

# [***What Is The Horatio Alger Association? Group Includes Clarence Thomas And Several Billionaire Friends, Report Says.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68NH-6FG1-DXVP-52D4-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 776 words

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**Highlight:** A New York Times story published Sunday detailed the close relationship Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas had with a number of wealthy members of the Horatio Alger Association.

**Body**

**Topline**

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas s close relationships with wealthy members of the Horatio Alger Association led him to receive lavish vacations, a Super Bowl ring and public support, a**New York Times** investigation published Sundayfound, building on previously reported gifts Thomas received from businessman Harlan Crow.

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A New York Times story published Sunday detailed the close relationship Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas had with a number of wealthy members of the Horatio Alger Association.

AP/Cliff Owen

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**Key Facts**

The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, founded in 1947, is named after an author known for his rags-to-riches novels and has counted hundreds of figures in business, ***politics*** and media as members, aiming to dispel the mounting belief among our nation s youth that the American dream was no longer attainable, according tothe group s website.

Thomas has been a member of the association for more than three decades, joining shortly after he was confirmed to the Supreme Court, and regularly hosts an annual ceremony inside the high court to induct new members, the**Times** reported.

The justice received a Super Bowl ring from billionaire Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones (whose friendship with Thomas predates his joining Horatio Alger), multiple private flights from the deceased former Miami Dolphins owner andbillionaireBlockbuster founder Wayne Huizenga, as well as vacations with business executive David Sokol, according to the **Times**.

After Anita Hill s sexual misconduct allegations resurfaced in 2016 with the release of the HBO film**Confirmation**, Sokol, Crow and billionaire Horatio Alger member Dennis Washington were reportedly among the funders of a favorable documentary of Thomas life titled**Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words.**

Thomas is an honorary member of the group s board of directors, a panel that includes several billionaires according to the group s website and**Forbes** valuations, including Los Angeles Rams owner Stanley Kroenke as well as Washington, Byron Trott, V. Prem Watsa, George Argyros, Ken Langone, Craig McCaw, T. Denny Sanford, David Steward and Alan Miller.

Other billionaires who have joined Horatio Alger in the past five years include: Kroenke, David Hoffman, Frederic Luddy, Trevor Rees-Jones, Mario Gabelli, Ronald Wanek, Daniel Lubetzky, Jay Hennick and James Liautaud.

**Big Number**

More than $245 million. That s how much Horatio Alger has awarded in college scholarships to about 35,000 students, according to the group swebsite.

**Surprising Fact**

Former members of the Horatio Alger Association include Fred Trump (former President Donald Trump s father), Trammell Crow (Harlan Crow s father), former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and poet Maya Angelou.

**Key Background**

Earlier this year, Thomas made headlines after his close relationship with Crow wasdetailedin a ProPublica investigation. For years, Thomas enjoyed free travel at Crow s expense. The justice stayed at Crow s resort and traveled on Crow s private jet and superyacht, the investigation found. But Thomas did not disclose any of these gifts as some experts said federal law requires (Thomas has said he didn t disclose the travel because he believed it fell under an exemption for personal hospitality). ProPublica alsoreportedCrow paid for two years of tuition for Thomas grandnephew Mark Martin without disclosing the payments, and Thomas and his familysolda number of properties in Savannah, Georgia, to Crow in 2014 without disclosing the sale. These revelations, as well as existing criticism about Thomas wife Ginni s right-wing activism, led to calls from many Democrats to institute a code of ethics for justices to be bound to. Meanwhile, Republicans accused Democrats of leveling a partisan campaign against Thomas and conservative justices because of the court s new conservative tilt. Thomas isn t the only Supreme Court justice toaccept gifts of travel: Samuel Alito flew to Alaska with billionaire Paul Singer 15 years ago,ProPublicarevealed, and the late Ruth Bader Ginsburg disclosed traveling to Israel with billionaire Morris Kahn, the**Times** notes.

**What We Don t Know**

It s unclear exactly how much Thomas has accepted in gifts over the past few years. After the**Los Angeles Times**disclosedin 2004 a number of expensive gifts Crow had given to the Justice, Thomas stopped publicly disclosing gifts he received.

**Further Reading**

Where Clarence Thomas Entered An Elite Circle And Opened A Door To The Court(**New York Times**)

Clarence Thomas: Here Are All The Ethics Scandals Involving The Supreme Court Justice Amid New Revelations(**Forbes**)

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