

Address to Delegates and Rhodes Top 50 Free First -Year Tuition Scholarships Prize Winners at the De Beers English Olympiad Prize Giving Ceremony

**Settlers Monument, Grahamstown
13 July 2006**

Ms Clayton, Dr Malcom Venter, Mr Mokoatle, distinguished guests, the officials that conduct the Olympiad, the teachers and parents of prize winners and, above all, you the De Beers English Olympiad prize winners: good morning, Molweni.

On behalf of Rhodes University my warmest congratulations to all the winners of the English Olympiad, and especially the top 15 that are with us this morning. Congratulations also to the teachers, parents and guardians that have undoubtedly played a vital role in nurturing a love for the English language among our winners.

Rhodes University is extremely pleased to be associated with the English Olympiad and with this morning's prize giving event. As you are aware we are committed to providing scholarships to the top 50 Olympiad prize winners that will entitle you to free tuition for the first-year in whatever field or discipline you may wish to register.

In monetary terms, these scholarships are each worth between R18 000 and R 20 000, with a total value of almost R 1 million. We consider this a very worthwhile investment in the future leaders, intellectuals and professionals of our country.

As Olympiad prize winners, you are clearly highly talented individuals with immense potential to become great people – people with a love for learning and knowledge, who are keen to acquire special expertise and skills, and who have a commitment to serve our society, which has many challenges.

The Rhodes University slogan, 'Where Leaders Learn' expresses our commitment to produce leaders and great people. We are able to realize this commitment because there are a number of things that make Rhodes special and distinct:

1. We are the smallest university in South Africa, which confers many advantages on our students
2. We have the lowest student to teacher ratio in the country – an average of 1 teacher per 15 students
3. We have a proud reputation of excellence in teaching and learning and research – shown in the fact that we have the best undergraduate pass rates in South Africa, the best undergraduate graduation rates, and the best research output per staff member
4. Finally, we take pride in being a lovely environment and a nurturing institution in which students can develop and realise their potential as intellectuals and professionals through excellent academic programmes, research and community engagement.

I hope many, if not all of you, will take up the scholarships that we offer and will join us at Rhodes next year. I can assure you that you will not regret such a choice.

Once again, on behalf of Rhodes University, congratulations to all the winners of the English Olympiad.