

# South Africa brings back eight Gold Quill Awards

Of the 16 entries submitted by IABC Africa Region members to the International Association of Business Communicators 2013 Gold Quill Awards, half were recognised with either merit or excellence awards, and one received a 'Best of the Best' award for scoring the highest out of all the winners in the Africa Region. This entry also scored the highest out of the more than 800 entries submitted to the competition.



The top scorer, Mari Lee of DevCom, a development communication consultancy, says, "It's a great honour to be recognised for excellence in communication by one's peers." Her entry highlighted a successful stakeholder management campaign for the Timbali Technology Incubator, an agri-incubator setting up small-scale farmers in their own sustainable businesses.

The local ceremony in Pretoria, came after the winners had received their global awards at the IABC's World Conference held in New York in June.

## Local talent on world stage

"A Gold Quill award is the highest accolade in the global business communication environment. It is resounding confirmation that the work the entrant has produced is among the very best in terms of quality and effectiveness, in the world," says IABC Africa chairperson Sophia Dower.

Of the eight African winners, four were from Anglo American subsidiary Kumba Iron Ore. Kumba CEO, Norman Mbazima, who was keynote speaker at the Pretoria event, says, "Participating in the Gold Quills forces communicators to look critically at what they do and how they do it. It's not only about winning awards, it's also about changing the way corporate communicators think, how they plan, and how they implement.

"It is a long-term investment in aligning what you as corporate communicators do to the business objectives of your companies and organisations; in setting clear and measurable objectives in support of these business goals and in completing the loop with proper bottom-line research.

"Winning Gold Quills and proving that your efforts are world class, not only enhances the reputation of the individual who entered and the whole team who contributed to the project or campaign, it also says a lot about the company or organisation they work for. To put it simply, a Gold Quill comes with serious bragging rights."

Just more than 800 entries from across the world competed in the 2013 competition and 288 received either Merit or Excellence awards. Panels of trained evaluators, all of whom are IABC members and professional communicators, scored entries. The panels met face-to-face in San Francisco, London, Toronto, Melbourne and Pretoria and a virtual panel, including evaluators from Africa Region, scored online. The evaluators worked to a seven-point scale to ensure consistency across the board. Merit Awards were assigned to entries that scored a minimum of 5.25; and Excellence Awards went to entries that scored higher than 5.75.

## Top performers

Pretoria-based communication consultant, Dr Amanda Hamilton-Attwell, who is the international chairperson of the IABC Gold Quill Awards managed by IABC headquarters in San Francisco, says, "To put it into perspective, Africa outperformed Canada, IABC's largest region after the US, in terms of the ratio of winners to entrants."

Hamilton-Attwell emphasised that while the evaluation process takes communication outputs such as media and design into

consideration, it focuses on the strategic impact the messages make to the sustained success of an organisation and the measurable business return delivered.

## **Africa region winners**

1. Mari Lee, DevCom: Communication Excellence Delivers Agri-incubation Production Increase - Excellence Award, Internal Communication
2. Madelain Roscher, PR Worx: Optimising Media Relations to mitigate crises - Merit Award, Multi-Audience Communication
3. Ghrethna Kruger and Carla Pattison, Kumba Iron Ore: Preparation takes crisis out of crisis communication - Merit Award, Issues Management and Crisis Communication
4. Ludwig von Benecke, Sasol; and Rick Mellvill, Unplugged: Team Sasol National - Merit Award, Safety Communication
5. Lesmarie Bentley-Steyn, University of Johannesburg: Be Clear About Your Future - Excellence Award, Advertising Campaigns
6. Tanya Aucamp, Kumba Iron Ore: A Real Mine Using Skateboarding to Make a Real to the lives of real people - Excellence Award, Corporate Social Responsibility
7. Mooketsi Mocumi, Kumba Iron Ore: Envision - Excellence Award, Human Resources and Benefits Communication
8. Nelmarie Schutte, Kumba Iron Ore: Using Kids to Manage Employee Fatigue - Excellence Award, Safety Communication

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