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Pam Nelson Chosen as TIME Magazine Dealer of the Year Award Finalist

January 26 - **Pam Nelson, Foothills Toyota-Scion, Burlington**, is a 2009 TIME Magazine Dealer of the Year Award Regional Finalist. She is Washington State's first woman to receive the award and one of only three Washington dealers to be named a finalist in the award's 40-year history.

Forty-nine auto dealers from around the country were nominated for the industry's most prestigious award which recognizes new car and truck dealers for exceptional performance in their dealerships and distinguished community service. Pam was one of three regional finalists who accepted the award at the National Automobile Dealers Association's (NADA) annual convention in New Orleans.

Pam has the auto industry in her blood, thanks to her grandfather Stan Nelson, Sr. whose opening of Nelson Chevrolet in Seattle in 1922, planted the seed for future generations of Nelsons to open their own dealerships as well.

When Pam entered the auto industry after college as a switchboard operator at Nelson Chevrolet, women dealers were not the norm. In fact, in 1979, when she graduated from what was then known as "Dealer Son's School" - today's equivalent of the NADA Dealer Candidate Academy - Pam was one of just two women in a class of 50 men.

Just six years later, with a 2 1/2 year old toddler and a 6 month old baby at home, Pam became a dealer in her own right. "My age group of women is the transitional age group that went from working in the home to having a career or both," she said.

Pam has since grown her dealership from five employees to a staff of 68, and 18 months ago, she built a new facility to conform with the Toyota current Image II program. She is a multi-year winner of the prestigious Toyota President's Award, and has earned numerous sales and service awards.

With a firm belief in the importance of giving back to the community, Pam has served as President of both the Skagit Valley College Foundation and Skagit Valley YMCA; and as a board member of the Economic Development Association of Skagit County and Skagit & Whatcom County Junior Achievement. Her community involvement earned Pam the recognition of 2006 Skagit County Business Person of the Year, and the 2007 Skagit Women's Alliance & Network Professional Business Woman of the Year.

While President of the Puget Sound Automobile Dealers Association, Pam helped secure a nearly \$1.5 million grant from the United States Department of Labor to implement the national award winning General Service Technician curriculum at Shoreline Community College, and developed First Night for Charity for Junior Achievement to coincide with the Seattle Auto Show. This year, she was also nominated for the Automotive Youth Education Systems (AYES) Dealer of the Year award.

"Being nominated by your peers is one of the most humbling experiences I have ever gone through," Pam said. "Every dealer I know could and should have this award. I'm very proud to be a car dealer. I think it is one of the most important industries in our country for the health of our economy. I am very proud of my family. They have all done so much for the auto industry and for me and continue to do so."

WSADA serves 328 franchised new-car and truck dealers in 75 communities across the state. Together, they employ 22,326 people with a combined payroll of more than \$1 billion. Their dealership sales totals 15.1% of the state's retail sales, generating hundreds of millions of dollars of tax revenue for state and local governments through sales, corporate, and payroll tax revenue.

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