

BUSINESS DAY

WOMEN'S HUB

MAR 19, 2021

From Goldman Sachs to
Evercare Hospital Lekki

TEMI

AWOGBORO knows her stuff



What does **International Women's** month mean to you?



EDITOR'S

NOTE

How are you? We truly mean that in every sense of the word. Please keep safe and guard your mental health as you do your body.

It is still our month as women and we are celebrating all women around the world.

Our cover personality for today is Temi Awogboro, and she certainly knows her stuff. With an extensive background in deal executions, portfolio management, fundraising in developed and growth markets, she keeps raising the bar.

I asked three outstanding women what this month means to them and their responses will whao you!

Nonny Ugboma writes on 'Designing and Implementing Effective Collaborations', Deborah shares on 'Dealing With Special Children (Part 1)', and Osarennoma says 'When you need a break, take a break'

For Biodun DaSilva, 'Without discipline, there'll be no progress.'

Gladys Agwai asks 'Are You Self-Rejecting to Avoid Rejection from Others?'

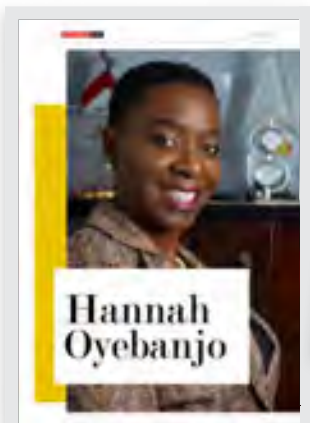
Desmond Okon writes on Marsai Martin, the youngest producer, to begin new Disney show with predominantly Black cast.

Certainly, we have fashion and meals for you to make in the comfort of your home.

Enjoy!

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**From Goldman Sachs to
Evercare Hospital Lekki**

TEMI

AWOGBORO knows her stuff

BY KEMI AJUMOBI

Temi Marcella Awogboro is an investment and operations executive with over 10 years of experience across origination, deal execution, portfolio management, fundraising in developed and growth markets. She currently serves as the Executive Director (Finance, Admin, Strategy) with Evercare Hospital Lekki, wholly owned by the Evercare Health Fund, a US\$ 1 billion emerging markets healthcare fund managed by The Rise Fund, the impact investment platform of global alternative asset manager TPG Capital.

Temi's prior experience spans a range of sectors including healthcare, financial services, manufacturing, and information technology. She has extensive entrepreneurial experience and has been instrumental in building and cultivating disruptive, transformative institutions that will emerge initially as regional champions. Temi started her career at Goldman Sachs International, where she was selected as a GS Global Leaders Scholar and received the GS Global Leaders Award.

Temi has extensive board and committee experience with the Equality Fund Board of Directors, Evercare Hospital Lekki Founding Board Member, Save the Children UK Africa Advisory Board, and Alumni Ventures Group Spike Investment Fund. Temi is a Kauffman Venture Capital Fellow; an African Leadership Institute Tutu Fellow; and previously a World Economic Forum Global Shaper and Alumni Ambassador. She is the recipient of the Future Awards Africa Prize for Professional Service, M&A Advisor's European Emerging Leaders Award and has been recognized as the Female Lead's Top 20 Women under 20; and, Management Today and The Telegraph's 35 Women Under 35 in the UK.

Temi holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Stanford University's Graduate School of Business and Master of Arts (MA) degree with First Class Honors in Economics from Christ's College, the University of Cambridge, where she was a matriculation scholar.



Growing up and influence till date

I am proudly Nigerian with German and Scottish heritage; I was born in Nigeria and raised in the UK. My father was a doctor turned entrepreneur and my mother was a Miss Nigeria beauty queen, tech systems engineer and subsequently joined my father in building the family business. Growing up, I was inspired by the entrepreneurial spirit, work ethic and tenacity of my parents and these influences are intricately woven into the individual and professional I am today.

