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Missouri casinos educate employees and patrons on the odds

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – Missouri casinos will focus on the theme "Know the Odds" during the 14th annual Responsible Gaming Education Week, August 1 through 5.

"Knowing the odds of the games in a casino is an important component of responsible gaming," said Mike Winter, executive director of the Missouri Gaming Association. "By educating our employees, we empower them to help casino patrons know what it means to keep it fun."

A free American Gaming Association (AGA) educational booklet, "The House Advantage: A Guide to Understanding the Odds," will be available at Missouri casinos during Responsible Gaming Education Week. Responsible Gaming Education Week was created by the AGA in 1998 to promote responsible gaming nationwide and to increase awareness of problem gambling issues among employees and customers.

The new booklet explains the casino's advantage – also known as the "house advantage" – and outlines the mathematical probabilities of various popular games. It also explains other factors a player should take into account when gambling, such as the amount wagered, the time spent playing a game and, to a degree, a player's skill at certain games.

The free booklet also busts common myths about casino games. For example, so-called gambling "hot streaks" actually are just random sequences of events perceived by players to be favorable. In reality, slot machines are no more or less likely to hit a jackpot just because they haven't hit for a while, and roulette wheels are no more or less likely to land on red if they just previously landed on black. Every casino game of chance is based on randomness; each spin of the wheel or roll of the dice is an independent event, not influenced by previous events.

The Missouri Gaming Association and its casino company members sponsor and fund year-round programs to address responsible gaming issues. Every Missouri casino property has a designated employee who serves as the director of responsible gaming programs for that location. Missouri responsible gaming programs include:

- 1-888-BETSOFF - a statewide telephone crisis line and referral service for problem gambling.
- Project 21 – a scholarship competition that addresses underage gambling;
- Operation Bet Smart – an awareness program that focuses on compulsive gambling;
- Alcohol Awareness Programs – promote responsible consumption of alcohol.

Missouri casinos will participate in Responsible Gaming Education Week with these

activities:

Ameristar ~ St. Charles and Kansas City

- Ameristar will educate employees through a newsletter, buttons and stickers, a quiz with prizes, posters, bulletin boards, daily emails and table tents in the team dining room. Ameristar also will post a responsible gaming banner on the corporate website and the internal I-TV system to inform guests that the casino supports responsible gaming.

Argosy Casino Hotel and Spa ~ Riverside

- Argosy Riverside will raise awareness through a mayoral proclamation, billboard, newspaper ads, e-blast, banners at the 635 and new bridge entrances to the casino, souvenir cups and signage. Employees will wear wristbands and buttons, and participate in educational games.

Harrah's ~ Maryland Heights & North Kansas City

- Harrah's will focus on their ongoing theme "Responsible Gaming is Our Business" which highlights the company's commitment to integrity and positions responsible gaming as another piece of customer service. Harrah's Maryland Heights will use posters, a buzz session planner, newsletter articles, a pay stub message and a memo from the general manager to increase employee awareness. Harrah's North Kansas City employees will wear wristbands, participate in educational games and network with their property's responsible gaming ambassador.

Isle of Capri ~ Kansas City & Boonville

- Department managers will present a responsible gaming training program to all employees, including a refresher on spotting underage patrons. All employees will wear Responsible Gaming Education Week buttons throughout the week.

Lady Luck Casino ~ Caruthersville

- Lady Luck Casino will educate employees and patrons through pay stub messages, posters and banners, an information center, training session, buttons, TV and newspaper public service announcements, and messages in the public walkway to the casino.

Pinnacle's Lumiere Place and River City Casino ~ St. Louis

- Pinnacle Entertainment's River City and Lumiere Place Casinos will offer the "Know the Odds" brochure at their mychoice player's club and cashier locations. Pinnacle also will educate employees on house advantage calculations and review responsible gaming issues during daily pre-shift meetings and weekly quizzes.

Terrible's Casinos

- Terrible's Casinos will use brochures and signage to educate guests and employees. Supervisors will review responsible gaming issues with employees, train them to recognize the possible signs of a gambling problem, and remind them of available programs such as the 888-BETSOFF helpline and the voluntary exclusion list.

The Missouri Gaming Association (MGA) is the statewide trade association of the Missouri casino entertainment industry and its related professionals. Formed in 1993, the Missouri Gaming Association provides research and information to increase awareness of the economic benefits of Missouri's casinos. For more information, visit www.missouricasinos.org