and oil and gas extraction.

Levine said that:

- 58 percent of electric, gas and sanitation workers use Super Duty trucks.
- 50 percent of forestry workers use Super Duty trucks.
- 50 percent of oil and gas extraction workers use Super Duty trucks.
- 48 percent of heavy construction workers use Super Duty trucks.
- 42 percent of manufacturing workers use Super Duty trucks.

Each work experience brings unique insight into the capabilities of Super Duty, Levine said. Later episodes will explore how

weight savings from high-strength steel and high-strength, military-grade, aluminum alloy are reinvested to create a Super Duty that can tow and haul more than ever with innovative new driver-assist technology developed specially for heavy-duty truck customers.

"There's no better way to demonstrate the power and capability of Super Duty than through the hands and eyes of our toughest customers," said Schmatz. "We're letting them put Built Ford Tough to the test."

Each video in the series will demonstrate key attributes of the Ford F-Series Super Duty.

The -new F-Series Super Duty pickup is Ford's toughest, smartest, most capable Super Duty ever, Levine said. It is built on a -new, high-strength steel frame, the truck has a segment-first, high-strength, military-grade, aluminum-alloy body with stronger axles, springs and suspension that work as hard as Super Duty customers.

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GM's Take 2 Helps Women Return to Work

General Motors established a new kind of pilot internship program aimed at experienced women engineers who are interested in returning to the workforce after a two or more year career break.

Take 2 is a 12-week internship for women with technical backgrounds in vehicle engineering, manufacturing engineering, or manufacturing operations, said GM spokeswoman Rebecca White.

As part of this program, interns will receive training, professional development, and the opportunity to network with other technical leaders to gain exposure to and understanding of GM's structure and functional areas.

"Pregnancy is often a reason women will leave the workforce for a couple of years," White said. "But there are a lot of different reasons women leave. Sometimes it's because their husband was relocated and the whole family moved. Sometimes, it's because the woman is question maybe just wanted to take a career break for a couple of years. When it comes to personal reasons for something, there's so many different situations that apply."

This program is part of a larger initiative to increase the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) talent pipeline

swe + **iRelaunch**
Society of Women Engineers THE RETURN-TO-WORK EXPERTS

STEM RE-ENTRY
TASK FORCE

GM launches career re-entry internship program.

driven by the Society of Women Engineers and iRelaunch, a career re-entry firm, White said.

"GM is proud to be a founding member of the STEM Re-entry Task force, and understands there are many high-caliber, technical women who have taken a break from their careers and are ready to come back to work but may feel out of touch with their former professional network," said Kristen Siemen, executive director Global Thermal Engineering and executive champion of the program. "The Take 2 program provides them a unique opportunity to refresh their skills and rebuild their network while working on real engineering programs for GM."

Other founding members of the STEM Re-entry Task Force include Booz Allen Hamilton, Caterpillar, Cummins, IBM, Intel and Johnson Controls.

"We're looking for experienced engineers, and there are qualified, capable women who are interested in returning to the workforce to pursue new and challenging opportunities – it's a win-win, and one commitment among many we've made to support women's careers at GM," said

John Quattrone, Senior Vice President, Global Human Resources.

White said she first heard about the development of this program in the summer of 2015.

"There is a need for something like this," White said. "It is a way for women who have left the workforce to reengage with colleagues and rebuild their professional network. People who have been out of the workforce for a couple of years, especially in STEM fields sometimes think that they might be behind the eight-ball and that technology has passed them by."

Being able to take part in an internship is helpful, White said, because it gives women the chance to get reacquainted with their chosen STEM fields and catch up on the latest technology.

"We've just announced this program," White said, "and I've already been contacted by someone interested in it. I will say what I said to her. Go to our Web site. It has all the information."

The Web address is careers.gm.com/working-with-us/experienced-internships.html

The Take 2 program begins on April 1, 2016, White said.

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Recall Issues Plague Takata As More Deaths Reported

DETROIT (AP) – Another death has been reported in a crash that involved an exploding Takata air bag inflator, but it's unclear whether the inflator killed the person.

The driver of a 2007 Honda Civic died last year in India, according to Takata documents posted Jan. 27 by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. An inflator exploded in the crash, spraying metal fragments, but authorities in India have not determined the cause of death, according to the documents.

If the inflator was the cause, it would be the 11th person killed worldwide by Takata air bags in a crisis that seems to grow larger every day. But Honda spokesman Chris Martin says Indian authorities found that other injuries from a high-speed crash were the most likely cause of the driver's death.

The death also raises questions about the safety of the 2007 Civic worldwide. Martin said both the driver and passenger air bag inflators ruptured in the India crash.

The 2007 Civic's inflators haven't been recalled yet in the U.S., but could be part of a larger recall announced last week by NHTSA. The 2007 inflators are different from those used in India, he said.

On Jan. 27, Takata filed paperwork detailing recalls of about 5.1 million vehicles made by Audi, BMW, Daimler Trucks, Honda, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz, Saab,

Toyota and Volkswagen. Automakers are scrambling to figure out what models have the recalled Takata inflators, and they're expected to file papers with further details in the coming days. Toyota says it already has recalled all the suspect inflators.

The additional recall brings to about 28 million the number of vehicles recalled so far in the U.S. to replace Takata air bag inflators. It already is the largest auto recall in U.S. history.