From a young age, my parents and close family fondly nicknamed me 'Small but mighty' because within my pint-sized package, came mighty aspirations. As I reflect on it, the nickname spoke to the fearlessness with which I embraced life challenges, refusing to be bounded in any dimension from a young age and subsequently pushed me beyond the limits perceived in my mind or externally imposed.

10 years of experience across origination, deal execution, portfolio management, fundraising in developed and growth markets. How was that experience like?

I have more than a decade of experience in finance across developed and growth markets and have lived and worked across 4 continents. After graduating with an MA (Hons) in Economics, from the University of Cambridge, I started my career at Goldman Sachs International, London and subsequently went on to pursue an MBA at Stanford Graduate School of Business before launching my career in private equity.

My ethos in life is based on three p's, purpose, passion and performance. I strive to live a life that is purpose driven, passion filled and performance oriented. This has led me through various unconventional paths but has made for a much richer professional experience. My investment experience spans early-stage venture capital to late-stage private equity across emerging markets and developed markets. In this journey, I have committed over half a billion dollars in capital to tackle pressing challenges on behalf of some of the world's leading global investors across industries including healthcare, financial services, consumer and industrial sectors.

This varied experience has been instrumental and in-

valuable in my journey with Evercare. This journey has taken me across a host of milestones including: the fundraising drive to close the health fund in 2015; working collectively with cross-country teams of investors, advisors and clinical experts to conceptualize the vision for the health ecosystem; leading the origination and execution of strategic assets to actualize this vision; and working with all stakeholders to design, build and implement the teams, systems and processes required to launch Evercare in Nigeria.

In what way have you been building and cultivating disruptive, transformative institutions?

I have always believed in the power of private capital to transform lives and I am passionate about harnessing the potential of impact investment as a catalyst for equitable, inclusive growth that ultimately maximizes human well-being for all while delivering superior financial returns.

I have been privileged to live out this passion through my experience with the Evercare Health Fund from inception and through to my current role at Evercare Hospital Lekki. Evercare's mission is to disrupt and transform traditional healthcare models through strategic investment and the hospital is poised to transform the healthcare landscape in Nigeria. Innovation is at the heart of Evercare's operating model, improving patient experience, promoting better health outcomes, expanding access to care and enabling collaboration across the global platform.

I have also equally driven by my belief in the central role of technology in bridging the gap between emerging and developed nations. I have been uniquely positioned and privileged to operate at the intersection of healthcare, finance, technology and impact. I am deeply committed to investing in and building transformational companies that will emerge as today's regional champions and tomorrow's global challengers. This unique positioning gives me invaluable insights into companies disrupting traditional industries, and at the forefront of paradigm shifts.

Why was Evercare set up in Nigeria? What is it out to achieve? Why the strategic location?

Evercare Hospital Lekki is a 165-bed, purpose-built,



multispecialty tertiary care hospital. The hospital offers care across a range of specialty medical and surgical services. Evercare Hospital Lekki is part of the Evercare Group, which is wholly owned by the Evercare Health Fund, a US \$1bn emerging markets healthcare fund managed by The Rise Fund, the impact investment platform of global alternative asset manager TPG. The Evercare Health Fund is comprised of the world's leading impact investors and global development finance institutions. Evercare Hospital Lekki benefits from the healthcare investing experience of TPG's global team and the impact investing expertise of The Rise Fund.

The decision to enter the Nigerian market is in line with the Evercare Group's core belief that access to quality healthcare is a fundamental right and demonstrates Evercare's belief in the potential of the Nigerian market. Evercare has made a strategic investment to support Nigeria's healthcare sector by providing quality, accessible, specialist health services. The goal is to create a long-term blueprint for the healthcare sector and support the advancement of medical care across Nigeria through first-class healthcare services. The key purpose behind this investment in Nigeria is to expand and accelerate positive societal impact – as improving the health of Nigerian citizens will positively impact the Nigerian economy.

What is it about health care in Nigeria that burdens your heart? Advice the people/govt

I have always believed access to quality healthcare is a fundamental human right. Whilst we have made significant headway over the last few years, there is still a need for significant advancement in Nigeria's healthcare system to enable adequate provision of services required to serve the needs of its large population. Some of the key challenges that continue to plague the Nigerian healthcare sector today include: Insufficient funding at less than 5% of GDP, low health insurance penetration at less than 5%, poor infrastructure, and brain drain resulting in a dearth of qualified personnel. In order to address these issues, convergence of the public and private sector is key.

Much needed interventions include improving access to financing for the sector, restructuring the demand side through risk pooling and demand side aggregation, and enforcing robust quality standards to rebuild trust in healthcare.

What is your take on medical tourism in Nigeria? Is Evercare here to help change the narrative?

Nigeria is one of the top contributors to the global medical tourism spend estimated at US\$1.0-1.5bn annually with an average of 30,000 patients travelling abroad annually for healthcare services. Nigerians are indeed yearning for quality healthcare with excellent clinical outcomes. Evercare seeks to alleviate some of the burden brought on by medical tourism with its world class infrastructure, innovative technology and skilled talent pool. Over time, Evercare seeks to reverse this trend by making Nigeria a destination for inbound medical tourism from across the West Africa region and beyond.

One of the factors contributing to Nigeria's medical tourism is the brain drain. With over 40% physician migration, Nigeria is one of the leading African sources of foreign-born physicians. Evercare is focused on improving the operation of healthcare facilities that fill capacity gaps, meet the full spectrum of Nigerians' medical needs, employ and retain local and critical talents and reduce the need to travel internationally for medical care. Evercare with its purpose-built infrastructure, best in class equipment, and focus on quality metrics that meet international standards is attracting critical medical talent back to Nigeria from the Diaspora, thereby reversing some of the brain drain that plagues the sector.

It is International Women's Month, what is it that you will love women to know?

The election of Kamala Harris as the Vice President of the United States of America was a momentous occasion for me. In her victory speech, the Vice President urged young girls to "Dream with ambition, lead with conviction, and see yourself in a way that others might not see you, simply because they've never seen it before." This resonated profoundly with me as a woman who has often found herself in male-dominated rooms with few allies. What has kept me going over the years, is a deep sense of purpose, an unrelenting tenacity, and an unwavering belief in myself, especially in the face of being underestimated or told no.

My message to women everywhere this International Women's Month is that you are powerful beyond measure and your voice matters. Do, do not feel less entitled, expect more, take up more space and de-

mand more, be bold in challenging the status quo. Finally, teach your girls to embrace a world of possibilities, to be proud of their ambition, regardless of their gender, send them a clear message that they can be whoever they chose to be, and applaud them every step of the way. This IWD, I re-affirmed my commitment to continuing to challenge inequality, to subvert the status quo, and to mobilize capital to forge an inclusive world.

In what way are you involved in contributing your quota (Evercare) to ease the fatalities and challenges of COVID?

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the case for the much-needed evolution of our healthcare ecosystems on the African continent and illustrated the importance of technology in accessible and quality healthcare delivery.

The burden of COVID-19 accelerated the need for innovations to improve the way healthcare is delivered. Evercare was at the forefront of this, launching its "Ecare" telemedicine platform in 2020 to provide access to specialist doctors in the height of the pandemic. We strongly believe Nigeria and Africa more broadly has the potential to leapfrog other markets, delivering a more personalised and integrated healthcare experience to patients, enhance provider productivity, and improve outcomes and accessibility.

Furthermore, in response to the need for greater testing capacity, Evercare accelerated the completion of a standalone Laboratory with COVID-19 PCR testing capabilities in Ikeja. This lab will benefit from the extensive COVID-19 testing experience across Evercare group, which includes the largest diagnostic network in Pakistan with over 75 diagnostic centers, which established COVID-19 PCR testing facilities (including drive through sample collection for patient safety) across the country. Evercare also intends to play a strategic role in the future to support initiatives around the administering of COVID-19 vaccines.

Advice to everyone, especially those who do not believe or are living carefree

The health and wellbeing of our community remains a key priority. The COVID-19 pandemic is real.

