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National Interstate Insurance Company, founded in 1989 and headquartered in Richfield, OH is a member of the Great American Insurance Group and offers insurance products and services specifically focused on the transportation industry. As a leading specialty property and casualty insurance holding company, National Interstate offers more than 30 different insurance products, including traditional insurance and innovative alternative risk transfer (ART) programs for commercial companies and insurance for specialty vehicle owners including passenger transportation, moving and storage and truck transportation.

Michelle Wiltgen is Assistant Vice President & National Marketing Manager for National Interstate Insurance Company's Passenger Transportation Division. She joined the company in 1991 when the company was less than two years old. With 37 years of insurance experience, 30 of them with National Interstate, she is the company's longest tenured employee and has been a part of National Interstate's success of becoming an industry leader as it grew from 23 to over 700 employees. This may not have been the business she thought she'd be involved in for her entire career but she can't imagine not being part of the motorcoach industry. She resides in Estero, Florida with her husband Dann Wiltgen who retired from Prevost.

Growing up in a small town outside of Cleveland, Ohio, in a family of four older brothers, didn't offer many opportunities or female role models for me to look up to with respect to a career. It was the late Seventies and the prevailing attitude was that women would get married and have children just like their mothers had done. There were no family discussions of college visits or talk of what college I would attend. I realized at a very early age that if I wanted a career I would need to get an advanced education and I would be the one paying for that. During my senior year of high school I was hired by a local insurance company called Progressive Insurance. I worked there during the day and attended classes at Cleveland State University at night. That was my schedule and routine for the next four plus years until I

graduated in 1989 earning a BA in Management & Labor Relations - Human Resource Management. Armed with a degree in Human Resource Management I naturally thought HR would be the field I would go into but with five years of insurance experience remaining in the insurance field made the most sense and I believed would provide me with the most rewarding opportunities.

Not long after graduating from college I received a call from a former Progressive colleague and friend who had recently left Progressive to become an executive of a newly formed insurance company called National Interstate. He wanted me to interview at this "start-up" company as a Marketing Representative. When I asked what they insured he replied "buses". I remember thinking how odd that was but decided to find out more and attended the interview. I left a company with thousands of employees to work for a company with only 23 employees and never looked back. Today, I can't imagine not being part of the National Interstate family and the bus industry.

As one of the first female officers of National Interstate I always felt it was important to lead by example. I wanted other women to see that it is possible to be successful, regardless of your title or family background, in a male dominated business. Through hard work, dedication and commitment you can be rewarded with success. Along with being the face of National Interstate to the bus industry, I try to be a resource to other women in the industry. Whether you are a National Interstate customer or not, I will always take your call and try to answer questions or direct you to someone who can.

Joining Women in Buses was an easy decision. The organization, formed by the ABA, is a progressive organization focused on promoting and recognizing the efforts of women in the industry. It gives women the opportunity to network, learn, mentor and be recognized for their strength, dedication and expertise. I hope my involvement speaks to women who may not feel comfortable to come forward and that this will encourage them to be a part of something great.