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## **Fulton Telecommunicator Receives Statewide Award of Excellence**

*Jackson, Mississippi, August 18, 2004* — Emergency telecommunicator Dedra Ann “Dee Dee” Hughes was recently awarded the 2004 Larry Lindsey Award by the Mississippi Chapter of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International.

Hughes, a veteran telecommunicator with Itawamba County Sheriff’s Office, was voted for the award by the APCO-MS board during their August 2004 meeting in Jackson, Mississippi. In addition to her duties as an Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) telecommunications supervisor, Hughes also serves as Terminal Agency Coordinator for her agency and as primary training officer. She is a certified peace officer with the State of Mississippi, and holds certifications from the Mississippi Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards and Training (BETST), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and other public-safety organizations.

Nominations for Hughes for the Larry Lindsey Award came from her peers in emergency telecommunications. Some of her most vocal supporters were her coworkers at Itawamba County Sheriff’s Office, who universally describe her as “well-respected.” Telecommunicator Meadow Rogers describes Hughes as “ready with an open heart and strong sense of duty to her fellow telecommunicators.” Hughes’ ability to get things accomplished was also a frequent comment, as stated by telecommunicator Michael Walton. Walton cited Hughes’ efforts to have the telecommunications center moved to a secure facility as demonstrating “her concern about safety and security on the job.” He added, “Telecommunications is a very good and important job, and Dee Dee does it very well.”

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Brenda Gowdy, president of APCO-MS, fondly recalls Hughes from her forty-hour Basic Telecommunicator certification classes some years ago. “She was very shy. She didn’t know what a teletype (TTY) was, and I told her she couldn’t be certified until she learned what it did. And now she is a training officer herself, helping to create the best in future emergency telecommunicators. I couldn’t be more proud of her accomplishments, and I’m glad I had a hand in her success.”

The Larry Lindsey Award was established to recognize those who strive for greater service to the public as an emergency telecommunicator. The award acknowledges exemplary professional conduct, ability, and overall contribution to the field of telecommunications.

The award is in honor and memory of Larry Lindsey, who was instrumental in the creation of the Mississippi Board of Emergency Telecommunications Standards & Training, the regulatory agency that certifies all emergency telecommunicators in the state and governs their training and continuing education. Lindsey served as the first APCO representative on the board of BETST, helping define the high standards that make Mississippi telecommunicators some of the best in the nation.

Hughes will be presented with the award on September 21, 2004 at 11:00 a.m., at a special ceremony held at the Itawamba County Courthouse at 210 East Main Street in Fulton, Mississippi. The ceremony is open to the public.

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