

# PGRI Announces Lottery Industry Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients



Honoring the 2023 recipients for their distinguished careers and a Lifetime of Dedication which has Contributed to the Great Success of Government Lotteries

**Join us at 4:30 pm on Tuesday September 12 at PGRI Lottery Expo Nashville to celebrate the Lottery Industry Lifetime Achievement award ceremony honoring Ms. Carney and Ms. King.**

**Created in 1993 to honor Major Peter J. O'Connell**, the first director of the Rhode Island Lottery, the Lottery Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes industry leaders who have, over a long tenure of service, made important contributions to the success of their peers and to the lottery industry, as well as to the lotteries that they serve. The recipients are nominated and selected by current Lifetime Achievement Award holders and join an elite group of industry leaders.

Major O'Connell was a pioneer in the lottery field and the evolution of instant ticket and on-line systems. After years of promoting the concept of a multi-state lottery, Major O'Connell served a two-year term as the first President of the Multi-State Lottery Association (MUSL), where in 1988 he was instrumental in launching Lotto<sup>®</sup>America, the predecessor of today's Powerball. In 1993, the Public Gaming Research Institute honored Major O'Connell with the Major Peter O'Connell Lottery Career Achievement Award presented for "the principles of high integrity, commitment to the quality of the lottery, dedication to the lottery playing public, professional independence and service to the state, along with tenure in office, as exemplified by Major O'Connell."

After serving in the United States Marine Corps during WWII, Peter joined the Rhode Island State Police, where he served with distinction for 25 years. During his tenure he held several top-level positions as he rose to the rank of Major. As chairman of the New England Police Intelligence Unit, he designed and implemented the New England Police Management School for State Police, which became known nationally. Major O'Connell was inducted into the Rhode Island Criminal Justice Hall of Fame in 2014.

In May of 1974, Major O'Connell was appointed by the governor to be the first Executive Director of the Rhode Island Lottery where he served until his retirement in 1993, making him the longest tenured Lottery Director in the United States at the time, and continues to be the longest serving tenure at one lottery. Major O'Connell passed away in 2021, just weeks shy of his 100th birthday. ■

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**MICHELLE CARNEY**  
Vice President,  
Global Lottery Marketing, IGT

Michelle Carney has dedicated much of her 23-year career at IGT to working collaboratively with lotteries, industry associations, and peers to help drive the lottery industry forward. For the past 15 years, she has engaged with state lotteries and their vendor partners to evolve the Powerball and Mega Millions multi-jurisdictional game portfolio in the U.S., and most recently was honored to be asked to lead the 2025 Mega Millions project-plan implementation. In 2007, she was immersed in developing the consumer questions and framework to inform a national approach to the evolution of multi-state games. Since then, Michelle has collaborated with the MUSL and Mega Millions working groups to implement six multi-jurisdictional game enhancements, including Cross-Sell, \$2 Powerball and \$2 Mega Millions — changes that have contributed substantial revenue for good causes. Another aspect of multi-jurisdiction game evolution was Michelle's role leading the Cash 4 Life project implementation, originally launched in NY and NJ in 2014. From 2015 to 2017, as IGT's Vice President of Strategic Customer Initiatives and Customer Advocate, she worked closely with CEOs and directors of all U.S. government-sponsored lotteries to develop, manage, and execute national opportunities to grow their lottery business.

What was most important to her when she first started in the industry was to earn the trust of customers: "I believe wholeheartedly in the mission of government-sponsored lotteries to benefit the good causes and people in the jurisdictions they serve. I wanted our lottery customers to know, and still do, that I am committed to listening to their needs and helping them responsibly grow sales to serve those beneficiaries."

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**JEANNA KING**  
Vice President, Creative Engagement  
& Events, Scientific Games

Jeanna King's design career spans more than two decades at Scientific Games and a lifetime of dedication which has contributed to the great success of government lotteries. Today, she is the company's Vice President of Creative Engagement and Events.

Jeanna joined Scientific Games 22 years ago as a graphic designer. Since then, she's become a leader of the company's creative and marketing efforts supporting its global mission to help lotteries generate maximum funding for their good causes. Jeanna's creative talents and design vision allowed her to spearhead high-visibility creative projects, including developing Scientific Games' strong corporate brand identity and helping the company pioneer linked games and once-in-a-lifetime winners' events.

In her current role, Jeanna leads creative development and marketing campaigns with an internal team as well as external agencies that create engaging consumer-level materials for the company's lottery customers. She has provided branding expertise to more than 100 lottery marketing programs in the form of radio and television ad campaigns and point-of-sale materials, including many featuring popular licensed entertainment brands. Jeanna also leads Scientific Games' visual presence and renowned hospitality at lottery industry conferences and trade shows around the world.

Jeanna holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a concentration in Visual Communications from Auburn University in Alabama. She is a die-hard Auburn Football fan and a longtime participant in the Disney Princess Run and Half Marathon. She has dedicated her free time to generating awareness and funding for Rett Syndrome. Jeanna lives with her husband and daughters, Caroline and Aeryn, in metro Atlanta. ■

the vendors,” he said. “Portfolio management is so important and ticket printers have the data to help us with our planning. And they can provide us with information from lotteries across the world. How we work together, including management of our contracts, is critical to a healthy ongoing relationship.”

