

Legends

MEDIA24 NEWS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2019

PRESS RELEASE – Media24 News 2019 Legends Awards

The 11th Media24 News Legends Awards ceremony took place in Cape Town on Friday, August 2.

The awards ceremony took place at Nasdak in the Media24 Centre. It was attended, amongst others, by professor Rachel Jafta, chairperson of the Media24 board, Ishmet Davidson, CEO of Media24 and Rika Swart, CEO of Media24 Print.

In his welcoming speech, Clement Singh, general manager of Media24 News, pointed out the importance of relevance, credibility and accuracy in reporting. “It is therefore imperative that we, as the country’s leading media business, ensure that we can have economic independence to sustain our most fundamental principle, editorial independence,” Singh said.

Winners were awarded in three categories: editorial, advertising and services. Each category were adjudicated by a panel.

Mbavhi Maalakano was the convener of the judges in the advertising category. The service category was judged by a panel convened by Beulah van Rensburg, head of human resources.

The judges in the editorial category were Mathatha Tsedu (former chairman of the South African Editor’s Forum), Joe Thloloe (former Press Ombudsman of South Africa), Chris Whitfield (former editor of the Cape Times and the Cape Argus), Roger Sedres (renowned South African sports photographer), Esmaré Weideman (former CEO of Media24), Ainsley Moos (former editor of Volksblad and Landbouweekblad), Johan Myburg (poet, journalist, freelance arts writer and arts critic) and Henriëtte Loubser (editor of Netwerk24).

Johanna van Eeden, freelance journalist and former editor-in-chief of the Media24 Afrikaans dailies, was the convenor of the panel. Van Eeden said the qualities of the entries were of an exceptional standard this year, with several highly contested categories. “It was also

encouraging to see a lot of new names amongst the finalist, which is an indication of a new generation of journalist making their mark in a very competitive industry.”

The evening produced two highlights: the announcement of the All Time Legend Award and the Journalist of the Year.

Len Kalane, a former editor of City Press, was recognized by the All Time Legend Award. He is a former editor of City Press. Kalane started his journalism career at The World and Post newspapers, both banned by the South African apartheid government in 1977 and 1982 respectively. He was also a founding member of Kaya FM, one of the first post-democracy privately-owned radio stations in the country.

Charles Smith walked away with the title of Journalist of the Year for his portfolio of feature articles published in Volksblad. He has a flair for storytelling and is generous in sharing knowledge, in mentoring a new generation of journalists, and in supporting and acknowledging the importance of teamwork. His portfolio of work impressed the judges and his career inspires his peers.

The names of the winners and finalist/finalists (editorial) in each category, together with commentary from the judges, are listed below.

EDITORIAL WINNERS 2019

ARTS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Laetitia Pople – Die Burger

Winner: Charl Blignaut – City Press

The winner submitted a portfolio that included a spectrum of genres – film, literature, music, a news story on a topic relating to the arts world, and an editorial opinion. Apart from registering the said variety, this portfolio is also indicative of a re-evaluated and reconstructed approach to arts journalism in the sense that the presentation moves away from formal reviews and one-dimensional interviews in the direction of engaging and longer human experience-driven stories. It is evident that the writer is knowledgeable, informed and committed to the particular field of writing.

BUSINESS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Herman Scholtz – Rapport

Winner: Nellie Brand-Jonker – Die Burger

The winner’s work indicates a thorough knowledge of the subject and is well-researched, but above all she makes complicated issues accessible to her readers. Her excellent coverage includes investigative elements and is obviously the product of lots of hard work. Her coverage has ranged from interviews to investigations and parliamentary coverage

COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Tinus van Staden – Beeld

Winner: Kgomotso Sethusha – Daily Sun

The winner delivered a selection of entries that are of an impressively high standard, demonstrating that a skilful and versatile columnist not only identifies issues close to readers' hearts and minds, but presents readers with fresh perspectives on known matters. Presenting arguments clearly and coherently resulted in the winner rising head and shoulders above fellow entrants.

DEON DU PLESSIS TABLOID JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Shantel Moses – Die Son

Winner: Tracy-Lynn Ruiters – Die Son

Publications are relevant when they tell stories about the ordinary people they serve. Our winner did precisely that. She wore lenses different from those of any other journalists when she covered the murder trial of Sedick Abrahams, who was accused of murder after stabbing his drug addict son to death. Mother Myrtle Abrahams lost her son and her husband was on trial. The journalist won the trust of the family and made Myrtle the heart centre of her stories.

