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Contact: Kathleen Whalen
617.723.6400
KWhalen@DALBAR.com

DALBAR Announces Best Investor Statements of 2014 AIG, BlackRock, Edward Jones, MassMutual, Merrill Lynch, & Prudential come out on top

(Boston, MA. January 12, 2015) DALBAR, Inc. released its 17th annual *Trends and Best Practices in Investor Statements* report which evaluates the statement's ability to address the needs of both investors and financial advisors. The firms ranked #1 include: AIG for annuities, BlackRock for mutual funds, Edward Jones for brokerage, MassMutual for defined benefit, Merrill Lynch for defined contribution, and Prudential for total retirement.

A vital role of the client statement is to support the decision making process. The statement should help with the single most important decision – to stay the course or seek a change. The Industry-leading firms will seek ways to make the statement one that will guide investors in making these critical decisions regarding their financial well-being:

- **AIG:** offers helpful content covering asset allocation, account holdings, transaction details and other important account information.
- **BlackRock:** this statement offers a wealth of helpful, informative content that is presented using a very clear and easy to understand design. This design is meant to help guide the investor in understanding their financial health.
- **Edward Jones:** includes a section on the statement focused on the investor's goals and personal financial situation. Called "Your Financial Foundation," this feature covers clients' goals, goal details, risk tolerance and the date of the previous portfolio and goal reviews. This section helps de-emphasize the short term ups and downs and establishes the need to regularly review the portfolio and make changes if warranted.
- **MassMutual:** earned a top ranking for its clear presentation of information and overall design. Charts, graphs and the strategic use of color make it easy to quickly and easily see the account's current and projected value, performance over time and income replacement ratio.
- **Merrill Lynch:** uses a unique graphical indicator to show the risk level and investment strategy of holdings in the investment performance section of the statement to aid in decision making.
- **Prudential:** provides a clear presentation of important account information and retirement income replacement within a very straightforward, easy to read design.

"The investor statement is the most widely read, most frequently sent and is often the only personalized communication received by clients," said Kathleen Whalen, Managing Director at DALBAR. She added, "By utilizing the statement in a strategic way, firms can increase the

trust and confidence of investors as well as strengthen the relationship with financial advisors.”

DALBAR takes a systematic approach to evaluating statements using a method that has been developed and refined over the past two decades. Statements earned credit for including features that strongly impact an investor’s ability to act prudently and make financial decisions. Features include the ability to understand the significance of the information, answer pertinent questions and utilize design elements that enhanced their overall effectiveness.

The table below includes the firms that rated “excellent” in each industry sector, listed in alphabetical order. No annuity firms earned an “excellent” designation:

Firms Awarded DALBAR’s ‘**Excellent**’ statement designation in 2014

Brokerage	Mutual Fund	Defined Contribution	Defined Benefit	Total Retirement
Baird	BlackRock	MassMutual	MassMutual	Prudential
Edward Jones	Invesco	Merrill Lynch		
Merrill Lynch		Prudential		
Morgan Stanley				
National Financial				
Pershing				
Raymond James				
UBS Financial Services				
Wells Fargo				

The DALBAR Trends & Best Practices Report is one of a suite of reports that are available as part of DALBAR’s Statement Strategies. For more information on [Statement Strategies](#) or the 17th Annual Trends & Best Practices, please visit the web site at www.dalbar.com or contact Brooke Halloran at 617-624-7273 or bhalloran@dalbar.com

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