

Thursday, December 12, 2013

She's in the Driver's Seat

A woman will lead the nation's largest carmaker for the first time.

Mary Barra's birthday is on Christmas Eve. On Tuesday, she got an early present. She was named the head of General Motors, America's biggest car company!

Barra will be the first woman ever to run a major car company. This is seen as a big step toward closing the gap between men and women in the **corporate** world. Of the 500 biggest companies in the country, women will now run 23.

Barra, who turns 52 this month, has worked at General Motors for 33 years! She has worked in all sections of the company. She studied **engineering** and business in college.

General Motors has had some rough times. In 2009 the company went **bankrupt**. It almost went out of business. The United States government had to loan GM money. Now the car company is making money again. Barra says she will make sure the company looks at cars the way customers do. After all, that's who buys the cars and keeps the company in business!

What's her favorite car? "If you ask me what my all-time favorite is, I am a Camaro fan," she told the *New York Times*. "Or a Firebird."

By Melissa Kim



Mary Barra is the new head of the car company!

FACT:

The global headquarters of GM is in the GM Renaissance Center in Detroit, Michigan. The "RenCen" is so big it has its own zip code!

ACT:

Take a survey of 10 companies or organizations in your area, such as your school or local stores. How many have a female leader or owner?

VOCABULARY:

corporate: relating to a large business, company, or organization
engineering: building; creating
bankrupt: out of money; unable to pay back owed money