



Laura Kakon named Top 10 finalist for Africa Education Medal 2023

Founded by T4 Education and HP in collaboration with Microsoft, the Africa Education Medal is Africa's most prestigious education accolade

Casablanca, Tunis, Durban, Abuja, 16 May 2023 – Laura Kakon, Chief Growth and Strategy Officer of Honoris United Universities, has been named as a Top 10 finalist for the [Africa Education Medal 2023](#). Founded last year by T4 Education and HP in collaboration with Microsoft, the Africa Education Medal is Africa's most prestigious education accolade.

The Africa Education Medal was established to recognize the tireless work of those who are transforming education across the continent - to celebrate the stories of those who have lit the spark of change so others will be inspired to take up the torch. It is given to an outstanding individual who has demonstrated impact, leadership, and advocacy in the field of education.

Having been at the forefront of Honoris' inception in 2017, Kakon is in charge of identifying and steering Honoris' long-term growth strategy and driving value creation across the student journey through differentiation, digitization, and innovation. She helped establish Honoris as a market leader which has today grown to comprise a community of 71,000+ students on 70 campuses, learning centres and via online, in 10 African countries and 32 cities. Kakon was also assigned the responsibility of building the Honoris Employability Function across all 15 institutions, which has resulted in an 83% employability rate for graduates, supported by over 800 employer partners.

Kakon is passionate about women's leadership and entrepreneurship and promotes increasing girls' education across Africa. She has advocated for greater access to STEM, maker spaces, coding as a second language, and 21st-century skills. This has involved work as a board member of the World Economic Forum's New Champions Local Chapter in South Africa; the official Knowledge Partner of the Women In Africa Initiative currently training 20,000 women entrepreneurs; and as a founding member of the WeforShe Association. Her advocacy of youth mental health is also reflected in her role as a board member at Sourire de Reda, a pioneer in this area in Morocco.

She has been fundamental in nurturing an open innovation approach to transforming higher education to promote equity and widen access to quality education in Africa, having worked in the education sector for over 15 years. This has resulted in partnerships to significantly improve learning outcomes, such as an exclusive roll-out of Le Wagon's world-class coding boot camps across the continent, and the implementation of Lecturio, one of the world's leading online medical education platforms powered by AI to train healthcare professionals across Honoris' institutions. The introduction of adaptive learning - which recreates scaled personalized learning with the benefits of a one-to-one personal tutor - to the Honoris curricula reflects an emphasis on academic innovation by providing students with access to advanced learning technologies.

As part of Kakon's work to increase collaboration with some of the world's leading organizations focused on societal change, in 2022, Honoris was recognized as a New Champion by the World Economic Forum and was awarded the New Champions Award for Excellence in Adaptive Capacity.

Mayank Dhingra, Senior Education Business Leader, Southern Europe, Middle East and Africa, at HP said: *"My warmest congratulations to Laura Kakon on being named a Top 10 finalist for the*



Africa Education Medal 2023. Her tireless work to improve education stands as an inspiration to us all and I hope many others will follow in her footsteps to become leaders in the field.

“HP has a bold goal to accelerate digital equity for 150 million people globally by 2030. Only by joining forces and aligning with NGOs, government, educators and businesses can we truly improve the education environment. The Africa Education Medal brings together all those who are changing the face of African education, whose vital work deserves to be celebrated.”

Vikas Pota, Founder and CEO of T4 Education, said: *“Africa’s teachers and school leaders, and its leaders of governments, NGOs and businesses, all play a crucial part in unlocking the continent’s potential through quality education. African education stands at a crossroads in the wake of the pandemic, but if leaders from across the continent in every field can work together then they can build the lasting change needed.*

“I congratulate Laura Kakon on her achievements in building Honoris and I hope her success serves as a rallying cry for changemakers to come forward and make a difference.”

The Top 10 finalists for the Africa Education Medal are:

- Mary Ashun, Principal of Ghana International School, Ghana
- Laura Kakon, Chief Growth & Strategy Officer of Honoris United Universities, Morocco
- Rogers Kamugisha, Country Director of Educate!, Rwanda
- Grace Matlhape, CEO of SmartStart, South Africa
- Mary Metcalfe, former policymaker and CEO of Programme to Improve Learning Outcomes (PILO), South Africa
- Martha Muhwezi, Executive Director of FAWE, Uganda
- Jean-Claude Nkulikiyimfura, Executive Director of Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village, Rwanda
- Simi Nwogugu, CEO of JA Africa, Nigeria
- Sara Ruto, Former Chief Administrative Secretary of Kenya’s Ministry of Education and former CEO of PAL Network, Kenya
- Snehar Shah, CEO of Moringa School, Kenya

Nominations for the Africa Education Medal opened in February 2023 for individuals working to improve pre-kindergarten, K-12, vocational and university education who are either educators, school administrators, civil society leaders, public servants, government officials, political leaders, technologists, or innovators.

Honoris United Universities Group CEO Jonathan Louw commented, *“We are thrilled that Laura’s work to increase access to quality education for Africa’s young people has been recognized in this year’s Africa Education Medal shortlist. Since the beginning of the network, she has championed a disruptive and innovative approach to transforming higher education in Africa, tantamount to her passion for Africa’s long-term sustainable growth.”*

Laura Kakon, Chief Growth and Strategy Officer at Honoris, added, *“I am honored to be included in this year’s shortlist for the Africa Education Medal – alongside some of the continent’s most inspiring changemakers. Education is a powerful force for us to transform the continent, and I look forward to connecting with the ecosystem that T4 Education has built to harness the world’s future workforce, the African youth.”*



The winner of the Africa Education Medal will be announced in July. Finalists will be assessed by a Jury comprising prominent individuals based on rigorous criteria.

Ends.

About Honoris United Universities

Honoris United Universities is the first and largest pan-African private higher education network committed to transforming lives through relevant education for lifetime success. Collaborative intelligence, cultural agility and mobile mind-sets are at the heart of the Honoris approach to educate the next generation of leaders and professionals able to impact regionally in a globalized world. Honoris combines the expertise of its member institutions to develop world-class African human talent that is competitive in today's fast-paced, demanding and increasingly digitized labour and start-up markets.

Recognized as a New Champion by the World Economic Forum, Honoris comprises a community of **71,000** students on **70+** campuses, learning centres and via on-line, in **10** African countries and **32** cities. The network is formed of **15** institutions: multidisciplinary universities, specialized schools, technical and vocational institutes, contact, distance, and online institutions. Students have an opportunity to experience exclusive partnerships and exchange programs in more than **190** universities across Europe, the United States and Asia. Over **420** degrees are offered in Medicine, Health Sciences, Engineering, IT, Business, Law, Architecture, Creative Arts, Fashion and Design, Media, Political Science and Education.

Honoris United Universities. Education for Impact. www.honoris.net

About T4 Education:

We believe every child everywhere deserves a good education. We are building the world's largest community of teachers and schools to achieve this. Together. Our digital media platform provides opportunities for educators to network, collaborate, share good practices, and support each other's efforts to improve learning and school culture. We work to amplify teachers' voices because the world we want to see will only be built by listening to those at the heart of education. Our global community of over 200,000 teachers and our digital media platform provides an engine for organisations to run education prizes that cut through in both the international media and the public consciousness.

For Media Information

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