On Jan. 26, Ford said it would recall about 391,000 Ranger pickups because the driver's air bag inflators can explode. The recall, which covers trucks from the 2004 through 2006 model years in the U.S. and Canada, comes just days after NHTSA revealed that a South Carolina man was killed when an inflator exploded in December.

Joel Knight, 52, of Kershaw died when he was struck in the neck by metal shrapnel after his 2006 Ranger hit a cow in the road and struck a fence.

A lawyer representing Knight's family says the crash was moderate and Knight would not have died if the inflator didn't rupture as it did.

The lawyer says Ford should have recalled the trucks sooner than the company did.

Takata declined to comment on the India case or the latest recalls.

A spokesman for NHTSA said the type of inflators used in the India crash are being recalled.



The 2016 GMC Sierra 1500 garnered top towing marks in Texas.

Sierra Earns Towing Award

Well, the bragging rights have been settled. The GMC Sierra 1500 on Jan. 25 was named the 2016 Texas Truck Showdown Towing Champion, in a head-to-head capability test conducted by editors from the Web sites Cars.com, PickupTrucks.com and MrTruck.com, said GM spokeswoman Kelly Wysocki.

The editors, Wysocki said, praised their Sierra 1500 SLT test truck, which was equipped with the available 6.2L V8 engine – the segment's most powerful gas engine – and eight-speed automatic transmission. It offers a max trailering rating of 12,000 lbs.

"This is a mild-mannered pickup that is ready to don its cape and do some heavy lifting, saving the day from a long list of work chores," said Mark Williams, PickupTrucks.com editor. "The engine and transmission are synced up like a smooth-flying jet rocket."

And while it had the largest, most powerful engine in the test – 420 hp and 460 lb-ft – the Sierra also ranked first in fuel economy with a trailer, Wysocki said. The other competitors included:

- Ford F-150 Lariat with the 3.5L V6 EcoBoost;
- Chevrolet Silverado 1500 LTZ with the 5.3L V8;
- Ram 1500 Laramie Longhorn with the 5.7L V8;

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*All applicable rebates including lease/conquest offers have been deducted from sale price/payment. Pictures may not represent actual vehicle. Prices subject to change per GM incentives. Prices and payments are inclusive of active GM Employee Discount (Unless otherwise stated). Equinox, Cruze, Malibu, Trax, Traverse, Impala, Silverado, and Camaro are 24 month leases. All leases are 10k miles per year w/ approved S Tier credit w/ \$999 due at signing. Prices & payments are plus tax, title, and plate fees with acquisition fee up front. Refundable security deposit required on certain vehicles - to be determined by lender. **\$3500 trade-in is valid on 2003 or newer vehicles with under 115k miles in drivable condition, no branded titles, less reconditioning determined by appraiser. Deposition Fee may be required at vehicle turn in. Certain restrictions may apply, see dealer for complete details. ** Expiration Date - 2/1/16.

Chevy Promotes Kindness on Leap Day 2016

A Leap Year means an extra day, an extra 24 hours, and this year Chevrolet is encouraging everyone to put their added time towards simply doing something nice for someone else, said Chevy spokesman Craig Daitch.

To that end, Chevrolet has kicked off its #DayItForward campaign.

Daitch said the concept of #DayItForward came about when Chevy's were talking about there being an extra day in 2016.

"We've been working on this idea since late December," Daitch said. "Our blended team of marketing and advertising people were talking about what they'd do with an extra 24 hours. We were really busy in 2015. We launched five vehicles at Chevrolet, so time became very precious. We got to thinking that an extra day would be great to do something nice for others."

"Time is such a precious commodity and having an extra day this year presents an amazing opportunity for all of us to do something impactful," said Paul Edwards, Chevrolet vice president of Marketing. "The Chevy team is going to take those extra hours and put them towards doing unexpected acts of kindness for people - something that we hope others will embrace and repeat."

Chevrolet, Edwards said, will not be alone in the movement to "surprise and delight with moments of happiness."

Edward urges members of the public to keep their eyes peeled as some of their favorite entertainers, websites and companies join Chevrolet in the fun of treating each other to something meaningful, contributing with their own ideas on how to #Day-ItForward.

Daitch said that Chevrolet has really put its muscle behind Day-ItForward. The brand is working with some "strong" media partners to help promote the day.

"We really want to make this a movement," Daitch said. "We really want the public to get behind the idea and make it something that they embrace with all their hearts."

"Whether you buy a cup of coffee for the person behind you in line or buy a stranger the vacation of their dreams, there is no act too big or too small that a person can do," Edwards said. "So, with plenty of time left in 2016, the question challenging all of us now is, how are you going to #DayItForward?"

Plante Moran Adds Staff to Detroit Office

DETROIT (AP) - Plante Moran is increasing the number of its employees that will be based in downtown Detroit offices.

The accounting and business advisory firm will add about 60 new workers by June, pushing its total downtown workforce to 120.

The company also will begin expanding its office space at One Campus Martius this spring to 30,000 square feet.

Plante Moran had opened an office in 2013 at One Campus Martius.

Bedrock Real Estate Services and Meridian Health acquired the 15-story office building located in downtown Detroit back in 2014.

Bedrock told the media the building now is 100-percent occupied.

Bedrock and its affiliate companies have invested nearly \$2.2 billion in acquiring, renovating and developing more than 85 downtown properties.