

The David Astor Journalism Awards Trust

NEWS RELEASE

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Exceptional Young East African Journalists Selected for the 2012 David Astor Awards

Three exceptionally talented and determined young print journalists from Kenya and Uganda have been recognised for their outstanding future leadership potential and selected as winners of this year's David Astor Journalism Awards.

Kenfrey Kiberenge, 26, a features writer with *The Standard* in Nairobi; Daniel Edyegu, 29, an upcountry reporter for the *New Vision* in Uganda; and Yasiin Mugerwa, 29, chief parliamentary reporter for Uganda's *Daily Monitor*, emerged the winners after a rigorous six-month review and assessment of 29 locally nominated candidates.

They now join 11 previous David Astor award winners as career-long members of an expanding regional network of the most promising next-generation leading journalists in East Africa, supported by The David Astor Journalism Awards Trust.

"These exciting young journalists are firmly committed to long-term careers in the profession and will clearly make great contributions to the future of journalism in East Africa," said Jim Meyer, the Trust's Executive Director. "They can now count on our full, continuing support to help them develop and achieve their potential."

The Trust is a UK charity founded in 2006 to promote, strengthen and support independent journalism in Africa. It honours the late, distinguished editor of *The Observer* newspaper in London from 1948 to 1975, who was a lifelong champion of African development, human rights and social justice causes.

Each award winner will take part in an individually tailored professional development programme later this year, involving three-month work experience attachments with newspapers in the UK or South Africa. They also received nominal cash awards of \$500.

Independent panels of East African and British judges chose this year's winners after interviewing short-listed finalists in Nairobi on 2nd March and in Kampala on 4th March.

The Nairobi judges were: Tabu Butagira, a senior reporter at the *Daily Monitor*, who was the first David Astor Journalism Award winner in Uganda in 2008; Joachim Buwembo, formerly editor of several Ugandan and Tanzanian newspapers, and now a Knight International Journalism Fellow training regional journalists; and Oliver Wright, Whitehall Editor of *The Independent* and former News Editor of *The Times* in London.

Judging the candidates in Kampala were: Michael Holman, former Africa Editor of the *Financial Times* from 1984 to 2002; Kwamchetsi Makokha, a former editor at *The Standard* and *The Nation* in Nairobi, now a media trainer, lecturer and consultant; and Oliver Wright.

The candidate-selection process began in May 2011 when all news media houses in the region, as well as local journalists' associations, media trainers, civil society organisations and former editors, were invited to nominate one candidate each for consideration.

Candidates were expected to be at an early stage in their career and had to meet certain key criteria, including solid commitment to the profession, continuing to work in Africa as their long-term career goal, and maintaining the highest ethical standards.

They also had to show some special talent and flair for journalism, and requisite qualities to succeed in the profession, such as critical thinking, courage, determination and drive.

After reviewing written applications from the nominees and examples of their published work, eight short-listed candidates were interviewed in Kenya and 11 in Uganda last September. Second-opinion interviews were conducted with the candidates' nominators, employers, and other local sources in October before choosing three finalists in each country.

The runners-up were Walter Menya at *The Star* and John Ngirachu at *The Daily Nation* in Kenya, and John Abimanyi at the *Daily Monitor* in Uganda. They each received \$250 and will be offered a second chance to be considered for the awards next year.

SABMiller plc is a principal sponsor of this year's awards.

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For more information contact:

Jim Meyer

Tel: +44 (0)20 7424 0049

E-mail: jim.meyer@dajat.org