

Legends

MEDIA24 NEWS EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2018

PRESS RELEASE – Media24 News 2018 Legends Awards

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The Media24 News Legends Awards ceremony took place in Cape Town on Friday, July 27.

The awards, now in its 10th year, drew a record number of 651 entries. This year, for the first time, freelancers received acknowledgement for their contribution with two special editorial categories for journalists and photographers.

The awards ceremony took place at Zeits MOCAA at the Waterfront, home of the largest collection of contemporary African art in the world. It was attended, amongst others, by Rachel Jafta, chairperson of the Media24 board, and Esmaré Weideman, CEO of Media24.

Clement Singh, acting general manager of Media24 News, referred in his welcoming speech to the role the media played in the resignation of former president Jacob Zuma earlier this year. Singh said the resignation was the result of great work done by the media including journalists of Media24.

“I would like to salute each of our editors and journalists for the role you play not only in Media24, but also in our country and democracy. You are the eyes, ears and conscience of our country and we stand firmly with you,” Singh said.

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

Singh 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 for Media24 Print Media. Weideman lead the All Time Legend award.

The judges in the editorial category were Mathatha Tsedu (former chairman of the South African Editor’s Forum, Sanef), 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), André le Roux (media consultant and founder of the Media24 Africa office), Maryna Engelbrecht (a non-fiction publisher at NB-Uitgewers and former recipient of the Mandy Rossouw trophy) 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 high quality of the entries from

local newspaper journalists in all categories was noteworthy of this years competition. “It was also encouraging to see so many new names amongst the entries and finalists.”

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

Joe Tholoe was recognized by the All Time Legend Award. He is a pioneer of press freedom and seasoned journalist who also served as Press Ombudsman and, more recently, director for the Press Council.

Nellie Brand-Jonker walked away with the title of Journalist of the Year for her reporting on the Steinhoff scandal in Beeld, Die Burger and Volksblad.

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

EDITORIAL WINNERS 2018

FEATURE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Willemien Brümmer – Die Burger

Murray la Vita – Die Burger

Winner

Hendrik Hancke – Rapport

In the crazy chase to meet deadlines, some journalists become guilty of telephone journalism, but not this writer. He took to the highway with a truck driver from Heilbron to Lesotho for a first-hand experience of this demanding job. His poignant article on Tefo Tsotetsi makes this journalist a worthy winner.

DEON DU PLESSIS TABLOID JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Sifiso Jimta – Daily Sun

Winner

Bohemia Hoffmeester – Die Son

The disappearance and death of Courtney Pieters outside Cape Town was covered with diligence and zest. This journalist owned the story, from the moment the 3-year old disappeared to the high profile-visit by then president Jacob Zuma. This reporter used a popular style tinged with empathy for the mother struggling to come to terms with the loss of her daughter. She showed that a tabloid story does not have to be insensitive or flippant about people's pain.

PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Deon Raath – Rapport

Winner

Jaco Marais – Die Burger

The winner's submission for this year's competition was exceptional and showed his versatility as a photojournalist. His attention to detail, composition and work ethic transfers to his work. All of his images submitted were well chosen and contained all the characteristics of what a winning portfolio should be.

GRAPHIC ARTIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Johnn-Grant Munro – Die Burger

Winner

Jaco Grobbelaar – City Press

The reader is drawn into the infographic by the skillful use of a timeline, colour-coded for easy navigation, and the clever use of a combination of pictures and illustrations to depict the life of Oliver Tambo.

LOCAL NEWSPAPER JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Jamey Gordon – District Mail

Marianke Saayman – Potchefstroom Herald

Winner

Raymond Willemse – District Mail

How do you report in local newspapers on an international day of significance? The winner sketched the context, asked the opinion of local experts and presented his readers with an in-depth look and practical advice on the complex issue of mental health.

ARTS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Charl Blignaut – City Press

Aldi Schoeman – Rapport

Winner

Grethe Kemp – City Press

It could have been a straight forward review of just another musical, but the winner wrote a thought provoking piece that forced the reader to think critically about the interaction between art and audience and how this part of the creative process can't be predicted or controlled.

