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## \*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\*

# John P. McNulty Prize Announces 2011 Winner

Secretary Albright to Award \$100,000 to Nigerian Journalist Revolutionizing Media Landscape

New York, NY, October 25, 2011 – The <u>Aspen Institute</u> and Anne Welsh McNulty, Institute trustee, today announced journalist Dele Olojede as the winner of the fourth annual <u>John P. McNulty Prize</u>. A committee of judges including Madeleine Albright, Olara Otunnu, Shashi Tharoor and Anne McNulty selected Olojede in recognition of <u>his groundbreaking work</u> to deliver unbiased information to the Nigerian public, demand government transparency and advance journalistic standards in the country.

"With NEXT, Dele is truly changing the expectations to which Nigerian leaders are held, equipping Nigerians to be active citizens," said Anne McNulty, founder of the McNulty Prize. "The jury was inspired by his courage and conviction in forging new ground, and leading his country toward a better future."

Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, judge for the 2011 McNulty Prize, said, "Dele Olojede is a remarkable leader operating in a very difficult environment. He is giving the people of Nigeria what they do not have, which is unbiased information. He is standing up for media and government transparency and is a formative figure in building a strong democratic base in his country."

Olojede is the CEO and Founder of <u>NEXT</u>, the leading source for independent Nigerian and African news, and first Pulitzer Prize-winning African. Prior to his founding of NEXT, Olojede attended Columbia University's School of Journalism and spent 16 years at *Newsday*, where he received the Pulitzer for his "fresh, haunting look at Rwanda a decade after rape and genocidal slaughter had ravaged the Tutsi tribe." After becoming an Africa Leadership Initiative Fellow of the <u>Aspen Global Leadership Network</u>, Dele decided it was time to return to his native Nigeria in 2008 and to elevate the public dialogue in a nation characterized by corruption, a wealth gap, and an acceptance of the status quo as his Fellowship project. The result was NEXT, a venture founded on journalistic integrity and credibility, which is now the most trafficked news site in the country at 2 million monthly views.

"Our aim is nothing less than to transform the way Nigerians think, to arm the citizen with factual information so that...she will make better decisions," said Olojede. "The funding conferred by the McNulty Prize is invaluable in continuing and growing NEXT's operations, particularly as we expand our digital media presence. Ultimately, our real impact will be measured by the changing thinking of the Nigerian people, but to receive the international recognition of the McNulty Prize is immensely humbling."

Running a 24-hour newsroom on diesel generators, Dele and a team of young people work to bring unbiased investigative reporting to a country mired in corruption. To date, NEXT has exposed the role of Nigerian political elite in the Haliburton scandal, uncovered tax evasion by Nigeria's richest tycoon and publicized the pay of Nigerian legislators. After NEXT exposed the concealed truth that Nigeria's President, Umaru Yar'Adua, was seriously brain damaged, agents of the State Security Service attempted

to burst into the newsroom and seize the paper. The story precipitated the appointment of a new leader in the country.

The McNulty Prize seeks to galvanize efforts to address the foremost social, economic and political challenges of our time by recognizing the very best in high-impact work by Fellows from the Aspen Global Leadership Network under taken as part of their Fellowship. Projects are assessed on their creativity, impact and sustainability. The 2011 finalists include:

- Jay Coen Gilbert & Andrew Kassoy of B Lab (Philadelphia, Penn.), an organization dedicated to redefining 'business' to make solving social and environmental problems as important as generating profits.
- Timothy Marquez of Denver Scholarship Foundation (Denver, Colo.), an organization that combats the inequity of college success for Denver's youth by distributing scholarships and helping students navigate the college and financial aid processes.
- Ann Lamont of Leadership & Innovation Network for Collaboration in the Children's Sector (South Africa), an organization that facilitates leadership and interaction between actors in the children's sector and innovates new approaches to overcome the systemic problems hindering the delivery of services to children.
- Alejandra Poma of Libras de Amor (El Salvador), an organization that ensures thousands of infants a fair start in life by taking on malnutrition in El Salvador's poorest regions.

The winner and finalists will be recognized at a reception that will include a conversation between Dele Olojede and Walter Isaacson to be held on November 2 from 6:00 - 8:00 PM at the Metropolitan Club, President's Ballroom. On November 3, Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will present the McNulty Prize to Olojede at the Aspen Institute Annual Awards Dinner.

### About The John P. McNulty Prize

The John P. McNulty Prize celebrates the boldness and impact individuals around the globe are bringing to the toughest challenges in their communities and the world-at-large. Founded in 2008 by Anne McNulty in honor of her late husband John, the Prize aims to galvanize efforts to address the foremost social, economic and political challenges of our time by recognizing the very best in high-impact leadership. Each year, the winner is selected by an international jury that has included Mary Robinson, Bill Gates Sr., and Sir Richard Branson and recognizes exceptional leadership projects undertaken by the Fellows of the Aspen Global Leadership Network.

For more information, please visit <a href="http://www.mcnultyprize.org/">http://www.facebook.com/#!/TheMcNultyPrize</a>.

#### **About The Aspen Institute**

The Aspen Institute mission is twofold: to foster values-based leadership, encouraging individuals to reflect on the ideals and ideas that define a good society, and to provide a neutral and balanced venue for discussing and acting on critical issues. The Aspen Institute does this primarily in four ways: seminars, young-leader fellowships around the globe, policy programs, and public conferences and events. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore and has an international network of partners.

### **About the Aspen Global Leadership Network**

The Aspen Global Leadership Network is a growing, worldwide community of entrepreneurial leaders from business, government and the nonprofit sector -- currently, more than 1,300 "Fellows" from 43 countries -- who share a commitment to enlightened leadership and to using their extraordinary creativity, energy and resources to tackle the foremost societal challenges of our times. All share the common experience of participating in the Henry Crown Fellowship or one of the dozen Aspen Institute leadership initiatives it has inspired in the United States, Africa, Central America, India and the Middle East.

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