

# Vodacom Journalist of the Year: KZN winners

The winners of the KwaZulu-Natal leg of the Vodacom Journalist of the Year Awards were revealed last night, Thursday, 2 September 2010, at a cocktail function at the Protea Hotel Umhlanga Ridge. These awards aim to celebrate distinction by giving recognition to the individuals who continually dedicate their lives to report the news.



After a rigorous selection process and plenty of deliberation among the judging panel, the winners of the Vodacom Journalist of the Year Kwazulu-Natal region are:

Category	Winner	Judges' comment
Regional Photography	Ronelle Ramsamy	The photographer skilfully showed us the condition of a big hole caused by the city council not servicing the area.
Regional Television - General News	Troy Martens, eNews	This story is about predominantly middle-class people in smart cars on vacant land outside Estcourt in Kwazulu-Natal trying to stake their claim to land over the Christmas and Boxing Day period, as the law states that if you occupy land for 48 hours, it is more difficult to be evicted. This piece shows the greed and opportunism of people who can never have enough.
Regional Print - General News	Fred Kockott, Sunday Tribune	This journalist takes what looks like a closed case and reinvestigates it, forcing the police to do the same. Having initially cleared the police of wrongdoing in the murders of some taxi drivers, this series of stories compelled the Independent Complaints Directorate (ICD) to reopen the investigations and recall all related police dockets. Amid his general newsroom duties and constant deadline pressures, this journalist found time to follow on leads, relentlessly pursuing and interrogating all facts. There is no doubt that this series of stories took guts and handwork. The result was a body of work which stands up to scrutiny.
Regional Print - Feature	Agiza Hlongwane, Independent Newspapers	A well-written feature story has the ability to touch all readers and they work because these stories have nothing to do with news, but with life itself. For his feature titled "The Wheels of Fortune", an in depth analysis about the feared, elusive, enigmatic emperors of the South African taxi business - the Gcaba Brothers.
Regional Radio - General News	Zanele Buthelezi, SABC Radio News	The winner in this category took a story of much interest and relevance and gave it the treatment that made sure it had impact and gripped the listener. While the subject matter determined the news value, it was the creativity, passion and commitment of the journalist that made the story last. The sound was cleverly used, the script was powerfully crafted and the entire package well researched and structured to represent a colourful and diverse 100 days to the 2010 FIFA World Cup kick-off.
Regional Radio - Feature	Zanele Buthelezi, SABC Radio News	While the feature story is usually longer than a news story, it is not the length that is of importance but rather the form the story takes. The winning entry explored several different points of views, even when the story was about one particular person. The story told the audience why and how it happened, how the people involved reacted and what impact the individual had on others. The subject - Mandela - his release and his role - was tackled with precision, skill and care. The execution resulted in a well-researched news story with information that was relevant, powerful and gripping.
Regional Financial/Economic	Wendy Knowler, East Coast Radio	The piece carried educative information aimed at safeguarding the less sophisticated so as to assist them from falling into the trap of a crippling debt situation and the group most likely to benefit from this would be the category of LSM (living standards measurement) 1-5 - that is the lower-end of the market, or the indigenous group market (blacks). But notwithstanding this oversight, the piece was well-researched and meant well, save for the fact that it probably missed the primary target it was intended for because of its English language broadcast.
Regional Columnist	Lungani Zama, Natal Witness	Many truths are told in jest; so goes the old adage. Satire as expressed in column writing does this best. Our winner wraps all kinds of issues into one column - even the all so-sensitive racial issue. He laughs at black people - he laughs at white people - he laughs at himself - he laughs at the world. Through his take of Pietermaritzburg's obsession with endurance sports, our writer presents us a skilfully written column. It is a call to black folk - or 'new age darkies' as he calls them, to shed their stereotypes and join in the endurance sports 'whities madness'.
Regional Cartoonist	Anthony Stidolph	A collection of well thought-out and crafted cartoons that show a year that was...
Regional Sport	Zayn Nabbi and Terence Stone	Sport is seen as giving expression to one's ability and at the same time contributing to social recreation. But sport can and does go even further as demonstrated in an exceptional manner by the journalists. Sport is utilised here as a powerful tool to rid an area of ills such as drug abuse and prostitution. These journalists have skilfully focused the story on an individual who himself has been the victim of rampant crime. The former professional footballer assembles children in a downtrodden area, teaches them family values and helps give them a strong sense of belonging.
Regional Community Media	Ronelle Ramsamy, Zululand Observer	Politically inspired and tribal conflicts have become the trademarks of the KZN province, resulting in many journalists internalising them so that they are no longer news. But for a journalist to revisit them and make the reader confront them, that is the hallmark of the storyteller.

The regional winners walk away with R7500 each in prize money, as well as becoming eligible for the grand prize of overall Vodacom Journalist of the Year 2010. This will be handed out at the national final ceremony in Johannesburg in November.

"These awards, which have been running for nine years, celebrate distinction in journalism, rewarding the men and women who at times have put their lives on the line to get the full story" said Robin Sewlal, convener of judges.

"We were very impressed with the calibre of entries this year. Our South African journalists have churned out world-class stories and this is reflected in the broad spectrum of quality entries that we received."

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