

## Coronavirus is Disrupting U.S. Auto Industry

FCA was the first domestic automaker to report a confirmed case of the Coronavirus among its employees.

On March 12, Reuters reported that FCA officials have confirmed that an employee had tested positive for COVID-19 at its Kokomo, Ind., transmission plant but the location will remain open, raising the specter of

U.S. shutdowns hitting the industry.

The automaker said the employee was receiving medical care and his immediate co-workers and others he may have come into direct contact with have been placed in home quarantine.

FCA officials have not named the infected employee, but said that his work station has been

sanitized. The plant normally employs about 4,000 people.

In a March 13 "Dear Colleague" memo to staff, FCA CEO Mike Manley wrote that the company's "first priority during this time is the welfare of the FCA family and we are taking specific actions to protect both our manufacturing and office-based employees. Second, we are now managing the

company to ensure business continuity, in particular focusing on how we keep production lines running and vehicle programs on track.

"Across the world, our regions are experiencing the spread of the virus in various stages with China starting to re-open for

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Just a week after FCA revealed a \$400M plan to upgrade its Kokomo, Ind. transmission plant, an employee was confirmed to have the Coronavirus.

## Marelli Choses Southfield as New U.S. HQ

Marelli, a leading global tier-one automotive supplier, has signed a multi-year lease to relocate its North American headquarters to Southfield.

The company will occupy nearly 200,000 square feet of the brownfield site at 26555 Northwestern Highway, with room to grow, said Marelli spokeswoman Lisa Van Giesen. The mid-century modern building, which has been unoccupied since 2015, is conveniently located at the corner of Lahser Road and the John C. Lodge Freeway.

"While it's important for us to be in close proximity to our automotive clients, it's just as important to ease the transition for our employees," said Gene Spector, senior vice president Sales and Business Development North America, Marelli. "Our new location will have minimal impact on the average commute, and will provide employees with a modern, open and collaborative work environment."

Bringing local teams together under one roof is a key step forward in Marelli's integration process, Van Giesen said. In May 2019, Magneti Marelli and Calsonic Kansei came together as Marelli, a move which created one of the world's largest global independent automotive component suppliers.

In a recent interview with *Automotive News*, Marelli CEO Boda Bolzenius said, "The integration

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## GM Changing Work Rules to Fight Virus

by Jim Stickford

The Coronavirus has come to Michigan, and that has affected how major employers in the auto industry are doing business.

On March 13, GM CEO Mary Barra sent out a message to employees about GM's new policies developed to fight the virus.

She stated "the coronavirus continues to evolve, we have important updates to our working policies to share.

"If the nature of your work allows for it, we are asking all GM

employees and contract workers to work remotely, beginning Monday, March 16. This policy applies globally, apart from our team in China, which has existing protocols in place. Please speak with your direct manager about what this means for you.

Contract workers should contact their employers for further direction.

"These are important steps to lower the probability of spreading the coronavirus to co-workers, families and communities and to relieve the burden on pub-

lic resources. It also helps conserve critical resources like cleaning crews, medical staff, and supplies so they can be deployed where they are most needed."

Barra noted that not all of GM's teams are able to work remotely and that the company is taking every precaution to ensure teams remain safe and are adjusting manufacturing, Global Product Development, Customer Care and Aftersales and Contact

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## Ford Mach-E Mustang Can Get Charge Station Maps

You want a Ford Mustang Mach-E, but are afraid that you won't know where to go to get it charged.

But no worries, Ford has you covered, said Ford spokeswoman Emma Bergg.

From the sunny Pacific Coast to the brutally cold Northeast, the all-electric Mustang Mach-E has drawn reservations from all 50 U.S. states during the first three months of reservations thanks in part to key vehicle attributes like EPA-estimated range and all-wheel drive capability that meet regional customer needs, Bergg said.

For example, a Mustang Mach-E with available extended-range

battery and rear-wheel drive has a targeted EPA-estimated 300 miles of range, paying off the spirit of freedom Mustang has delivered for the past 55 years, Bergg said. It is especially a favorite among customers in the west and southwest. California, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona and Washington are particularly strong.

On the other side of the country, available all-wheel drive is proving popular with customers in the frigid and snowy northeast. While nearly three in four customers reserving a Mustang Mach-E have so far opted for an

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## Ford Issues New Virus-Related Work Rules

Ford was the latest Detroit automaker to issue new rules about work schedules as a result of the Coronavirus.

On Friday, March 13, the company issued a press statement outlining new work procedures.

It stated that "Ford's top priority is always the safety and well-being of our employees, dealers, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders.

"Thankfully, the effect of the coronavirus on Ford employees so far has been very limited. In recent days, though, we concluded the issue has taken on a different dimension – and are continuing to act in real time to keep our people safe and help limit the spread of the virus in communities where we live and work.

"Therefore, starting Monday, March 16, we are instructing

much of our global workforce – except those in business-critical roles that cannot be done away from Ford facilities – to work remotely until further notice. The action will additionally help reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus while maximizing the health of our business."

Both GM and FCA issued new work rules as a result of the virus. But the change in work procedures extends far beyond the auto industry.

AP reported that head of Gannett, the nation's largest newspaper chain, on Thursday urged employees able to telecommute to "refrain from coming into the office unless absolutely necessary" because of the coronavirus outbreak.

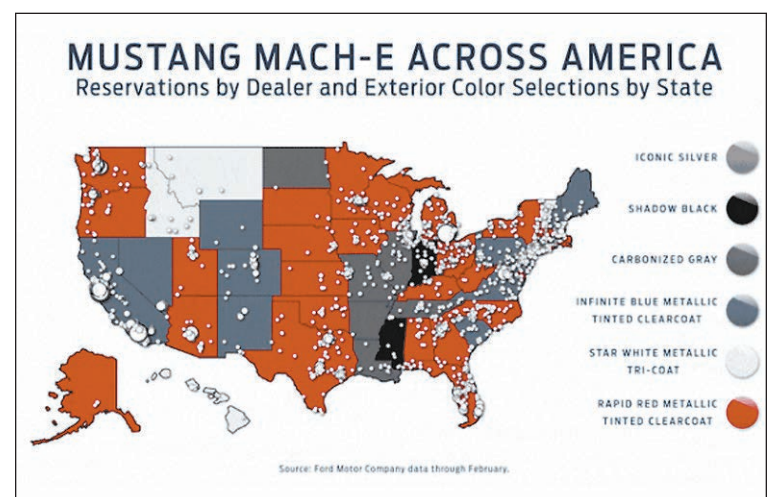
Gannett and Fox News were the latest media companies to is-

sue directives to workers designed to minimize transmission of the disease, both focusing on reducing the number of people in offices.

Paul Bascobert, president and CEO of Gannett, said in a memo to staff that no guests should be allowed in company offices. With its merger last year with GateHouse Media, Gannett now owns some 260 daily newspapers, including USA Today, the Arizona Republic and Providence Journal, and hundreds of weekly newspapers.

"For those working in the office, we would ask that you try to create space from co-workers, avoid direct contact whenever possible and continue with the previously advised hand washing

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Ford has created a map of EV charging stations accessible via its tech.



# FCA Indiana Facility Getting \$400 Million Upgrade to Meet Jeep Demand

FCA's Jeep brand is getting bigger and that is good news for employees in FCA's Indiana facilities.

The company will invest \$400 million to repurpose an idled transmission plant in Kokomo, Ind., to build the GMET4 engine – the Company's 2.0-liter Global Medium Engine inline four-cylinder turbo that is currently offered on the Jeep Wrangler and Jeep Cherokee, said FCA spokeswoman Jodi Tinson.

With this investment, 1,000 Indiana jobs will be retained with nearly 200 new jobs added to support production, bringing total employment in the state to more than 8,300.

FCA North America Chief Operating Officer Mark Stewart, along with Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb, Kokomo Mayor Tyler Moore, UAW Vice President and Director of the FCA Department Cindy Estrada and UAW Region 2B Director Rich Rankin, joined other local officials and guests to celebrate the news at an event at the plant, which will be renamed Kokomo Engine Plant in early March, Tinson said.

In his remarks, Stewart talked about the importance of this engine to the Company's future powertrain strategy.

"The GMET4 will be a very important engine for us as we look to deliver on the promises we made as part of our five-year plan in 2018," Stewart said. "While the 2.0-liter is a current engine option on the Jeep Wrangler and Cherokee models, a significant number of new technologies can be applied to this engine, making it relevant for the future. It will play an important role in our plans to offer electric engine options across 30 name-

plates that FCA will bring to markets around the world by 2022."

The new facility will be the source of all U.S. production for the engine currently built in Termoli, Italy. Production is expected to begin in the second quarter of 2021, Tinson said.

Stewart acknowledged the support of the State of Indiana, the City of Kokomo and the UAW for working with the company to finalize its investment plans.

