25 November, 2009

To news editors:

Cecilia Pereruan Naeku of Egerton University has been named the top prize winner in the annual essay and public speaking contest sponsored by the Satima Trust. This year’s topic was “Proud to be Kenyan”? Cecilia won Ksh 50,000 for her essay and presentation.

The second place winner was Raymond K. Bett of the University of Nairobi, who won Ksh 30,000. The third place winner was Peter Oduor Onyango, also of the University of Nairobi, who won Ksh 20,000.

The contest, now in its fourth year, was set up to honour the late Imre Loefler, a surgeon and essayist, and is intended to recognize young people who share his dedication to the written and spoken word. There were 130 entries this year.

The judging took place on 25 November at the University of Nairobi, whose School of Journalism and Mass Communication administers the contest. Prof Enos Njeru, Dean of the University’s Faculty of Arts, welcomed the participants.

This year’s prizes were underwritten by the Marie Rahima Dawood Foundation. The foundation was created by Yusuf Kodwawvala, a fellow surgeon and long-time colleague of Imre Loefler, and his wife, Marie Kodwawvala, both of whom were present for the awards. Mr. Kodwawvala recalled with affection his long association with Mr Loefler, and Mrs Kodwawvala presented the awards. The judges were Andrew J. Hill, editor of Swara, the journal of the East African Wildlife Society; and Prof Martha Loefler, widow of Imre Loefler.

Actor and director John Sibi-Okumu presided over the event and critiqued the finalists’ presentations on behalf of the judging panel. He was assisted by Attorney Philip Coulson and University of Nairobi lecturer Magayu K. Magayu.
The other finalists were Evelyne Bosire of Egerton University, David Ooko of Moi University, and Onyango Sylvester Oluoch of the University of Nairobi.

The trustees of the Satima Trust are Mr Coulson, M. Janmohamed, Tom Mshindi, Nicky Blundell Brown, Mr Sibi-Okumu and Mr Magayu.