

## CHALLENGES IN 2020 PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES IN 2021

2020 will historically be remembered as the year COVID-19 changed life as we knew it. The public health crisis forced every business, big and small, to re-think strategic plans, messaging and what business would look like on the other side of the pandemic. America's favorite jackpot game was no exception.

In April, the Powerball Product Group announced its decision to determine Powerball's advertised jackpot based on game sales and interest rates. Changes were necessary to ensure that ticket sales could support the Powerball jackpot. The priority was to make sure the Powerball game could continue to assist lotteries in raising proceeds for their beneficiaries. More than half of all proceeds from the sale of a Powerball ticket remain in the jurisdiction where the ticket was purchased.

"This year has given each of us challenges never faced and new uncharted waters to navigate," said Sarah M. Taylor, the newly appointed President of MUSL and Executive Director of the Hoosier Lottery.

Now is the time to focus on the future and evolve with a world that has adapted its way of living but still seeks entertainment. Lotteries more than ever will need to execute on their missions to raise funds for good causes. "We must evolve and collaborate in order to contribute to the beneficiaries of each of our participating jurisdictions," said Taylor. On July 1st Sarah started her new term as Board President, elected by the MUSL Board of

Directors. "We are learning much about our industry, our players, our communities and our beneficiaries. We must implement the knowledge gained for future success."

One of the exciting new ventures set to debut this year, a new Powerball Draw Show. The MUSL Marketing and Promotions Committee formed a smaller subcommittee to review changes to the Powerball Draw Show, aired live every Wednesday and Saturday night from the Florida Lottery studio in Tallahassee, FL. Outgoing Marketing and Promotions Committee Chair Rebecca Hargrove (TN) tapped Beth Bresnahan (DC), Gregg Edgar (AZ) and Brian Rockey (NE) to review the current elements and guide the selection process for the fresh new show. The subcommittee met several times to review new background graphics designed by the contracted provider and to select a new original music selection composed with assistance from the Arizona Lottery's advertising agency. These elements will be unveiled along with the new Smart Play draw machines that will be placed into service later this summer. These new machines might steal the show, but the background and music will tie everything together bringing a modern refresh to the presentation of America's favorite jackpot game. "Our objective going into this project was to create a modern, fun and thrilling backdrop that captures the anticipatory excitement of winning a life-changing prize," said Bresnahan, Executive Director of the DC Lottery. "I believe we achieved this with new graphics, new music and tweaks to the

script that showcase the winning numbers and complement the Powerball brand."

MUSL has partnered with Dick Clark Productions once again for the second installment of the Powerball First Millionaire of the Year promotion. One lucky player will have the chance to win \$1 million in a special drawing LIVE on ABC just after midnight on Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve with Ryan Seacrest. Although events of the past few months have changed many aspects of our lives, the ball will drop, time will pass and a new year will begin. The experience with this year's promotion will be different, but the shot at winning a million dollars will remain.

"As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the POWERBALL First Millionaire of the Year promotion has been slightly modified for the safety of all participants," says Bret Toyne, MUSL Executive Director. "The finalists will have the option of attending the live drawing in New York or having a Rockin' New Year's Eve party at a local venue. Either way, someone winning one million dollars live on New Year's Rockin' Eve is must see television."

As the world evolves in the coming year, MUSL will also focus on the evolution of Powerball. We are challenged to nurture and grow the game with the need to be more flexible and responsive to an ever-changing marketplace.

"The MUSL Development Committee is looking at a variety of options focused on increasing the player base, enhancing player convenience,



**Sarah Taylor**, President of MUSL Board and Executive Director of Hoosier Lottery

and strengthening Powerball," says Drew Svitko, Pennsylvania Lottery Executive Director and Chair of the committee. Options under consideration will ensure the long-term stability of the game and its ability to generate money for the great causes our members serve.

As caretakers of this popular brand, we have to continuously look forward for new opportunities and innovations according to Rebecca Hargrove, Chair of the International Working Group (IWG). "The Powerball Product Group and the IWG will continue to work together to identify the best markets to potentially conduct a pilot program for Powerball. Additional population has historically benefitted the Powerball game, and international partners are an additional opportunity to expand the player base," stated Hargrove

As we step into the future at a time like this, the commitment is to be innovative, optimistic and above all else, build our brand as we better serve players everywhere. ■