

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:00 P.M. ET,  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**

**FORBES 400 SHOWS THE RICH ARE GETTING POORER**  
*Bill Gates Retains #1 Rank; Ten Richest Americans Lose \$39.2 Billion*  
*Price of Admission Lowered to Under a Billion, Cumulative Net Worth Drops 19.1%*

**New York, NY (September 30, 2009)** – This year, the superrich are getting poorer, according to The Forbes 400, an annual ranking of the wealthiest Americans (**The Forbes 400, p. 54**). For only the fifth time since its inception in 1982, the collective net worth of members of The Forbes 400 has declined, falling \$300 billion in the past twelve months from \$1.57 trillion to \$1.27 trillion. Faltering capital markets and real estate prices, along with fraud and divorce, caused a loss of wealth among 314 returning members and forced 32 plutocrats to fall off completely. The price of admission to appear on Forbes' list this year dropped to \$950 million from \$1.3 billion in 2008.

The number of Forbes 400 members who experienced year-over-year declines was more than double the number of members who sustained losses in 2008, with 314 of this year's members declining in wealth compared to 126 last year. Still, thanks to a lower net worth threshold, the list welcomed 19 new members, such as **Marvel Entertainment Chief Isaac Perlmutter (#230)**, mapping-software magnate **Jack Dangermond (#158)**, and **Jeffrey Picower (#371)**, a longtime investor with Bernard Madoff who is alleged to have extracted billions of dollars from Madoff's fund before it collapsed.

There were 32 dropoffs this year, including disgraced financier R. Allen Stanford; former Citigroup chief Sanford "Sandy" Weill; brothers Frank and Lorenzo Fertitta, the Ultimate Fighting Championship co-owners whose Station Casinos filed for bankruptcy during the past year; and former Google billionaire Omid Kordestani, whose divorce forced him off the Forbes rankings.

Of the ten richest Americans, all but one suffered significant losses to their net worth over the past year: Oracle founder **Lawrence Ellison (#3)** saw his net worth remain unchanged at \$27 billion. The Top Ten lost a combined \$39.2 billion over the past twelve months, with the second-richest person in America suffering the biggest hit: **Warren Buffett (#2)** is down \$10 billion over the past twelve months. Other members of The Forbes 400 sustaining big losses this year include casino mogul **Kirk Kerkorian (#97, down \$8.2 billion)**, Enterprise Rent-A-Car founder Jack C. Taylor (**#32, down \$7 billion**), and talk show queen **Oprah Winfrey (#141, down \$400 million)**. This year only 28 members added to their wealth, including banker **Andrew Beal (#52)**, who tripled his net worth to \$4.5 billion buying cheap loans and assets. The Top Ten includes:

<b>RANK</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>WEALTH</b>	<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>CHANGE IN PAST 12 MONTHS</b>
1	Bill Gates	\$50 billion	Microsoft	- \$7 billion
2	Warren Buffett	\$40 billion	Berkshire Hathaway	-\$10 billion
3	Lawrence Ellison	\$27 billion	Oracle	\$0
4	Christy Walton and family	\$21.5 billion	Wal-Mart	-\$1.7 billion
5	Jim C. Walton	\$19.6 billion	Wal-Mart	-\$3.8 billion
6	Alice Walton	\$19.3 billion	Wal-Mart	-\$3.9 billion
7	S. Robson Walton	\$19 billion	Wal-Mart	-\$4.3 billion
8	Michael Bloomberg	\$17.5 billion	Bloomberg LP	-\$2.5 billion
9	Charles Koch	\$16 billion	Manufacturing, energy	-\$3 billion
9	David Koch	\$16 billion	Manufacturing, energy	-\$3 billion

For the full list and associated features that will go live on Forbes.com after 6 p.m. ET on Wednesday, September 30, visit: [www.forbes.com/400richest](http://www.forbes.com/400richest).

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