For Immediate Release
December 2, 2015

PRESS RELEASE

IBM Chairman, President & CEO and Distinguished Philanthropist Virginia Rometty to Receive 2016 Horatio Alger Award

Horatio Alger Association names 13 exceptional corporate and civic leaders, each of whom has triumphed over adversity to achieve success, to its Member Class of 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 2, 2015) – Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., a nonprofit educational organization honoring the achievements of outstanding individuals and encouraging youth to pursue their dreams through higher education, today announced that Virginia "Ginni" Rometty, chairman, president and CEO, IBM, has been selected for membership in the prestigious organization. Ms. Rometty joins 12 other accomplished business and civic leaders from across North America in receiving this honor in 2016. Since its establishment in 1947, the Horatio Alger Award is annually bestowed upon recognized leaders who have succeeded, despite facing adversity, and who are committed to both philanthropy and higher education.

Ms. Rometty learned about perseverance and determination from her mother. The oldest of four children, Ms. Rometty was born in Chicago and raised by her mother, who worked multiple jobs while also attending night school to pursue a college degree. Inspired by her mother’s pursuit of higher education, Ms. Rometty attended Northwestern University on a scholarship from General Motors (GM), graduating with a degree in computer science and electrical engineering. After two years at GM, she started in an entry-level role at IBM. She rose over the next 30 years through a series of increasingly broad, strategic roles to become CEO, president and chairman of IBM in 2012. She is the first woman to head the iconic global technology and services corporation.

“Despite a childhood that demanded her to grow up more quickly, Ms. Rometty never stopped believing in her ability to succeed, no matter the industry,” said Byron Trott, president and CEO, Horatio Alger Association and 2011 Horatio Alger Award recipient. “Each year we select Members who are strong advocates for the Association’s mission and we are pleased to welcome Ms. Rometty, an inspiring leader and role model for future generations, into the Association.”

Ms. Rometty addressed the class of 2015 at her alma mater, Northwestern University, and spoke of hard work, determination and her personal journey to success. She continues to give back to the community in myriad ways. She serves on the Council on Foreign Relations and is a board member of Northwestern University and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

In accepting this honor, Ms. Rometty commented, “I strongly believe that through dedication and perseverance, one can overcome adversity to achieve success. It is a privilege to accept membership in the Horatio Alger Association, an organization which promotes this principle. I’m honored to stand alongside an incomparable list of Members – both past and present – and look forward to meeting the Scholars, and supporting them in their endeavors.”

CONTACT:
Mckenna Young
484-385-2913 (office)
myoung@briancom.com
Through its Members, Horatio Alger Association aims to educate young people about the limitless opportunities afforded to them by the free-enterprise system. To further this goal, the organization awards scholarships to outstanding high school students who are committed to pursuing higher education and giving back to their communities. Like Association Members, Horatio Alger Scholars have faced numerous challenges and have displayed unmatched resilience in overcoming them. Since the scholarship program was established in 1984, Horatio Alger Association has provided more than $110 million to students in need. Scholarships are funded solely through the generosity of Association Members, Life Partners and friends.

Ms. Rometty and the Member Class of 2016 will be officially welcomed into the organization during the 69th Annual Horatio Alger Award Induction Ceremonies in Washington, D.C., from March 31-April 2, 2016. In addition to recognizing these tremendous leaders, Horatio Alger Association will also honor its 2016 National Scholarship recipients, affording both groups the opportunity to meet and learn from one another.

For more information about Horatio Alger Association and a full list of its Class of 2016, please visit www.horatioalger.org.

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About Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans:
Founded in 1947, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc. is dedicated to the simple but powerful belief that hard work, honesty and determination can conquer all obstacles. The Association honors the achievements of outstanding leaders who have accomplished remarkable successes in spite of adversity by bestowing upon them the Horatio Alger Award and inducting them as lifetime Members. Horatio Alger Members support promising young people with the resources and confidence needed to overcome adversity and pursue their dreams through higher education. Thanks to their generosity, the Association awards more than $11 million annually in undergraduate and graduate need-based scholarships across the United States and Canada and provides college support and mentoring services to its Scholars. Since 1984, the Association has awarded more than $110 million in college scholarships to more than 22,000 deserving young people. For more information, please visit www.horatioalger.org.