

ASE Group Awards Chrysler's Rae as Human Resources Executive of Year

by Jennifer Knightstep

In June of 2000, Nancy A. Rae was named senior vice president of Human Resources at Chrysler. Since then, she's won accolades and honors across the board.

Award have come for her dedication to building a diverse workforce and for other aspects of her organizational leadership, ensuring the success of her company and the well-being and inclusion of its employees.

This month, Rae added to her impressive list of awards, honored as Human Resources Executive of the Year by the American Society of Employers (ASE), an affiliate of the Employer Associations of America.

Rae has faced challenges in reorganizing and rebuilding Chrysler's workforce, hiring 16,000 people since June 2009, when the company was bailed out.

The bailout loans were repaid in May 2011 due in part to Rae's dedication to the recovery and restructuring process, a fact that surely figured in her nomination for the ASE recognition.

According to a press release, the ASE scrutinizes nominees based on "the nominee's commitment to the HR profession, past and current successes, contributions to the community, impact on the lives of others, and the



Nancy A. Rae, senior vice president of Human Resources at Chrysler.

success of the nominee's company or organization."

"This award is all about recognizing how critical the HR executive's leadership role is in today's workplace," said Mary Corrado, ASE president & CEO.

"It is all about influencing people at all levels, no matter what their respective roles, to align their own priorities with the overall mission of the organization."

Rae adds this more personal honor to several other recent awards to her organization, including being named among the "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers" by *Working Mother*

magazine, and being recognized earlier this year by the editors of *LatinaStyle* magazine as one of the 50 best companies for Hispanic women to work in the U.S.

"This is a great honor that truly recognizes the dedication and hard work of so many Chrysler Group people who helped to create a company that is a sustainable world-class competitor and an employer of choice," Rae said.

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Faurecia Honored by PDMA

Faurecia, which maintains its North American offices in Auburn Hills and is the sixth-largest global automotive supplier, has been recognized for its sustained and quantifiable innovation success by the Product Development & Management Association (PDMA) at the organization's annual global conference Oct. 20-24 in Orlando, Fla.

The award is presented to innovators in such diverse categories as computer technology, materials science, automotive, health care and consumer products. Faurecia was acknowledged for its innovation in the automotive industry and for its ability to spot trends and turn ideas into products.

The PDMA chose to honor Faurecia after a rigorous nine-month examination of the company's processes and products. The PDMA study focused on the activities of Faurecia's "xWorks" innovation incubator in Holland, Mich., one of the company's dedicated centers that conceptualize automotive seating products.

The team and its process have developed such products as SmartFit, a system that enables drivers and occupants to use their smartphones to automatically adjust their vehicle seats to the best position for their own body.

Another innovation that was developed using Faurecia's methodology was the Performance Seat, a unique dynamic comfort system and composite

back technology to create a comfortable, safe seating system that is 20 percent thinner and 20 percent lighter than conventional seats.

While Faurecia engaged the PDMA Outstanding Corporate Innovator (OCI) Committee with its seating innovations, the Outstanding Corporate Innovator Award recognizes the innovation process that Faurecia employs across all the company's product groups, include automotive seating, emissions control technologies, interior systems and automotive exteriors.

The committee indicated that particular interest in top management's direct engagement in the innovation process and the way that Faurecia's innovation has translated directly into commercial activity.

"Faurecia is focused on open innovation," said Rob Huber, vice president of innovation for Faurecia North America.

"We're constantly looking outside the company and the industry to find the best ideas that can move our industry forward in such arenas as light-weighting, passenger wellness and comfort, premium features and other critical trends. We're set up to work actively with people outside the company to translate these concepts into real products."

Recipients of the innovator award needed to demonstrate a sustained record of success in launching new products or services over a five-year period.

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