

Press release

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The PAMRO DAN media course to award bursaries to Zimbabwean students

PAMRO has teamed up with the DAN Academy to offer the PAMRO DAN media course, an online introduction to the world of media.

“For many students around Africa, there isn’t an organisation where they can do this type of a media course. They don’t have access to this type of information and expertise, so the online aspect of the course was a real win for us,” says PAMRO’s Jennifer Daniel.

The organisation has also decided to award a bursary to two deserving students in each country where the PAMRO conference takes place, “as a way to give back, as well as to uplift media and media research on the continent,” says Daniel. The first bursaries will go to two students from Zimbabwe, who will take the course in 2017.

About the course

According to DAN Media Course Director, Vonda Meekin Wilcox, the PAMRO DAN media course is based on material from the AMASA textbook, and covers all of the basics from target markets to research, the different media types, as well as media strategy, planning and implementation, and media buying.

“Our material has a South African base, but the thinking is global, it’s borderless,” she says. “We cover each of the media types from radio, to TV, magazines and digital. A lot of the students are from companies that are particular media owners, and it gives them a nice overview of all the types that are available, so that when they’re dealing with their clients, they have a much broader understanding of media as a whole.”

The course runs for 15 weeks and covers 15 chapters. Each Thursday, an industry specialist from the Dentsu Aegis Network provides a short overview of the chapter on video, which is uploaded to the online learning platform. On Friday, the chapter itself is uploaded, and the students receive an email alerting them that the reading material is available, along with instructions detailing an exercise based on the week’s chapter.

“The students have ten days to fulfil a brief assignment – nothing too arduous – and can contact me directly with any questions and queries they have,” explains Meekin Wilcox, who then marks and returns the assignments. An online exam is held around six weeks after the completion of the course, where the students are given 90 minutes to answer 90 multiple choice questions covering the course material.

The students’ results are stratified, so that a score of 80% or above is classed as platinum; between 70 and 80% earns gold, and so on. Students who have finished the course and done the exercises, but decided not to write the exam, receive a certificate of completion – but few students take this option, notes Meekin Wilcox. This year, two students from Mauritius, Sandy Shiepping and Deborah Chui Chun Lam, both from JCDecaux, received platinum certificates.

Expert assistance and feedback

Meekin Wilcox has been in the media industry for 27 years, with 24 years in senior positions – as media director of a large advertising agency, and also as head of Marketing Services and Research

for Oracle Airtime Sales (M-Net and DStv's sales arm.) She has run her own strategic media consultancy for the last 14 years, servicing both marketers and media owners. As such, Daniel is quick to highlight the value of students having access to Meekin Wilcox's feedback: "Not many people have an online hotline to an expert like Vonda, to interact with and ask questions," she says.

"We've wanted to do something educational for many years, but it's been too difficult because of the logistics of working with all of the different organisations in all of the different countries. ... We now have a one-stop-shop with the DAN academy, in that the course is online. That two students in Mauritius have excelled as platinum winners illustrates the success of this approach."

Meekin Wilcox was impressed by the quality of the students to come through PAMRO this year. "The PAMRO students generally were amazing – keen and engaged," she says. "The quality of their work was really excellent."

PAMRO DAN 2017 course registration

The next PAMRO DAN Media Course will begin in February 2017. Follow this link to register for the course: <http://pamro.org/dentsu-aegis-networkpamro-media-101-course-registration-form/>

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About PAMRO

Pan African Media Research Organisation's (PAMRO) mission is to create a uniform research infrastructure for African countries, and to use the same measuring and target marketing methods so that results of different countries can be compared validly.

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