"I'd like to add my appreciation to both Gov. Holcomb and Mayor Moore for seeing the opportunities that exist with this investment and helping give this facility new life," Stewart said. "I also want to thank Cindy Estrada and Rich Rankin, as well as the rest of the UAW leadership, for working with us to preserve and add jobs. Their support will be critical to building a quality engine for our customers."

For more than eight decades, FCA has built transmissions in Indiana, more than 90 million since record keeping began in 1974, Tinson said. Since 2009, the Company has invested nearly \$2 billion in its four area plants to produce the eight- and nine-speed transmissions, some of the most fuel-efficient transmissions on the market. When production of the GMET4 launches, it will mark the first time in the company's history that it has built engines in the state.

But, according to Stewart, the decision to invest in Indiana and transform the plant into the Kokomo Engine Plant came down to the level of commitment shown by the women and men who work in the region.

"As engine technology continues to change, our focus must continue to be on our most valu-

able asset – our people," Stewart said. "This engine program will bring new job opportunities for our current workforce, as well as the manufacturing workforce of the future. Our employees – some of whom are second-, third- or even fourth-generation FCA employees – have always demonstrated a passion to help deliver great products for our customers."

In total, FCA has committed to invest more than \$14 billion in its U.S. manufacturing operations, creating nearly 30,000 new jobs since June 2009.

The 2.0-liter turbocharged I-4 engine is part of FCA's Global Medium Engine family, Tinson said. Identified as the GMET4, this high-tech, direct-injection engine uses a twin-scroll, low-inertia turbocharger mounted directly to the cylinder head, along

with a dedicated cooling circuit for the turbocharger, intake air and throttle body for exceptional responsiveness, performance and fuel efficiency.

The engine is fitted with double overhead camshafts, dual independent camshaft timing and cooled exhaust gas recirculation. Direct injection delivers fuel into the cylinder and, coupled with turbocharging, enables more efficient combustion, reduced emissions and increased performance.

The foundation of the engine is a low-pressure sand cast-aluminum block with cast-in iron cylinder liners and a cast aluminum alloy cylinder head.

When equipped with the GMET4, the Jeep Cherokee can deliver over 30 mpg highway and provide outstanding off-road performance, while the Jeep Wran-

gler can deliver a rating of 24 mpg highway.

Construction of Indiana Transmission Plant II (ITPII), which will be renamed Kokomo Engine Plant, began in 2002 and launched production of five-speed transmissions in November 2003. The plant also produced components for eight-speed transmissions. ITPII built its last five-speed transmission in August 2018 and was idled in the fall of 2019.

FCA currently operates three transmission plants and one casting plant in Indiana. The portfolio of transmissions includes four-, six-, eight- and nine-speed transmissions, as well as the SiEVT transmission for the Chrysler Pacifica plug-in hybrid electric minivan, built at the Windsor Assembly Plant in Ontario, Canada.



Stewart (right) and Holcomb check out the 2.0-liter engine that will be built at the new Kokomo Engine Plant.

## Aptiv Gets Innovation Honor

Auto supplier Aptiv PLC (formerly part of Delphi), a global technology company focused on making mobility safer, greener, and more connected, announced has been named to *Fast Company's* prestigious annual list of the World's Most Innovative Companies for 2020.

"Aptiv has transformed our business to focus on innovating at the intersection of the most disruptive trends in the automotive industry," said Kevin Clark, president and CEO, Aptiv. "This award goes to our engineers who are working to solve mobility's toughest problems with technology that improves safety, lowers emissions, and delivers the intelligent software-enabled features consumers want."

*Fast Company* recognized Aptiv for its work in the development of Level 1 – 3 ADAS systems and Level 4 – 5 autonomous driving solutions which will make

mobility safer and more accessible.

The company's industry-leading advanced active safety technologies are currently used by 20 global automakers.

Aptiv also operates a fleet of Level 4 autonomous vehicles in both the U.S. and Asia, across a wide range of driving conditions and environments, including the industry's largest commercial deployment of self-driving vehicles in Las Vegas.

This real-life commercial application of automated driving technology has provided more than 100,000 rides on the Lyft network, and received a 5-out-of-5 star rating from 98 percent of the passengers.

The Most Innovative Companies issue is now available online at [fastcompany.com/most-innovative-companies/2020](https://fastcompany.com/most-innovative-companies/2020) and on newsstands beginning on March 17.

## State Approves a Tourist Campaign

LANSING, Mich. (AP) – The Michigan Senate on March 12 approved \$312 million in spending to provide financial assistance for adults age 25 and older to attend community college and partially revive the state's tourism campaign.

The supplemental bills won bipartisan approval from the Senate two days after clearing the House. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer will sign the legislation after the House concurs with minor changes.

Some of the money will partly restore funding the Democrat vetoed last fall amid a budget impasse with the Republican-led Legislature over fixing roads.

The measures include \$35 million to fund the Reconnect Grant program, which Whitmer proposed a year ago. Starting next school year, the state will provide tuition-free community college or technical training for

25,000 people age 25 and older who have graduated from high school or received a GED and have not previously earned an associate's or bachelor's degree.

The aid will cover tuition or mandatory fees not already offset by need-based federal Pell Grants or Michigan's tuition program for Medicaid recipients.

Also, \$31 million for legal settlements. There is an initial \$25 million payment as part of the state's \$80 million settlement with male teens who said they were sexually harassed or assaulted in prison while housed with adults. Legislators also allocated \$6 million to cover costs associated with a \$12 million settlement with the family of a Detroit teenager who crashed an all-terrain vehicle and died when it with a Taser by a state trooper.

Also \$25 million to respond to the coronavirus, \$10 million now and \$15 million in reserve.

## Michigan Gets First Cases of Coronavirus

It was inevitable.

On Tuesday, March 10, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Oakland County Health Division and Wayne County Health Department reported that two Michigan residents tested presumptive positive for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the first confirmed cases in the state.

The governor has declared a state of emergency to maximize efforts and assist local governments and officials to slow the spread of the virus.

"We are taking every step we can to mitigate the spread of the virus and keep Michiganders safe," said Gov. Whitmer. "I have declared a state of emergency to harness all of our resources across state government to slow the spread of the virus and protect families. It's crucial that all Michiganders continue to take preventative measures to lower their risk, and to share this information with their friends, family, and co-workers."

The MDHHS reported of the cases is an adult female from Oakland County with recent international travel and the other is an adult male from Wayne County with recent domestic travel. Clinical specimens were collected and sent to the MDHHS Bureau of Laboratories where both tested presumptive positive for COVID-19.

Specimens will be sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for confirmatory testing.

"We are taking the identification of COVID-19 in our state very seriously," said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. "We continue to urge Michiganders to take precautions to prevent the spread of this virus in our state."

"This patient in Wayne County is currently under isolation. Our Public Health Division is working to identify individuals who may have come into close contact with the patient so we can take appropriate steps and monitor them closely," said Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans. "We are continuing to collaborate with the state health department and recommend residents continue to practice prevention measures to slow the spread of COVID-19."

"Oakland County and our Health Division will investigate the circumstances around this case so we understand if there are any potential close contacts," said Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter. "We must all as individuals and communities continue our prevention and preparedness strategies as we hope for a full recovery for this member of the community."

Local health departments will be working diligently to identify anyone who has come in close contact with these cases and recommend they be assessed for symptoms and monitored appropriately.

There are steps residents can

take to prevent spread of flu and the common cold that will also help prevent coronavirus disease, including:

- Washing your hands with soap and water.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoiding contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home if you are sick and contact your healthcare provider.

COVID-19 Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure to the virus. They include:

- Fever;
- Cough;
- Shortness of Breath.

The State of Michigan and MDHHS will announce additional recommendations to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 tomorrow afternoon.

This is a rapidly evolving situation. Updates will be posted to [michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [cdc.gov/Coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

## Spartan Motors Reports Earnings

CHARLOTTE, Mich. (AP) – Spartan Motors Inc. (SPAR) on March 12 reported a fourth-quarter loss of \$27.8 million, after reporting a profit in the same period a year earlier.

The Charlotte, Michigan-based company said it had a loss of 78 cents per share. Earnings, adjusted to account for discontinued operations and costs related to mergers and acquisitions, came to 47 cents per share.

The maker of chassis for fire trucks, RVs and other vehicles posted revenue of \$180 million in

that period of time.

For the year, the company reported a loss of \$12.6 million, or 36 cents per share, swinging to a loss in the period. Revenue was reported as \$756.5 million.

Spartan Motors expects full-year earnings in the range of \$1.20 to \$1.36 per share, with revenue in the range of \$730 million to \$780 million.

Spartan Motors shares have dropped 37 percent since the beginning of the year. The stock has climbed 28 percent in the last 12 months.





Jeep is in a worldwide partnership with groundbreaking pop team Now United and group’s new release “Come Together” to promote the Renegade.

## Jeep Has Worldwide Promotion to Promote World Vehicle

A vehicle like the Jeep Renegade built for the global market deserves a global marketing campaign.

