

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



EFG Companies, Northwood University Announce F&I Innovator of the Year Competition Judges

- Judges Bring 100+ Years of Experience to Inaugural F&I Competition -

DALLAS, TX (November 4, 2015) EFG Companies, the innovator behind the award-winning Hyundai Assurance program, together with Northwood University, today announced the judging panel in the first annual F&I Innovator of the Year Award competition. Combined, the 8-member panel brings over 100 years of F&I experience at automotive dealerships across the country and encompasses all of the major automotive brands.

The judges will select a winning F&I product idea from one of six teams currently competing in the F&I Innovator of the Year competition, which will conclude Friday, November 13. The winning team and product will be announced on Thursday, December 10.

2015 Inaugural Competition Judges

Judge	Title	Auto Group/Company
Lisa Copeland	Manager Partner/General Manager	FIAT of Austin, a Nyle Maxwell Family Dealership
Alvin Heggs	Dealer Principal	Superstition Springs Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram
Kurt Hornung	Vice President of F&I Operations	AutoNation, Inc.
Tiger Lester	Regional Finance and Insurance Director	Group 1 Automotive
Patricia Lindseth	Western Region Financial Services Manager	Penske Automotive Group
Anthony Patterson	Vice President of Operations	Patterson Auto Group
Fernando Somoza	Executive Manager	Central Houston Cadillac, Central Houston Nissan, & Baytown Nissan
John Stephens	Senior Vice President	Dealer Services, EFG Companies

“Each judge selected for this panel has a reputation associated with innovation and raising the bar within the automotive industry,” said John Pappanastos, President and CEO, EFG Companies. “Collectively, their vision, years of experience, and expertise give

them the unique ability to determine what F&I product has the most potential to benefit consumers, individual dealerships, and the industry as a whole.”

About the competition

The F&I Innovator of the Year competition is designed to foster breakthrough ideas in the F&I space. It includes six competing teams from Northwood University that have been tasked with developing a business case for a new F&I product. The students must research, rationalize and demonstrate market viability of their new product, and its potential to facilitate F&I product sales in franchise dealerships.

At the conclusion of the competition, EFG Companies will award the winning team \$25,000. The company will also develop the winning F&I product for the retail automotive marketplace, and return a percentage of the product’s revenues to Northwood University.

Bookmark the F&I Innovator of the Year YouTube Channel to see the teams’ weekly videos: <http://bit.ly/1E5zix0>

Follow @EFG_NWInnovator on Twitter for the latest competition news.

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About EFG Companies

EFG Companies combines almost 40 years of experience serving as an industry innovator of consumer and vehicle protection programs with the company’s commitment to raising the industry bar in providing superior client engagement. With their field and administrative teams AFIP and ASE certified, EFG’s professionals provide world-class product development and administration, go-to-market strategies, training and auditing support across a multitude of channels. www.efgcompanies.com

About Northwood University

Northwood University is committed to the most personal attention to prepare students for success in their careers and in their communities; it promotes critical thinking skills, personal effectiveness, and the importance of ethics, individual freedom and responsibility.

Private, nonprofit, and accredited, Northwood University specializes in managerial and entrepreneurial education at its full-service, residential campus located in mid-Michigan. Adult Degree Programs are available in six states with many course delivery options including online. The DeVos Graduate School offers accelerated, evening and weekend programming in Michigan and Texas. The Alden B. Dow Center for Creativity and Enterprise provides system-wide expertise in family enterprise, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and new business development. International education is offered through study abroad and in Program Centers in Switzerland, China (Changchun and Wuxi), Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

<http://www.northwood.edu/>

RELEASE ADDENDUM



Blue Ribbon Judges Panel Backgrounder

A panel of eight judges will collectively choose the first annual F&I Innovator of the Year Award recipient from six teams tasked to design a breakthrough F&I product. Through their participation in the contest, the judges are helping to foster the next level of innovation across the industry.

