

For Immediate Release

DALBAR Announces Its 2011 Mutual Fund Service Award Winners in Financial Services

(Boston, MA December 16, 2011) DALBAR released the 2011 winners of its annual Mutual Fund Service Award. **BlackRock, DWS Investments, JPMorgan Funds, Lord Abbett, Mainstay Investments, Primerica, Putnam Investments and Transamerica Funds** emerged as the leaders in customer service in 2011.

For over two decades, DALBAR has conducted rigorous testing of service delivery and, each year identifies those mutual fund firms that were found to be above their peers in service to clients after a full year of rigorous testing.

DALBAR found the service these firms provide to be far superior to the industry at large. Two significant areas of excellence this year were:

- When an investor contacts their call centers, the personnel demonstrate an immediate high level of professionalism, respect and appreciation for the relationship more than 85% of the time. This compares to an industry average of 58%.
- 50% of the industry fails to talk about fees. The award-winning firms ensure that if there is a fee or a sales charge associated with a transaction, the client is fully informed. This eliminates the element of surprise and/or gives them the opportunity to decide whether they want to execute the transaction.

"In 2012, for the first time, seventy two million people will get reporting that will clearly outline any fees associated with their retirement plan. This is sure to spill over and create questions regarding what they are paying for the mutual funds they own. The award-winning firms understand the critical nature of proactively keeping their clients informed," said Kathleen Whalen, Managing Director at DALBAR.

The Mutual Fund Service Award is based on systematic testing of customer service throughout the year. DALBAR conducts thousands of tests to measure how financial companies respond to the need for service from their customers. Companies that exceed a variety of industry benchmarks after one year of testing earn the DALBAR Mutual Fund Service Award.

DALBAR, Inc., the nation's leading financial services market research and consulting firm, is committed to raising the standards of excellence in the financial services industry. With offices in both the US and Canada, DALBAR develops standards for, and provides research, ratings, and rankings of intangible factors to the mutual fund, broker/dealer, life insurance, property and casualty, and managed account industries. Measurements include investor behavior, customer satisfaction, service quality, communications, Internet services, and financial professional ratings.

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