To that end, FCA spokeswoman Diane Morgan said the Jeep brand has unveiled an innovative partnership with the world’s first global pop team Now United to promote its popular Jeep Renegade through a series of brand integrations across digital and social media with music videos and live performances around the theme of “Come Together.”

Now United is the world’s first global pop team comprised of 15 different singers and dancers from 15 different countries around the world: India, Brazil, UK, Mexico, Philippines, Finland, South Korea, Senegal, China, Japan, Germany, Russia, Canada, Australia and USA. They have quickly amassed a fanatical following of 40 million fans worldwide, Morgan said.

The Jeep brand’s announcement as global auto partner for Now United will unite its own

global fan base with Now United’s 40 million-plus fans and followers around the world and comes hot on the heels of parent company FCA winning acclaim for its “Groundhog Day” Super Bowl commercial starring Bill Murray, Morgan said.

Following a series of branded teasers on Now United’s social media channels through the current week, the campaign launched on March 7 with the official release of the new Now United song “Come Together.” The new music video has made an immediate impact with 1.8 million views in the first 24 hours of posting.

The Now United partnership will cater to first-time auto buyers through a dedicated digital and social media campaign with 15 group members to include new music, daily and weekly YouTube shows, real-time social engagement on Instagram, TikTok and Twitter, as well as branded onstage uniforms for the band members, Morgan said.

Now United is the world’s first global pop team, comprised of 15 different singers and dancers from 15 different countries: India, Brazil, United Kingdom, Mexico, Philippines, Finland, South Korea, Australia, Senegal, China, Japan, Germany, Russia, Canada and the United States of America. Created by music industry icon Simon Fuller in 2017, Now United has quickly amassed a fanatical following of 40 million fans worldwide.

“The Jeep brand is unique in that it is truly a global automotive brand, one that is instantly recognizable across every continent,” said Olivier Francois, Chief Marketing Officer, FCA. “Our fans and followers around the world understand that passion, authenticity and freedom drive the Jeep brand.

“Now United shares these same core attributes with us. As the band undertakes its summer tour with a first stop in Brazil, we look forward to a partnership with Simon Fuller that both rep-

resents and unites our fans in a way that only Jeep and Now United could make possible.”

Simon Fuller added, “I am excited to be collaborating with Olivier Francois, who is a branding genius with an extraordinary innovative mind, and welcoming Jeep as a global partner of Now United. Jeep is such an iconic brand and we share their powerful spirit and sense of adventure. Jeep’s involvement in our Come Together video is the first of many pioneering things we plan to do together, which will empower new ways to collaborate and engage our fans around the world”.

Now United is the vision of Simon Fuller, creator of American Idol and acclaimed British music entrepreneur, Morgan said.

Fuller’s music management roster has included many famous musical acts and singers, including the Spice Girls, Amy Winehouse, Annie Lennox, Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and others.

## EyesOn Design Exhibition Honors Four

The honorary chairmen for the 2020 EyesOn Design Automotive Design Exhibition are four of the world’s top automotive designers.

They are: Moray Callum, Ford Motor Company; Ralph Gilles, FCA; Kevin Hunter, Toyota Calt Design; and Michael Simcoe, General Motors Corporation. They will preside over all 2020 EyesOn Design activities, including the EyesOn Design Automotive Design Exhibition on June 21 at the Ford House in Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan.

“Since 1988, the vice presidents of design have made EyesOn Design a significant force in supporting the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology’s work to aid those with vision loss. That alone warrants this distinctive decision to now honor these four leaders of automotive design,” said Dr. Philip Hessburg, DIO founder and medical director.

Along with Stuart Reed, chair of Transportation Design at Art-Center in Pasadena, California, the four honorary chairmen will also serve as the chief judges for the June 9 EyesOn Design Awards at the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) at the TCF Center (formerly COBO Center) in Detroit.

Serving as emcee at the EyesOn Design at NAIAS awards will be veteran broadcaster John McElroy. The award ceremony will include the presentation of the 2020 EyesOn Design Lifetime Design Achievement Award to designer Peter Brock. Among Brock’s designs are two legendary cars – the Corvette Sting Ray and the Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe.

Says FCA’s Gilles, “Peter Brock has that special gift to make speed flow from the tip of his pen. His designs for iconic sports cars continue to be touchstones for those creating the high-performance vehicles of tomorrow.”

A limited number of tickets to attend EyesOn Design at NAIAS, including a VIP reception preceding the award ceremony, are available for purchase. Call 313-936-1966 or visit [www.eyesondesigncarshow.com](http://www.eyesondesigncarshow.com) to learn more.

## New Consumer Demand Ups Need For Machining Tools

The growing purchasing power of middle-class consumers in Asia has led to an increase in spending on consumer goods. In a rush to meet the escalating demand, manufacturers catering to the APAC region are investing in new production plants and machines, creating a requirement for machine tools in the process. An analysis by Frost & Sullivan reveals that this requirement will push the Asia-Pacific machine tool market to grow at a CAGR of 2.2 percent from 2018 to 2023, reaching \$10.5 billion in revenue.

“Business expansion strategies and plant localization of end-user industries are set to drive the growth of the machine tool industry in the APAC region,” said Divya Saiprasad, Principal Consultant, Industrials at Frost & Sullivan. “The rise in demand for machine tools can be attributed to the increase in the production of auto components and growth of the automotive industry.”

Frost & Sullivan’s latest research, Asia-Pacific Machine Tool Market, Forecast to 2023, explores the trends and factors in-

fluencing the machine tools industry in the Asia-Pacific region and provides a thorough analysis of the current market scenario. The report examines the key market drivers and restraints and presents detailed market share analyses and revenue forecasts through the year 2023. The research also offers strategic recommendations to leverage the growth opportunities identified in this sector.

Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are expected to remain the top three markets for machine tools in the region in 2023, contributing 69.5 percent. Additionally, emerging economies such as Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand are anticipated to showcase strong growth over the next three years, driven by foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow in the manufacturing sector.

“On the end-user vertical front, engineering and automotive sectors are projected to remain dominant,” said Saiprasad. “The aviation sector is also expected to further supplement the market for machine tools, given the

demand from the burgeoning upper-middle-class population.”

Machine tool vendors can tap into further growth by integrating new features and technologies into additive manufacturing to increase the overall efficiency of multi-tasking machine tools.

Including new technologies such as IoT and Big Data for preventive and predictive maintenance of machines to help machine tool companies enhance their customers’ rate of operations in manufacturing, thereby increasing their brand recognition in the market.

Developing and selling smart machines equipped with AI, robots, and software technologies to expand sales and improve the productivity of customers in ASEAN countries.

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and maintaining price competitiveness to increase sales and improve market profitability.

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# Coronavirus Requires FCA To Set New Worker Policy

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business, EMEA experiencing substantial disruptions and North America and LATAM now seeing localized hotspots and the cancellation of many events. Although each region is experiencing different levels of disruption, we are deploying common methods to protect our employees:

- In manufacturing, FCA changing its production techniques at several plants to enable greater space between employees at workstations. Across all our facilities we are stepping up cleaning, sanitization and the availability of masks where deemed necessary.
- In office locations, FCA is also accelerating the deployment of working remotely, or “Smart Working.” At its offices in China, Korea, Japan and Italy this practice has become the “new normal.” For other locations, Smart Working is now available to all employees and Manley asked employees coordinate with local HR representative on how this is deployed department-by-department.
- In addition to the substantial reduction in travel, FCA has also introduced a very strict policy on external visitors at FCA sites. Unless business critical to the company, the company is asking every employee to suspend business travel and hosting external guests on site.
- FCA is also postponing or cancelling most company events. This applies equally to large gatherings of employees as it does to our participation in auto shows and sponsorships of commercial events.
- The company is also increasing cleaning and sanitizing of all common areas in its office facilities.

FCA maintains many facilities, including its European headquarters in northern Italy, which has been severely affected by the Coronavirus outbreak. According to the Web site

www.worldmeters.info, as of 9 a.m. on March 13, Italy had a reported 15,113 cases of the Coronavirus. This means that Italy has the second-largest number of infections, behind China’s 80,815.

The country reported 1,016 deaths due to the infection and 1,258 cases of patients recovering from the disease.

At this time, the United States had a reported 1,832 confirmed cases, and 41 deaths. This was the eighth-largest number of reported infections, placing the U.S. behind France’s 2,876 cases and Germany’s 3,117 reported cases.

As a result of Italy’s high infection rate, *Automotive News* reported on March 11, that the company may have to close some parts factories in northern Italy to support a nationwide campaign to contain the virus. It also is slowing production at some plants there to enable greater spacing between workers.

Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer has announced that, effective Monday, March 16, all of Michigan’s public and private schools will closed through April 5 to combat the spread of a rising number of coronavirus cases in the state.

The announcement came on the evening of March 12 as officials said 10 more cases have been confirmed in Michigan, raising the tally to 12. Officials say all the new cases are adults – three in Kent County; two in Oakland County; two from Washtenaw County; and one each from Ingham, St. Clair and Montcalm counties.

