



Press Release

13 WINGS TO FLY SCHOLARS SCORE STRAIGHT A IN THE 2018 KCSE EXAMINATION

Nairobi, Thursday, 3rd January, 2019...Thirteen *Wings to Fly* beneficiaries were among the students who scored straight A's in the recently announced 2018 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education KCSE examination results. The 13 were among the 315 students who got A's in last year's national examinations. Additionally, 147 *Wings to Fly* scholars got A-. Overall, 1,421 (74%) of the 2018 *Wings to Fly* scholars who sat for KCSE exams attained university level grades, compared to a 14% national average.

The students, who were among the top in the country in this year's examinations, were hosted to a celebratory breakfast by the Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman, Dr. James Mwangi. During the event, Dr. Mwangi praised the beneficiaries' ability to rise above their challenges, noting that they were now firmly on their way to becoming the agents of their families and societal transformation.

"The increase from 2017's year's nine *Wings to Fly* students who scored As to last year's thirteen is a reflection of just how far you have come, and representative of the progress that scholars under the programme have been able to make. We are proud of you for the hard work you have put in to be able to achieve these performance, and today we share in your joy. As you go forward, we want you to remember that your journey continues. We have full trust that you will continue to excel in your university education and to become leading lights in your families and communities," Dr. Mwangi said.

Dr. Mwangi further reiterated that the continued support that the *Wings to Fly* programme has received from its partners over the years is as a result of the positive impact the programme has had in the lives of the students, their families and their community.

Out of the 10,060 scholars who have already completed their KCSE, 5,431 have joined the Equity Bank's paid internship program. This number is set to increase with this year's additions to the programme. Further, through the ELP programme, 465 scholars have been supported to secure admissions to global universities, with the rest joining universities in Kenya.

The *Wings to Fly* program, which is entering its 10th year, has so far given 15,168 scholarships to needy/financially challenged pupils across the country, surpassing the target set in 2011 of 10,000 scholarships. It selects beneficiaries through a rigorous selection process that identifies the most deserving beneficiaries to receive the scholarship.

One of the beneficiaries, John Kerario from Kapsabet Boys' High School, noted that the *Wings to Fly* programme had put him one step closer to achieving his dreams.

"I will remain eternally grateful for the *Wings to Fly* programme for helping me complete my high school education. Some of my friends were unable to continue with their education despite getting good marks in their KCPE exams. After going to university, I hope that I will now be in a better position to assist others who may have faced challenges similar to mine," she said.



This year, the Bank received close to 20,000 applications from various counties across the country. Through the scholarship, the students will have expenses such as tuition, books, uniform, transport costs, pocket money paid for them in full. The students will also have the opportunity to receive mentoring and leadership development during their four- year secondary school journey.

The 1,421 scholars who have qualified to join university this year will bring the total number of Wings to Fly scholars who have attained the minimum university entry grades to 8,062 since the inception of the programme.

Ends...

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.

www.equitygroupfoundation.com

<http://www.facebook.com/KeEquityBank>

<https://twitter.com/KeEquityBank>

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.