

DAJAT News

Winter 2009

As our second year of awards draws to a close, we review the award programme experiences of our three outstanding winners: Erick Kabendera, 29, Features Writer at *The Guardian* in Tanzania; Jillo Kadida, 28, a Reporter for *The Nation* in Kenya; and Barbara Among, 28, Senior Reporter at *The New Vision* in Uganda.

Each of them took part in an individually tailored three-month professional development programme, offering them increased exposure, opportunities to broaden their professional outlook, and useful new contacts. They now join the 2008 winners as career-long members of the David Astor Journalism Awards regional peer-support network.



ERICK KABENDERA came to London in late May for two six-week attachments at *The Independent* and *The Times*.

Working on various desks at both papers, he produced nine published articles, including stories on health and education, which are among his areas of special interest.

He also worked with their respective comment writers and authored an opinion piece on President Obama's landmark visit to Ghana for *The Independent*.

We sponsored his attendance at a three-day international conference of science journalists, and arranged meetings for him with UK international development officials and policy experts. He also met editors at *The Economist*, *The Lancet* medical journal, and the literary magazine *Granta*.

Among other contacts, he met DAJAT's two founding Patrons: Lord Joel Joffe, a South African human rights lawyer who represented Nelson Mandela at his 1963-64 trial and former chairman of Oxfam; and Lord Dennis Stevenson, former chairman of Pearson Plc, owner of *The Financial Times*, and a director of numerous other major companies.

Since returning to Tanzania, Erick has continued to contribute articles to both *The Times* and *The Independent*.

We are grateful to the Tanzania Media Fund (TMF) for its contribution towards Erick's travel costs for his award programme in London.

JILLO KADIDA spent three months working at the *Mail & Guardian*, South Africa's leading weekly newspaper, from September.



Since she specialises in court and legal reporting in Nairobi, she worked part of the time alongside the *Mail & Guardian's* justice and investigative reporters getting some useful exposure to the South African constitutional system and judicial selection process.

She had six articles published, including a couple of court stories and a feature on refugees denied health care. She also spent two weeks at the paper's Cape Town office from

where she ventured into nearby townships to write about homophobic attacks on the local gay community.

While in Cape Town, she was invited to be a guest on a local women's radio programme, which was broadcast on International Rural Women's Day. She talked about her experiences of growing up in a remote rural community in northern Kenya, where girls have very limited educational opportunities and few chances of pursuing a professional career.

She also attended an intensive three-day investigative reporting workshop at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg with journalists from across Africa.

Jillo was the first David Astor award winner to be attached to the *Mail & Guardian*, a paper with which DAJAT has historical ties.

David Astor was a vigorous supporter of its predecessor, *The Weekly Mail*, which openly challenged the apartheid regime in the 1980s – one of his many efforts to promote the South African liberation cause, remembered by Nelson Mandela last year when he endorsed the awards as “a fitting and meaningful way” to honour the late editor of *The Observer* and lifelong human rights campaigner.

BARBARA AMONG took a three-month leave of absence from her paper in October, funded by DAJAT, but remained in Uganda to work on an in-depth story for *The Guardian* in the UK.



With the paper's East Africa Correspondent based in Nairobi serving as her mentor, she examined the heavily donor-funded public health system in Uganda, a project that involved extensive research and visits to a dozen health facilities around the country.

Also as part of her programme, we brought her to London for 11 days to meet *The Guardian's* foreign editors and get some exposure to their newsroom. She spent a week on the foreign and home news desks, and with the multi-media team, since online journalism is her particular interest. She attended the morning news conferences, wrote a short human interest story and contributed to a major spread in *The Observer* (*The Guardian's* sister paper).

She also visited *The Independent* and *The Times*, where she met both the editors and the foreign editors.

OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE TO FUND 2010 AWARDS

We are very pleased to have received a substantial grant from the Open Society Institute to fund three more awards next year. The winners will be selected in February from a shortlist of three candidates in each country.

The judges will be: William Carmichael, former head of the Ford Foundation's Africa Program and adviser to Human Rights Watch; Paula Fray, Africa Regional Director of the global development news agency Inter Press Service and a former Editor of *The Saturday Star* in Johannesburg; and Michael Holman, Africa Editor at *The Financial Times* from 1984 to 2002.

For further information contact:
Clare Marnham, Programme Coordinator
clare.marnham@dajat.org