Michigan’s chief medical executive said a statement to the media, that she’s concerned with the federal government’s ability to provide enough COVID-19 tests.

“This is a necessary step to protect our kids, our families, and our overall public health,” said Governor Whitmer. “I am working with partners across state government to ensure educators, parents, and students have the support they need during this time, and to ensure our children who rely on school for meals have access to food.”

In addition to allowing any staff members able to telecommute to do so starting on Monday, Fox said it was encouraging its shows to book guest appearances via Skype or remote locations.

Staff members were told to avoid large gatherings and, whenever possible, conduct business by phone or video conferencing. Earlier in the week, Fox banned all non-essential travel, according to a memo sent by Fox News Media CEO Suzanne Scott and Jay Wallace, president and executive editor of Fox News Media.

# Marelli Consolidating Offices in Southfield

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of the two companies is the most important thing if we want to grow, if we want to have cross sales, if we want to have the right synergies.”

Consolidating the teams into a single location in metro Detroit will naturally drive efficiency and cooperation, Bolzenius said.

The three-story building, which is undergoing extensive renovations, will feature modern workspaces for nearly 500 employees, 75 conference rooms, an auditorium, cafeteria, fitness room, and plenty of indoor/outdoor meeting space.

Approximately 100,000 square feet will be dedicated to testing and lab equipment to support R&D activities for the company’s automotive lighting, electronics, exhaust, interiors, powertrain, ride dynamics and thermal solutions business units.

Marelli is leasing the property from Dembs Development, who purchased the building in 2017 from a New York-based investment company. Dembs Development has a strong 30-year history

in construction, development, ownership and management of real estate projects throughout the United States.

“Based on our extensive experience in designing and constructing new state-of-the-art facilities, we knew the minute we walked in to this building it had everything it takes, and then some, to become a world-class headquarters once again,” said Ryan Dembs, president Dembs Development.

Dembs Development hired HED as project architect, a national firm specializing in architecture, engineering, planning and consulting for a variety of industries. Recent local projects in the automotive sector include The Environmental Protection Agency’s Automotive Testing Laboratories and the Ford Robotics Building at the University of Michigan, both in Ann Arbor.

Marelli worked closely with the City of Southfield and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation on site selection, Van Giesen said. Both organizations provided unmatched support throughout the decision making process.

“The City of Southfield is pleased to welcome Marelli to our ever-growing corporate community,” commented Mayor Ken-son Siver.

“We trust Marelli employees will enjoy our central location and the convenience of working in Southfield – the Center of It All.”

“When an international company like Marelli chooses Michigan for its North American headquarters, that is a statement about our state’s business attractiveness, talented workforce, and leadership in automotive manufacturing,” said Jeff Mason, CEO of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the state’s chief marketing and business attraction agency, responsible for enabling long-term economic opportunity for all Michiganders.

Marelli currently has two locations in Auburn Hills, and one in Farmington Hills.

The company is planning a staggered move-in to begin in late 2020, with full occupancy expected by March 2021, Van Giesen said.



This facility is currently undergoing redevelopment and will house Marelli’s North American headquarters.

# Barra Urges GM Employees to Play it Safe

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Center work schedules to allow for additional cleaning.

“Given the current drop in use of public transportation and extensive flight cancellations, our customers are looking to us more than ever to ensure they have the vehicles, parts and services they need. Thank you to everyone for helping to ensure that we continue to deliver,” Bar ra wrote. “We will be posting updates regularly. Government policies vary by country; please make sure you work closely with your leader to stay compliant in your area.”

In an email to the Detroit Auto Scene, GM spokesman Dave Barnas wrote, “The following information below provides the latest guidance on our corporate travel (air) policy, along with our revised visitor guidelines. Additionally, we are providing employees with regular guidance to outline the steps each of us can take to help to protect our own

health and safety and slow the spread of COVID 19.

This includes:

- Making antibacterial hand soap, wipes and hand sanitizer available, and
- Utilizing virtual tools to help facilitate larger group meetings and keep us working efficiently.

He further stated that new GM visitor guidelines have been initiated.

“We are implementing new visitor protocols at all GM sites to keep our employees and all those who visit our locations safe. As the coronavirus disease outbreak continues to evolve and spreads globally, GM Medical and Security are monitoring the situation closely and will periodically update guidance based on the recommendations from the CDC and WHO. The latest information regarding these new procedures can be found at GM.com/coronavirus.”

Company Guidance Regarding Travel:

- We are monitoring the situation closely and periodically updating company guidance regarding travel restrictions. Based on current recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, GM recently implemented the following travel changes: Travel Bans (no travel to these locations unless it is an employee’s primary work location) – China, South Korea, Italy and Japan.

“All additional domestic and non-domestic air travel requires senior leader approval.”

GM wasn’t the only Detroit auto company making changes as a result of the virus.

Michelle Collins, a spokeswoman for BorgWarner, wrote in an email that “BorgWarner’s Auburn Hills offices are open. We continue to monitor the situation to ensure the health and safety of our employees. Travel is restricted to level 3 countries as identified by the CDC.

# Ford Promotes Mach-E Charging Maps

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

all-wheel drive model, in states like Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, that number climbs to more than nine in 10, Bergg said.

The Mustang Mach-E’s all-wheel drive system is also helping to combat the misconception among Americans that electric vehicles can’t handle driving in bad weather.

“Since revealing the Mustang Mach-E last November, we have seen a high level of interest from customers around the world. We designed the Mustang Mach-E with the aim to deliver an electric, guilt-free, performance SUV

while providing peace of mind through our strong dealership network.

“Our strategy is working. With reservations from coast to coast in the US, we look forward to growing our reservations and delivering this SUV in late 2020,” said Mark Kaufman, global director of Electric Vehicle Marketing & Distribution, Ford Motor Company.

Also contributing to the early nationwide success is the availability of the FordPass Charging Network, North America’s largest public charging network, with more than 12,500 places to charge, including fast charging sites, Kaufman said.

The Mustang Mach-E GT also remains popular with customers across the country, and approximately 30 percent of all Mach-E reservations are for the GT – remaining steady when compared to the last update in late December, when it was announced that reservations for the limited edition First Edition are full.

Mustang Mach-E starts at \$43,895 not including the \$7,500 tax incentive. With the tax incentive, the entry level price is even more attractive for an all-electric SUV.

People can reserve a Mach-E Mustang by going online and deliveries begin late 2020, Bergg said.



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# Cadillac Brand Finds Home in Return to its Detroit Roots

by Jim Stickford

Cadillac has come back to Detroit. The brand will be celebrating it's return to Detroit this April 1.

Before moving to what was known as the VEC East building on Van Dyke, across the street GM's Tech Center in Warren, the Cadillac brand headquarters was in New York City.

Wade Harris, Global Product Planning manager, was one of the Cadillac staff that moved to Detroit from New York.

He said the move was done for several reasons, not the least it was just easier to have design and marketing people in the same city.

Harris said that being close to the Tech Center is an advantage because being able to get in the same room by walking across the street is a lot more convenient than flying to Detroit a couple of times a month from New York.

Harris said that moving to Detroit was easy for him. He grew up in Florida and is not married. That meant he wasn't moving away from family and didn't have to uproot a wife or children.

"It just made sense for us to be here in metro Detroit instead of New York," Harris said.

Harris said that coming to Detroit has been an experience. He lives downtown and is amazed at how active the area is in the summer.

And having offices in the Cadillac Tower in Warren provides a little more elbow room. Office space in New York City is very expensive, so by moving to Warren, they've been able to spread out a little more and even the conference rooms aren't as cramped.

The move back to Detroit has come at a time when the entire Global auto industry, not just the Cadillac brand, is facing challenges of change and competition for market share.

"The luxury car segment is not different," Harris said. "Cadillac, for a long time, has been known as the pride of American luxury brands. Now Cadillac has to find a place in the world market with its EV and AV technology."

And that is not an easy task, Harris said. He cite the example of BMW and the I-3. The company has a definite image and its buyers are known to be purists

and are very particular about looks and performance. Many thought that the I-3 threw off that balance. Harris said that the problems BMW has faced is the same for other luxury brands.

As to Cadillac being known as American luxury, Harris said that means something to the public here and in China. That resonates with the rest of the world. "I think the U.S. public wants Cadillac to win as a luxury brand," Harris said. "And they are holding us to a higher standard, so we have to be on our game on what we're working toward. GM as a company is working to what Mary Barra has called the three zeroes – zero emissions, zero fatalities and zero congestion."

And that goal puts Cadillac in a strong position, Harris said. The Super Cruise AV technology launched with the 2018 CT-6 has proven to be successful as a technology and successful in attracting new buyers to the brand.

"When we launched Super Cruise, we knew that people would want it," Harris said. "It does add cost, but it's not that expensive a technology. Now people are coming in and we're more than half of the CT-6s we sell have that feature."

Super Cruise is next coming to the 2021 Cadillac Escalade and will continue to be rolled out with other Cadillac models in the future, Harris said.

