Stevens Appointed GM's Executive VP, CFO

General Motors has named Chuck Stevens as executive vice president and chief financial officer, effective Jan. 15.

He replaces Dan Ammann, who became company president on Jan. 15. Stevens was previously CFO of GM North America.

In his new position, Stevens will be responsible for leading the automaker's financial and accounting operations on a global basis, said GM spokesperson Dave Roman. He will report to Mary Barra, who became GM CEO on Jan. 15.

"Chuck's extensive experience in leading finance operations and driving profitable growth all around the world makes him the perfect choice to help our team drive GM's global performance to new heights," said Barra.

Stevens, 54, became CFO of GM North America in January 2010. In this position, he led GM's financial operations for U.S. Sales, Service and Marketing, GM Canada, GM Mexico, North America Manufacturing, Customer Care and Aftersales, and Global Connected Consumer. He was also interim CFO of GM South America from December 2011 to January 2013.

Stevens previously held leadership positions in China, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand, Roman said. He began his career at Buick Motor Division in 1983.

"The plan is to build on the good progress made by the finance team in driving the right business decisions," said Stevens. "I look forward to working with the GM team to drive even stronger business results."

John Stapleton, currently CFO of GM Global Manufacturing, will replace Stevens as CFO of North America. He will report to Alan Batey, who becomes executive vice president and president of GM North America effective Jan. 15. Stapleton,

Chuck Stevens

45, has more than 24 years of financial experience at GM.

Steve Hill, 53, currently North America vice president, Customer Care and Aftersales, was named vice president, U.S. Sales and Service. He will lead U.S. Sales Operations, Chevrolet, Buick and GMC Sales and Service, and Fleet and Commercial Sales.

Tim Turvey, 51, currently executive director, Customer Care and Aftersales Sales and Marketing, will succeed Hill as North America vice president, Customer Care and Aftersales, effective immediately.

"Both Steve and Tim have proven track records of delivering strong business results and keeping our customers at the center of everything they do," said Alan Batey, GM executive vice president and president, North America.

"Their broad experience in a variety of areas that touch our customers will help us achieve the highest levels of customer satisfaction."

Hill joined GM in 1983 and held a series of sales assignments with Cadillac prior to being named director of Sales Promotion at Cadillac in 1993. Following assignments with Motors Holding, HUMMER and retail planning, he became executive director of Retail and Customer Relationship Management Marketing in 2006 and North America vice president, Customer Care and Aftersales, in 2010. He earned a bachelor's degree at Michigan State University and a master's degree at Wayne State University.

Turvey, currently executive director, Customer Care and Aftersales Sales and Marketing, began his GM career in 1983 with Buick. After a series of sales assignments, he became director of Aftersales for GM Japan in 2002.

Following assignments in China, Canada, and the Latin America, Africa and Middle East region, he was named to his present position in 2011. He holds a bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale.

Federal-Mogul Buys Affinia Arm

(AP) – Auto parts supplier Federal-Mogul is buying Affinia's chassis components business to help broaden its product offerings.

Financial terms were not disclosed. Affinia Group Inc.'s chassis components business serves U.S. aftermarket customers with branded and private label chassis product lines. The company said the sale will help it to pay down its debt.

"This combination will allow us to better meet the needs of current customers and increase our ability to attract new customers," Kevin Freeland, Federal-Mogul Corp. co-CEO and CEO of its vehicle components segment, said.

The deal gives Federal-Mogul a wider range of wheel-end and steering products.

Ford's Matchmaking Summit Results in Contracts for Michigan Small Businesses

Ford and its Tier I suppliers recently awarded $10.4 million in contracts to Michigan-based companies.

The contracts were granted as a result of the March 2013 Pure Michigan Business Connect Ford Matchmaking Summit.

Ford hosted the summit with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, in partnership with the Detroit Regional Chamber.

Ford, the first OEM to host the summit, used the event to connect more than 300 qualified Michigan suppliers with 12 of the automaker's purchasing teams and 30 of its Tier I suppliers.

"For a program like Pure Michigan Business Connect to be successful, we need leaders like Ford and its commitment to grow our economy organically from within, and we thank them for their investments in Michigan," said Gov. Rick Snyder.

"Their commitment, along with those of other PMBC members, means significant growth opportunities for Michigan companies."

Supply contracts for more than $11 million were sourced because of the summit, with $10.4 million originating with Ford and its suppliers.

Ford directly sourced $5.8 million with Michigan-based small businesses, and its Tier I suppliers signed $4.6 million in contracts with local companies.

"The matchmaking summit allowed the Dura Automotive team exposure to high-quality Michigan small businesses that we otherwise would not be aware of," said Richard Hopkins, vice president of global purchasing, Dura Automotive Systems, one of the Ford suppliers that participated in the event.

"We sourced more than $45 million with 200 local suppliers in 2013, including $9.2 million with diverse suppliers. As a Michigan-based company ourselves, Dura is thrilled to be supporting growth and job creation in our local community."

Ford has a long history, said Ford spokesperson Kristina Adamski, of "matchmaking" suppliers through its Supplier Diversity Development program, which celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2013.

Through the program, Adamski said, Ford aims to source at least 10 percent of U.S. purchases from minority, women and veteran-owned businesses.

Since the program's inception, she added, Ford has spent more than $67 billion with diverse suppliers.

Ford is committed to using home-grown suppliers, Adamski said. In 2012, the company purchased $15 billion in goods and services from Michigan-based companies.

"We are proud to be the first OEM to support Gov. Snyder's initiative to increase additional opportunities with Michigan small businesses," said Hau Thai Tang, Ford group vice president, Global Purchasing.

"Ford recognizes the importance of our supplier network in the success and growth of our company, and we truly believe in profitable growth for all."

GM's Patents Lead the Way When It Comes to Car-Making Technologies

A patent for an industry-first aluminum welding process used on the 2014 Corvette Stingray is one example of how General Motors is driving more of its inventions into making and equipping cars and trucks on the road.

Another industry first – the use of a lightweight shape memory alloy wire instead of a heavier motorized actuator to open and close the Corvette Stingray's hatch vent – is another reason General Motors continued to lead the auto and transportation industries in patents granted for the 10th consecutive quarter for July to September, according to The Patent Board.

According to The Patent Board, GM received 1,672 U.S. patents in 2013 applied to global product engineering, powertrain engineering, manufacturing, research and development and On-Star organizations. That's 176 more than second place Toyota and more than twice as many as Ford, said GM spokesman Dan Flores.

"Breakthrough technologies like aluminum welding and shape memory alloys show how GM is leveraging its intellectual property for real-world applications," said Jon Lauckner, GM chief technology officer, vice president of Global R&D and president of GM Ventures. "Commercializing patented inventions as game-changing vehicle features and manufacturing processes reflects GM's commitment to innovation."

Aluminum welding is important because it enables increased use of aluminum to shave pounds, which helps to improve fuel economy and driving performance.