

**Address to Delegates and Rhodes Top 50 Free First -Year
Tuition Scholarships Prize Winners at the De Beers English
Olympiad Prize Giving Ceremony**

**Settlers Monument, Grahamstown
11 July 2013**

Ms Clayton, Dr Malcom Venter, Olympiad and Foundation officials, sponsors, distinguished guests, the teachers and parents of prize winners and, above all, you the De Beers English Olympiad prize winners: good morning, molweni, goeie more.

On behalf of Rhodes University my warm congratulations to all the winners of the English Olympiad, and especially the top 15 that are with us this morning. Congratulations also to the teachers, parents and guardians - you have undoubtedly played a vital role in nurturing a love for the English language among our winners.

Rhodes University is extremely pleased to be associated with the English Olympiad and with this morning's prize giving event. As you are aware we are committed to providing scholarships to the top 50 Olympiad prize winners that will entitle you to free tuition for the first-year in whatever field or discipline you may wish to register.

In monetary terms, these scholarships are each worth in the region of R 30 000, with a potential total value of some R 1.5 million. We consider this a very worthwhile investment in the future leaders, intellectuals and professionals of our country.

As Olympiad prize winners, you are clearly highly talented individuals with immense potential to become great people – people with a love for learning and knowledge, who are keen to acquire special expertise and skills, and who have a commitment to serve our society, with its many challenges.

The Rhodes University slogan, 'Where Leaders Learn' expresses our commitment to produce leaders and great people. There are many things that make Rhodes special and distinct. I will mention just a few

1. William Butler Yeats, the great Irish poet, writer, dramatist and the 1923 winner of the Nobel Prize for literature writes that “education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire”. The idea of education as the igniting of the intellect and the cultivation of a desire for learning is one that we at Rhodes strongly embrace.
2. We take pride in being a university in which students can develop and realise their potential as intellectuals and professionals through excellent academic programmes, research and community engagement.
3. We are the smallest university in South Africa, which confers many advantages on our students. We are currently some 7 500 students, of whom 30% are postgraduates, 59% are women and 23% are international students from 66 countries around the world
4. We emphasise acquiring a formative undergraduate education which means you have wide choice of courses – you can major in English and Physics, Chemistry and Accountancy. The only restriction is what the timetable may not be able to accommodate
5. We have a proud reputation of excellence in teaching and learning and research, shown in the fact that we have the best undergraduate pass and graduation rates in South Africa, and among the best research output per academic staff member
6. We take pride in having a lovely environment with state of the art facilities – recent developments have seen a new R75 million library, 7 new residences and soon we will begin to build a new R130 million Life Sciences building and a new R31 million School of Languages building

I hope many of you will take up the scholarships that we offer and will join us at Rhodes next year. I can assure you that you will not regret such a choice.

Once again, on behalf of Rhodes University, congratulations to all the winners of the English Olympiad.