Please take precautions and ensure you follow the government guidelines. Everyone has a role to play, every symptom checked, every test booked, every mask worn counts in the fight against the spread of COVID-19 so please do your part for your fellow Nigerian citizens.

Personal and professional challenges

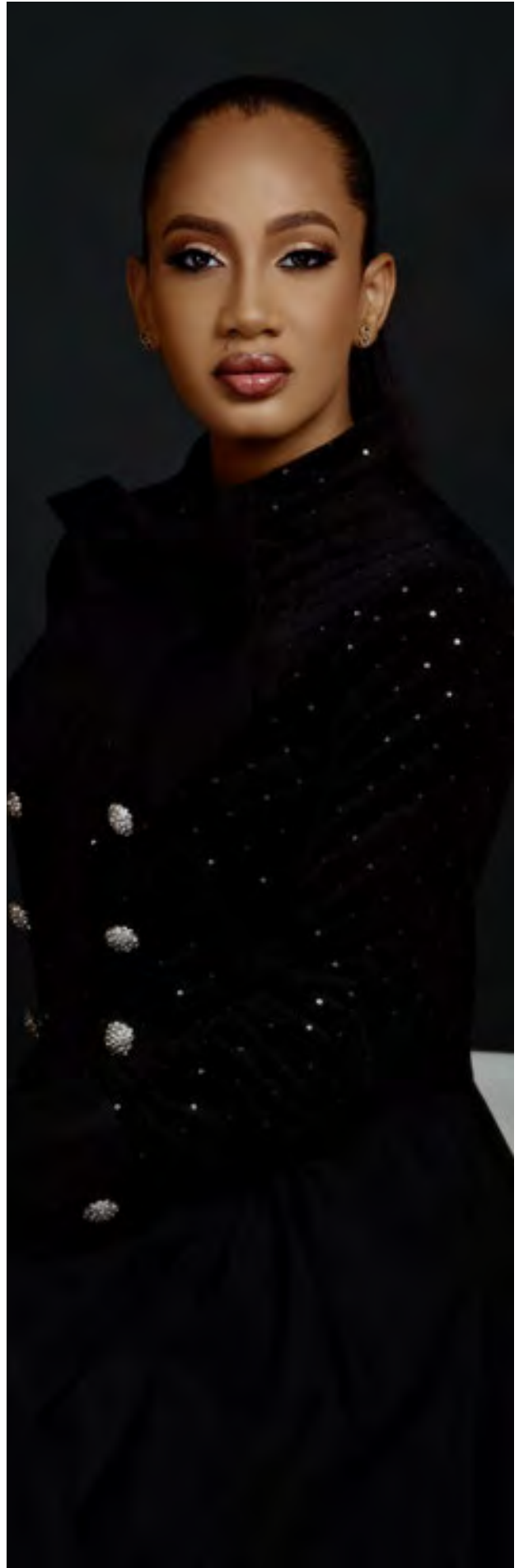
I have faced a host of personal and professional challenges: navigating my first job at the epicenter of the global financial crisis, encountering significant resistance trying to break into private equity, navigating the lonely path as a woman rising the ranks in male dominated industries and juggling the demands of being a present and invested mother to 2 toddlers, while managing my professional commitments.

In order to deal with these challenges, I have conditioned my mind to adopt a growth mindset, with this framing, challenges become exciting rather than threatening. As a matter of fact, the bigger the challenge, the bigger the opportunity for growth. This has been borne out in reality as the challenges I have faced have coincided with my greatest periods of personal growth.

I have trained myself to feel the fear, and do it anyway, to see challenges as the doors to success and perceived failure as an invaluable part of life's journey. Failure for me, is an unavoidable part of living a limitless life. I continue on my journey not focused on pursuit of perfection but led by the voices of those who christened me 'Small but mighty'. They challenge me to create and compete; to build and nurture; to take risks and leave my legacy.

Day never to be forgotten and why

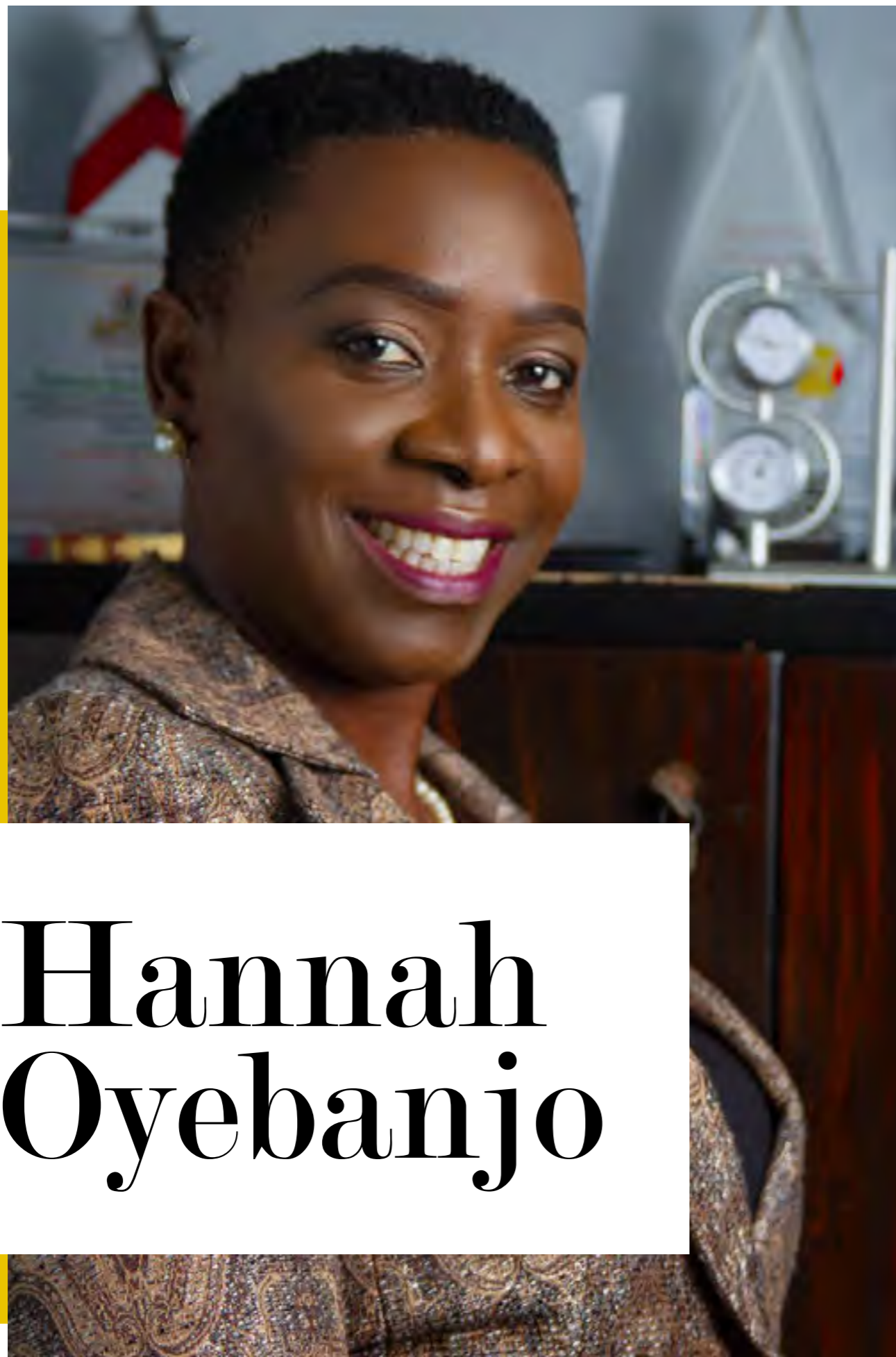
The birth of my first daughter is forever ingrained in my memory. Within a matter of seconds we went from elation to terror as I realized she was not breathing the moment I held her. I remember very little from the time the hospital alarm went off and three doctors yanked her away, all I know is those minutes felt like a lifetime. This moment in time re-affirmed my conviction and commitment to transforming healthcare.





WHAT DOES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH MEAN TO YOU?

KEMI AJUMOBI



Hannah Oyebanjo

Oyebanjo (MCIM, FISMN) is the CEO Nigeria, the Republicom Group, an Integrated Marketing Communications group. She is also the Managing Director at Redwood Consulting; an outsourced marketing outfit based out of Lagos, Nigeria. Their services include Research, PR, Consulting on Strategy, Sales & Marketing and so on. She is on the board of Pathfinda

What does International Women's Month mean to you?

It's a reawakening month for me. It's a reminder, a month that just reminds me that 'hey, you have to help a girl out there. You've been doing that but help a girl' because there are so many women and girls who are seeking who to help them. So, this month for me is a reminder.

Secondly, it's a reminder that all things are possible. No one would ever have thought that I would rise in career, become a director, own a business because of my pedigree. It's a reminder that as a woman, you can tell your story, you can write your script. It's a reminder that as a woman, you can break all the ceilings and get to the highest peak possible. It's just reminder of possibilities for women, that's what it is.

It's a reminder that every woman there, you've got something in you, your work is waiting for you to share and showcase. International Women's Day reminds me to go forth and encourage a lot more women and let them get into their destinies.

Share how you soared above challenges

In the days of my active career, there were moments that I was the only girl in the meeting. To start with, I always acted like I was a male. My father didn't have a boy child early, so, he treated me like a boy and kept on telling me that you can do everything that a boy can do. With that, I never thought I was different from the male. Therefore, in career, it was the same attitude. So, it's very important, if you're going to get in there, you must be sure of who you are, nobody should treat you funny because you're a female, there are certain things you can't do but you can do anything legit, anything of value, anything of repute.

Secondly, lifestyle is very important. Your conduct as a girl in the corporate world is very important. Once you start meddling up, getting in certain terrain with some of the men in or without the establishment, it's going to rob you off negatively. Thirdly, you've got to know what you're doing, if you're a girl, lady, where you are, especially in career, please, don't be too gentle. Don't be too quiet because quietness can mean you don't know what is happening and it can rob you off negatively. You have to be active, alive, present by your contributions and comments.

So, mentally, you've got to continue to stretch, and that way, the men will respect you.

Pulling women down/women supporting women. Have you seen either?

Have I been where women pull me down? To be honest, No. That's because there are things I choose not to see. My life is into different strata, I'm a pastor's wife, I'm a pastor, I'm a career person, I'm a mother, I'm a mentor, I am a role model, I train, and teach, so there are things I choose not to see, or hear. What that does is that it keeps me on the radar going. So, will I say women haven't pulled me down? The answer will be "not necessarily" or I just did not see it or I chose not to see it. I didn't notice it or chose not to reckon with it.

But women pulling women up, that's where I am. Three women have done so much for me in my life, especially when I was transiting from career to business, and these were three ladies who were in career themselves. We were peers in career. When I left career to set up my business, these ladies were of immense help. These are women raising women. One of them told me, "I know you can

do recruitment, I know you can help other people, would you come and train my team and recruit for all the positions?" The first million I made in business, came from this lady who was the head of operations and managing director then, and she didn't ask for a farthing. But now, things have changed. She's in a position where I am helping her. So, we should continue to help other women because tables do turn, tomorrow you will need me...men help themselves.

Promotion for women spikes

I think the pandemic is a game-changer. I think because families had to stay together at home, the need to empower the woman has been elevated and I think that staying at home also opened women up off their shells, the voices are stronger now because of social media unlike before. I think all of that is throwing up the agenda that says, give women a chance and all that. I also think the development goals that tend to have been slowed over the years, having women occupy certain international roles is also opening us up. We need to keep it going so that it gathers a lot momentum.

