



PRESS RELEASE:

750 Top KCSE Scholars in the Country Selected to Join The Prestigious Equity Leadership Program

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Nairobi, Kenya – 17th February 2025 – Equity Group Foundation has announced the selection of 750 top secondary school graduates to its prestigious Equity Leaders Program (ELP). These top-performing students who are joining the Pre- University Paid Internship program within the ELP will embark on a six-month internship at Equity Bank branches nationwide as they prepare for their university journey later this year.

The cohort consists of 350 *Wings to Fly* Scholars and Elimu Scholars who achieved Grade A and A-, 167 top-performing students from each sub-county who scored Grade A (Plain), and 233 top national scholars who earned a minimum of Grade A (Plain) with 84 points in their final exams.

While addressing the scholars at the commissioning ceremony, Equity Group Foundation Executive Chairman, Dr. James Mwangi, said, "You are here today because you have demonstrated consistent excellence and determination in your academic journey, and we are proud to have you join us as part of this transformative experience. This Program is not just about providing you with valuable work experience, it's about nurturing your leadership skills, empowering you to become change-makers in your communities and beyond, and equipping you with the tools to succeed in both your university studies and your professional future. You represent the future of Africa, and we, at Equity, are excited to walk with you as you take your next steps. This is just the beginning of your journey to greatness. We believe in you, and we are here to support you every step of the way."

The commissioning ceremony was held after a two-week intensive induction program which included interactions with leaders from various industries, including Equity Group's leadership team. Scholars engaged in discussions on leadership, personal growth, and community development, ensuring a holistic approach to their learning experience. These insights will help position them for success in their academic and future careers.

During their two-week induction, the scholars were addressed by Equity Bank Kenya Managing Director, Moses Nyabanda, who emphasized the importance of trust, honesty, and integrity in leadership. "As future leaders, it is crucial that you are known for your principles," he said. "At Equity, we believe in values such as professionalism, integrity, creativity, innovation, teamwork, and a shared purpose. Above all, we emphasize respect and dignity for our customers, as well as strong corporate governance. We challenge each of you to embody these values, not only in your work, but also in your everyday life as you step into roles that will shape the future."

As part of the program, the interns will receive a monthly stipend during their six-month internship, with a portion of the stipend saved and released to them upon their transition to university to instill a saving culture early. This initiative helps facilitate a smooth academic transition, providing financial support for their higher education. The scholars receive mentorship and coaching from globally experienced and accomplished professionals with diverse skills to deepen their knowledge before they settle on what careers to pursue and what to study.

Dieume Baraka, a former student of Starehe Boys Centre who achieved an A (Plain) in the 2024 KCSE and is also an alumnus of the Elimu Scholarship Program, shared his journey, "Coming from a background marked by unimaginable hardship, I have always believed that education is



the key to a brighter future. Despite the many challenges I faced, whether it was living in refugee camps, enduring displacement, or struggling with the basic needs for my education, I remained focused on my dream of bringing change to my community. Being selected for the Equity Leaders Program is a tremendous opportunity, and I am excited to be part of a program that will not only provide me with valuable skills but also equip me with the leadership tools I need to create a more peaceful and united world. I hope to study a course at university, to better understand and contribute to the healing of my community and beyond."

Salmo Abdullahi Hassan, a former student of Parklands Arya Girls Secondary School who achieved an A- (Minus) in the 2024 KCSE, highlighted, "This is a great opportunity that Equity has provided us through the Equity Leaders Program, and I am truly grateful for the chance to be part of it. The two weeks of leadership mentorship have been incredible, particularly the interactions with the Bank's leadership and the insightful mentors. I'm really looking forward to the six-month internship, where I hope to learn more from experienced colleagues, grow as an individual, and expand my world view as I prepare to join university. I am excited for the future and ready to use the lessons learned here to make a positive impact."

Elema Badaqe Duba, a former student of Makueni Boys High School who achieved an A- (Minus) in the 2024 KCSE and is also an alumnus of the Wings to Fly program, stated, "Growing up in Marsabit as the firstborn in a family of seven, I faced immense challenges, including sleeping outside due to the high temperatures and walking long distances to school. Despite these hardships, I remained determined to excel academically. What inspired me to work hard is my deep desire to provide for my family and lift them out of poverty. Being selected for the Equity Leaders Program is a dream come true, and I am eager to use this opportunity to gain the skills and leadership experience that will help me achieve my goal of transforming my family's life and contributing to my community's development."

Since inception, the ELP program has grown significantly supporting 29,515 scholars studying at local and global universities. With the addition of the new cohort of 750 scholars, the total number of scholars who have benefited from the Equity Leadership Program's 6-month pre-university internship program now stands at 9,700. During the internship, the ELP scholars are nurtured to succeed and thrive in the workplace through mentorship, leadership, life skills, and work readiness training. They also have an opportunity to join Equity's bespoke College Counselling program that has to date supported 970 scholars to attend global universities on fully funded scholarships across 233 universities in 37 countries and 6 continents, with 204 having attended Ivy league universities. The global scholars benefit from a comprehensive two-month College Counselling program where they receive expert guidance on essay writing, university selection, and exam preparation. Additionally, a week-long bootcamp equips them with the necessary skills to navigate the transition to university life and thrive as global scholars. The global scholar's program is a manifestation of Equity's commitment to a creative approach to knowledge exchange and global interconnectedness. This initiative goes beyond traditional academic frameworks, emphasizing critical thinking, leadership training, and exposure to diverse educational environments. The initiatives breakdown geographical barriers, offering African scholars access to world-class education. This not only creates a pipeline of globally competitive talent but also fosters innovation through exposure to diverse educational environments and methodologies, preparing students for the global stage, fostering innovation through exposure to different perspectives and challenges.

The Equity Leaders Program, an initiative of Equity Group Foundation, continues to impact the lives of countless young people by preparing them to thrive in their future educational and professional endeavors. Alongside entrepreneurship in various sectors of the economy, ELP



alumni have gone on to establish 132 Equity Afya medical centers with presence in all 47 counties of Kenya with 5 units established in DRC in 2024.