Two TSU Students Win Trip to South Africa Sponsored by Coca Cola

Two Texas Southern University students will travel to South Africa courtesy of Coca Cola and the Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN). Cherish Rush and Ryan Small, will join other HBCU students from all over the United States and will travel to South Africa where they will attend the World Cup as a part of their prize package. As a special bonus these students will be accompanied to each event by the actor Idris Elba. Rush and Small won Coke’s video competition where students were asked to present a three minute video about Coke’s RAIN project. More than 60 TSU students participated.

“It’s unbelievable. I still won’t believe it until I get on the plane. I am so very appreciative of this wonderful opportunity. I’ve always had a heart and a passion for Africa, and I have always wanted to do mission work in Africa. I have always done service in my community, now going to Africa – it’s a global extension of community service. I am so very grateful to Coca Cola for this wonderful opportunity” stated Cherrish Rush, a graduate student in public affairs.

According to Ryan Small, a graduate radio television and film (RTF) student in communication, “This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. I have always wanted to visit South Africa, and now I have to opportunity to do thanks to Coca Cola and the Rain Initiative.”

The Coca-Cola Company has committed $30 million over the next six years to provide access to safe drinking water to communities throughout Africa through its Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN). Implemented by The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation, RAIN will provide at least 2 million Africans with clean water and sanitation by 2015.

"Africa’s water crisis threatens the health of its population and, therefore, its prospects for economic growth," said Muhtar Kent, President and CEO of The Coca-Cola Company. "Communities need strong, healthy people to thrive, and our business needs strong, healthy communities to grow and be sustainable. Helping African communities tackle their water challenges is an important priority for our Company and our bottling partners and is an area where we can make a positive and lasting impact."

According to the World Health Organization, more than 300 million Africans lack access to safe drinking water, and millions of them die each year from preventable waterborne illnesses. Up to half of the region’s population at any one time suffers from diseases related to unsafe drinking water and poor sanitation.

Between 2004 and 2015, the number of people living without access to safe water in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to increase by 47 million people. Africa is expected to miss the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals target for access to clean drinking water by 111 million people and the sanitation target by 289 million.

"No single organization can resolve Africa’s development challenges, but together with civic society, nongovernmental organizations and government we can make a positive difference in the lives of the people who make up our communities," said William Asiko, President of The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation.