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**TIME AND ALLY FINANCIAL HONOR STRONGSVILLE DEALER**

**Robert Serpentini Jr. Wins National Recognition for Community Service  
and Industry Accomplishments**

(New York, NY, November 8, 2021) – The nomination of Robert Serpentini Jr., dealer and owner of Serpentini Chevrolet of Strongsville in Strongsville, Ohio, for the 2022 TIME Dealer of the Year award was announced today by TIME.

Serpentini is one of a select group of 47 dealer nominees from across the country who will be honored at the 105<sup>th</sup> annual National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) Show in Las Vegas on March 11, 2022. The announcement of this year's annual award was made by Viktoria Degtar, Global Chief Revenue Officer, TIME, and Doug Timmerman, president of Dealer Financial Services, Ally Financial.

The TIME Dealer of the Year award is one of the automobile industry's most prestigious and highly coveted honors. Recipients are among the nation's most successful auto dealers who also demonstrate a long-standing commitment to community service. Serpentini, 64, was chosen to represent the Greater Cleveland Automobile Dealers' Association in the national competition – one of only 47 auto dealers nominated for the 53<sup>rd</sup> annual award from more than 16,000 nationwide.

"I knew that if I invested the time and effort, I could accomplish my dream of being a car dealer," nominee Serpentini said. "Grit, fortitude and the ability to just keep going during adverse times were all part of the equation that led me here as well."

And that journey of highs and lows began when Serpentini fell in love with the car business after landing his first job washing vehicles at a dealership when he was 16 years old. By the time he was 22, he was a first-generation Chevrolet and Buick dealer in Orrville, Ohio.

"Through the early years as a dealer, I knew how to sell a lot of cars," he said. "And I knew how to establish strong relationships with our team, our customers and Chevrolet."

His business grew and he added four more dealerships in northeastern Ohio. But in 2008, when the Great Recession hit, Serpentini experienced some bumps in the road.

“I found out that my weakness for details and financial discipline were almost a fatal flaw,” he said. “Luckily, the relationships that I had built over the years paved the way for me to put a comeback plan in place. Navigating through those times made me a better dealer and a better person.”

Today, the Serpentine Auto Group encompasses six Ohio Chevrolet stores in Orrville (also Buick), Tallmadge, Strongsville, Westlake, Medina and Willoughby Hills, and a Nissan store in Pompano Beach, Florida. His two sons, Bobby and Ryan, also work for the family business.

“I try to surround myself with people who have high core values and drive,” he said. “It has never been about me. Our success is always a result of the people on my team. Without them, none of this is possible.”

An active member of the Greater Cleveland Automobile Dealers’ Association, Serpentine was tapped to be the liaison between the Cleveland Auto Show staff and General Motors to promote the brand in an engaging way to ensure a successful event, which helps fund the association’s scholarship program.

Serpentine also worked with Chevy to create an LMA (Local Marketing Association) after ad groups were disbanded by the automaker. “We agreed to form the first LMA in the country and, most importantly, had Chevy agree to allow us to use 20% of our funds for community action,” he said. “This meant each dealer could use 20% of their contributions to put directly back into the community.”

Another way Serpentine gives back is by donating to schools in the areas where his dealerships are located. “I’ve been able to provide amenities such as new turf for athletic fields, scoreboards and hurdles, as well as donating cars for raffle giveaways,” he said. “Supporting the athletic enrichment of youths builds pride in the schools and creates college opportunities for the students.”

In an effort to help students who missed out on senior events during the pandemic, Serpentine offered the 2020 graduating class of Orrville High School \$500 per student to be put toward textbooks for their first semester of college. He also established the Serpentine Chevrolet Buick of Orrville scholarship at the University of Akron Wayne College in Orrville.

Other organizations and events that he supports include: Harvest for Hunger; Toys for Tots; American Cancer Society Relay for Life; Rotary Club of Strongsville’s Kids Fest and Duck Race; Altenheim Senior Living; Cleveland Clinic Children’s; and Lions Steps for Pediatric Cancer Research (organized by Ohio Lions Clubs), to name a few.

“I carry the hard lessons of my mistakes and understand that success is guaranteed to no one,” Serpentine said. “I’m looking forward to watching my sons and our team grow our dealer group further in the future – giving us more opportunity to help our communities.”

Dealers are nominated by the executives of state and metro dealer associations around the country. A panel of faculty members from the Tauber Institute for Global Operations at the University of Michigan will select one finalist from each of the four NADA regions and one national Dealer of the Year. Three finalists will receive an additional \$5,000 for their favorite charities and the winner will receive an additional \$10,000 to give to charity, donated by Ally.

In its eleventh year as exclusive sponsor, Ally also will recognize dealer nominees and their community efforts by contributing \$1,000 to each nominee's 501(c)3 charity of choice. Nominees will also be recognized on AllyDealerHeroes.com, which highlights the philanthropic contributions and achievements of TIME Dealer of the Year nominees.

"In cities and towns across the country, auto dealers make a big economic impact—going the extra mile to strengthen their communities," said Doug Timmerman, president of dealer financial services, Ally. "It's an incredible achievement to be nominated for TIME Dealer of the Year. The program not only recognizes leadership in business and customer service, but also a commitment to giving back and doing it right."

Serpentini was nominated for the TIME Dealer of the Year award by Lou Vitantonio, president of the Greater Cleveland Automobile Dealers' Association. He has two sons.

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### **About TIME**

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### **About the NADA Show**

*The annual NADA Show brings together more than 20,000 franchised dealers and their employees, industry leaders, manufacturers and exhibitors to learn about the latest auto industry tools, trends, products and technologies.*