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Samantha Loring and Ericka van der Merwe Scoop 2012 Top Journalism Award

Johannesburg, JHB – Business Day’s Investors Monthly features writer Erika van der Merwe and CNBC Africa anchor Samantha Loring have been named the winners of the Citi Journalistic Excellence Awards for 2012. The competition, which was launched in 1982 to recognize journalists for excellence in financial and business reporting by the global financial services firm, was open to all financial, business and freelance journalists from across the country.

Both Loring and Van der Merwe will join Business journalists around the world in New York City at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, where they will be provided a golden opportunity to meet and speak with leaders in the fields of finance, journalism and government.

Affirming the importance of journalists gaining an enhanced understanding of global business Van der Merwe said “I am thrilled to be included in this year’s group of winners because attendance at the eight day Columbia seminar will provide an extraordinary opportunity to meet role players in business and commentators. Our financial media is an important platform for debate on the future of Western capitalism, the value of conventional policy tools and curbing the widening income disparities globally. It is therefore vital that our journalists become more informed and their horizons broadened.”

Van der Merwe will be honoured for his article published on the November 30, 2011 – January 24, 2012 edition of Investors Monthly titled “Unlisted and Uneasy,” which cautions readers about investing in private placements in the unlisted market.

Samantha Loring won the award for her story on cabinet’s approval of Gauteng’s R20.7 billion e-tolling system. Business leaders such as the CEO of Avis South Africa Wayne Duvange were interviewed with the cost of doing business and the trickle down effects e-tolling will have on consumers were clarified.

Speaking about her motivation to enter the competition Loring expressed her appreciation to be recognized for excellent reporting and she said the achievement will expand her knowledge base. “The opportunity to spend time at Columbia University learning from the best in the business was certainly the key motivation to put my work forward for this award. I studied a Business Science degree from the University of Cape Town but haven’t had formal training in journalism. So learning best practice in terms of crafting financial stories as well as sharing experiences with journalists from around the world were key reasons that I felt driven to enter this award. I’m really grateful to Citi for recognizing my work, this is such an honour,” said Loring.

For over 20 years Citi has been hosting the Journalistic Excellence awards to recognize excellent business reporting globally. Past winners from South Africa include Rob Rose from the Financial Mail, Sizwekazi Jekwa from Finweek and Bruce Whitfield from 702 Talk Radio. Last year, 21 journalists from around the globe were chosen on a competitive basis to attend the 10-day seminar.

Chief Country Officer of Citi South Africa Donna Oosthuysen applauded the great work of the contestants and emphasized the significance of the awards. "We are really proud of the two contestants who have won from South Africa. These are very prestigious awards which will not only be a great networking opportunity, but also a chance for journalists around the globe to participate in discussions which affect each country around the world."

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