

EAST AFRICA COMES OUT TOP AT THE DSTV EUTELSAT STAR AWARDS FINALE

Organised by Eutelsat and MultiChoice Africa, the 2012 DStv Eutelsat Star Awards has proved a resounding success, drawing on the popularity of last year's first edition for high-school students from across Africa. The winners of the second edition were announced on 22 November in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, with a spotlight on East Africa as Anthony Oyom Peter from Uganda was chosen as the winner for his essay and Eva Chemwogore from Kenya for her poster.

Anthony came out top in the Best Essay Award category with his entry "A watchful eye from above the heavens" that impressed the judges with its creativity. This is the second year that a Ugandan student takes first place in the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards, after last year's winner, Mary Musimire. The Best Poster Award went to Eva Chemwogore from Kenya titled "Africa united through satellites". Anthony's prize is a trip with one of his parents to watch a live rocket launch and a visit to Eutelsat in France. Eva will also visit Eutelsat's Paris headquarters to get a closer insight on satellite technology. Merit Awards for the runners up for Best Essay and Best Poster Awards went to Charles Finch from Swaziland and Tony Tumnsiime from Uganda who will both visit MultiChoice's broadcast facilities in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Officiating the evening was the Honourable Deputy Minister of Communications, Science and Technology, Mr January Makamba who encouraged the founding sponsors in their efforts to provide sustainable solutions to some of Africa's social challenges and challenged the private sector to collaborate with government in order to play a meaningful role in the sustainability of communities and the furthering of education in our young minds.

Of over 1100 entries from across the continent, the final judging panel reviewed the work of 16 finalists and commented on the high standard of work. The panel members, comprised Judging Chairman Mr Patrick Baudry, an experienced astronaut and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador; Ms Queen Mbori, Sub editor at the Citizen newspaper; Catherine Bukoza, Principal Education Officer from the Education Ministry, Tanzania; Ms Jane Mbugua, Senior assistant Director, Ministry of Education, Kenya and Ms Frederique Gautier representing Eutelsat.

Addressing students at the University of Dar es Salaam, Patrick Baudry encouraged a belief in the impossible: *"Before I went to space on the NASA Space Shuttle mission, I had dreamt of this day for as long as I remember. A phenomenal experience such as the one I had, should encourage all young people to hold on to their vision and to aspire to achieve the best in their lives. During the adjudications, I was impressed by the quality of the entries and I am honoured to have been involved in promoting a love for the sciences in young learners. Science has the ability to change Africa's landscape and its economic success. May the continent's potential be seen as these awards seek to bring forth innovators and world changers."*

Nico Meyer, CEO of MultiChoice Africa added that considering the scope of Africa's challenges today, it is impossible for one organisation to effect change without on-the-ground support. *"Partnerships are crucial in spreading the burden of development, and identifying and sharing the responsibilities. Partnerships are also central to our core business at MultiChoice. We depend on strong ties with governments, service providers, subscribers and shareholders for continued growth and success. Our application of our Corporate Social Investments is no different - we prioritise building and mobilising partnerships with country governments and our business partners to jointly leverage our assets and expertise to nurture talent, harness skills and expand opportunity through technology access. We are delighted with our participation with these awards as the ultimate endorsement of our support of continental growth and the development agenda for Africa as a whole."*

Adding to this Michel de Rosen, CEO of Eutelsat Communications said: *"With more than 1,100 essays and posters received, the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards is a resounding success. The quality of the work submitted underscores the students' intense interest in space and satellite technologies as well as their awareness of the challenge of transforming the trend towards digital into economic and social progress of benefit to all. The overwhelming response to the Awards encourages us to increase our commitment with MultiChoice Africa and to combine our mutual expertise in order to support science and technology education in Africa."*