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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15 for the 40th Anniversary of GEI

THE “GEI AWARDS 2015” TO ITALIAN EXCELLENCE

Awardees: Claudio Del Vecchio - Amalia Ercoli Finzi - Gualtiero Marchesi
- Bruno Vespa - Roberto Vittori -
- “Special Award” to Pier Carlo Padoan - Award in Memory of Mario Cuomo.

New York, March 31, 2015 - Leaders in Italian excellence at an international level will be the focus of celebrations during the 40th anniversary of GEI - Gruppo Esponenti Italiani, the organization whose members represent the main Italian entities operating in the United States.

An event of great importance and prestige, the black-tie Gala Dinner will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan on April 15th.

On this occasion, distinguished personalities will converge on New York and, with their presence, give further prominence to the celebration of this very important, unique organization that has been highlighting the best of Italy for forty years.

Guest of Honor and Keynote Speaker of the event will be the Minister of Economy and Finance of Italy, Hon. **Pier Carlo Padoan**, who will underline in his speech the state of the Italian economy and its indisputable signs of recovery.

The Minister will receive the “SPECIAL GEI AWARD” for his long and successful career in the economic field, both in Italy and abroad at prestigious international organizations.

During the evening, five other prestigious personalities will be awarded for achieving excellence in their respective career sectors by contributing substantially to the image and prestige of Italy in the world.

GEI

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The recipients of the “GEI AWARDS 2015” include: **Claudio Del Vecchio**, for his accomplishments in Italy and abroad in the field of entrepreneurship; **Amalia Ercoli Finzi**, a top international expert in aerospace engineering who has made valuable contributions to the success of the Rosetta project; Maestro **Gualtiero Marchesi** for his contributions to the prosperity of Italian gastronomy across the globe; **Bruno Vespa** for elevating Italian journalism to levels of international importance throughout his career, which, indeed, has been marked by many outstanding accomplishments; and **Roberto Vittori**, the Italian astronaut who furthered Italian excellence in advanced technology in space (where an Italian astronaut is currently in orbit).

A “SPECIAL GEI AWARD” will be presented in memory of **Mario Cuomo**, the first governor of Italian origin of the State of New York, recently deceased. With enormous talent, preparation, humanity and political vision, he considerably enhanced the image of Italo-Americans and Italians, paving the way for their current presence and improved status in America.

The ceremony of these coveted awards will take place in the presence of more than four hundred qualified and selected guests, including numerous Italians and Americans; business, economic and financial leaders; authorities and VIP, crowding the Grand Ballroom of the Plaza Hotel to capacity. The awards ceremony will be preceded by a reception, followed by a dinner with an Italian menu specially prepared for the occasion.

The GEI AWARDS are periodically bestowed upon Italian and American personalities who have distinguished themselves over the years. Among the past award recipients: Gianni Agnelli, Biagio Agnes, Robert E. Allen, Luciano Benetton, Guido Carli, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, Emilio Colombo, Mario Cuomo, John E. Grettenberger, Pier Francesco Guarguaglini, Edward M. Kennedy, Emma Marcegaglia, Vittorio Merloni, Leonardo Mondadori, Mario Monti, Gian Marco Moratti, Giorgio Napolitano, Umberto Nordio, Corrado Passera, Luciano Pavarotti, Sandro Pertini, Sergio Pininfarina, Leontyne Price, Alessandro Profumo, David Rockefeller, Renato Ruggero, Massimo Sarmi, Paolo Scaroni, Marvin S. Traub, Marco Tronchetti Provera and Ellen Wolff.

GEI, Gruppo Esponenti Italiani, a non-profit, non-political organization founded in 1974, consists of all the major Italian representatives in the United States who joined the group in order to undertake initiatives that serve to improve the image of Italy in the U.S.

For more information on GEI and its activities, visit the site: www.geinewyork.com.

