



Press Release:

African Youth Cyber Contest to Launch “I am Africa. This is my Story...” www.i-am-the-story.org

Sponsored by: UNESCO Power of Peace Network, ZAA-ICT/Southern Africa
Telecentre Network and Chrysalis Campaign, Inc.

March 1, 2011: An African continent-wide digital storytelling contest on YouTube will be launched by Chrysalis Campaign, Inc., USA and ZAA-ICT/Southern Africa Telecentre Network supported by UNESCO Power of Peace Network, Paris on March 1, 2011, called “I am Africa. This is my Story...” African native youth, between the ages of 14 and 35, are encouraged to team up with press, schools, cyber cafes, NGOs, missions and youth agencies to produce three minute YouTube digital stories. Part of the free contest is free membership to an African Ning social community: www.this-is-my-story.org. The YouTube stories will be featured and voted on through a YouTube Channel. African youth will have their own Ning social network “I am Africa. This is my Story...” a Twitter community @IamAfricaStory and a Facebook community.

“Youth of Africa needs a campaign and voice they can call their own, ‘I am Africa. This is My Story...’ They need to be the generation of possibilities and of progressive change,” stated - Wandila Simon Kamukwape, from Youth Action Forum for Networking and member of Zambia Telecentre Network Zambia. www.youthskills4dev.interconnection.org.

The youth will be called “StoryTellers” and receive free multimedia Internet training on how to produce digital stories on YouTube. Training will be available online and through African CyberCafes, schools and NGOs. The stories must be encouraging and show how African youth are improving their lives in positive ways such as through education, microeconomics apprenticeships and simply hard work. There will also be a music video award for a three minute YouTube with original or cultural music.

“Colonial multi-national media frequently projects a one-sided and seemingly false image of African youth whenever negative issues become newsworthy. The truth is, millions of African youth are bright, hard working and accomplishing remarkable achievements that often times go unnoticed. It is time that youth have a voice in the world, and it is time that NGOs, ITCs, missions, schools and CyberCafe’s help African youth tell their stories on the Internet.” – Richard Close Servant, CEO Chrysalis Campaign, Inc.

Individuals and organizations that help youth “StoryTellers” will be called “CyberGuides” and will also receive free media training. We are looking for CyberGuides to help in ways such as loaning video equipment, as basic as a cell phone, which can record movies or help with donating Internet time and technical resources. CyberCafes that donate Internet time will be able to display CyberGuide certificates and posters in their stores telling others that they are training centers for the contest.

“I am Africa. This is my story...” Merges the oldest traditions of the human race with the global reach of the Internet. Storytelling is still the greatest teacher, encourager and unites us as one people. From the events of today we know the power of the net. Armed with this contests social network, Facebook and Twitter community, African youth can now bypass the commercial media and finally tell the truth of their



innovation, determination and reasons for us to invest in their future. -Ming Kuok Lim
mk.lim@unesco.org UNESCO Power of Peace Network www.thepowerofpeacenetwork.com.

This program is completely unique because it encourages all countries, tribes and organizations to work together or to compete in a friendly way. Local towns or schools can have their own contest and a small NGO can raise awareness on equal ground with the UN or other major NGOs. No spokespeople will be used and all the fame will go to the StoryTeller. No organization spokespeople or advertising will be accepted in the videos, this about the youth.

“Youth in all African countries need an opportunity to be heard. First, Africa’s youth need a voice that will bypass the international press and tell the unfiltered stories of millions of good young men and women who work hard to make a difference. Second, all government agencies, NGOs, missions, schools and ICTs need to come together and help the youth tell their story. Third, the world needs to take notice and recognize that African youth are bright, resourceful, and driven to build a new Africa. Fourth, we all need to guide, encourage, invest and cheer African youth on to build a new future.” – Richard C. Close
Servant-CEO, Chrysalis Campaign, Inc.

“Telecentres and the Internet are a uniting force where the smallest school and the largest NGO are on equal ground. Here is a contest that favors no one and encourages everyone at no cost. It is also a great educational opportunity for youth to learn from one another and be encouraged by African innovation and teamwork. ZAA-ICT and Southern Africa Telecentre Network is proud to host and support this effort to both encourage the use of Internet and demonstrate that the will and intelligence of Africa’s youth crosses all country, religious and tribal boundaries.” - Dean Mulozi, ZAA-ICT/Southern Africa Telecentre Network, Regional Facilitator. www.satnetwork.org

“Free social media is explosive with youth in developing nations. Social media describes the online tools and platforms that people use to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives with each other.” - Wandila Simon Kamukwape, Youth Action Forum for Networking, Zambia.
www.youthskills4dev.interconnection.org

Free Storytelling training material is available for press and CyberCafes from the contest web site. Our hope is that members of the press and African media professionals will take these materials into their local schools and volunteer to encourage young StoryTellers to enter the contest. Local news stations and newspapers can even give out their own local awards for achievement. Online blogs and news can link to these materials.

To enter the contest, go to: www.i-am-the-story.org. Free online training is available and links to free video editing tools are available as well. Organizations that help youth with YouTube stories will be able to use them for their own web sites. Voting will start in May 1, 2011. Voting ends August 1, 2011

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Contest Site: <http://this-is-my-story.ning.com> www.this-is-my-story.org

Contest Twitter: @IamAfricaStory