FEATURE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Cheréne Pienaar – Volksblad

Winner: Charles Smith – Volksblad

Charles produced an excellent portfolio of features: some soft, some hard, all memorable. His is a potent skill set of relentless journalistic instinct, real empathy, good prep, wide knowledge, and true storytelling flair. A case in point is his entry on the conflict between the ANC and EFF and the police in the Free State town of Koffiefontein – one of many Free State towns buckling under corruption and the lack of service delivery following Ace Magashule's disastrous reign as Free State premier. This easily could have been a Page 5 filler about another service delivery protest, but in his skilful hands this story becomes a hard-hitting, thought-provoking, and insightful gem of an article.

GRAPHIC ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Ryan Carolisen – Kuier

Winner: Jaco Grobbelaar – City Press

The amount of information contained on the winning entry is staggering. It could easily have turned out boring and messy. What is most striking is the amount of planning that went into this presentation in order to create a layout that is relatively simple. The artist succeeded in creating a simple visual tableau with three basic colours rendering a historical quality to the

overall image. The visual simplicity of the graphic contributes to a sense of order to assist the reader in accessing the information. A well-presented graphic of well researched subject matter and equally well-presented illustrations.

HEADLINE AND POSTER WRITER OF THE YEAR (AFRIKAANS)

Finalist: Eugene Yssel – Beeld

Winner: Johnn-Grant Munro – Die Burger

The winner was creative in capturing the essence of an article about an exceptional story in the country side. The combination of an old, well known expression and a fresh creative thought process (in combination with a nifty layout) produced the winning entry.

HEADLINE AND POSTER WRITER OF THE YEAR (ENGLISH)

Winner only: Nahima Ahmed and Keith Henderson from Daily Sun

The winning team demonstrated once again that writing street posters remain one of the greatest of challenges to one's creativity. If delivered correctly, the benefits to readers are immense. An unusually interesting news event resulted in an unusually interesting poster. It is the sort of poster headline that lingers on in one's head long after one drove past it, hopefully encouraging the person to purchase the newspaper and find the story to see what it's all about – which are of course all elements of a winning street poster.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Elvira Wood – Beeld

Winner: Ntombizodwa Makhoba – City Press

The winner's body of work tracked the man known as prophet Bushiri to his home country, Malawi, and his arrest and the night spent in a police charge office before being deported. It describes Bushiri's fleecing of his gullible congregants, his arrest for fraud, and his seven-year-old baby girl back in the village where the now rich man grew up as a poor shy boy who always walked behind his mother. The stories earned our winner the ire of Bushiri's followers which led to threats on her life, but she persevered despite the dangers. Her work is informative, thorough and balanced.

LAYOUT SUB-EDITOR OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Gabriel Seeber – City Press

Winner: Vernon Janse van Rensburg – Beeld

In a competitive category where the bar was set very high and where there could've been more than one winner, this year's top dog does just enough of the right thing to create an impact, without overdoing or underdoing it. Eye-catching layouts are created through clever solutions, even when there are not that much to work with in the way of pictures or emotive subject matter. The result is front pages that will make the reader stop and buy the newspaper. Lead stories are also made accessible by skilfully combining pictures with

elements such as quotes and boxes with facts, opinions and analyses. Even a low-resolution picture of a bulldozer was put to good use by letting a hi-res eagle “fly” over the bulldozer to bring across the gist of the story.

LIFESTYLE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Phumlani Sithebe – Ciy Press

Winner: Carla Lewis – Beeld

The winner of this category has an impressive vocabulary and general knowledge which lead to interpretive writing and an unexpected joining of the dots to draw the reader into the story. The reader is put on the scene by activating the senses – not only through imagery, but through smelling and tasting what the writer is experiencing. This descriptive way of writing is combined with hard-hitting facts and excellent research on the topic at hand. She takes you on a mental journey where you look at an experience from many different angles that she binds together to a flowing and coherent whole. As a cherry on the top, there are usually fact boxes with practical advice or extra good-to-know information.

