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PRESS RELEASE

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AUSTIN - The Texas Association of State Systems for Computing and Communication (TASSCC) held its annual conference in Arlington, Texas from August 12th through the 15th. Over 350 members and associate members were in attendance. During the conference, TASSCC bestowed awards to recognize excellence and innovation in Texas public sector IT services.

The TASSCC President's Award for IT Excellence recognizes individual leadership and excellence in information technology by an individual who works for a state agency or institution of higher education. This prestigious award recognizes an IT leader who has provided outstanding information technology leadership to the state over many years. Special consideration is given to those who have played a strong role in mentoring and sharing their information technology experience/knowledge with others, promoted intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration, and supported the goals of the TASSCC organization.

The TASSCC President's Award recipient for 2012 is Mel Mireles. Mel is the Chief Information Officer (CIO) at the Employees Retirement System of Texas.

Mireles has served Texas state government in a wide range of information technology positions. Prior to being named CIO of ERS, Mireles' distinguished career included the following positions: Director of the Enterprise Operations Division at the Department of Information Resources, Chief Information Security Officer for the State of Texas, Chief Advisor to the Governor's Homeland Security Division, Acting Information Resources Manager for the Texas Railroad Commission, Manager of IT Security Operations at the State Treasury, and IS Auditor in Charge at the State Auditor's Office. Mireles' career also included a successful stint in the private sector.

Throughout a career spanning two-and-a-half decades with the State of Texas, Mireles has distinguished himself as a leader and mentor, with an unwavering commitment to innovative technology solutions that achieve a difficult balance: improving government performance while conserving scarce tax dollars.

As CIO of the Texas Employees Retirement System, Mel has overseen a series of IT transformations that modernize business applications through the development of a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA). They serve as more than templates for pension agencies facing a tsunami of retirees—the solutions provide a badly needed cost-saving model for the entire public sector. While agencies around the nation continue to rely on multi-million dollar IT modernization projects to meet soaring demand, Mel is proving that

smaller, less costly implementations can deliver impressive results. By encouraging his employees to challenge conventional thinking, his team has successfully adapted inexpensive, flexible, reusable solutions from the private sector and extended the life of ERS' legacy systems. The streamlined, centralized, automated systems have increased efficiency, speeding pension payment to retirees and trimming operating costs.

Ann Fuelberg, executive director of ERS, sums up Mireles stand-out contribution: "The achievements that Mel and his staff have accomplished in the four years he has been at ERS are unprecedented in both the public and private sector."