



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Allen Prize names Young Writer of the Year 2012

Port-of-Spain, May 1, 2012:

On April 29, 2012, arts development NGO The Allen Prize for Young Writers named Joshua Sammy as its Young Writer of the Year. Sammy was awarded a cash prize of \$2,500 for the honour, in addition to the prize of \$1000 for winning the top prize in Senior Prose Fiction. Warren De Mills was awarded the top prize in Senior Poetry, also worth \$1000.

Sammy, 17, is from Curepe and is a CAPE student at St George's College, Barataria. De Mills is also 17, and is pursuing a degree in theology and religion at the University of the Southern Caribbean, Maracas. De Mills has just published a collection of his poems, *Affections*, as an e-book.

All the writers in the competition, including Sammy and De Mills, will be invited to participate in a two-day intensive writing workshop to be held in July. The Allen Prize soon plans to publish their winning works and the works of last year's winners.

Judy Raymond, Head Judge of the competition, said in her remarks that "once again, choosing a winner wasn't easy, and there was a long, heartfelt discussion of the final choices". Raymond, the editor-in-chief of the *Trinidad and Tobago Guardian* and an author herself, led the team of judges that included award-winning poet James Aboud, prolific novelist Roslyn Carrington, and Sharon Millar, whose story "Friends" was just short-listed for the Commonwealth Writers Short Story Prize.

Raymond also promised to publish some of the winning Allen Prize work in the *Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*.

The Allen Prize ceremony took place in the AV Room of the National Library, as part of the NGC Bocas Lit Fest, which ran in Port-of-Spain from April 26-29. Festival founder and director Marina Salandy-Brown in her brief remarks at the ceremony said the festival supported the work of the Allen Prize.

The Allen Prize for Young Writers was founded in 2009 and gives seminars, workshops and prizes to writers living in Trinidad and Tobago aged 12-19 years. Publishing the work of the winners is planned, promised founder and chair Lisa Allen-Agostini at the function. This is the second year the Allen Prize has been awarded; some of last year's entrants read at the ceremony on April 29. Sammy and De Mills were both among the readers, and were short-listed for last year's awards.

Board of Directors:

Lisa Allen-Agostini (*Chairman*), Peter Gomez (*Secretary/Treasurer*), Rhoda Bharath, Charlotte Elias, Nicholas Laughlin, Georgia Poplewell, Anthony Smart, *Ex-officio*: Gina Ottley (legal counsel)

This year's competition ran from November-January and was advertised on the organisation's web site and its Facebook page. The competition is annual and open to young writers in the genres of prose fiction, creative non-fiction, drama and poetry, in two age categories: 12-15 years and 16-19 years. There were far fewer entries this year compared to the inaugural year in which some 80 entries were submitted from writers all over the country. The complete list of 2012 participants and winners follows:

Participants:

Junior category

Creative non-fiction

Levan Ramlogan

Senior category

Creative non-fiction

Reon Elder

Fiction

Darion Boysie

Krystoff Kissoon

Michael Phillip

Joshua Sammy

Precious St Clair

Renelle Wilson

Drama

Precious St Clair

Poetry

Justin Chin Aleong

Warren De Mills

Precious St Clair

Awardees:

Creative non-fiction

Honourable mention

Reon Elder

Senior poetry category winner

Warren De Mills

Senior Fiction category

Honourable mention

Krystoff Kissoon

Renelle Wilson

Senior Fiction winner

Joshua Sammy

Young Writer of the Year 2012

Joshua Sammy

END



CAPTION: Allen Prize Young Writer of the Year 2012, Joshua Sammy, right, and senior poetry prize winner Warren De Mills chat with OCM Bocas Prize winner Earl Lovelace at the NGC Bocas Lit Fest. Photo: Rodell Warner/NGC Bocas Lit Fest

*For further information about The Allen Prize for Young Writers, go to <http://www.allenprize.org>
The winners are available for interviews.*

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