"We have a number of new technology vehicles in the pipeline," Harris said. "We have recently previewed our long line of them and they represent a wide breadth of vehicles that will be based on GM's EV architecture. It's key that the Cadillac brand is in the forefront of these launches. We will have a number of Cadillacs designed from the ground up to meet the needs of the modern buyer."

And creating luxury in the EV market is a little different than in the traditional engine segment, Harris said. Take noise for example. EVs don't make any engine noise, so when that is eliminated, people discover that there's still noise from the road and tires.

That's why Cadillac has worked to incorporate the latest in noise cancelling technology as well as tech that actively masks outside noise.

"The goal is to create an EV that provides a serene and comfortable environment," Harris said.

And luxury means not scrimping on materials. In the past too many Detroit automakers substituted plastic for wood and vinyl for leather. That's not the case with Cadillac anymore.

"I've been with the brand for about four years," Harris said. "And during that time Cadillac has always been working to ensure authenticity. The days of finding ways to make plastic look like wood or aluminum are long gone. If it looks like wood, you can assured that it's wood and if looks like aluminum or leather, you can be assured that it's aluminum or leather."

And Cadillac's efforts to attract younger buyers has been paying off, Harris said. In China, the average Cadillac buyer is about 33 give or take a year, which is young for a luxury car buyer.

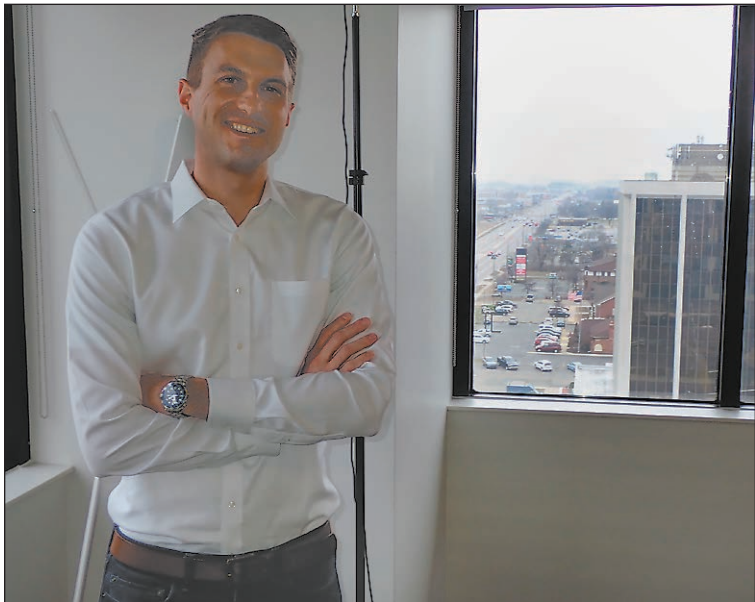
"In the United States, we are seeing more young people with every new model we introduce," Harris said. "They are particularly interested in our BEVs (Battery Electric Vehicle). Younger buyers are much more in tune with adopting EVs, but they are interested in them for both performance and the environment."

And Cadillac has noticed a couple of trends that are growing in popularity, Harris said. One is active safety measures. The tech is still relatively new, but the public has come to appreciate what it can do. And, again, GM's Three Zeros policy has helped with Cadillac.

And the growth of SUVs has presented a challenge for rea-

sons that are not so obvious, Harris said.

SUV popularity has greatly grown in the past few years, fortunately, Cadillac had some designs that can take advantage of that, Harris said. Preferences change. In the past, people who grew up when their parents drove station wagons didn't want to drive station wagons. Will that be the same for SUVs?



Harris is leading the charge to develop Cadillac as a world brand.



This model of Cadillac's past overlooks a view that shows off GM's Design Dome at the Warren Tech Center.



Cadillac has adopted the open office space design for the employees who have moved into the Cadillac Tower, formerly known as the Campbell Ewald building, in Warren.



## *Wrangler Celebrates With Special ‘Friends and Family’ Consumer Pricing*

There is good news for the many fans of the Jeep Wrangler.

The Jeep brand is giving its fans and followers motivation to join one of the most legendary and exciting nameplates in automotive history, said FCA spokeswoman Diane Morgan.

As part of its spring celebration, the brand is launching the Jeep Wrangler "Friends & Family" initiative, giving consumers access to special pricing for the first time ever on select models of the Jeep Wrangler, and with ownership, the opportunity to join the global Jeep family.

The campaign includes a 30-second TV and online spot, featuring the song "Young," a custom track performed by Old Dominion (and written by Katelyn Tarver) that speaks as a love letter to Jeep brand's attributes of freedom, adventure and Americana. The song was created specifically for the Jeep brand through an innovative partnership with NBC's hit series "Songland" last summer.

"The Jeep brand is the longest lasting 4x4 SUV brand with more than 11 million vehicles on the road today, including nearly three million Jeep Wrangler SUVs," said Jim Morrison, head of Jeep Brand – FCA North America. "Jeep Wrangler has countless loyal fans and, as part of our spring celebration, we're taking this opportunity to

invite even more consumers into our Jeep family."

To celebrate past and present members of the #JeepFamily, which is more than 13 million strong across the brand's social channels, the Jeep brand launched a new social media campaign last week, giving Jeep owners, fans and followers the opportunity to share their photos and stories of off-road adventures in Jeep vehicles, why they love the Jeep brand, why they love their vehicle and what it means to be a part of the #JeepFamily.

As a true cult brand, with a history of more than 80 years filled with memorable experiences past and present, these stories are ones that only Jeep and its owners can tell, Morrison said.

Additionally, one lucky enthusiast will have the chance to attend the "ultimate Jeep family reunion" next month, the Easter Jeep Safari in Moab, Utah.

Consumers can enter beginning next week for a chance to win. In addition to an all-expenses-paid trip to Moab, the enthusiast will be invited to drive his or her own Jeep vehicle, or have a Jeep Wrangler provided to them to drive the trails, for an adventure they'll never forget, Morgan said. More information, including where to enter, will be available next week across the brand's social media channels.

To help celebrate all of the new members of the Jeep Wrangler family, the Jeep brand is launching phase II of its Badge of Honor program, a mobile app and online community that celebrates and rewards those who live the off-road lifestyle.

The app can be downloaded in the Apple App Store or Google Play to discover trails based on locations and difficulty.

This exclusive program, open only to Jeep customers, delivers an official "Badge of Honor" to the Jeep vehicle owner's home

upon completion of the trail. This industry-exclusive program further cements the Jeep brand's commitment to the off-road community it helped create.

In addition, every new Jeep Wrangler owner is automatically enrolled in Jeep Wave, an exclusive membership program granting two worry-free years of customer care, maintenance, dedicated 24/7 support and trip interruption coverage. Complimentary sign-up is included with every eligible Jeep vehicle purchase.

If owners cannot find what they are looking for here, then owners are encouraged to call their dedicated direct support agent at any time (24/7) at 1-844-533-7928 (1-844-JEEP WAVE). They can also learn more at [jeep.com/jeep-wave.html](http://jeep.com/jeep-wave.html) and use the Live Chat option on their account page.

The Jeep Wrangler recently earned, for the ninth consecutive year, two Kelly Blue Book Best Resale Value Awards for one of the highest residual values in the industry.



*The Wrangler's popularity has resulted in the Jeep brand creating a special promotion for its fans.*

## IIHS Offers Ideas on How Automakers Should Create Safer AV Systems

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has issued a set of research-based safety recommendations on the design of partially automated driving systems. The guidelines emphasize how to keep drivers focused on the road even as the vehicle does more of the work.

Today's partially automated systems still need the driver to be involved at all times. That means they need robust methods of monitoring driver engagement and more effective ways of regaining the driver's attention when it wanders. Designs should be based on a principle of shared control, and they should have built-in limits that prevent them from being used on roads and under conditions where it isn't safe to do so, IIHS researchers say.

As part of that philosophy of shared control, partially automated systems shouldn't change lanes or overtake other vehicles without driver input. They should be responsive to driver steering input even when automatic lane centering is engaged.

"Unfortunately, the more sophisticated and reliable automation becomes, the more difficult it is for drivers to stay focused on what the vehicle is doing," says IIHS President David Harkey. "That's why systems should be designed to keep drivers actively engaged."

Under the classification system developed by SAE International, there are five levels of automation, ranging from 0 (no automation) to 5 (fully self-driving). The highest level available in production vehicles today is Level 2. These systems continuously control acceleration, braking and steering to keep the vehicle traveling at a set speed in the center of its lane while maintaining a selected following distance from the vehicle ahead. They require the human driver to remain vigilant and ready to intervene in the event that the system encounters a situation it cannot handle.

Despite these limitations, some designs make it too easy for the driver to rely heavily on the system and lack robust methods to make sure he or she remains actively engaged in the driving.

