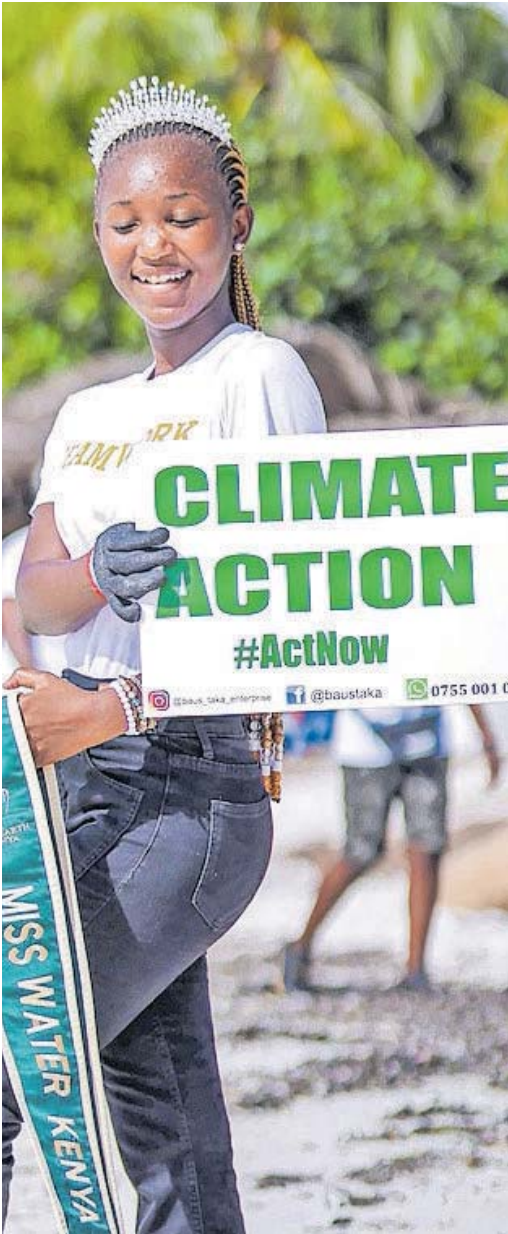
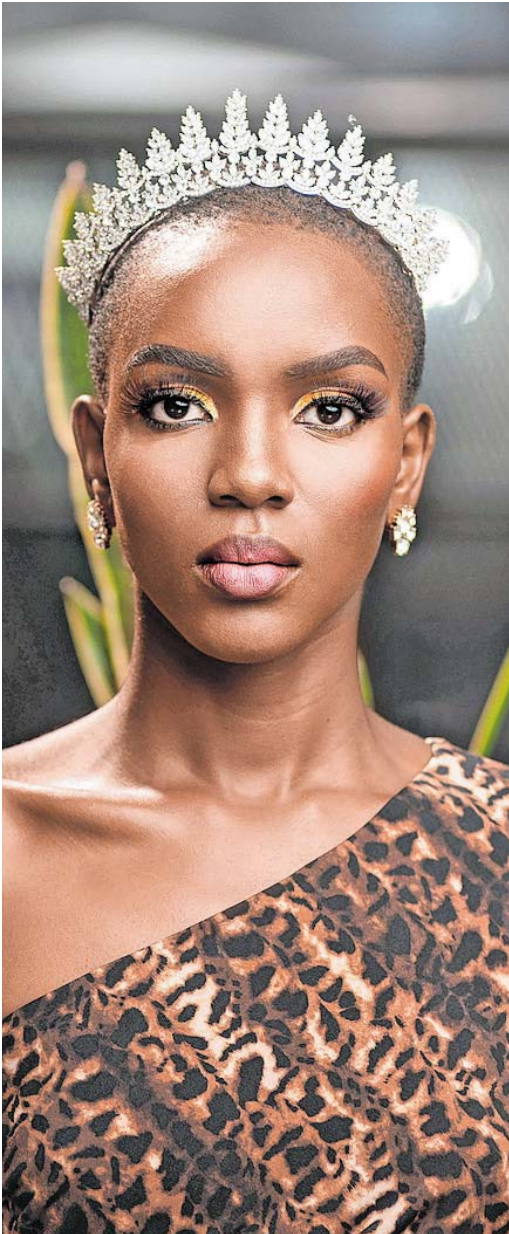


