

# South Africans awarded Rosalynn Carter fellowships

Two South Africans are among 10 recipients of the 14th annual Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism, named last week by the Mental Health Programme of The Carter Centre in Atlanta, Georgia.

"Journalists have a very important role to play in shaping the public's perception of mental illnesses," said former First Lady and Carter Centre co-founder Rosalynn Carter. "If a news piece or a book shows what mental illness is really like, people will understand that mental illnesses happen to so many of us, and fortunately, even the most serious mental illnesses can be treated and most people can recover."

The South Africans are Salome Delport, health editor and writer for *Rooi Rose* magazine from Cape Town and Joanne Lillie, freelance journalist, Cape Town. They join six fellows from the United States, and two from Romania. Each South African fellow will receive a R50 000 stipend to study and report on a particular issue within the mental health field for one year.

## Setting the standard

This year nearly 100 applicants applied for the Carter Centre's Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism - reputedly one of the only journalism fellowships exclusively for mental health. Since 1996, the fellowship programme has educated more than 100 journalists, who set the standard in their field for accurate and sensitive portrayals of mental health issues.

Previous fellows have produced more than 300 stories, documentaries, books, and other works. Fellows' projects have garnered awards from Mental Health America (formerly the National Mental Health Association), the American Psychological Association, Amnesty International, and the Association of Health Care Journalists, as well as Emmy and Pulitzer Prize nominations.

The fellowships are part of the Carter Centre's Mental Health Programme, which works around the world to reduce stigma and discrimination against people with mental illnesses and decrease incorrect and stereotypical information. In addition, The Carter Centre conducts pioneering work on many other health fronts, including spearheading the historic campaign to eradicate Guinea worm disease, integrating neglected disease prevention, and building health infrastructure in some of the world's most impoverished communities.

The fellows will convene in Atlanta at The Carter Centre on 13-15 September 2010, to meet with former US First Lady Rosalynn Carter, the Centre's Mental Health Task Force, and the Journalism Fellowship Advisory Board to discuss planned topics of study

The Rosalynn Carter Fellowships would like to acknowledge their partnership with the South African Depression and

Anxiety Group (SADAG), Johannesburg, South Africa. For more information on the Carter Centre's Mental Health Programme or the Rosalynn Carter Mental Health Journalism Fellows go to [www.cartercentre.org](http://www.cartercentre.org) or contact Marion Scher ( [journos@icon.co.za](mailto:journos@icon.co.za)) or call +27 (0) 82 467 6046.

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