Some manufacturers already offer automated lane-changing, and others have announced plans to follow suit. Most sys-

tems use only the presence of the driver's hands on the steering wheel to monitor whether he or she is paying attention. Some seem to discourage the driver from actively sharing in the driving when lane-centering support is engaged.

Only Cadillac's Super Cruise uses GPS-enabled navigation to restrict its use to specific highways that its engineers believe it can handle. However, Super Cruise doesn't require the driver's hands to remain on the wheel at all. Instead it monitors where the driver is looking and issues an alert when the driver's gaze is diverted for too long. The researchers recommend that driver attention be monitored through multiple modes, so Super Cruise doesn't meet all their recommendations.

"These systems are amazing feats of engineering," says IIHS Research Scientist Alexandra Mueller, lead author of the IIHS recommendations. "But they all suffer from the same problem: They don't account enough for the behavior of the human being behind the wheel."

Too much trust in partial automation is one issue. An IIHS survey suggests that many consumers think Level 2 systems are practically self-driving. But the problem does not disappear when drivers understand the limits of partial automation and consciously resolve to remain focused on the road.

Research has shown that the more sophisticated and reliable automation becomes, the harder it is for a driver to remain vigilant. Fatigue increases, as indicated by longer and more frequent eye blinks, and the driver's mind is more likely to wander. It takes less physical effort to drive when these Level 2 systems are providing support, even though the driver must still be in full control at all times, supervising both the roadway and the system's behavior. Studies have shown that this change in the driver's role increases the temptation to do other things, such as text or check email.

Various high-profile fatal crashes have shown how dangerous such lapses can be. All these systems can fail to follow the road when confronted with situations as common as a hill or curve.

In a fatal crash involving Tesla's Autopilot system, for instance, a Tesla Model X failed to properly detect the lane markings at an exit ramp and crashed into a highway divider. The Tesla driver, who was killed, was playing a game on his cell phone at the time of the crash.

Following an investigation, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) concluded in February that Autopilot's limitations, the driver's overreliance on the technology and his own distraction led to the crash. The NTSB called for the development of standards for driving monitoring systems "to mini-

mize driver disengagement, prevent automation complacency and account for foreseeable misuse of the automation.”

The new guidelines developed by IIHS are a step in that direction. The researchers reviewed dozens of academic studies to develop a series of recommendations for manufacturers.



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# BorgWarner Launches Next Generation Coolant Heater

BorgWarner's state-of-the-art coolant heaters are expected to appear in 2021 on the next generation of passenger cars produced by global OEMs.

The company has been chosen as a supplier for cabin heating and battery conditioning solutions for several high-volume vehicle programs. Its leading edge high-voltage heaters have changed the way automotive engineers think about thermal management requirements for the most advanced electric and plug-in hybrid passenger cars, said BorgWarner spokeswoman Michelle Collins.

"Our Battery and Cabin Heater has become the technology of choice for some of the most important electric and hybrid vehicle manufacturers in Europe, North America and Asia, helping them to reduce battery consumption while increasing passenger comfort," said Joe Fadool, President and general manager, BorgWarner Emissions, Thermal and Turbo Systems. "Our engineers have a deep system understanding of cabin heating and battery conditioning requirements and are supporting our customers as they prepare new vehicles for start of production."

The new technology was developed to meet the demand for fast-acting solutions as the heat management systems of vehicles increasingly become decoupled from the internal combustion engine – permanently in the case of EVs and for longer parts of the drive cycle in hybrid electric vehicles, Fadool said.

BorgWarner's coolant heaters

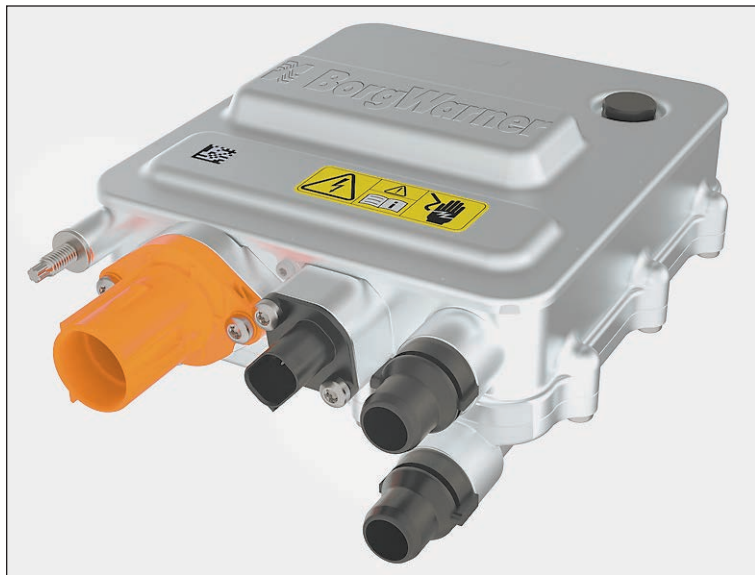
can be used for both passenger cabin heating and improving battery energy performance in electric and hybrid vehicles by offering consistent temperature distribution inside the battery pack and its cells.

With high thermal power density and fast response time due to their low thermal mass, these heaters also extend pure electric driving range. The thick film heating element is compact and very flexible regarding sizes and shapes. BorgWarner has engineered two versions – single plate and dual plate.

Single plate devices are responsible for either thermal management of the battery or cabin heating, while dual plate versions manage both tasks at the same time while providing up to 80 percent more heat transfer surface, Faddool said.

Both versions are integrated into robust aluminum housings that provide excellent electromagnetic shielding. Battery and Cabin Heaters offer a power range of between 3 and 9 kW. They have been designed for input voltages between 250 and 500 V. If necessary, there is an 800 V alternative to enable faster battery charging.

Safety was also paramount in the design, Fadool said. The product development team devised a strategy for the high-voltage coolant heaters using intelligent and robust power electronics that enable the prevention of thermal events such as overheating. As soon as the system detects an error it switches off automatically.



*This BorgWarner coolant heater will go into vehicles around the world.*

## LeMans Racers Honored

The Concours of Elegance, presented by A. Lange & Söhne, has picked its specially curated centerpiece display for 2020; a lineup of the McLaren F1 GTRs that finished 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th at Le Mans 24 Hours in 1995. Taking place from 4-6th Sept. in the Fountain Gardens of Hampton Court Palace in London, the Concours of Elegance is celebrating the 25th anniversary of McLaren's motorsport achievement, said event spokesman Luke Madden.

Concours of Elegance's centerpiece display is reserved only for the most extraordinary vehicles or astonishing motoring feats, which in the past has included a celebration of the Jaguar D-Type's 1-2-3-4-6 finish at Le Mans. But, arguably, the McLaren F1 GTR's achievement is remarkable, not least because a motorsport-ready McLaren F1 was never part of the production plan.

The McLaren F1 GTR was an afterthought, demanded by F1 customers that wanted to take their cars racing. To that end, the F1 GTR began testing in January 1995, with the Le Mans 24 Hours race only 5 months away, where it

would be competing against not only modified production cars but prototype vehicles designed specifically for endurance racing. The F1 GTR won in one of the most comprehensive motorsport victories, taking four of the top five places overall and the top four GT1 places.

All four cars will be parked side-by-side at Concours of Elegance 2020; the winning Kokusai Kaihatsu Racing car, the third-place Harrods-liveried car of Andy Wallace, Derek Bell and Justin Bell, the fourth-place Gulf Racing F1 GTR and the Giroix Racing Team F1 GTR that finished fifth.

Andrew Evans, Concours of Elegance Director, said: "The Concours of Elegance is all about shining a light on the most astonishing stories and creations in the motoring world, and bringing them to one of the world's most beautiful palaces for our visitors to enjoy. Arguably there's no more emotive story than that of the F1 GTR; a car that no one expected anything of which then went on to one of the most convincing victories ever seen at the world's hardest motor race."



# Young Son of FCA Employee Really Loves That Racing Life

DETROIT (AP) – At age 12, Keegan Sobilo of New Baltimore carefully tucks his legs and arms into a fire suit, pulls on a helmet and climbs into a race car that exceeds 80 mph.

He has been doing this since age 8, the *Detroit Free Press* reported.

“I’d stand underneath the grandstand, and whenever somebody would get close to Keegan on the track, I’d have to walk away,” said his mother, Hillary Sobilo, 46, a kindergarten teacher at Cleveland Elementary School in Port Huron.

“At first, I was scared to death. I was like, ‘Let’s do bowling or swimming.’ It’s still very scary. But he knows what he’s doing. Your heart goes out on that track every time he goes out there.”

The sixth-grader always arrives at the track in his pajamas. The first time he wore his choo-choo train jammies to the track, Keegan went from last place to ninth place. He decided they brought luck. Since then, he has racked up a series of championships.

With his first corporate sponsorship secured, Keegan is focused on NASCAR.

This year, he moves into a full-size race car – the kind professionals use.

“When I’m racing, I feel hot and tight in there, tight in the seat,” he said. “In the car, I don’t feel like I’m going that fast. When I go 90, it feels like you’re going 60. Sometimes when you’re going too fast, there’s not enough grip and you’re sliding.”

