

# The Lex:lead Group

Lawyers for Economic Advancement and Development

December 2013

## *Happy New Year from the Lex:lead Group!*

It's that time of year again! We are happy to share our end-of-year newsletter with you as this still-young group conducts its *fourth* annual essay competition open to the **world's least developed countries**. Here is a recap of our year and the steps forward we are looking to take.

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Dame Linda Dobbs DBE (UK)

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**Scholarship winners.** We started 2013 by **more than doubling** the number of scholarships awarded in 2012: in February we made awards to **1 Ms Rediet Zegeye Yigezu** (Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia), **2 Ms Samrawit Getaneh Damtew** (Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia), **3 Ms Redeat Kassahun Seifu** (Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia), **4 Ms Hilina Berhanu Degefa** (Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia), and **5 Mr Masalu Elias Luhula** (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania). Scholarship winners each received US\$500 toward their studies at their universities of enrolment. Sponsoring at least one full scholarship apiece, the group again extends its thanks to **Allen & Overy LLP**, the **Claude Moore Charitable Foundation** and the **International Bar Association Foundation** (extraordinary second award). One award was made in honour of **John H Morrison OBE** who has been instrumental to the group since its inception.

**Lex:lead Winners Published Again.** Each of our winning essays—this last year on law and access to finance for development—was again published by the **International Bar Association African Regional Forum** which dedicated a full section of its May 2013 newsletter to the competition. For the students, being published in a widely-read international journal is as exciting as winning the competition in the first place. The publication can be downloaded from our website at [www.lex-lead.org](http://www.lex-lead.org); a link is provided on the 'Programs' page following the year's winners.

**Student Ambassador Program Grows.** We invite the winners we think will represent our program well to be **Lex:lead Student Ambassadors**. In addition to adding four representatives to our program in **Ethiopia** (Ms Rediet Zegeye Yigezu, Ms Samrawit Getaneh Damtew, Ms Redeat Kassahun Seifu and Ms Hilina Berhanu Degefa), in 2013 scholarship winner **Mr Masalu Elias Luhula** became our first student representative in **Tanzania**. In another vein, we promoted our very first scholarship winner and student ambassador, **Ms Lemlem Fiseha Minale** (Ethiopia), to our advisory board.

### **Judges (2013)**

Judge David Mackie CBE QC  
(UK) (Reappointment)  
Professor James Crawford AC SC  
(Australia) (New appointment)  
Hon. Justice Aminatta N'gum  
(Gambia) (New appointment)  
Hon. Justice Joaquine De Mello  
(Tanzania) (New appointment)  
Hon. Inés Mónica Weinberg de Roca  
(Argentina) (New appointment)  
Ambassador Peter Maddens  
(Belgium) (New appointment)  
Judge Fred Cowan  
(USA) (Re-appointment)  
Judge Jonathan Moses  
(New Zealand) (Re-appointment)  
Ms Dianna Kempe QC, JP  
(Bermuda) (Re-appointment)  
Mr Iain Morley QC  
(UK) (Re-appointment)  
Mr Fasil Amdetsion  
(Ethiopia) (New appointment)  
Ms Violet Odala  
(Malawi) (New appointment)  
Chief Charles Taku  
(Cameroon) (Re-appointment)

### **Donors**

Allen & Overy LLP, UK  
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Foundation, USA  
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Zara Watkins, Brooklyn, USA\*  
Joyce Dudley, Sun City, USA  
Nelmarie Melville, Sun City, USA

\*Member

**Fundraising Success; 2013 Competition.** Following a concerted effort, the group was delighted to **again increase** the number of its sponsorships this year raising our **largest-ever total** of seven. Awarding all seven scholarships in February 2014 will bring overall awards to 15, across the world's least developed countries in **Africa, Asia** and the **Americas**, opening a door for students in some of the world's most challenging countries and benefiting their countries and communities. Each sponsoring at least one full scholarship, thanks go this year to law firms **Allen & Overy** (UK), **DLA Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr** (South Africa), **DLA Piper** (UK), **Webber Wentzel** (South Africa); the **Law Council of Australia** and the **Claude Moore Charitable Foundation** (USA).



Scholarship Winner Hilina Berhanu Degefa and Matt Weldon, New York



Patron: Former UK High Court Judge Dame Linda Dobbs DBE

**Dame Linda Dobbs DBE Joins Lex:lead as Patron; Senior Advisory Board to be Established.** We were very pleased to have former UK High Court Judge **Dame Linda Dobbs DBE** join us this year as **patron**. With a Sierra Leonean mother, Dame Linda has a family connection to this least developed country, and a dedication to the welfare of developing nations. We plan to augment our senior representation in 2014 with a **senior advisory board**—initially from law firms Allen & Overy and McGuire Woods.

**New York Meets Second Scholarship Winner.** In August, Lex:lead scholarship winner and student ambassador **Ms Hilina Berhanu Degefa** (Ethiopia) was competitively selected for a UN program in New York affording some of our members an opportunity to meet in person. It's a particular pleasure to meet the students whom we end up feeling we know!

**Competition 2013 Underway.** In September, the group launched this year's essay competition answering the question: **How can the rule of law reduce poverty and foster economic growth?** With announcements made across Africa, Asia and the Americas, more than 115 applications were received this round. Essays are due **31 December 2013**, with our next winners to be announced after our annual meeting, **26-27 January 2014**.

Good luck to all applicants, and **Happy New Year!**