

# Free State Community Media Awards 2008 a success

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The third of November 2008 marked a very important day on the calendar of Free State Community Media. It was the first-ever community media award ceremony organised by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) and Mangaung Local Municipality (MLM). It is also the first of such events organised at provincial level.

The awards function was held at the Mangaung Regional Hall. The purpose of the event was to honour men and women of the media, who so diligently serve their communities with information that enriches their lives. This event follows the national Community Media Awards hosted by SABC in partnership with MDDA and industry players, which took place in May 2008.

The role of the community media is often overlooked and through this event, its profile and significance will be highlighted. "We saw the need for the awarding ceremony because community media is one of the most important tools used by government to deliver its message to the community," said Free State GCIS Director Trevor Mokeyane.

Delivering the keynote address, Mr Mokotjo Mokotjo who worked for the South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC) for many years, encourage the community journalists to do their best despite the obvious challenges such as lack of training and mentorship to sharpen their skills. One of the concerns he raised strongly, was that the Free State indigenous languages such as Sotho, Tswana and Xhosa are neglected in the media in particular newspapers, although the majority of the people use them in the province. He called for the community media to produce media in the languages spoken by the targeted audience, as that does not only satisfies audience needs but makes business sense, in the context of the transformation of this country. He asked the Minister in the Presidency Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang (through the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) CEO, Mr Lumko Mtimde) to lobby for increased financial support for media produced in indigenous languages.

Mangaung Local Municipality Acting Executive Mayor, Councilor Ms Eva Moiloa emphasized the importance of the community media in safe guarding the tenets of democracy through which the community can interact with government. She referred at length to the importance of the mandate enshrined in the MDDA Act of 2002 and called for support for the MDDA in its pursuit of its mandate to promote and encourage media development and diversity.

Amongst the guests at the function was, the CEO of the MDDA, Mr Lumko Mtimde, who also presented the overall winner award. Mr Mtimde congratulated the winners and thanked GCIS and Mangaung Municipality for the wisdom to recognise community media, the sponsors for supporting such a noble step to recognise and celebrate excellence in community media, as in so doing this effort encourage the growth and development of the media industry.

The competition comprised with the five categories which are Government and General News, Sport, Feature, Photography and Radio. The winners are:

- For the Government and General News category: **Mr Jabulani Dlamini** from *Express Newspaper*,
- For the Sport category: **Mr Tebogo Setena** from *Express Newspaper*
- For the Features category: **Ms Julia Stuurman** from *Free State News*
- For the Photography category: **Mr Nkosinathi Mashinini** from *Eastern Free State Issue*
- For Radio category: **Mr Molefe Sompane** from *Mosupatsela Community Radio Station*

The **overall winner** who took the coveted **Free State Community Award for 2008** is **Mr Jabulani Dlamini** from *Express Newspaper*.

Sponsors that heeded the call to make the event a success were: Klopers and Crystal Cave Trading.

The judges for the event were: Dr Pepler from the University of Free State, SABC Senior Reporter, Matefu Mokoena and GCIS Director Trevor Mokeyane and the Deputy Director, Lineo Matekane. Dr Pepler commended the community journalists for their work on behalf of the judges.

Mr Qondile Khedama, the General Manager (Communications) for the Mangaung Municipality thanked all participants, sponsors, guests, judges and the Programme Director (Ms Rosaline Sebolao). Mr Khedama emphasized the importance of the partnership between community media and government, as community media provides the relevant platform for communicating with citizens. He hoped that each and every government communicator could appreciate the role, relevance and strategic location of community media. He indicated that it is the municipalities wish that this event takes place annually in partnership with the MDDA and the GCIS.

▪ **Deadline looms for MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards entries for 2014** 23 Jan 2015

▪ **MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards entries for 2014 now open** 26 Nov 2014

▪ **Entries open for MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards** 25 Nov 2014

▪ **Mandla Langa acknowledges 20 years of media freedom and diversity** 28 May 2014

▪ **MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards winners announced** 27 May 2014

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