Passion for cars runs in the family.

Keegan’s father is a design mechanic at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. He knows what it means to have seats and roll cages built to fit his son’s body.

“My father was an employee at Chrysler and had an opportunity to get me into the factory. After I finished my degree, I moved over to Auburn Hills, working in a research lab,” said Roman Sobilo, 45.

“What I see in Keegan is passion, like how I feel about car restoration. But for him, everything has to align itself. I tell my son you have to be the perfect package. Winning races every weekend is not the (only) key.

You have to have the right name, you have to look the correct way, speak the correct way, act the correct way. Then the rest of it is really luck, like the stock market. If you don’t put yourself out there, you’ll never hit it big.”

While Keegan’s classmates at Immanuel Lutheran School in Macomb County play basketball and volleyball, Keegan is at the Birch Run track – practicing, qualifying and racing until 10 p.m. or 2 a.m. While many children spend time playing video games, Keegan runs race simulation training with his joystick after school.

People sometimes ask whether Keegan pressures his parents to allow him to drive on regular roads.

“He has never mentioned anything about it,” said Roman Sobilo. “And what’s weird is I asked him to move his mother’s (Ford) Explorer two weeks ago on our property behind our garage, approximately 30 feet, and he was scared to do so. But he has no problem driving his full-size race car on the track.”

Like the professional racers competing at Daytona International Speedway, Keegan wears a headset.

He listens carefully to his crew chief, Tim Phillips, 59, of Otsego, who has won multiple championships as a driver and crew chief.

“I work on his car three nights a week and deliver it to the track,” Phillips said. “Mom and dad leave me alone and I talk to Keegan on the radio as he’s going around. I’m in the pits when he’s racing. It’s just like on TV. If lap traffic is coming up, you need to be prepared. If you’re coming up on slower traffic, you need to have a plan.”

Keegan may take corners at 65 or 80 mph, he said.

“Me and him will talk different strategy,” Phillips said. “He’s one of them little smart kids. He’s very intelligent. And he’s a good driver. He listens well. He wears those pajamas to the track every night and takes them off when he puts his race clothes on. He’s been doing that for the last four years. That’s his trademark. When he won the championship, he was shaking up little kid champagne.”

Phillips says the boy is tireless, staying up past 2 a.m. at Springport speedway in Calhoun County on the west side of the state.

“They made us race last,” Phillips said. “But he was ready to go.”

For four years, Keegan has raced mini cars from May through October.

“This is nothing like street car racing.”  
– Glenn Luckett, *Champion Racing Association*

“You’ve got to know what you’re doing. These cars have quick steering and they’re fast,” said competitor Mike Todd, 69, of Galesburg, Michigan. “I think I was into it a year before Keegan. It was like, really, I’m going to be racing against a kid who doesn’t have a driver’s license? Come on, now. I had to put myself in check. It was like having a grandson. I showed him respect and he showed me respect. The kid is cool. And he takes it very serious.”

Todd, a retired high school custodian, said he would never underestimate Keegan.

“I’d like to see him make it big. He’s got the willpower,” said Todd, a Marine who served in Vietnam and loves competing in the Great Lakes Super Mini Cup Series that Keegan won. He spun me out a couple times. He was a sportsman all the way. We were both going into the corner, he tried to put his nose underneath,” Todd recalled. “And the front end of his car would wash out, hit the end of my car and spin me. It was nothing intentional. You’re going to get this car to go as fast as possible. Everything is momentum. There are centrifugal clutches so you have to build your speed up. We go into the corners full bore.”

Competitors meet on asphalt

tracks in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. There may be nearly two dozen competitors or half a dozen. For Keegan, the 2020 season racing both half-size and full-size cars will require nearly 20 matchups that will consume all of his weekends.

In full-size cars, he will race exclusively against drivers ages 10 to 15 who submit a resume, prove their racing experience and go through a very specific process to qualify.

“This is nothing like street car racing. These cars are built from the ground up for racing. This is high performance, like a Corvette on steroids,” said Glenn Luckett, managing partner of the Champion Racing Association, who is based in Salem, Indiana.

“This is like minor league to NASCAR,” he said. “It’s gotten a lot more difficult. By the time they’re 10 or 12, they’ve raced five or six years. It’s neat when you see a kid make it. A lot of talented kids don’t get the opportunity. It used to be just talent could get you where you needed to go. Now it’s a lot more about having the money to pay. And sponsorships aren’t what they used to be.”

Keegan continues looking for support. Knowing he needs sponsors, Keegan scheduled a meeting earlier this month at Golling Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram of Roseville and spent 45 minutes making his case.

“He came in and had a nice handshake,” said general manager Matt Godfrey. “Then he gave me a book with a picture of him in his race car at a track. The second page is ‘Golling sponsor meeting by Keegan,’ where he describes himself as ‘a 12 year old with a love of racing that has grown since he was a young boy.’”

The young racer explained that, since seeing NASCAR at age 6, he has dreamed of racing. What stunned Godfrey, who said he has endured many presentations from people of all ages, is that Keegan included plans for brand awareness, a social media strategy, a media strategy, a public relations strategy and promotions.

He listed Keegan’s accomplishments – 2019 GLS Super Mini Cup champion; 2019 GLS Super Mini Cup Young Guns champion; 2018, GLS Super Mini Cup Young Guns champion, and 2018 GLS Super Mini Cup most improved driver.

Goals for this year, Keegan said, “maintain courteous professional behavior and appearance. Represent my sponsors proudly.”

Golling has decided to sponsor Keegan “in one way or another,” whether it’s paying for tires, fuel, oil, filters, Godfrey said. “Golling is looking forward to being a sponsor in this 2020 upcoming season.”

The young driver broke down all fees for sponsor review, including a spotter who tells the driver when to pass and when not to pass. If the dealership can’t provide the product, Godfrey said, they’ll write a check.

Keegan is the future of racing, said Diane Flis-Schneider, after meeting him at an event in Rosemont, Illinois, in the fall of 2019.

“He has learned how to lose but still be a champion. What’s important to him is understanding that losing is a part of life and how do you handle that gracefully? I mean, he has approached NASCAR drivers and said, ‘I’m going to be you when I grow up,’” said Flis-Schneider, advancement director for America’s Automotive Trust.

## Virus’ Effect on the Economy Just Starting

WASHINGTON (AP) – Buffeted by fears of the fast-spreading coronavirus, consumers in the United States and overseas are showing increasing signs of cutting back on spending in what amounts to a severe threat to economic growth.

Consumer confidence has declined in most advanced economies in the past month, surveys show, amid a drumbeat of travel disruptions, event cancellations and business closures.

Large public gatherings have become suddenly rare. U.S. movie ticket sales are down, and travel and hotel bookings have plummeted. Because consumers are the primary driver of growth in most advanced nations, any sharp drop in spending could cause those economies to slip into recession.

Even before coronavirus cases surfaced in her state, Whitney Parks, a 29-year-old resident of Ypsilanti, was staying home with her two children whenever possible. A server at a restaurant in nearby Ann Arbor, Parks noted that business there has noticeably declined.

“A lot of people don’t really want to be out in the public right now,” she said.

Economists point to confidence among consumers and businesses – “animal spirits,” as the legendary economist John Maynard Keynes called them – as

a vital ingredient for growth. People and companies must feel optimistic enough to spend, hire, expand, travel and invest.

“The line between an expanding economy and recession is crossed when investors, businesses and – most important – consumers lose faith,” Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s Analytics, said. The coronavirus “is especially corrosive on that faith and is thus a serious threat to the record-long economic expansion.”

The viral outbreak is proceeding so fast that there isn’t yet any U.S. government data that would reflect its broad impact on the economy. But there are growing signs that consumers are pulling back. Jesse Edgerton, an economist at JPMorgan Chase, said in a research note that U.S. weekly movie ticket sales and Broadway theater ticket sales have sunk about 20 percent since Feb. 16.

While those sectors constitute a relatively small part of the U.S. economy, Edgerton said, “we do think they may prove illustrative.” Revenue at hotels fell 16 percent in the first week of March compared with earlier this year, Edgerton added, citing data from Smith Travel Research.


Naomi Goldberg, 37, of Ann Arbor, canceled a March weekend trip to Aspen, Colo., after she heard that some people in the ski town had been tested for the

coronavirus. And to avoid crowds, she also decided not to visit a nearby museum with her wife and 6-year-old, a trip that would have cost them about \$30 each. She’s not putting all purchases on hold. A bathroom renovation will go forward. A trip to Yosemite in May is still in the works – for now. And she sees the recent stock market plunge as an opportunity to put more money away.

Even so, stock market drops typically drag down consumer confidence and can limit spending. The Dow Jones plunged an additional 2,000 points Thursday in mid-day trading after having entered a bear market the day before, with stock prices 20 percent below a record high reached just a few weeks ago.