Combined, the eight-member panel brings over 100 years of F&I expertise from automotive dealerships from across the country, encompassing all major automotive brands. Following are brief descriptions of each judge:

Lisa Copeland

Lisa Copeland is managing partner/general manager of FIAT Austin, Texas, a Nyle Maxwell Dealership and the number one FIAT retailer in NAFTA since the brand's return to North America. Lisa is a pioneer in automotive marketing and management with over 20 years of proven success, and was recently honored by Chrysler Group CEO Sergio Marchionne for record-breaking FIAT 500 sales.



Lisa's expertise in sales and management has been published in prominent media outlets such as the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, Marie Claire and Automotive News. Under Lisa's leadership, FIAT of Austin was recognized as the sixth "Best Workplace in North America" by Automotive News in 2013, and "Outstanding Business Leader 2014" by Northwood University. She was also appointed to the Dealer Advisory Council for Autotrader.com in 2014.

Alvin Heggs



Alvin Heggs is dealer principal of Superstition Springs Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram in the Phoenix, Arizona area. A former NBA power forward for the Houston Rockets, Alvin transitioned to automotive dealership management at the end of his basketball career. He previously served as the general manager for Spring Chrysler Jeep Dodge, based in Spring, Texas.

Kurt Hornung

With over 20 years of experience in the automotive F&I industry, Kurt Hornung serves as vice president of F&I Operations at AutoNation, Inc., the nation's largest retailer of new and used cars, trucks and SUVs in the United States. Prior to joining Auto Nation, Kurt was a district manager for JM&A Group, one of the largest providers of F&I products in the automotive industry. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Kansas State.



Tiger Lester



Tiger Lester serves as regional finance director for the Austin Division of Group 1 Automotive, a Fortune 500 company. Group 1 owns and operates 148 automotive dealerships, 193 franchises and 30 collision centers in the United States, United Kingdom and Brazil. Tiger began his career at Gene Messer Ford in Lubbock, Texas. He earned his Bachelor's degree in finance and economics from Texas Tech University.

Patricia Lendseth

Patricia Lindseth is western region financial services manager for Penske Automotive Group in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. The Fortune 500 transportation services company employs more than 22,000 people worldwide with automotive and commercial truck dealerships principally in the United States and Western Europe.



Anthony Patterson



For the past 12 years, Anthony Patterson has served as vice president of operations for Patterson Auto Group in Wichita Falls, Texas. He brings over 15 years of experience in the automotive dealer finance industry, and previously served as the General Manager of Patterson Honda where he was responsible for all aspects of the dealership.

Fernando Somoza

Fernando Somoza is executive manager of Central Houston Cadillac, Central Houston Nissan and Baytown Nissan. Fernando is a native of Nicaragua where his family was a Mercedes Benz distributor. He served as the first Hispanic chairman of the Houston Automobile Dealers Association in 2006, and was recognized as General Motors' Dealer of the Year in 2008. He has also served on the board of directors of General Motors Minority Dealers Association (GMMDA).



John Stephens



As senior vice president of Dealer Services at EFG Companies, John Stephens directs the company's direct sales and service channel, providing EFG's solutions and engagement to auto dealers. John is responsible for leading the Dealer Services team in optimizing the profitability of EFG's direct dealer partners and supporting the use of EFG products and services. In his 25 years in the automotive industry, John has held many positions, from F&I contractor and director to a general sales manager. When working for Mac Haik, his store ranked number seven in the nation for unit sales.

About the competition

The competing teams will be tasked with developing a business case for their new F&I product. The students must research, rationalize and demonstrate the market viability of the new product, and its potential to facilitate F&I product sales in franchise dealerships. Teams will upload video diaries weekly to YouTube, chronicling their progress, challenges and breakthroughs.

The competition runs through November 13, 2015 when a panel of leading dealer principals, EFG executives, and Northwood's automotive program educators will judge each team's business case. EFG Companies will award the winning team \$25,000, and will develop the winning F&I product for the retail automotive marketplace. The company will also return a percentage of the product's revenues to Northwood University.

For more information on the student competitors and F&I mentors visit http://efgcompanies.com/efg_nwinnovator.aspx.

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