

## Northwestern Mutual Appoints Senior Leaders to Advance Transformation and Drive Client Experience

First-ever officer roles created to lead transformation, digital and marketing

MILWAUKEE, May 25, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Northwestern Mutual, a Fortune 100 financial security company, today announced new senior leadership appointments that advance transformation across the enterprise. These leadership roles signify the company's deep commitment to transform how people plan for, experience and achieve financial security.

"These forward-thinking leaders will play a critical role in transforming our business to provide more people with financial security," said Northwestern Mutual Chairman and Chief Executive Officer John E. Schlifske. "They have distinct strengths and a shared commitment to deliver results and an unmatched client experience."

The following leadership changes that integrate and accelerate the company's strategic initiatives were recently approved by Northwestern Mutual's Board of Trustees:

**Bethany Rodenhuis**, an executive officer and 22-year veteran of the company, has been appointed senior vice president – transformation, reporting to Schlifske. In her new role, Rodenhuis will spearhead the company's transformation strategies in a unified way, aligning all priorities and plans to deliver value to the company's more than 4.4 million clients. Rodenhuis has served in a variety of cross-functional leadership roles, most recently heading the company's distribution strategy and planning. She received her Juris Doctor degree from Marquette University Law School and her Bachelor's degree in economics from Northern Michigan University.

**Alexa von Tobel**, founder and CEO of LearnVest, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Northwestern Mutual, and executive officer and vice president of digital client and field solutions for Northwestern Mutual, has been named chief digital officer. In this role, von Tobel will help accelerate Northwestern Mutual's digital transformation, delivering state-of-the-art capabilities and tools that will allow the company to deliver an unmatched client and advisor digital experience. She received her Bachelor's degree from Harvard and also attended Harvard Business School.

**Aditi Gokhale** has been appointed executive officer and chief marketing officer of Northwestern Mutual. She will lead an enterprise-wide comprehensive marketing strategy to strengthen the Northwestern Mutual brand, amplify its digital marketing, and expand the company's engagement with clients and prospects. Gokhale joined the organization nearly a year ago as chief marketing officer of LearnVest. Throughout her career, she has been credited with building brands in today's digital world for global companies such as Shutterstock, American Express, and Nutrisystem. She has a Bachelor's degree and M.B.A. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

**Lisa Cadotte** has been named executive officer and vice president – investment risk & operations (IRO). She joined Northwestern Mutual in 1996 and assumed leadership of IRO in 2016, leading the team's work in safeguarding and enhancing policyowner value by ensuring the appropriate balance of risk and return in the investment portfolio. In addition, she has responsibility for investment operations. Cadotte received a Bachelor's degree in Finance from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and M.B.A. from Washington University.

**Hamilton Faris** has been named executive officer and vice president – data & analytics, and is responsible for accelerating the application of data-driven insights. He joined Northwestern Mutual's New York office in September 2016 to lead global data strategy and insights delivery. His previous roles include head of global data strategy & insights delivery for MetLife, and chief data and analytics officer for MetLife's Americas region, as well as other roles. Faris received his Bachelor's degree in civil engineering from North Carolina State University.

**Courtney Reynolds** has been named executive officer and vice president – communications & corporate affairs, after joining Northwestern Mutual in 2015 as vice president – corporate communications. Her team is responsible for strengthening the company's reputation and shaping and sharing the company's story internally and externally. She has more than two decades of corporate and agency experience spanning multiple industries and companies, such as ITT Corporation. Reynolds holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Virginia as well as an Executive M.B.A. from Stevens Institute of Technology.

**Emilia Sherifova** has been named executive officer and vice president – architecture & engineering and will lead the development of a five-year technology roadmap and continue to build the company's next generation

digital platform. Prior to joining LearnVest as chief technology officer in 2014, Sherifova led technology in a variety of organizations ranging from Wall Street to ad tech. She holds a Master's degree with a concentration in international business and finance from Columbia University and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Bridgeport.

**Ainslie Simmonds** has been named executive officer and vice president – digital products & design. She leads digital products and design teams and oversees product development for web and mobile, user experience, visual design, and voice of client for both Northwestern Mutual and LearnVest brands. She retains her role as chief operating officer of LearnVest. Prior to LearnVest, she served as the senior vice president of innovation for Maddock Douglas and held roles at several consumer companies. Simmonds received her M.B.A. from Harvard and her undergraduate degree from Ivey Business School at Western University in London, Ontario.

All changes are effective June 1.

## About Northwestern Mutual

**Northwestern Mutual** has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for 160 years. Through a distinctive, whole-picture planning approach including both insurance and investments, we empower people to be financially confident so they can live life differently. We combine the expertise of our financial professionals with a personalized digital experience to help our clients navigate their financial lives every day. With \$250.4 billion in assets, \$28.2 billion in revenues, and more than \$1.6 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to more than 4.4 million people who rely on us for life, disability income and long-term care insurance, annuities, brokerage and advisory services, trust services, and discretionary portfolio management solutions. The company holds more than \$100 billion of client assets as a part of its wealth management company and investment services. Northwestern Mutual ranks 100 on the 2016 FORTUNE 500 and is recognized by FORTUNE® as one of the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2017.

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company (NM), Milwaukee, WI (life and disability insurance, annuities, and life insurance with long-term care benefits) and its subsidiaries. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a comprehensive approach to financial security solutions including: life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, annuities, life insurance with long-term care benefits, investment products, and advisory products and services. Subsidiaries include **Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC** (NMIS) (securities), broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company® (NMWMC) (fiduciary and fee-based financial planning services), federal savings bank; and Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company (NLTC) (long-term care insurance).

SOURCE Northwestern Mutual

For further information: Jennifer Ryan, Northwestern Mutual, 1-800-323-7033,  
mediarelations@northwesternmutual.com

---

<https://news.northwesternmutual.com/2017-05-25-Northwestern-Mutual-Appoints-Senior-Leaders-to-Advance-Transformation-and-Drive-Client-Experience>