As North Carolina’s primary instant game partner, Scientific Games is constantly looking for ways to responsibly drive sales and streamline the planning process, Jeremy said. “Portfolio management and optimization is a constantly evolving journey and lotteries should lean on their partners to guide them on that journey,” he said. “In North Carolina, for example, we set up games to have a conservative quantity at the start as we don’t want to over-produce a product and have it in-market longer than intended. We then work with Mark’s team to make sure there are no gaps, consider re-orders, and decide when to pull a ticket from the market. And the relationship between us and the lottery and our goals is outlined in our contract. We are aligned for growth. When the lottery does well, we do well. That seems to be the intelligent path for a successful partnership.”

Matt continued on the contract discussion. “I think that lotteries that provide for secondary vendor contracts see great benefit because it allows innovation from a variety of sources,” he said. “At Pollard, we bring things to our clients, both primary and secondary, that have worked in other jurisdictions in the U.S. and around the world and show how they can be used in each lottery. We might have sales strategies

*Michelle Carney, continued from page 12*

In her current role leading a team responsible for the development of IGT global marketing and communications strategies, Michelle also leads the management of IGT’s relationships with industry associations such as the World Lottery Association (WLA), the National Association of State and Provincial Lotteries (NASPL) and European Lotteries (EL). Her contributions in this role have included helping to establish the framework for WLA partnerships between lotteries and vendors, and developing innovative concepts for retail and product execution through the North American and EL Design Partner Programs.

She has served on numerous industry panels and committees, and collaborated with lotteries around the world on new game development efforts, new product introductions and market execution, as well as working with the late Buddy Roogow on industry monitor game and price-point innovation for U.S. draw games.

“Michelle consistently brings her critical thinking

that are different from the other printers but would work well in a certain jurisdiction. The more information a lottery can receive from different sources the better decisions that can be made that drive sales and revenue.”

Ryan said that Texas has successfully employed the “all three” ticket vendor strategy and it has worked for them. “All three vendors come in and bring us all their best ideas, and we then pick which ones work for us irrespective of the vendor,” he said. “We weigh an array of different factors

## “Let’s focus on providing players with the products they do want and support the retail network with the information they need to reach players and increase sales.”

– licensed brands, printing innovations, product nuances, press availability. I’m not sure anyone can grow a category by leaving any ideas on the table which is why I like this model. We get the best ideas from the experts in the ticket printing field, and then we choose the ones that fit best with the needs of the Texas Lottery.”

As someone who has worked for both vendors and lotteries, Tom brings a unique perspective to this type of discussion. “We’re a small industry so we can’t exclude anyone from business discussions because good ideas come from everywhere,” he said. “Look at the iLottery industry. They use different game developers to create different

games with an array of play styles. Why can’t that model work for instant tickets? In the end, we need to listen to our players. We are wringing our hands because of the drop in sales of \$1 and \$2 tickets. Well, since our players are telling us they don’t necessarily support those price points, why continue to force the discussion on how to grow those sales? Let’s focus on providing players with the products they do want and support the retail network with the information they need to reach players and increase sales.”

Mark wrapped up the discussion by

harkening back to his opening comments. “Data, data and more data,” he said. “We can’t have enough data to make the decisions that are so critical to our businesses. And we can’t just look at the ‘easy’ data like price-points and game attributes. We need to look at seasonality and timing of releases. When to pull games and put others in their place. This can only be done by working with our printing partners who work with lotteries across the world. Once we have the data, we can make informed decisions and create balanced portfolios for the future. The success of our industry depends on all of us working together towards one common goal.” ■

ability and keen business acumen to industry executive-planning and decision-making sessions while masterfully delivering complex execution plans,” said Jay Gendron, IGT Chief Operating Officer Global Lottery. “She respects the diversity of competing perspectives and is tenacious about chasing the details to get the job done.”

Before joining IGT (formerly GTECH) in 2000, Michelle began her career with Comcast Wachovia Center, working for the Philadelphia Flyers, and The Vanguard Group in Pennsylvania, followed by the Fleet Financial group. She was determined to succeed in what were then male-dominated business environments. Her early mentors taught her the importance of honesty, integrity, and perseverance, and she has always focused on understanding issues from the customer’s point of view as well as demonstrating sensitivity to the consumer journey.

Michelle’s career in the lottery industry has truly grown from the ground up, starting with her

earliest role as a senior market analyst at GTECH. By applying an entrepreneurial spirit of innovation and her commitment to building mutually beneficial, long-term business relationships, she contributed to the execution of the first in-lane solution in U.K., and, in 2005, the Florida Lottery’s terminal rollout retail-optimization plan and first digital signage implementation in the U.S.; led the development and execution team for Game Pro, a standalone system to test new monitor games, deployed in Rhode Island; the initial launch in Illinois of Pick n Play as a new category of instant online games; the execution of e-scratch in Kansas; and the launch of G3 (Generation 3) games, the precursor to today’s Fast Play games, in Minnesota.

“Customer First is a core IGT belief that has always inspired me,” said Michelle, “and that is genuinely how I feel about what we do for lotteries and for the industry.” ■