

Northwestern Mutual Announces Executive Leadership Changes

MILWAUKEE, Jan. 9, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Northwestern Mutual has announced executive leadership appointments to advance its commitment to innovation and transformation.

Alexa von Tobel, chief innovation officer, has announced she will leave the company to launch a new venture in the innovation and start-up space, an area of her personal passion. This opportunity will enable von Tobel, best-selling author of "Financially Fearless," to continue on an entrepreneurial path and expand her leadership in the broader innovation community. As founder of LearnVest and a key member of the company's senior leadership team, von Tobel has been instrumental in accelerating the client planning experience and advancing company-wide innovation efforts.

Souheil Badran is joining the company as chief innovation officer and executive vice president. He will be a member of the company's senior leadership team and report to John Schlifske, chairman, president and chief executive officer. Badran is an accomplished executive leader with extensive financial and operational leadership experience in both Fortune 250 and high-growth venture organizations. Most recently, he was president, Americas, of Alibaba's Alipay Ant Financial, the world's largest third-party payment platform. He will be responsible for identifying opportunities in innovation communities and overseeing the company's venture capital funds.

"I want to thank Alexa for helping us think bigger and expand our lens on innovation and our digital experience work. We plan to continue working together in business ventures as she takes this next step that she's chosen to pursue in the innovation space," said Schlifske. "We look forward to having Souheil join our senior leadership team – his experience and track record make him the perfect successor for our top innovation role."

"I could not be more proud of the work we have done together over the last four years of merging LearnVest and Northwestern Mutual and the work we will continue to do together in the future. I love this great company, the amazing people who work here, and everything our mission stands for," said von Tobel. "I feel deeply honored to have been a part of that important work for people across America, and I'm thrilled for this next chapter and excited to hand the torch to Souheil."

Additional leadership promotions

Several senior leaders who report to Schlifske have been promoted to executive vice president roles. They include: Tim Gerend, head of career distribution leading growth and development of the company's financial advisor system; Aditi Gokhale, chief marketing and communications officer; Beth Rodenhuis, chief transformation officer; and Emilia Sherifova, chief technology officer. In addition, Don Robertson, chief human resources officer, has been promoted to executive vice president and joins the senior leadership team reporting to Schlifske. The other members of the company's senior leadership team are: Souheil Badran, Mike Carter, Jo Eisenhart, John Grogan, Ron Joelson, Ray Manista and Christian Mitchell.

"As we transform our company to give clients what they need and deserve, the breadth and depth of knowledge on our senior leadership team is critical," said Schlifske. "This team brings diverse backgrounds and perspectives to the table, with a shared commitment to innovate and deliver results."

About Northwestern Mutual

[Northwestern Mutual](#) has been helping families and businesses achieve financial security for more than 160 years. Through a distinctive, whole-picture planning approach, we empower our clients to make the most of every single day and plan for important moments in their future. We combine the expertise of our financial professionals with a personalized digital experience to help our clients navigate their financial lives every day. With \$265.0 billion in assets, \$28.1 billion in revenues, and \$1.8 trillion worth of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual delivers financial security to 4.5 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 manages more than \$125 billion of client assets through its wealth management and investment services. Northwestern Mutual ranks 104 on the 2018 FORTUNE 500 and is recognized by FORTUNE® as one of the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2018.

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: Betsy Hoylman, 1-800-323-7033

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)

<https://news.northwesternmutual.com/2019-01-09-Northwestern-Mutual-Announces-Executive-Leadership-Changes>