LOCAL NEWSPAPER JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Elmarine Anthony – Eikestadnuus

Winner: Trish Goosen – Weslander

This category was highly contested with exceptional entries from all over the country. The winner submitted a portfolio that reflected how she serves her community through quality local news. She ticked all the boxes: entertainment; giving a national issue a local angle; news on the regional economy; and a highly informative series on unresolved murder cases in her community.

MANDY ROSSOUW POLITICAL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Marietjie Gericke – Volksblad

Winner: Setumo Stone – City Press

A wide-ranging portfolio, which included analyses, comment, and imaginative election coverage stood head and shoulders above the competition. The writer has an impressive contact list and has been able to talk to insiders to get the story behind the story. He brings to the readers rare glimpses of political actors such as deputy president David Mabuza and EFF Commander-in-Chief Julius Malema. The journalist makes the reader understand Mabuza’s importance to president Cyril Ramaphosa as a behind-the-scenes operator, who swung the vote to Ramaphosa at the Nasrec ANC conference in 2017. Malema is captured in a closed meeting where he clamps hard on what he considers irresponsible conduct among his followers – he ejects people arriving at a closed election meeting without written reports about their activities.

In the column *Who will protect you when the ANC comes for the land?* the journalist tells the story of his family’s struggle with a land invader who threatens to take over the land they have leased for decades. The intruder has the support of politicians and government

officials in the North West Province. The column is a current picture but foretells what could happen if the country's Constitution were to be amended to allow for expropriation of land without compensation. A disturbing picture indeed.

PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Jaco Marais – Die Burger

Winner: Felix Dlangamandla – Beeld

The entries for this year's category were outstanding. The worthy winner submitted five outstanding images, one which included a rather well thought out top-down angle of the military funeral procession (in the pouring rain) behind the flagged-draped casket of Mama Winnie Mandela.

PROFILE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Hanlie Retief – Rapport

Winner: Willemien Brümmer – Die Burger

Good profile writing requires a keen eye for detail and the ability to bring the subject to life through words. Willemien Brümmer has this and more: she researches her subjects thoroughly and the results are compelling insights into individuals and the issues that they are dealing with. She handles interviews with powerful businessmen and victims of terrible crime with equal aplomb.

SCOOP OF THE YEAR: AFRIKAANS

Finalist: Maygene de Wee – Die Burger

Winner: Johan Eybers – Rapport

Using his network of contacts and some good old journalistic slogging, the winner managed to deliver various exclusive stories on the Stella murders that left readers speechless.

SCOOP OF THE YEAR: ENGLISH

Finalist: Setumo Stone – City Press

Winner: Abram Mashego and Setumo Stone – City Press

2018/19 was an election year. The contest was characterized by not only the rhetoric of opposing parties, but also by trouble within the ANC. This also affected state institutions where public officials serving the same government slugged it out in the open. No story illustrates this better than our winning entry which involved the Minister of State Security, who is in charge of spies, wanting to go to court to get the Public Protector to return an allegedly unclassified document that the latter had in their possession. The story introduced in a significant way the entry of the Public Protector into the factional-battles domain which has now seen her squaring up to another minister and the president. This story was the scoop that showed us the then still beckoning future.

SPORTS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist: Lehlohonolo 'Mazola' Molefe – Soccer Laduma

Winner: Marizanne Kok – Beeld

The entries for this category were of such a high standard this year, that it was rather difficult to decide on a winner. However, the recipient of this prestigious award submitted superb stories and her unique perspective on all of them, made for awesome reading.

ADVERTISING WINNERS 2019

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR: CLASSIFIEDS SALES, PORTFOLIO LESS THAN R2 MILLION

WINNER: Jaydene Sampson – Boland Media

Jaydene exceeded the combined target with 8% and grew her portfolio 2% year-on-year. In addition to that, her manager says she treats clients and colleagues with respect and is a pleasure to work with.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR: CLASSIFIEDS SALES, PORTFOLIO MORE THAN R2 MILLION

WINNER: Michelle van Schalkwyk – Die Burger

Not only does this Michelle get the job done, she does so with pride and attention to detail. She achieved her target 11 out of 12 months in the previous financial year, exceeded the target with 17% or R2,4 million, and achieved year-on-year growth of 24%.

