

## POWERBALL IN PRIMETIME

“Alright, let’s pick a winner now!” With millions of viewers watching, Powerball® had another magic moment on network television to ring in the New Year. Shortly after the iconic Times Square Ball Drop, Ryan Seacrest and country music singer and Powerball correspondent Jessie James Decker announced Carlos Mabry of Washington, D.C. as the winner of the POWERBALL First Millionaire of the Year® drawing during the ABC broadcast of *Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve with Ryan Seacrest 2021*. For the second year, the national Powerball promotion has awarded \$1 million to a lucky lottery player on the top-rated New Year’s Eve broadcast.

“Partnering with dick clark productions has given us the opportunity to showcase the Powerball brand, its support of lottery beneficiaries, and the thrill of winning on network television,” said May Scheve Reardon, Powerball Product Group Chair and Missouri Lottery Executive Director. “This year, we were able to share Powerball’s story with an even larger audience.”

Despite Times Square celebrations being closed to the public, the 49th edition of *Dick Clark’s New Year’s Rockin’ Eve* outperformed last year’s show, with the first two hours growing viewership by 15% and the final primetime hour becoming the highest-rated entertainment telecast of the season in Adults 18-49, tying “The Masked Singer” Thanksgiving episode. According to Nielsen, more than 28.3 million viewers tuned in during the broadcast’s peak quarter hour from

12:00-12:15 a.m., which included the POWERBALL First Millionaire of the Year® drawing.

“We are continuously looking for new ways to promote Powerball that makes the product more relevant to a younger demographic,” said Gregg Edgar, Chair of the MUSL Marketing and Promotions Committee and Arizona Lottery Executive Director. “Through this promotion, we’ve been able to capitalize the star power

of Ryan Seacrest, Jessie James Decker, and the New Year’s Rockin’ Eve brand on television and social media to introduce Powerball to a whole new player base.”

On a local level, the DC Lottery experienced major success promoting Mabry’s journey as a finalist and \$1 million winner on social media, encouraging fans to follow, share and cheer on Mabry using the hashtag #DCforTeamCarlos on its social media platforms.

The hashtag quickly gained traction with mentions by news reporters, radio stations, and professional sports teams including the Washington Capitals and Washington Wizards.

“Ringin’ in the New Year with a million-dollar-win was not only a windfall for the Mabry family, but it was also an exciting journey for the DC Lottery and our players as we spent the weeks leading up to the big drawing engaging with Carlos via traditional and social media on the prospects of becoming Powerball’s First Millionaire of the Year,” said Beth Bresnahan, Executive Director of the DC Lottery. “While Carlos was stunned when his number was drawn, I am fairly certain I heard a collective roar throughout the District cheering #DCforTeamCarlos!”

This year, 19 lotteries participated in the 2021 POWERBALL First Millionaire of the Year® promotion.

**POWERBALL**  
**FIRST MILLIONAIRE**  
**OF THE YEAR®**  
**LIVE ON**  
**DICK CLARK’S**  
**NEW YEAR’S**  
**ROCKIN’ EVE**

Throughout 2020, lotteries held second-chance drawings and contests to determine a national pool of semi-finalists. Five finalists were randomly selected from that pool to move on to the New Year's drawing for the chance to win \$1 million. Like all things in 2020, this year's production and winner experience looked different than the inaugural event that flew more than 300 Powerball players and their guests to New York City for a VIP experience and New Year's Eve gala.



Ryan Seacrest and Jesse James Decker

To protect the health and safety of the five finalists and their families, dick clark productions and the Multi-State Lottery Association opted for an alternative format. The VIP experience in New York City was replaced with a New Year's Eve at-home party prize package including a \$12,500 cash prize, deluxe surf-and-turf dinner for eight, 70-inch LED TV, karaoke system, \$500 gift certificate to Party City, and more. All five finalists were interviewed live on-air from their hometowns by Jessie James Decker leading up to the \$1 million drawing.



Carlos Mabry & Family

"There were so many powerful stories that came out of the interviews with the finalists from last year's promotion that producers decided to add a fifth Powerball segment to this year's broadcast," said Kevin Patrick Smith, Senior Vice President of Business Development and Partnerships, dick clark productions. "Ryan Seacrest was also able to join Jessie James Decker in the Powerball Studio for the life-changing moment."

Interviewing the finalists from their hometowns added

several layers of complexity to the production. In addition to adhering to public health guidelines set forth by state and local officials, all five locations had to be audio and visually connected to programming in New York. Leading up to the broadcast, dick clark productions worked with all five finalists and their families to get them comfortable with appearing on network television.

Meanwhile, in New York City, a space in a high-rise building overlooking Times Square was converted into the Powerball Studio

for the \$1 million drawing. To oversee the drawing, MUSL's Director of Draws and Productions Sue Dooley departed for New York City on December 24. Dooley, like all production personnel, had to follow specified health and safety protocols in order to participate in the show.

In the end, after months of preparation, the POWERBALL First Millionaire of the Year® promotion culminated with 12 minutes of premier content on the top-rated entertainment telecast of the season. The Powerball

Product Group has already approved a third installment of the promotion, and talks have begun on how to expand the promotion to even more states, while delivering Powerball players another premier experience.

"We want to continue to build Powerball's brand on a global level," Edgar added. "At the same time, we're continuing to build enthusiasm about the game at the state level, and we will be working closely with our lottery partners in the months ahead to accomplish both." ■