

Joe Lescota

Former Northwood University Automotive Department Chairman Joe Lescota has been named Director of Dealer Development for the National Independent Automobile Dealers Association, NIADA CEO Michael Linn announced.

He will begin his new duties June 1 after Northwood completes its spring semester.

Lescota, who resigned as chairman of Northwood's Automotive Marketing Department in February after 15 years at the university, will work closely with NIADA Director of Education Georgia Brown on the association's dealer education initiatives as well as evaluating analytical data.

Lescota will continue to serve as lead instructor for NIADA's Certified Master Dealer course, a position he has held since 2003. The CMD program will continue to be presented in conjunction with and accredited by Northwood University, as it has since it was created in 2001.

"I am very excited about my new role as Director of Dealer Development for NIADA," Lescota said. "I have had the privilege of working with independent dealers for several years as the Certified Master Dealer instructor and at NIADA Conventions. Now I will be able to expand and help develop a wider range of educational programs offered by NIADA. It's an awesome opportunity for me to work even closer and more frequently with NIADA members."

Lescota is a former retail automotive executive with more than 25 years of frontline dealership, sales, management and training experience. He has served as a dealer operator and is credited with developing innovative management techniques leading to reduced employee turnover and increased customer retention and satisfaction. He has conducted workshops and seminars to help used car dealers increase their profitability and helped introduce college credit courses in dealerships nationwide via distance learning.

In 2011, Lescota was inducted into NIADA's Ring of Honor for outstanding performance and leadership that has contributed to the professionalism and growth of the automobile industry, one of only 21 honored in the association's 66-year history. He was named Man of the Year by the Association of Finance and Insurance Professionals in 2006 and is a five-time winner of Northwood's Faculty Excellence awards.

"I'm looking forward to having Joe as a senior staff member on our educational team at NIADA," Linn said. "Joe's industry knowledge and professionalism will be a great addition for us."