



Chris Christie, Governor
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor
Ford M. Scudder, State Treasurer
Carole Hedinger, Executive Director
Benefits Education and Institutions

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Powerball Makes Dreams Come True in New Jersey

TRENTON (Aug. 4, 2017) – The Powerball jackpot is now \$286 million. While there was no jackpot winner from Wednesday's drawing, New Jersey Lottery players are winning millions of dollars in prizes large and small with every drawing. Here are stories about two of New Jersey's winning tickets.

Powerball made Bhargav Dave's dreams come true. Dave, of Bridgewater in Somerset County, is a deli sandwich maker and cashier. After a day's work at the deli, Bhargav sat in his car before heading home and checked the winning Lottery numbers on his mobile phone for the Saturday, May 6 Powerball drawing. He discovered that his ticket matched all five of the white ball numbers drawn, missing only the Powerball number for the jackpot win, winning the \$1,000,000 second-tier prize.

"There were so many things in my mind at the same time and I couldn't express myself," Dave said. He then drove back to the Pantry 1 Food Mart, 101 Lincoln Blvd., Middlesex in Middlesex County, where he bought the ticket, to have it validated. He had been employed at the store and the owner was his friend; together they completed the claim form. Dave and his family are thrilled about the win. They will take some time to think about what they will do with these winnings.



The Che Maid Group is represented by David Ortiz as he claims the \$1,000,000 prize for the 46-member group.

Another million dollar winning ticket was purchased for the Wednesday, May 10 Powerball drawing. That was won by a group of 46 members called the Che Maid Group. The group was represented by Pedro Mena and David Ortiz at Lottery headquarters. The men shared that the group members are co-workers at a manufacturing company located in Saddle Brook, New Jersey. They have been playing Lottery together for the past three years.

Mega Millions is their game of choice - or shall we say, *was* their game of choice because now they are all big Powerball winners.

Mena explained that the group has a ticket purchasing system. They purchase Mega Millions game tickets twice a week. They buy 46 Mega Millions game boards for each drawing. With the winnings from each drawing they then purchase tickets for the following day's Powerball drawing. If there is no prize win, they do not play Powerball. When asked if they will change their method since they won big on Powerball, Ortiz said that they will stick to the current plan.

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Mena discovered that they were winners when the day after the draw he went to their lucky retailer, On the Go, 341 Route 46 W., Dover in Morris County, to check their tickets. He was thrilled to find out that one board was a million dollar winner. Mena didn't call any of his co-workers - he only shared the news with his wife.

The next morning, he went into work for his typical 5 am shift, which is before most of the other staff members arrive. First, he privately shared the news with a gentleman who has a heart condition, so as not to make it too stressful for him.

"He was so excited. Then I told another woman and she was jumping so high - and was almost hitting the roof." It was she who told all of the other workers as they came into the office.

"Everyone was very, very happy." It is not often that the group members come into a lump sum of money like this so he shared that many are planning to pay off some bills.

"Hopefully we are going to win again." Ortiz said, "Now a lot more people have joined the group. Now we have almost 100 people playing."

In fiscal year 2017, more than \$1.9 billion was paid out to players in prizes for all of the New Jersey Lottery games.

ABOUT THE LOTTERY

Since its inception in 1970, the New Jersey Lottery (NJLottery.com) has contributed nearly \$25 billion to the State in support of education and institutions.

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