LIFESTYLE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Carla Lewis – Beeld

Grethe Kemp – City Press

Winner

Phumlani S. Langa – City Press

The winning entry is a gutsy view on one of the most popular movies of the year. The journalist cuts through the hype by skillfully delving into the style, dialogue, plot, graphics and action sequences of the movie.

MANDY ROSSOUW POLITICAL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Marietjie Gericke – Volksblad

Winner

Sipho Masondo – City Press

The Gupta family was a major story for South African: its ramifications extended to the ANC elections in December and sealed the fate of former president Jacob Zuma. Fittingly, the Mandy Rossouw Political Journalist of the Year submitted a body of work on the infiltration and almost-capture of the National Treasury by the Gupta family. He reported on how officials within treasury were fighting a rear-guard battle to protect state resources.

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Suzanne Venter – Rapport

Dustin Wetdewich – Potchefstroom Herald

Winners

Hendrik Hancke en Elizabeth Sejake – Rapport

The strength of this story lies in the unusual team covering the complicated racial tensions that engulfed Coligny early last year. Their combination showed in the access they had to the divided community. They illustrated the anger that saw some black residents torching a white farmer's house and yet another group of blacks arriving to extinguish the fire. It was an unexpected take for Rapport for which this team deserves recognition.

HEADLINE AND POSTER WRITER OF THE YEAR (AFRIKAANS)

Finalist

Marizanne Kok – Beeld

Winner

Eugene Yssel – Beeld

To be creative in the heat of the moment, on deadline, with a headline that is in that specific hour of significance for both the national and international media, require years of experience and perseverance. The winner used a clever play on words in a headline that not only communicated the news, but also the hopes and wishes of people in that moment of breaking news.

HEADLINE AND POSTER WRITER OF THE YEAR (ENGLISH)

Winners

Nahima Ahmed en Keith Henderson – Daily Sun

A clever newspaper poster provokes the reader to look twice and think thrice. It prompts readers to buy the paper to see what the story is about and it becomes a talking point on the day of publication. The winning poster did all that. It is sharp and quirky, with a touch of humour.

PROFILE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Charl Blignaut – City Press

Belinda Jackson – Die Burger

Wenner

Samantha Lee – People's Post

They are themselves damaged by the lives they live in crime-infested communities plagued by poverty, violent gangs, drugs, rape and general dysfunction. They now use their harrowing experiences helping others to better cope with the same fates. The winner gave them a voice. This is street-level journalism at its best.

COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Charles Smith – Volksblad

Raymond Willemse – District Mail

Wenner

Carla Lewis – Beeld

This writer is a true word smith. She meticulously chooses every word and sentence and uses her skills to weave a brilliant and convincing argument. She writes cleverly, entertainingly, without fear and does not shy away from putting even the popular Cyril Ramaphosa on the spot.

BUSINESS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalists

Lesetja Malope – City Press

Dewald van Rensburg – City Press

Winner

Nellie Brand-Jonker – Beeld, Die Burger en Volksblad

There were several outstanding entries in the business category, but this journalist's coverage of the Steinhoff saga stood out for the way in which she repeatedly broke stories on the issue in a very accessible way. Besides her coverage of the financial details, she managed to cast a revealing light on all the role players, including Markus Jooste.

SCOOP VAN DIE JAAR: AFRIKAANS

Finalist

Hendrik Hancke – Rapport

Winner

Maygene de Wee – Die Burger

This journalist has an impressive network of contacts and did the hard work to truly own one of the biggest news stories of the year. The result is a series of strong news reports, reflecting how she stayed a step or two ahead of her competitors.

SCOOP OF THE YEAR: ENGLISH

Finalists

Nicki Gules en Sipho Masondo – City Press

Winner

Abram Mashego – City Press

In this year of the Guptas and the Zumas, the winner followed the preparations of the Asset Forfeiture Unit for three months before he could publish his story. He acceded to a request by prosecution boss Shaun Abrahams that he should not alert the Guptas before the unit pounced. The wait for publication allowed for in- depth reporting that stood head and shoulder above the competition.