Consumers have already turned decidedly less optimistic since mid-February, according to daily tracking surveys by Morning Consult. Its polls show that U.S. consumer sentiment has fallen more than 3 percent since then.

John Leer, an economist at Morning Consult, said the size of the drop was comparable to other recent declines, as in August 2019, when fears over the impact of the U.S.-China trade war intensified. But that downturn reversed itself once the trade fight cooled and a preliminary agreement was reached.






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## Downtown Detroit Auto Event Delayed

The Coronavirus, which had the first cases in Michigan confirmed on March 10, has had an impact on a major automotive event annually held in Detroit.

The *Automotive News* World Congress, which had been scheduled for March 24-25 in downtown Detroit, has been postponed because of the coronavirus crisis.

Also postponed are the annual *Automotive News* PACE Awards ceremony and the inaugural PACEpilot event, which were due to be held March 23.

“Rising concerns about the safety of our attendees and staff, as well as events of recent days, led us to the decision,” Publisher Jason Stein and Associate Publisher Karen Rentschler said in a statement. “We are currently looking at alternative timing.”

*Automotive News* has hosted the World Congress annually since 1977. This year’s event was slated to be held at the TCF Center (formerly Cobo Center) for the first time.

The PACE Awards for supplier innovation, now in their 26th year, are expected to be announced at a rescheduled event in Detroit. PACEpilot, which recognizes pre-commercialized innovations, will be rescheduled along with it.

Detroit is not the only city seeing major events cancelled.

According to the Associated Press, Major League Baseball is delaying its season by at least two weeks and suspending spring training games. The most powerful conferences in college sports canceled their men’s basketball tournaments, putting in doubt this month’s NCAA Tournament – one of the biggest events in American sports.

The coronavirus deepened its disruption of the global entertainment industry, triggering

more cancellations of concert tours, film premieres and other events. Rock band The Who canceled its U.K. and Ireland tour four days before its scheduled start, with guitarist Pete Townshend saying the members “haven’t reached this decision easily.” Canada’s top music awards, the Juno Awards, which were scheduled for March 15 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, were also canceled.

The Associated Press also reported Donovan Mitchell of the Utah Jazz confirmed March 12 that he has tested positive for the coronavirus, publicly saying that he is personally dealing with the pandemic that has temporarily shut down the NBA and other major sports leagues.

Later, his Jazz teammate Rudy Gobert – the first NBA player to test positive, which prompted the league to suspend the season – also confirmed his status and apologized. “I was careless and make no excuse,” Gobert said in an Instagram post.

Mitchell’s positive test was not known until early Thursday, the first full day of the NBA’s hiatus. Jazz players, staff and some beat writers covering the team were tested Wednesday night in Oklahoma City, where Utah was to play the Thunder in a game that was called off moments before tip-off once word about Gobert’s positive test was received.

Also on March 12, the Detroit Pistons, Boston Celtics, Washington Wizards and Toronto Raptors – teams that have all recently played against Gobert, Mitchell and the Jazz — all said that they were having some players and staff self-quarantine for as many as 14 days. The Cleveland Cavaliers, another team that has recently faced Utah, said they are not mandating quarantines yet but would if any of their players exhibit troubling symptoms.

“Thanks to everyone who has been reaching out since hearing the news about my positive test,” Mitchell wrote in an Instagram post. “We are all learning more about the seriousness of this situation and hopefully people can

continue to educate themselves and realize that they need to behave responsibly both for their own health and for the well being of those around them.”

Gobert was not among those behaving responsibly.

It started as a joke: Before leaving a media session at shootaround in Salt Lake City on Monday in advance of a game against Detroit that night, Gobert touched all the tape recorders that were placed before him on a table, devices that reporters who cover the Jazz were using.

“You know, there’s not much we can do right now,” Gobert said in that session when asked about how teams are dealing with the virus. And a minute or so later, before he ran out a side door, he touched all the recorders.

It isn’t so funny now – not with two Jazz players now having tested positive for the virus, and with a league on edge. It is not known if Gobert is responsible for Mitchell contracting the virus, or vice versa.

“I have gone through so many emotions since learning of my diagnosis...mostly fear, anxiety, and embarrassment,” Gobert wrote. “The first and most important thing is I would like to publicly apologize to the people that I may have endangered. At the time, I had no idea I was even infected.”

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough.

For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the WHO, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover.

Gobert became the center of why the league has been shut down for the foreseeable future after he became the first positive test.

## EV Loophole is Examined

DENVER, Colo. (AP) – A Colorado bill allowing electric vehicle manufacturers to sell directly to consumers passed a key legislative committee, clearing the way for a compromise with auto dealerships.

The House Energy and Environment Committee approved an amended version of the bill March 9, *The Colorado Sun* reported. The original measure would have allowed Ford Motor Co., Toyota Motor Corp. and other automakers with dealer franchises to jump into the direct-sales market to sell their electric vehicles.

The compromise was an amendment that will allow only automakers that have no existing dealer franchise to sell electric vehicles direct to consumers.

Democratic House Speaker KC Becker, a primary sponsor of the measure, said the bill’s intention is to close a loophole allowing only Tesla Inc. to sell its electric cars directly to Colorado residents.

A representative from Tesla spoke in support of the bill.

Other automakers must use dealer franchises as part of a consumer-protection law passed during the last decade.

The dealers initially opposed the change laid out in the bill because it would force automakers and the dealers they supply to compete against each other for sales.

Tim Jackson, CEO of the Colorado Auto Dealers Association, said dealerships compete for consumers with price and serv-

ice and invest in the local community. They often own multiple brand dealerships so they remain in the community if the automaker goes bankrupt. An individual automaker may not offer the same benefit, he said.

The dealers association will take a neutral stance on the amended bill because the original legislation was much worse for dealers, Jackson said.

## MCC Among The Schools Closing Down Events

With known presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 now confirmed in southeast Michigan, Macomb Community College is taking additional precautionary measures.

The college is suspending on-campus, in-person classes beginning 5 a.m., Thursday, March 12, through Sunday, March 22. The pause is to allow the college to work through the process of moving on-ground classes to online. Current online classes and offsite clinical rotations will continue as scheduled and will not be affected by the suspension.

During the suspension of face-to-face instruction, the college will be open. Students and community members are being encouraged to call first for resources and support.

The college has also cancelled all events involving more than 100 participants through April 12.

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PURCHASE FOR **\$41,529\***  
STOCK #XJTR9V



**2020 GMC YUKON SLE**  
LEASE FOR  
**\$429\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$1999** DOWN  
PURCHASE FOR **\$46,659\***  
STOCK #XGRH24



**2020 BUICK ENCORE PREFERRED**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$21,239\***  
LEASE FOR **\$189\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN  
STOCK # B502287



**2020 BUICK ENCLAVE PREFERRED**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$34,559\***  
LEASE FOR **\$329\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN  
STOCK# B502354



**2020 BUICK ENCORE GX PREFERRED**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$24,029\***  
LEASE FOR **\$229\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN  
STOCK# B503076



**2020 BUICK REGAL SPORTBACK PREFERRED**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$21,559\***  
LEASE FOR **\$359\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN  
STOCK# XBCNDJ



**2020 BUICK ENVISION PREFERRED**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$27,859\***  
LEASE FOR **\$269\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN  
STOCK# B501858




**2020 BUICK REGAL TOUR X PREFERRED**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$29,419\***  
LEASE FOR **\$499\*** PER MONTH | **39** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN  
STOCK# XBTSVK


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**2020 CHEVROLET TRAX LS**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$15,609\***  
LEASE FOR **\$149\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# 500632




**2020 CHEVROLET EQUINOX 2FL**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$21,079\***  
LEASE FOR **\$149\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
FORMER COURTESY VEHICLE STOCK# 500289



**2020 CHEVROLET TRAVERSE LS**  
PURCHASE FOR AN LS FOR **\$26,069\***  
LEASE FOR **\$169\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
FORMER COURTESY VEHICLE STOCK# 500015



**2020 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 CREW CAB CUSTOM**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$32,469\***  
LEASE FOR **\$219\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# XFWXR5




**2020 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500 DBL CAB CUSTOM**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$33,709\***  
LEASE FOR **\$219\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# 503140




**2020 CHEVROLET BLAZER 2LT**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$37,719\***  
LEASE FOR **\$219\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# 503140




**2020 CHEVROLET MALIBU RS**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$20,659\***  
LEASE FOR **\$229\*** PER MONTH | **24** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# 400047



**2020 CHEVROLET BOLT PREMIER**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$30,999\***  
LEASE FOR **\$249\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# XKPX07



**2020 CHEVROLET COLORADO CREW CAB WT**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$28,459\***  
LEASE FOR **\$259\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# XPCJB9



**2020 CHEVROLET TAHOE LS**  
PURCHASE FOR **\$45,199\***  
LEASE FOR **\$389\*** PER MONTH | **36** MONTHS | **\$1999** DOWN WITH CARD TOP OFF  
STOCK# 502220


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