



Media Release

2018 KCPE top performing scholars awarded *Wings to Fly* Secondary School Scholarships

Nairobi Kenya, Friday 4th January 2019... A total of 1,000 students drawn from various parts of the country have today been awarded Wings to Fly scholarships, during a commissioning ceremony presided over by Education Cabinet Secretary Ambassador Amina Mohamed. The Programme a partnership between Equity Group and Mastercard Foundation, with support of other partners offers comprehensive secondary school scholarships to bright but financially disadvantaged children. The scholarship covers tuition, books, uniform, transport costs and pocket money. The scholars will also receive mentorship and leadership training during their four-year secondary school journey to equip them with life skills that will transform them into leaders.

The 2018 class marks the 10th intake of the Wings to Fly program and brings the total beneficiaries to 16,168.

This year, Equity Group received nearly 20,000 applications from all counties across the country signalling the nationwide popularity and competitiveness that the program has attained over the ten years of its existence.

Speaking during the commissioning ceremony, Education Cabinet Secretary Ambassador Amina Mohammed noted that the *Wings to Fly* programme has continued to greatly impact bright students from vulnerable backgrounds, who would have otherwise missed the opportunity to explore their talents.

“All over the world, a nation’s most important asset is its people. Our future depends on the quality of education that our young people receive, locally and overseas. While education is the biggest item of expenditure in majority of the households in Kenya, the Government sees this as a worthwhile investment that needs to be supported by private and public sector stakeholders,” Amina said.

She also noted that the program was complementary to the Government’s efforts to improve access and quality of secondary education as part of its Vision 2030 and is leveraging broader changes to the education system in Kenya, where more than one in four young people still does not attend secondary school. In addition, as a result of the runaway success of the programme, it



has contributed in changing perceptions regarding the importance and reach of good quality secondary education in the country.

Equity Group Holdings CEO and MD and Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman Dr. James Mwangi advised the students to take up the opportunity with pride and remember that it came with high expectations.

“Receiving a scholarship is also a responsibility – a responsibility towards yourself, family and community. You are now in a position that allows you to give back. You will be the ones who will be able to support those in need and be catalysts of change. This scholarship opportunity demands from all of you a strong commitment and a sense of responsibility. You are going out there to become our ambassadors and role models for our young people across the country,” he said.

Mastercard Foundation President & CEO Reeta Roy represented by Timothy Chege the Regional Director and Country Representative, Kenya reiterated that the continued support for the Wings to Fly Programme is anchored on the positive impact that the programme has had and continues to manifest itself in the lives of the students, their families and their community.

“Our support is geared towards ensuring that that academically talented students from disadvantaged or marginalized communities are able to attend quality educational institutions, and can develop the knowledge and skills they need to join the next generation of ethical leaders. The vision of Mastercard Foundation is that these young people will make a lasting impact in their communities and regions, ushering in a new era of equitable and inclusive prosperity,” Reeta said.

To date, a total of 16,168 have benefitted from the *Wings to Fly* programme. The Wings to Fly Scholars continue to excel with a 96% secondary school completion rate and 82.2% attaining university admission grades. Some of the *Wings to Fly* 1st and 2nd cohorts have graduated and are working.

Ends...

Highlights for Wings to Fly Programme:

- *Wings to Fly Programme offers comprehensive secondary scholarships to bright but needy students*
- *Wings to Fly Scholarship programme has been in operation since 2010.*
- *Nearly 20,000 applications were received in 2018.*



- 1,000 students have been awarded Wings To Fly scholarships in 2019
- 16,168 students have benefitted from the Wings To Fly programme to date
- 82% of Wings To Fly Scholars attain university level grades
- 13 Wings to Fly scholars scored A in the 2018 KCSE while 147 Wings to Fly scholars got A-. Overall, 1,421 (74%) of the 2018 Wings to Fly scholars who sat for KCPE exams attained university level grades, compared to a 14% national average.

About the Wings to Fly Program

Wings To Fly program is a comprehensive secondary school Education and leadership program for top performing yet needy (orphan or vulnerable) students in Kenya. The Program is a partnership between Equity Group and Mastercard Foundation, with support of other partners including the German Government through KfW. It is coordinated by Equity Group Foundation. The objective of the scholarship program is to provide financial support and leadership empowerment tools to the scholarship beneficiaries. The total number of scholarships given under the Wings to Fly since 2010 currently stand at 16,168. Every year the scholars attend an Annual Education and Leadership Congress to activate and inspire leadership as well as inculcating a culture of giving back to society. They interact with mentors, professionals, thought leaders, influencers and captains of industry who encourage them to take up leadership roles in schools. On average, 86% of the scholars hold one or several leadership positions during their secondary school academic life. Further, the program records a 96% secondary school completion rate with 82% of the scholars attaining university admission qualifying grades.

Equity Group Foundation

Equity Group Foundation was established by Equity Bank to create the financial and operational infrastructure for its social programs aimed at the low-income population. This innovation and creative vehicle has fully transformed the concept of philanthropy and corporate social responsibility. While Equity Group Foundation champions the social economic transformation of the people of Africa and seeks partnership along seven cluster thematic areas, Equity Bank provides the infrastructure of delivery hence reducing the operational cost of the Foundation and increasing the rate of return on any social investment. The seven key social thematic areas are Education and Leadership development, Financial Literacy, Financial Inclusion, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Agriculture, Health, and Environment.



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Mastercard Foundation

Mastercard Foundation seeks a world where everyone has the opportunity to learn and prosper. Based in Toronto, Canada, the Foundation works almost exclusively in Africa. It is one of the largest foundations in the world, and its work is guided by its mission to advance learning and promote financial inclusion for people living in poverty. The Foundation's goals for the next decade are built on its optimism for Africa's future, recognizing that employment is a leading pathway out of poverty for families. In Africa, the world's youngest continent, youth employment is a particularly important measure of poverty reduction. By 2030, the Foundation's work will enable 30 million young people in Africa to secure employment they see as dignified and fulfilling.