SPORTS JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Stephen Nell – Die Burger

Winner

Marizanne Kok – Beeld

The winner's entry contained a scoop which subsequently catapulted South Africa's sporting mother body, SASCO, into disarray and resulted in the suspension of its CEO, Tubby Reddy and two others. Reddy's sexual misconduct was exposed, which resulted in a televised public hearing.

LAYOUT SUB-EDITOR OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Johnn-Grant Munro – Die Burger

Winners

Vernon Janse van Rensburg en Theuns Kruger – Beeld

This front page, published on December 16 as the ANC's national conference got under way, could have graced any newspaper in the world. The head-to-head theme, graphic execution and overall boldness made for a particularly striking front page. It stood out among several very good displays.

FREELANCE JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Deonette Haggard – Mid-Karoo Express

Winner

Suzette Truter – Die Burger, By

The judges were enchanted by three well-written stories of people and places that couldn't have been more different one from the others – a farm school, the only one in a radius of 120 km, a female windsurfer and the creator of theatre costumes. What tied them together was the quality of the writing.

FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Finalist

Thys Lombard – Eikestadnuus

Wenner

Marzahn Botha – Die Burger, By

The winner's attention to detail and the way she illustrated this story was the deciding factor.

ADVERTISING WINNERS 2018

DIRECT ADVERTISING/SALES MANAGER OF THE YEAR

WINNER: Tanya van Niekerk – Beeld

Not only did this advertising manager beat her advertising budget by 8,4% her year- on- year decline was 6% in a very challenging environment. Her new business contributed 18% of her total advertising achieved. Despite motor advertising migrating to digital platforms; she grew this specific portfolio by 20% year on year. Her average rate was 2% higher than her budgeted rate indicating great discount management.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR: CLASSIFIEDS SALES

WINNER: Shameema Somsodien – TygerBurger

Classifieds are where it all started for newspaper advertising, and although under great stress today, it remains the part of our advertising business with the biggest heart. Proactively matching clients' needs with her brand and going well beyond the call of duty with excellent customer service, the winner grew her portfolio with 20 new clients to beat her target by 21%.

REP OF THE YEAR: DIRECT SALES

WINNER: Michelle Phillips – Beeld

Having a difficult task of generating new business revenue in a very tough market, the direct sales representative of the year took the initiative of launching new projects that generated significant advertising revenue. As a result, she not only beat her target by 92%, but also grew revenue by 92% year-on-year. One of the highlight projects of the year was one done in conjunction with the department of education.

REP OF THE YEAR: LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

WINNER: Maro Swanepoel – PE Express

Tonight's winner has been described as a natural born rainmaker, consistently beating both her budget and the previous year's equally impressive performance. This year she once again proved that persistent dedication pays off – outperforming her budget by a whopping 182% and growing her portfolio by 30% year-on-year.

NATIONAL MEDIA EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

WINNER: Brigette Basson – Ads24

Managing a very wide portfolio of close on 30 clients – constantly juggling client needs, campaigns and relationships – this media executive has both beaten her target and grew her previous year revenues by an impressive more than 60%, with the value of new business contributing 40%.

NATIONAL SALES MANAGER OF THE YEAR

WINNER: Pierette Spadoni – Ads24

In the highly competitive world of frontline national sales, building strong relationships and service excellence are the tools of trade for top performers. This year's winner made Government, Education, Recruitment and Tenders – also known as GERT – her best friend and as a result, she outperformed her budget by 31%, and limited the year-on-year decline in a very challenging sector to only 8%.

CIRCULATION AWARD

WINNER: Renier van Wyk – Beeld/Rapport

Faced with unpredictability on the newsstand, volatility in consumer spending and the migration of news consumption to digital, our circulation managers have their jobs cut out for them. Not shying away from the challenge, as has become his trademark, the circulation manager of the year managed to keep subscription levels constant, outperforming his total budget by 3% and kept the year-on-year decline to below 10%.

