

Ntare School's Mumbere wins continental technology award

BY CONAN BUSINGE

Amos Mumbere, a Senior Six student of Ntare School in Mbarara district, has emerged the continental winner of the 2017 DStv Eutelsat Star technology awards. He beat 1,000 competitors from all over the continent.

The seventh annual technology competition was organised by the DStv and Eutelsat, and has two top accolades; the poster and essay competition. Mumbere won the essay category.

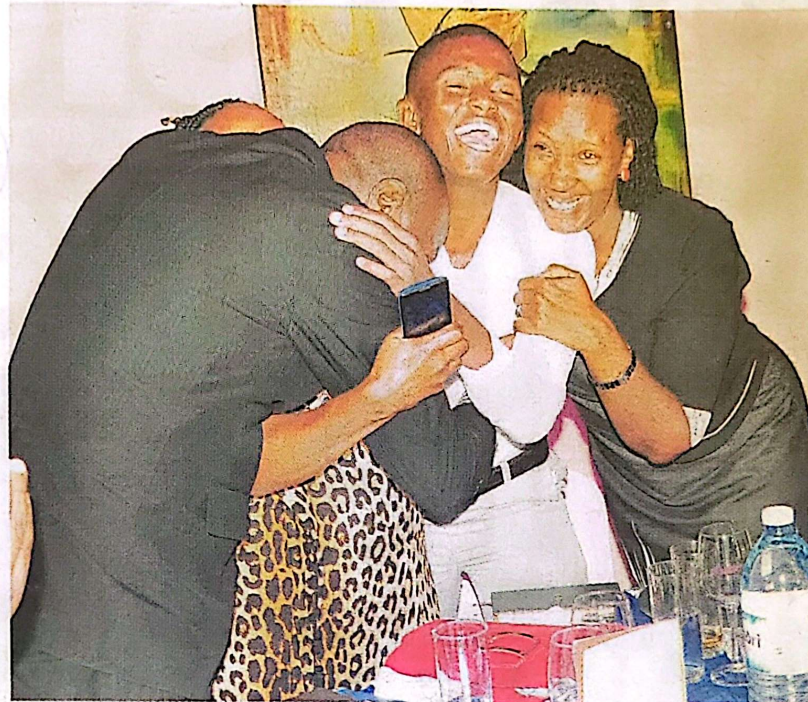
This is the third win in the essay category for Uganda since 2011, adding to a tally of six previous winners and runners-up in the poster category.

The awards are held to inspire innovative thinking among secondary school students in Africa, to create awareness on how science and technology can be applied to everyday life and to showcase the many ways that satellites already impact on the development of the continent.

There was a sudden burst of excitement as the room erupted into a thunderous applause when Mumbere was announced winner. Mumbere's winning essay was lauded for its simple, yet eloquent writing style as it demonstrated an understanding of the application of satellite technology and the role that Sputnik has played in launching humankind into the 21st century. He wins a trip for two to Paris and to a launch site in French Guiana to witness a rocket blast into space in order to place a satellite into orbit.

The awards are organised by MultiChoice Africa and Eutelsat in Kampala. In attendance was the state minister for higher education Dr John Chrysostom Muyingo, European Space Agency astronaut and the chairperson of the jury, Paolo Nespoli and Astrid Bonté, the director of international affairs at Eutelsat.

The others were the country manager for International Computer Driving Licence Africa



Mumbere (centre) being congratulated by his relatives at the 7th edition of the DStv Eutelsat Star Awards at the Kampala Serena Hotel on Thursday. Photo by Ashraf Kasirye

Michael Niyitegeka, University of Lagos dean for the Faculty of Engineering Prof. Funso Falade, MultiChoice Uganda's chairperson Steven Musoke, the head of operations, Patricia Kiconco and Charles Hamya the general manager.

Meanwhile Tanzania added to East Africa's

tally when Rasheed Taher from Al-Madrassatus-Saifia-tul-Burhaniya school in Tanzania was announced as the overall poster winner.

His poster was described as having been deceptively simple at first glance to the attentive eye, yet it revealed a deep understanding of the topic with a level

of ingenuity in using mirror imaging to demonstrate the rapid transformation of satellite technology.

Taher will get a trip for two to visit the South African National Space Agency and the MultiChoice facilities.

The two winning schools attended by Mumbere and Taher; will be rewarded with a DStv installation, including dish, TV set, PVR decoder and free access to the DStv education package.

NATIONAL WINNERS

At the same awards gala, national winners of the essay and poster competitions were announced. It is from the national winners, from various countries that the team chooses the best of the continent.

The winner for the poster category was Henry Kirungi from St Mary's College, Kisumu, followed by Elsa Mirembe from Gayaza High School.

Numberewas also the best in the essay category, followed Gavin Ngabonzinza from Kibuli Secondary School.

FIRST LADY VOUCHES FOR E-EDUCATION

The First Lady and education minister, Janet Museveni, in her statement read by Muyingo, pledged Government's support in the promotion of e-education.

She called upon other private companies and organisations to emulate the gesture of the awards, to support innovation and love for sciences in schools.

She advised the winners not to stop at celebrating their achievements, but go on to explore the many opportunities in science and technology.

See interview with the astronaut on page 14