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Life Lessons

02.27.2014 | Hot Topics, Education, Students, Business

One of the University of Dayton's most successful graduates, now a senior executive with Ford Motor Company, will share his story with prospective students on campus.

Joe Hinrichs, executive vice president and president of The Americas, Ford Motor Company, returns to campus Friday for a luncheon with prospective students, current students, faculty and staff.

"Joe's story of success will resonate with high school students who may just be starting to think about college, their major and career path," said Rob Durkle, University of Dayton assistant vice president of enrollment management. "A university education is about exploring your passions and discovering how you can make a difference in the world, and Joe will talk about how the University of Dayton can prepare you for a successful future."

A native of Columbus, Ohio, Hinrichs earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Dayton in 1989, but he didn't enroll in the School of Engineering to necessarily become an engineer.

"I really wanted to be in leadership roles in a company, but I felt that having an engineering degree would help me with problem solving and critical thinking skills — and help me get the confidence I needed to be able to be in tougher situations and be able to find solutions," he said.

That attitude certainly served Hinrichs well in his career. At the age of 29, he was General Motors' youngest plant manager. After joining Ford as a plant manager in 2000, he advanced the ranks with stints as president and CEO of Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited; vice president, North America Manufacturing; group vice president, Global Manufacturing and Labor Affairs, Ford Motor Company; group vice president and president of Asia Pacific and Africa; and chairman and CEO of Ford China.

Hinrichs is a member of the University of Dayton board of trustees. He was named the 2013 *Fortune Magazine* Reader's Choice winner as Businessperson of the Year for the automotive industry. Hinrichs was also named one of the 10 inaugural winners of the Shanghai Pudong Business Person of the Year award in 2013 in recognition of his leadership in growing Ford's business in China.

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