SERVICE AWARD WINNER 2018

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT AWARD

WINNER: Desiree Brewer

Long gone are the days when staff in the business support departments sits hidden away in an office, guarding processes and driving compliance. They have become strategic partners in the business, constantly seeking solutions that serve both the well-being of the business and the welfare of our staff. Faced by a very troubled HR department in her region, tonight's winner tackled the problems head-on. All by herself and in a very short space of time she managed to not only turn this department around – she was instrumental in also changing the climate of her immediate environment through innovation, promoting the welfare of staff within the core values of Media24.

ALL TIME LEGEND AWARD: JOSEPH NONG 'JOE' THLOLOE

In her book [The Proud Tower: A portrait of the World Before the War \(1890-1914\)](#), Barbara W Tuchman refers to one of the great statesmen of the period as somebody who “had become, through a combination of heritage and character, a keeper of the national conscience”.

So too is this year's recipient of the All Time Legend Award: A true statesman of South African journalism, who never faltered in his incredible life's journey of social and political activism, pioneering press freedom, quality journalism and the people's right to know in service of a just, fair and democratic South Africa.

It is a journey which started with a 16-year-old school boy from Orlando East in Soweto joining the group The Africanists in 1958, which led to him becoming a founding member of the PAC the next year He also joined the then Bantu World as a reporter straight out of school.

The next almost six decades took him as reporter, writer and columnist through many of the great newsrooms of the time, to serving as deputy editor of the Sowetan under the

legendary Aggrey Klaaste and later becoming head of news and current affairs at both the SABC and e.tv – where, at the latter, sticking to his principles, he walked out in 2006 when they changed their news policy.

Bra Joe is renowned today still for his coverage in the 70s and 80s of the labour movement. Applying the same principles he advocated in print on the newsroom homefront, he was instrumental in establishing and also led structures to promote and protect the rights of journalists – such as the Union of Black Journalists, the Media Workers' Association, the Black Editors' Forum and later Sanef. In 1980 he was amongst the leaders in the first ever strike by black journalists demanding racial parity in salaries.

His pursuit of justice and committed anti-apartheid activism often came at great personal cost – starting with his first prison sentence at the age of 18 for his role in the PAC's 1960 anti-pass campaign, followed in the 70s and 80s by periods of detainment, solitary confinement, imprisonment on Robben Island, house arrests and a three-year banning order.

True to his calling, life after the newsroom remained dedicated to journalism and a free press through leadership positions at institutions such as the Press Council and the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism, lecturing at Rhodes University, and writing passionately about and keeping up the relentless fight for our constitutional right to freedom of expression and the public's right to know.

Having served on a Human Rights Commission panel investigating racism in the media, he became South Africa's Press Ombudsman in 2007. Over the next six years he garnered tremendous respect amongst his peers and the public alike for cementing the credibility of this office through his fair and just rulings, not shying away from upholding charges against the media. Against the backdrop of the ever-present threat of a media appeals tribunal, the fancy word for government regulation, he was instrumental in establishing a system of co-regulation between the media and the public, explicitly excluding government. Bra Joe recently retired as the director of the Press Council.

This journey might've left him battle-scarred, but his integrity and principles remained intact, as did his selfless acceptance of the sacrifices made along the way. The numerous national and international awards he has most deservedly received are testimony to this and include, amongst others, two honorary doctorates (from Wits and Rhodes respectively), the Louis Lyons Award for Integrity and Courage from the Nieman Class at Harvard, the Nat Nakasa Award and the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver, to name a few.

Tonight we want to add to this list, when we humbly honour you, Bra Joe, as a Media24 All Time Legend of our great industry; we salute you for your lifetime dedication to protect that which we hold most sacred – a free press that serves democracy, and we thank you for reminding us by example of the great responsibility that comes with putting our hands on a keyboard. You truly are the keeper of the national conscience.

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