# E2MyNetWork



## BEYOND THE RUNWAY

Four models talk about how they are using their prestigious crowns to raise awareness about environmental conservation. For them, modelling is not just about looking beautiful, posing for photos and cat walking on the runway **P.4&5**



T5

MULAMWAH

BY ELIZABETH NGIGI  
@nyambs\_jiz

**D**avid Oyando, popularly known as Mulamwah, is among the most famous local comedians, and he rakes in over Sh1 million every month. He explains that his earnings fluctuate every week depending on the nature and number of clients he attracts.

In this exclusive interview, Mulamwah opens up about the highs and lows that have lined his path to prominence and reveals the reason he decided to abandon a career in nursing for the arts.

He finishes by confidently saying that based on the investments he has made, he does not doubt that his destiny and that of his children is safely secured, no matter the twists that may come later in life.

#### 1. Describe your upbringing and experiences during your early years in the village...

I am the second born in my family and I was raised in Western Kenya. I have an elder sister but we lost our mum when I was just two years old. I cannot remember her well. Our dad is a clinical officer and he raised us as a single dad until I was in Class Six when he remarried, and so I have two step-brothers who I truly cherish.

I grew up in different homes, raised mostly by my relatives. However, the only thing I lacked by not having my mum around was a mother's love. I grew up yearning for that kind of unconditional love, and even today, I find it hard to use some words, like, sorry. I did not experience the soft side of a mother's love.

#### 2. Why did you abandon nursing despite studying it in college?

First, I was a very bright student and I got good marks (I can't recall the exact marks) in Class Eight despite all the challenges, and secured a place at an extra-county school in Kitale. There I performed well and managed an A- of 80 points in Form Four.

I joined Moi University where I took a nursing course. It was during my four years in campus that I started nurturing my acting skills. I used to perform for other universities since at Moi there was



no drama club.

For my internship, I came to Kenyatta National Hospital for one year. The reason I wanted to be in Nairobi is so that I could get a chance to go for auditions on Churchill Show and other TV shows like *Inspekta Mwala*.

I did not quit nursing, but by the time my internship at Kenyatta Hospital was ending, I had begun creating videos and some were gaining traction online. By 2018,

I started getting job opportunities. That year, comedian Churchill posted one of my funny clips and it went viral. I was doing skits and posting them on social media groups, but nobody knew me. One day I went to church and stood at the entrance where everyone was registering. I took a photo of their contacts and saved all their numbers. I would then share my videos with them on WhatsApp.

All I wanted was to be successful and I wanted it to come from arts. That is why I opened my social media accounts in 2012. At that time, I did not know anything about monetising content, and an imposter began posting my videos on his YouTube channel.

#### 3. After gaining so much fame, why did you quit social media in 2020?

That was the lowest moment of my life. I never thought social media had its negative side. All I knew was that once you become a celebrity, everyone will love and praise you. Also, nobody had warned me against responding to hate on social media. I did not know my power. I did not know that the brand Mulamwah came with some weight, and every response was taken seriously.

The issue was that cyberbullying was affecting my family. People would even go to my home, take a photo of our house and post it. The pressure became too much so I made a video burning my signature shirt and announced

that I had decided to take a back seat in comedy following constant trolls on social media. By quitting, I knew I was protecting my family from

the trolls. I thought it was not a big deal but after that I realised I was a role model to so many people.

Suddenly I was on international news talking about online bullies. We even did a full documentary and some government officials began looking for me.

#### 4. Tell us about some of the highlights of your career. Do you regret not being a nurse?

I don't regret anything since I have achieved so much within a short period. I didn't think I would ever achieve this much. For me it is a confirmation that talent and formal education go together. Talent without education is not enough. A talented but uneducated comedian will still suffer because one needs the knowledge to read contracts and interact with fans.

Education is highly important. I will forever be a nurse. That's my profession and it will never change, but my talent in comedy could fade away any day. If, for example, I lose my voice, I will be jobless because I need a voice to entertain people. If I lose my social media accounts, I will not get clients. Talent is a short-time gamble. The most successful artists are those who have gone to school.

#### 5. What are your rates, and what advice would you offer to aspiring content creators?

Right now, I charge from Sh100,000 per post in a week depending on the deal and length of the contract. Some posts are worth up to Sh200,000 each and this depends on the social media platform the client wants. If they want the post on all social media pages, then the charges are a bit high.

Currently, I work with several brands. My advice to budding talents is to prioritise copyrighting all their work. Many artists overlook this crucial step, leaving their content vulnerable to theft. It is very easy to earn nothing even when your work is out there.

Additionally, make sure you invest. I still use *matatus* because that is part of where I get my content ideas. Interacting with people helps you understand life from all angles. My legacy is to be remembered as someone who started from scratch and has made something for themselves. I want people to see and appreciate my journey and that is why I flaunt my investments online – to inspire others.

#### Unit The Podcast

<https://www.youtube.com/@unit.thepodcast>

*Unit the Podcast* offers listeners an authentic glimpse into the lives of a husband-and-wife duo, Shikie and Shiv. With candid conversations and relatable stories, the duo invites audiences to join in on their laughter, love, and real-life experiences. As a popular married couple, Shikie and Shiv bring a wealth of shared experiences on love, relationships, and everyday challenges, although they occasionally discuss current events. Whether sharing heartfelt advice or providing entertaining banter, Shikie and Shiv's chemistry shines through, making each episode a joy to listen to.

Join this dynamic duo as they navigate life's ups and downs, sharing their journey with authenticity and humour. Whether you're seeking a dose of inspiration or simply looking for a good laugh, "Unit the Podcast" promises to deliver.

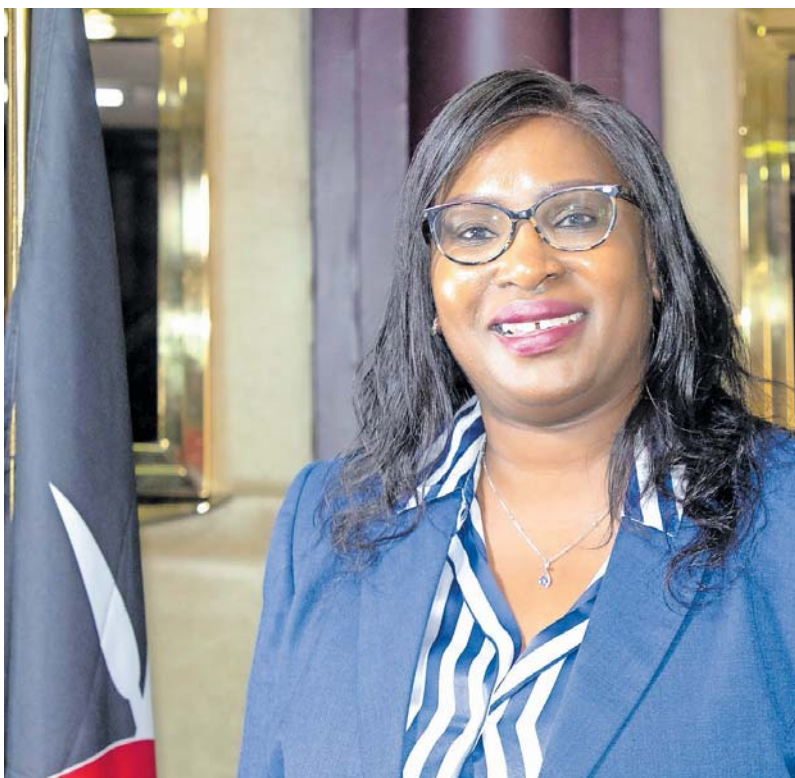
Drone Space Kenya is gearing up to host a revolutionary conference on March 26 and 27 at the Sarit Expo Centre in Westlands, Nairobi. The two-day event is set to attract a diverse array of innovators, professionals, industry leaders, and experts from across the region, all converging to explore cutting-edge developments in these dynamic industries.

Experts in AI, drone technology, and data analytics will offer insights into the latest trends, breakthroughs, and future directions in these fields. Tickets are available on [Ticketcity.com](https://www.ticketcity.com).



## People

# A prosperous career that began in finance and ended in marketing despite a law degree



BY WANJA MBUTHIA

When I meet Fioce Mukabana in her office on the 16th floor of Anniversary Towers, she invites me with a warm smile and a firm handshake, as if we are old buddies. But no, we are meeting for the first time and this is among her first media interviews since her appointment as the Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya Export Promotion Branding and Agency (KEPROBA). Ms Fioce is a seasoned civil servant with 21 years of experience.

Her career journey began in finance, but she has recently embraced the marketing world, a field that allows her to "position and speak to things that are important to people." Fioce describes this as a fulfilling experience that empowers her to be a solution provider and "create something out of nothing."

Growing up in Nairobi's South B estate, her parents placed great emphasis on education. Back then, gaining employment was highly valued, as it led to lifelong careers in the corporate world. This, she says, shaped her dreams and led her to a successful career.

She admits being mischievous as a child, saying she enjoyed having fun, although she always completed her duties.

"There were always things that needed to be done, and I made sure to take care of them. But if there arose an opportunity for harmless fun along the way, I didn't hesitate to take it."

She looked forward to adulthood, as she loved the freedom and independence it came with.

"I wanted to be an adult so I could make my own decisions and have the money to do whatever I wanted."

However, adult life brought her a surprising reality check.

"The freedom I so craved came with significant responsibility," she chuckles. "However, this experience continues to shape my approach towards children. I always aspire to make them enjoy their time as children," she says.

Her father worked as an engineering technician at Kenya Post and Telecommunications, and he influenced her career path.

"He kept saying, 'for you to make it out here, education is the answer'," she recalls.

Anything but linear, Fioce's career journey is a testament to her adaptability and diverse skillset. While she initially studied law,

her pupillage led her down a different path – tax accounting. This experience propelled her to the Kenya Revenue Authority and later the Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI), where she spent a decade as Head of Finance.

Her journey in marketing began at the Brand Kenya Board, where she started as Head of Finance before stepping up as acting CEO for two and a half years. During this time, she played a vital role in the merger of the Brand Kenya Board and the Export Promotion Council, forming the Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA).

Among the challenges Fioce has faced in her career, gender profiling stands out. "You have to fight for your space. You have to communicate in a way that transcends gender bias," she emphasises.

As the CEO at KEPROBA, her role involves driving the growth of Kenya's exports. This consists of recognising the nation's treasured export crops – coffee, tea, flowers, macadamia nuts, and, increasingly, human capital.

"We want to take these products to the international market and fetch the best possible prices," she says.

But her vision extends beyond traditional export models. She wants to democratise exports, enabling even small-scale producers like farmers in rural areas to participate in global trade.

"We need to ensure that the grandmother in Murang'a can sell her avocado to aggregators. We want her to say, 'I can go to this person; he's an aggregator; he's going to sell, and he'll be able to give me my exports in dollars,'" Fioce explains.

Fioce credits her success to a strong support system. "My family and friends are very supportive," she says. She advocates for personal time, and weekend getaways which she says are essential for introspection and rejuvenation.

"Remember, your career is just one part of life. Explore other passions, too."

Her proudest accomplishment is sponsoring the Kenyan rugby team and using their talent to promote the "Make It Kenya" campaign during the Sevens Circuit.

"We were able to leverage on sports talent to market the country. It was a great way to start my time as CEO, and seeing Make It Kenya gain global visibility was gratifying."

Fioce finds solace in introspection and spending time with those closest to her.

"I value things that are close to me," she reflects. "And when it comes to inspiration, my grandmother immediately comes to mind. She would say in Luhya, 'If you don't have common sense, you don't have science in your head.'"

Another source of inspiration is a close friend's grandmother, a woman who defied societal expectations.

"She was an independent woman who achieved a lot at a time when gender issues weren't even discussed. These two women inspire me deeply."

Beyond her circle, Fioce finds inspiration in Michelle Obama.

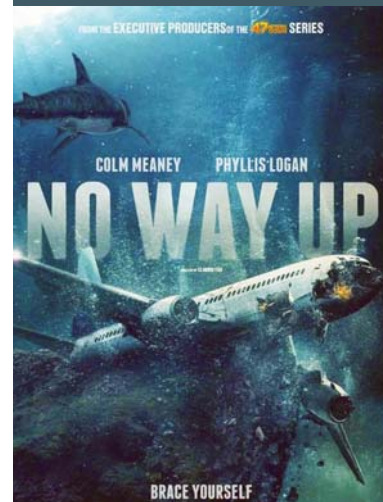
"Her message of 'growing where you're planted' resonates strongly with me. It's about making the most of your current situation and contributing positively to those around you. Embrace the space you're in and don't wait for a better tomorrow. Take risks and make the best of what you have," she urges.

Fioce has a clear vision:

"My passion lies in demystifying international trade. Initiatives like KEPROBA's focus on e-commerce are a step in that direction. I want to make exporting accessible to everyone, so that trade can thrive in all its forms."

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## Movie Review



### No Way Up

Where: Prime Video  
Genre: Thriller, Action

In *No Way Up*, director Claudio Fäh crafts a high-octane thriller that combines the adrenaline-pumping elements of a plane crash survival story with the heart-pounding tension of a shark horror movie. Set against the stunning backdrop of Cabo, Mexico, this film plunges viewers into a life-or-death struggle as a handful of survivors find themselves trapped in an airlocked cabin on the edge of an underwater ravine.

Ava (played by Sophie McIntosh), the daughter of California's Governor, embarks on what was meant to be a peaceful getaway with friends. However, fate intervenes when their plane crashes into the Pacific Ocean, leaving them clinging to survival. With bloodthirsty sharks circling and the odds stacked against her, Ava must step up and lead her fellow passengers to safety.

The film's opening sequence delivers a gripping plane crash, setting the stage for the harrowing ordeal that follows. While the sharks become the primary threat, the tension builds gradually. The cast, though small, delivers solid performances, with McIntosh portraying Ava's resilience and determination.

However, *No Way Up* doesn't quite soar to its full potential. The storyline occasionally veers into predictability, and some moments stretch the bounds of possibility. Despite these flaws, the film manages to entertain with its personality, thrills, and resourcefulness.

By Michael Ochieng



# Beauty and purpose: We aim to



Faith Akinyi is the reigning Miss Fire Kenya from Nairobi. PHOTOPOOL



Natasha Mungai is a veterinary student, and Miss Air Kenya. PHOTOPOOL



Cheryl Siso, current Miss Water Kenya.

**These women, all who hold different pageant titles, are using their positions to drive positive change by advocating for environmental conservation and social impact**

**They combine beauty with purpose and leverage on their influence to bring positive change in their communities, their goal being to protect Mother Nature**

BY THOMAS BOSIRE

Modelling is often associated with glitz, glamour and high fashion. To a layman, it seems the career is all about looking beautiful, attending beauty pageants and catwalking on the runway.

Maybe, but there is a new crop of fe-

male models that is out to rewrite this narrative. These women, all who hold different pageant titles, are using their positions to drive positive change, advocating for environmental conservation and social impact. These models combine beauty with purpose and leverage on their influence to bring positive change in their communities.

MyNetWork engaged four such models who talk about their efforts in raising awareness on sustainability. They emphasise on the importance of embracing sustainable practices to protect the environment.

## Cheryl Siso, 24

### Teacher, Miss Water Kenya

As a teacher, I love sharing knowledge and skills with my students. All the time, I have to smile and be happy, and be a role model. I find teaching to be a fulfilling career.

I was born and raised in Mombasa, and this made me love nature. I love going to relax at the beach, to breathe the clean, salty air and meditate near the tranquil ocean.

I cherish the title, Miss Water Kenya, which I received last year during the Miss Earth pageant. Before that, I had been doing a lot of activities such as clean-ups around my estate, and educating people about the dangers of using single use plastics through public gatherings and on social media. The has boosted my presence and influence, as I am able to reach a wider audience and impact more people.

When you preach about plastic recycling solutions and keeping the oceans clean using the Miss Water title, people easily heed to the advice.

I organised clean-ups at the beach by mobilising young people, and built a team that helped me go from house to house advising people on proper disposal of waste. We encouraged them to view waste as wealth, and to find ways of re-using it to make items such as key holders or decorations.

Most people think climate change is a hoax. I once attended a tree planting event and after planting the mangroves, I beseeched them to take care of the small trees. They then asked me why it was important for

them to do so. I was so shocked. That was a clear demonstration that people are not keen on matters sustainability.

What fuels my drive for sustainability is the reality that if we don't protect Mother Nature, we will lose the coastal region due to the rising sea levels. I don't want to lose my home, so that made me so passionate about taking care of the environment," she notes.

I have seen individuals being turned into refugees due to extreme weather such as floods, so I know that the issue of sustainability is highly important.

I started modelling in college. I try to add purpose into modelling so I only participate in pageants that have impactful themes.

The first title I got in Mombasa County was Miss Environment Mombasa in 2022, which was all about environmental conservation and the other one, Miss Empowered Mombasa, was about empowering the girl child.

What discourages me is that people sometimes do not acknowledge my efforts and those of my fellow advocates. When they see you doing beach cleanups, they think you have a lot of time to waste.



# do more than just cat walking



Faith Akinyi is a teacher from Mombasa. PHOTOPOOL



Ashley Jayalo is a model coach from Mombasa. PHOTOPOOL

The beauty of a model can get the attention of the public, but what you do afterwards is what will define you

Ashley Jayalo



I started modelling last year when I joined the Miss Earth Kenya title contest. The event aligned perfectly with my career and interests in nurturing the earth and protecting animals. I also learnt that there's more to sustainability than just planting trees. You can also engage in recycling, reusing and repurposing things. I even embraced sustainability practices like buying locally and ethically made clothing.

I am currently thinking of starting a campaign to prevent people from littering in national parks because it disrupts animals in their habitats and is not sustainable.

**Ashley Jayalo,**

**Model Coach**

When I was still a model, before I transitioned to coaching, I contested for Miss Heritage Kenya in 2020. I was struggling to get a project to work on, and after keen research, I identified a gap in that there was a great lack of proper waste disposal systems in Mombasa.

I decided to mobilise my peers for a clean-up exercise and that wasn't enough. We called upon the county government to help.

If we are not careful, we will find ourselves with a really poor waste management system, especially in Mombasa, in the next 30 years.

The impoverished communities need to be educated on how to manage waste through recycling and reusing waste products.

I have been in the modelling scene for six years, but stopped runway modelling as I gravitated towards mentorship and organising pageants.

I am currently working on the BigTree Pageant which is slated for March 30 this year and our theme is Defining The Face Of Service.

We have eight finalists and our goal is to ensure by the time they are on stage, they are individuals who can selflessly serve the society in different capacities.

The beauty of a model can get the attention of people, but what you do afterwards is what will define you. You need to know who you are because without that you will get lost in the noise.

Being a model coach is a journey of self-discovery. When you're a model, you crave the spotlight, but as a model coach, it is never about you, but the young people who look up to you. I purpose to shine a light on them. I want to create opportunities for models and that gives me a lot of fulfillment.

Even in sustainable modelling, there is the issue of marauding event organisers or pageant personnel who may take advantage of young models with the false promise of titles, and this does more harm to the models' integrity and health in the long run.

The fact that anyone can organise a pageant puts models in a risky position, and we are trying to find ways of coming with a regulation to vet everyone who plans to hold or organise a pageant.

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## Faith Akinyi

**Miss Fire Kenya, and entrepreneur in fashion, art and photography sectors**

My area of specialisation is using art to curb pollution. I collect plastic items and use them to make art, which I then sell to an art collector in Italy. I use the money I get to help children in Ngomongo slums where I was born. I am an advocate for less privileged children.

Where I grew up, there were hardly any trees. They had all been cut and used as firewood. My primary school was located right next to the dump site in Korogochi. We used to play there even though it made us get sick. I really wished I could do something about it, and that's what sparked my passion in environmental conservation.

My work revolves around repurposing plastic items alongside tree planting, and that is really good for the environment.

I was a high fashion model, but I had never participated in any pageants until last year when I contested the Miss Earth Kenya competition and won the title. The competition aimed at changing the world even at a small

scale level.

When I was young, I was slim and tall, and everyone used to tell me I would be a model. I didn't have any idea how I would do it since I had grown up in the slums. Luckily, I found a mentor who guided me and helped me get signed by a modelling agency.

I have learnt that there is a lot to modelling than good looks. The industry is accommodative to any physique, but to succeed as a model, you have to be determined, disciplined, and be focused on your goal. You also need to combine it with other income generating activities," she says.

Clinched the Miss Earth Kenya title last year opened my eyes to many possibilities. I am in the process of setting up an organisation to enable me raise funds so I can take on bigger, more sustainable projects.

If we heal the earth, we heal ourselves. The best time to take care of the earth was 20 years ago, because right now it's already ruined. The second-best time is now. We need to do it for the coming generation. That is our responsibility.

This year I plan to work with different stake-

holders to curb pollution, especially waste management in slums. If people can find a way of separating biodegradable refuse from plastic, then I could contribute to ridding our rivers from toxic waste.

I would also like to equip young people in slums with sustainable income generating skills so that they can be financially independent.

## Natasha Mungai, 23

**Veterinary student, Miss Air Kenya**

I am training to be a wildlife veterinarian because I have a passion for wildlife conservation. I chose to be an advocate for animals because they can't speak for themselves.

As Miss Fire Kenya, a title I received last year, whether doing fieldwork, researching on wildlife health, or championing for conservation practices, my goal is to contribute to a harmonious coexistence between humans and wild life.

I strive to make a positive impact on the environment by combining my love for animals with a commitment to sustainability.



## JOBS

## Career lessons we can learn from politics

BY PAUL KARIUKI

Politicians can teach us a few things, even if politics tends to be a game of betrayal. We are conditioned to think politicians hate each other, and we forget that in politics there are no permanent enemies, only permanent interests. Here are a few lessons we can learn from politics.

**Plan or strategise in advance**

Because every race has only one winner, you will always have an opposer. Because you exist together with other qualified individuals in your field, there will certainly come a time when your value to that organisation or office will be called to question, especially when a new face with practical solutions shows up.

Bear in mind that like a politician looking to woo the electorate, a new hire or novice will try to prove to the organisation or the electorate that they are the right bet for that position as they settle down by delivering on time, or beyond expectations. It pays to stay on top of your game always to ensure you don't get swept aside when a newbie comes knocking.

**That seat is not yours**

Nobody is indispensable, not even you, with your loyalty, expertise and wealth of experience. Voters can kick you out or retain you in your position, depending on your performance or how you represent them. It is never your decision to make. Same goes for the position you hold at work. It is not your birthright! Longevity doesn't mean you can't be sent packing or face disciplinary measures.

There's always one who'll outclass you in everything. If your organisation isn't keen on performance appraisals, you may find yourself stagnating in that job position, and a new hire gets a promotion ahead of you. Don't think hanging on the coat tails of the party leader, or the big boss, will save you when the management decides it is time for you to go.

**You can be recalled**

Don't think that because your contract wasn't renewed or the organisation parted ways with you amicably, all is lost. Your successor may prove incompetent, and your performance record will always speak for you when comparisons are drawn. Don't be surprised when organisation takes another look at your file and summons you back. Therefore, don't badmouth your employer just because you got laid off.

