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PANAMA NATIONAL ORATORY CONTEST PROMOTES YOUNG TALENT

Cable & Wireless Communications' Panama business has crowned Santiago Gallardo the winner of the 2011 National Oratory Contest.

Mr Gallardo is from the Guna Yala Indian Reservation, an island community just off Panama's Caribbean coast.

This year's ten finalists presented speeches on the topic, 'education for life'. Mr Gallardo told the audience and judges about how his biggest dream is to become a doctor to provide better healthcare to the Guna people. He also outlined the importance of environmental education, giving the example of how his island community is losing land due to rising sea levels, forcing people to move away from the region.

As well as being presented with the Oratory Cup, Mr. Gallardo won a new Peugeot car with petrol costs paid for an entire year, US\$10,000, a university scholarship, a Royal Caribbean cruise holiday and a US\$50,000 donation for an educational project for his school.

The final was broadcast on prime time national television, radio and on the internet. It was the most-watched national program in Panama that day.

The Contest was judged by a panel including the former President of El Salvador, Francisco Flores; CNN journalist Ismael Cala; Paulina Franceschi from the United Nations Development Programme; Panamanian writer, Gloria Guardia and Mexican writer Carlos Cuauhtemoc Sanchez.

Panama's National Oratory Contest was started in the 1970s and is a youth public speaking contest that each year involves more than 10,000 high school students, teachers and parents from across Panama. Cable & Wireless Panama has been the Contest's principal sponsor since 2005.

To view video profiles of the finalists, please visit: <http://www.youtube.com/user/CWCChannel>

About Cable & Wireless Communications

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