REP OF THE YEAR: DIRECT SALES, PORTFOLIO LESS THAN R4 MILLION

WINNER: Belinda Smit – Die Burger

Belinda has been with this publication for a long time, but she is constantly generating new ideas to grow revenue. Exceeding budget by 35% and reaching 16% growth year-on-year is no small task in the declining market of daily newspapers.

REP OF THE YEAR: DIRECT SALES, PORTFOLIO MORE THAN R4 MILLION

WINNER: Deon van Dyk – Beeld

Deon exceeded his advertising budget by 38%, or R900 000, with year-on-year growth of 13% and new business of close to R1 million. He also managed to secure R1,8 million from special projects.

REP OF THE YEAR: LOCAL NEWSPAPERS, PORTFOLIO LESS THAN R2 MILLION

WINNER: Anna-Marie Kleinhans – PE Express

Exceeding budget by 14% and showing 35% growth year-on-year, Anna-Marie is committed to high levels of customer service, securing retention. Her ability to exceed budget also stems from creative ways of bringing in new business.

REP OF THE YEAR: LOCAL NEWSPAPERS, PORTFOLIO MORE THAN R2 MILLION

WINNER: Odette Bennett – Mooivaal Media

Odette is described by her manager as a self-starter, a team player that motivates everyone around her and challenges the status quo. In the previous financial year, she managed to exceed her budget with 15% and grew year-on-year revenue by 49%.

NATIONAL MEDIA EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

WINNER: Ancilla Donaldson – Ads24

Ancilla exceeds her target year after year. She is responsible for the third-largest national retail portfolio in Ads24 and contributes 11% to the total revenue. In the last year, she grew her print portfolio by 13%, exceeding her budget of R46 million by R6 million.

DIRECT ADVERTISING MANAGER OF THE YEAR: COMMUNITIES AWARD

WINNER: Natasha Ingram – Kalahari Bulletin

Natasha exceeded her advertising budget by 8% or R220 000. She managed year-on-year growth of 2%. This is an outstanding achievement in a declining market. She is customer-focused and the phrase "not making target" is simply not in her vocabulary.

DIRECT ADVERTISING MANAGER OF THE YEAR: NATIONAL AWARD

WINNER: Tanya van Niekerk – Beeld

Tanya exceeded her advertising budget by 12% or R5,9 million, with year-on-year decline of 6% in a very challenging environment. She has managed to gain new business of over R6,7 million, which is 12% of actual sales achieved. This has been a very tightly contested award with the winning advertising manager narrowly beating the runner-up by a mere 1,1% Year-on-Year decline.

NATIONAL SALES MANAGER OF THE YEAR

WINNER: Mark Herman – Ads24

Mark in charge of a portfolio of more than R224 million. Bucking the overall trend, he achieved year-on-year growth of 1,3% and exceeded budget by R12,8 million or nearly 6%. In total, just under R4,5 million of this revenue was secured in line with Media24's digital growth strategy, growing his digital revenue and beating target with 75%.

CIRCULATION AWARD

WINNER: Paul Müller – Volksblad

Paul exceeded the sales-volume budget for editions from Monday to Friday with 4% and the Saturday-edition budgeted volumes with 5.7%. This resulted in a circulation revenue actual of R22.2 million against a budget of R21.6 million.

SERVICE AWARD WINNERS 2019

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT AWARD

WINNERS: Fanie Bothma, Nabeelah Holt, Lucinda Saayman, Tamzyn Barker, Ashley Fourie and Ilse McCarthy

Things change at a fast pace at Media24. This team has coped with changes nonstop, never complained, embraced change and see it as an opportunity to learn, develop and innovate the HR function. Prior to April 2017, News and Lifestyle worked separately and these two teams were serviced by ten HR Admins. After restructuring and the centralization of functions, the HR Admins were reduced to four. Processes had to be aligned, ensuring the same high standards. This meant more responsibilities, more work, and more controls ... and they did an excellent job. Then things changed again. In October last year, the Digital HR Admin team merged with this team. This time, alignments were more difficult, because processes on the digital side of the business were vastly different and limited controls were in place. Again, this team grabbed the opportunity with open arms and the outcome was extremely positive. They passed the recent internal audit and continuously make suggestions to improve processes and to be more efficient.

MEDIA24 NEWS VALUE AWARD

WINNER: Tasmia Ishmail – Die Burger

Changing the frequency of an iconic news brand's print edition from six days a week to weekly was perhaps the most radical step in the long and proud history of Die Burger-Oos. But the team responsible for this handled the change with the utmost care and with an unwavering focus on readers and advertisers.

They communicated continuously on various platforms, hosted town hall meetings and even visited loyal subscribers at home. The way this was executed now serves as a template for managing reinvention in the rest of the News division. At the heart of a change like this lies detail and care. In the implementation, one person demonstrated all the Media 24 values: from accountability for the team to respect for the market.

Tasmia's positive, can-do attitude was a major driving force in the success of the change. It takes courage to make such a bold move and to embrace this change. Tasmia cut her holiday in the US short by a few days so that she could be back in SA for the frequency change, taking accountability for her people, product, audience and business.

On the road show this came shining through in her direct interaction with readers and advertisers, shoring up loyalty to a publication older than eight decades. Her respect for the market was visible to all and translated into a commitment and perseverance to make the

tough changes a success. She also brought a good dose of fun to the change, which inherently was to be met with a negative reaction from advertisers and readers. Tasmia has demonstrated all the Media24 values in one of the most significant changes to our history of publishing.

She lives the Media24 values in everything she does, from managing and leading her people, to working with her suppliers, stakeholders and clients to every life she touches via the acts of kindness or CSI activities done by her region.

ALL TIME LEGEND AWARD: LEN KALANE

The book, *The Chapter We Wrote, The City Press Story*, is Len Kalane's recollection of the times he lived in and the histories that were made then. Len, as everybody calls him despite his greying hair, started in journalism at the lowest rung, as a reporter for *The World* before it was banned in 1977 as part of the clampdown by the apartheid regime.

The October 19 decimation aimed at stifling resistance, and which is now commemorated annually as Black Wednesday, saw three publications, and 18 mainly Black Consciousness organisations banned, with hundreds of people, including editors, journalists and political leaders and activists, detained for more than a year.

After the banning of *The World* in 1977, the Argus company introduced *Post Transvaal* and Len and the entire staff that was not in detention, produced the new paper from the same premises, writing the same kind of stories that got *The World* banned.

And it was not long when Len and other black journalists embarked on a significant strike for firstly recognition of their union, the Writers Association of South Africa (WASA), forerunner to the Media Workers Association of SA (Mwasa). The journalists also wanted the white liberal companies that employed them and which mouthed anti-apartheid slogans, to walk their talk and pay equal salaries for equal work.

It was indeed as if anything that Len touches was banned, because in January 1981, following the marathon three months strike that had stopped *Post Transvaal* from publishing, the paper was also banned. In its place, practically from one day to the next, *Sowetan* came into being as a for sale publication instead of the knock and drop it had been, produced by the same team, from the same premises, writing the same kind of news that affected black people and their struggles.

Len eventually left Sowetan and joined City Press in 1982. His City Press career saw him rise from being a senior reporter, deputy news editor to the position of news editor in 1984, a position he held for over seven (7) years. He received training from the Thomson Foundation (UK) in 1979, spent time in the USA in 1991 on a study tour which exposed him to US newspaper operations – business management, editorial, advertising, circulation and distribution.

In 1996 Len was appointed City Press editor and when he vacated the editor's chair, was moved to the business management side as City Press deputy manager. Later he served as executive director of RCP Media, one of Naspers (now Media24) newspaper subsidiaries incorporating Rapport and City Press. Within the RCP stable Len assumed control of strategic planning and projects. Len also served on the board of RCP media and on the board of M-Net until 2001. He also helped found Kaya FM, one of the first post-democracy privately-owned radio stations in South Africa.

He has also served as an executive at Telkom and has launched various media companies. Len is currently a consultant who has conducted training sessions for senior managers both in the editorial and management environment(s) of leading South African media houses and media titles.

He has also helped with the repositioning of certain leading titles. He currently sits on the board of the Botswana-based YMH Publishing where prior to the board appointment, served as a managing director.

In 2016 he took time off to write his book, reflecting on his time at City Press as part of the founding editorial management team in the early days of City Press existence. City Press started off with a circulation of a mere 4 000 weekly copies sold in 1982 at its launch. This steadily rose over the years to notch a 350 000 circulation mark.

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