**Rebrand and repackage yourself**

It takes time to recover from a sudden exit from an organisation or defeat at the ballot if you haven't prepared yourself. It pays to rebrand and repackage yourself to stay relevant in your career field by upskilling or building connections that can give you stepping stone onto your next job.

## Personality: Nicole Waweru is the president of The Magnetic Toastmasters Club

## With her public speeches, she hopes to help young people overcome self-doubt

BY MARGARET MAINA



Nicole Waweru, 22, is student at Daystar University. PHOTO|POOL

Nicole Waweru, 22, is a Fourth Year public relations and print media student at Daystar University, and the president of The Magnetic Toastmasters Club. She is determined to overcome her shyness and embrace her inner voice, but more importantly, she exemplifies the transformational potential of courage, tenacity, and mentorship. Her journey to the top of the club is not only a narrative of personal development, it is also a journey marked with overcoming obstacles and realising her great potential.

**How did you get into Toastmasters?**

My journey began in February 2022. Seeing my potential and yearning to boost my self-expression capabilities, my mother encouraged me to join Toastmasters International. I wanted to overcome my shyness and make genuine connections with others because I was tired of staying in the shadows. I knew something was wrong when I was unable to even stand in front of my class and give a short 10-minute presentation.

At the club, I was welcomed with open arms by the club's president, who also coached me for my very first Toastmasters icebreaker speech.

**How did your life and perceptions change after that?**

I felt more confident, and threw myself into the club's activities with a great deal of commitment. This resulted in my June 2022 nomination as Vice President of Public Relations, (VPPR).

This made me swell with pride, but I knew I was in good hands. Despite battling imposter syndrome, I took my role enthusiastically and was able to advance my knowledge in public relations, a course I am now studying at Daystar University.

As the vice president, I tried to serve as an example for the other members. With creative communication techniques and constant commitment, I tried to increase the club's awareness and promote a culture of excellence and inclusivity.

I made posters and films and managed the club's social media accounts. It was difficult at first, but with guidance from our Division B Public Relations Manager at the time, I was able to overcome my doubts and succeed.

**What stood out for you in this journey?**

I encountered challenges along the road but I always came out stronger and more determined. I learned the value of resilience because the organisation emphasises accepting failure rather than trying to avoid it as a neces-

sary step toward achievement.

Taking on more than I could handle resulted in a great deal of burnout. At times, I question my decision to take on so much to maintain excellent relationships with individuals.

**What key lessons have you learned so far?**

I discovered the importance of setting priorities for myself and being able to say no when necessary. Learning to truly understand others has proven invaluable, not only in my personal relationships but also in my overall growth and development.

**Tell us about some of your achievements...**

Last year I became the youngest president in District 114 Toastmasters. My motivation to continue in this race was reinforced by the accolades I have earned from Magnetic Toastmasters Club, including the Triple Crown Award, the coveted Overall Magic Winner, and the Club Rotation Trophy Award.

**It must be challenging to lead members who may be older than you, how do you manage to assert your authority?**

I am thankful to have a supportive executive committee (EXCO) that has made the journey incredibly gratifying. Our executive team members have a distinct set of abilities, perspectives, and qualities that they bring to the table, forming a coherent and dynamic leadership group that values collaboration and mutual support. Every member of our team continuously goes above and beyond to ensure the success of our club and the satisfaction of our members, whether it is through the planning of engaging meetings and activities or fostering an inclusive club culture.

**How has your reach and influence grown?**

Upon my nomination I assumed leadership positions in more extensive Toastmasters activities. Serving as the Division A conference's public relations lead in April 2023 was one of the most rewarding moments of my life so far.

I also serve as a features and opinion writer for my school newspaper titled *Involvement*.

**Your future plans?**

I want my narrative to be a source of inspiration and hope for everyone who dares to dream big as I develop into an even more skilled leader and communicator. I want to open doors for people to see their potential and escape the prison of self-doubt with every speech I give.

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