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**SUPPORTING TEXAS EDUCATION
AND VETERANS**

TEXAS LOTTERY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER RECEIVES TOP INDUSTRY HONOR

(AUSTIN) – The Texas Lottery Commission today announced that Joan Kotal, the agency's information technology manager, was named a recipient of the 2020 Powers Award during the North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries' (NASPL) annual seminar. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the award was presented to Kotal virtually during NASPL DeskCon, a digital conference for the lottery industry.

"There is no one in our agency more deserving of this prestigious award this year than Joan Kotal," said Gary Grief, executive director of the Texas Lottery. "She has been a driving force for nearly two decades in modernizing the technology, project management and information security landscape of the Texas Lottery Commission. Just this year, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Joan led in rapid fashion the successful completion of two integral projects for our agency and the people we serve. Under her guidance, the Texas Lottery Commission implemented the Claim Appointment Booking System, an application which allows players to request an appointment with lottery claim centers to claim prizes and which allows claim center staff to track the status of calls made to schedule appointments. Likewise, Joan's strategic thinking positioned our agency to move in a matter of days to an almost complete conversion to a telecommuting work environment. Because of her leadership, Joan's team is always positioned to tackle any problem and rise to any challenge. For these many reasons, I am proud to congratulate Joan on receiving one of this year's Powers Awards."

Each year, the Powers Awards are presented in recognition of the significant contributions lottery and lottery vendor employees have made through exceptional job performance. These awards are named in honor of the late Edward J. Powers, the "Father of U.S. Lotteries." Powers spent more than 25 years in the lottery industry helping to define the most effective organizational structures that have become a blueprint for today's lotteries. The drive, commitment and integrity Powers demonstrated set the standard of excellence exhibited by lottery and vendor employees nominated for this award.

(more)

A longtime employee of the State of Texas for multiple agencies, Kotal joined the Texas Lottery Commission in August 2004 and has served as information technology manager since November 2004. She has shepherded numerous security and technical modernization efforts for the agency during her tenure, including the award-winning Scratch Work Papers (SWAP) application, which allows external lottery scratch ticket print vendors to electronically submit working papers for Texas Lottery® scratch ticket games and manage cross-divisional collaboration and electronic approval of these working papers. Also under her leadership, the Texas Lottery implemented the Jackpot Estimation System (JES), which automates the jackpot estimations process for Texas Two Step®, Lotto Texas®, Mega Millions® and Powerball®, and allows for electronic approvals for all such estimations.

About the Texas Lottery

Beginning with the first ticket sold in 1992, the Texas Lottery has generated \$31 billion in revenue for the state and distributed \$66 billion in prizes to lottery players. Since 1997, the Texas Lottery has contributed \$25.8 billion to the Foundation School Fund, which supports public education in Texas. As authorized by the Texas Legislature, certain Texas Lottery revenues benefit state programs including the Fund for Veterans' Assistance. Since the first veterans' themed scratch ticket game was launched in 2009, the Texas Lottery has contributed more than \$144 million for programs supporting Texas veterans.

The Texas Lottery provides several entertaining games for lottery players including Powerball®, Mega Millions®, Lotto Texas®, All or Nothing™, Texas Two Step®, Pick 3™, Daily 4™, Cash Five® and scratch ticket games. For more information visit us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube or at www.txlottery.org. PLAY RESPONSIBLY.

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