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## Stingray, Silverado Chosen As NAIAS Car, Truck of Year

The new Chevrolet Corvette Stingray and Silverado 1500 are the 2014 North American Car and Truck of the Year.

It is the first time Chevrolet has won both awards in the same year, said GM spokesman Monte Doran. The Silverado was last named Truck of the Year in 2007 and the Corvette was last named Car of the Year in 1998.

"Chevrolet is in the midst of

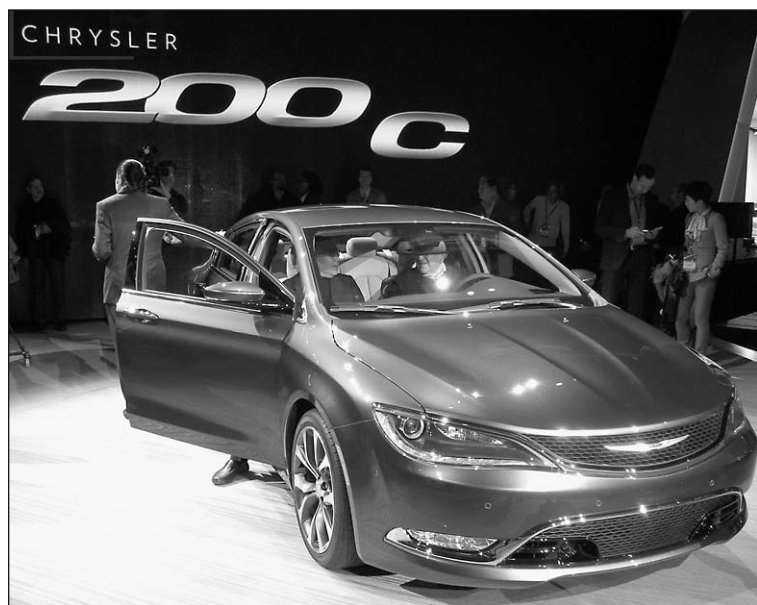
the most aggressive product transformation in the brand's more than 100-year history," said Alan Batey, General Motors senior vice president, Global Chevrolet.

"The Corvette and Silverado truly embody the passion, commitment and focus that is driving us to deliver the most expressive

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GM's new CEO Mary Barra with Silverado 1500, Corvette Stingray at Auto Show



Chrysler 200 sedan at automaker's NAIAS display

## Chrysler 200 to be 'The New Benchmark for Midsize Sedans' – Brand President Gardner

by Jim Stickford

How do you build a brand when you only have three vehicles?

That's the question Chrysler brand president Al Gardner faces.

And, he said, the answer is simple – build it off the products.

So the launching of the new 2015 Chrysler 200 sedan at Detroit's 2014 NAIAS is an important move in building brand awareness.

"The question of how to build the brand when you only have three vehicles – the 300, the 200

and the Town & Country – was something that (CEO) Sergio Marchionne asked me 90 days ago," Gardner said. "I say look at Kia and Hyundai. A decade ago, they didn't have a lot of vehicles and they didn't have much of a reputation being so new to the marketplace."

But, Gardner said, they were able to build their reputation through building great vehicles that people wanted. Which brings us to the 2015 Chrysler 200, he said.

"The all-new 2015 Chrysler 200 will be the new benchmark for midsize sedans with an excep-

tional driving experience, fuel economy of up to 35 mpg highway and exquisite craftsmanship," Gardner said.

"The all-new Chrysler 200 lays the groundwork for the future of the Chrysler Brand with a timeless, elegant design; clever functionality; a standard nine-speed automatic transmission; a class-leading all-wheel-drive system; more than 60 safety and security features and a host of new technology drivers and passengers will value."

The 2015 Chrysler 200 is de-

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## 2015 'Smart, Tough' F150 Debuts at NAIAS

by Ken Brown

Ford Motor Company unveiled the new 2015 F-150 truck last week during the 2014 North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) with a range of design and equipment innovations that Ford executives say will redefine the full-size truck segment.

The F-150 is part of the Ford F-Series truck lineup, America's best-selling truck for 37 consecutive years and America's best-selling vehicle overall for 32 years.

Ford executives call this new version of America's favorite truck the "toughest, smartest and most capable F-150 ever," based on the combination of power, capability, efficiency and safety that it delivers, as well as

its enhancements in driving, load handling and user convenience.

"Toughest" refers to the new F-150's improved fully boxed ladder frame that uses high-strength steel rated up to 70,000 psi – stronger, Ford claims, than in some competitors' heavy-duty pickup truck frames. "Toughest" also refers to high-strength, military-grade, aluminum alloys used throughout the F-150 body for the first time, improving dent and ding resistance and also saving up to 700 pounds of weight.

"Smartest" refers to an array of new class-exclusive features, some of which were showcased on the Atlas Concept truck that Ford exhibited at the 2013 NAIAS. Some of those features include a 360-degree camera view, LED headlights and sideview mirror spotlights, integrated loading

ramps, camera-aided trailer backup and hitch assist, trailer tow module that helps identify and alert the driver to potential trailer connectivity or trailer lighting issues, high-wattage power outlets in the cab, remote tailgate locking, unlocking and releasing, LED lighting embedded in the walls of the cargo box to illuminate the box interior to help the user quickly find tools and other items – and many more, say Ford officials.

"Most capable" acknowledges some "segment-first" technologies featured on the new F-150 to assist drivers and passengers, including:

- Second-row inflatable seat belts;
- Curve Control, which auto-

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Alan Mulally, left, and Bill Ford Jr. show off the new Ford F-150 at last week's NAIAS at Cobo Center in Detroit.



José Muñoz



Leon Richardson

## Urban Wheels Honors Minorities In the Automotive Industry

José Muñoz and Leon Richardson were the big winners at the 18th annual Urban Wheels Awards ceremony in downtown Detroit Jan. 12.

Muñoz was named 2014 Executive of the Year and Richardson received the 2014 Pioneer of the Year award.

Other award winners include Dorian Boyland, who was named African American Dealer of the Year, and Manuel Gonzalez, who was named Hispanic Dealer of the Year.

The Urban Wheels Awards are put on by Decisive Media and are meant to honor and promote the participation of minorities in all aspects of the auto industry.

The event was hosted by actor Morris Chestnut and comedienne Maria Costa.

Muñoz is executive vice president and chairman for Nissan's North America Region.

In 2009, Muñoz was named president of Nissan Mexicana (NMEX) and under his leadership, the NMEX organization achieved the highest market

share in Nissan's history and saw a 42-month run of sales leadership in Mexico.

Muñoz was also responsible for developing key dealer network initiatives that led to significant improvements across NMEX's sales network.

As president and CEO of Chemico Systems, Richardson serves as chairman of the National Association of Black Suppliers, is a board member of the Michigan Minority Supplier Development Council, and co-chair of the General Motors Supplier Diversity Council.

He is also a former executive board member of Suppliers for the Environment (SP) and the Chemical Management Suppliers forum (CSP).

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Contact us: [info@detroitautoscene.com](mailto:info@detroitautoscene.com)