Your event

We just concluded the women networking conference. I have had women come to me through groups to say, we need to network more, we need to learn from older women, and we also need to chair—peer-to-peer learning. That clamouring for more gathering where women who are experienced can intermingle with the younger or older became strong. Then I said okay, March will be a perfect time to do that. This conference was completely free and over 200 women registered. Women in start-ups, SMEs, large conglomerates, and women in career. We also had top-rated speakers.



Mariam Momodu

Mariam Momodu is a Lawyer and Doctoral Candidate at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Law. She specializes in international trade law and law and development. In her doctoral thesis, she re-evaluates economic integration in Africa through the lenses of bottom-up economic integration—specifically, how private regulation by non-state actors can facilitate trade within Africa.

What does International Women's Month mean to you?

When I was growing up, I thought being a woman was a disadvantage and if anybody asked me if I'll be a woman or a man when I come back to this world again, I think I would have said I wanted to be a man because of what was prevalent around me. The powerful people were men, the people who had wealth were men, Those who had influence were men, the leaders were men, and it seemed like as a woman, you're trying to be more than you were destined to be when you asked for more.

But days like International Women's Day (IWD), over the past few years has changed the narrative and has begun to show women they can achieve if they believe. If I had this kind of recent happenings back then, I wouldn't have had that mindset. I would have known that it's possible to grow, and for women to own the stage. I think social media has helped to amplify these stories.

So, IWD is an opportunity to see the women who are doing well, and to see how they can inspire others. It's also an opportunity for me to inspire the young women coming behind to see that being a woman is not a disadvantage. We have so much innate strength: strategy skills, organizational skills, selling skills, that we should not be afraid to own and to share.

One of the key things about International Women's Month for me is also empowering women to speak up and share their stories. It's alright to brag about yourself, put your name out there because if you don't do that, how would people know that you exist? Nobody is going to start speaking about you until you start speaking about yourself.

IWD is such a fantastic opportunity for even the women who are shy, who feel like they haven't done much, they can use that one day to celebrate themselves and begin to grow. It's just to celebrate women and change mindsets that being a woman is a disadvantage because it is not true.

Ever been in a position where you were not considered?

I usually put myself out in situations where I am challenged, to take up tasks where it might be difficult. I have never been passed over, but I have seen situations where

it seems like you're not invited to that table. If you're an employer, don't decide for the women; don't calculate their biological clock for them when you're deciding who is going to take on a project. Give them the opportunity for them to do the work and let them decide if it makes sense for them to do it or not. What I have experienced is that sometimes, one can be underrated. For instance, someone doing a PhD in a developed country where there are some adjusting to do, and the quality of your work counts, you need to catch up.

One thing I always say is that, it's okay for people to underestimate you, don't quarrel with them. But let your results show that you're not the type to be underrated.

Sometimes, we do get underrated and sometimes you have to judge whether it's even worth your energy fighting in that place. It's best we thrive in a place that believes in us, you might decide to move to a place that believes in you or find a way to prove to them that you're really worth who you say you are.

Lots of promotion for women in recent times

I have a bit of a contrary view about this. It's a good thing. I love seeing women being promoted, but what I want to say is that there's a culture of bringing women, especially black women to clean up other people's messes, and I think that we need to recognize it and call it out.

So, we see a situation where there has been a crisis and the next thing that happens is that a Black woman is promoted into that position, a position that she probably had the capability to lead for a long time.

I think that it is mindful for organisations to note when they're doing that and it's also important for us to call them out because what that means is that, sometimes, those women are being set up for failure, but because we have 'Black Girl Magic', somehow we make it work.

However, let us bear it in mind that we don't promote women or put them in a position of leadership when you've messed up. Don't call us to clean up your mess.

Call us because we deserve that position, we've worked for it, and have grown into it. I want to see more of these promotions but not to clean up messes.



Cynthia Mosunmola Umoru

Mosunmola is an Agribusiness Entrepreneur and Industry thought leader. She is a woman extremely passionate about food, farming and the community. She has a Bachelors degree in Zoology from the Lagos State University, Nigeria. She has served as a youth consultant ambassador and advocate to the African Union Commission (Youth Division). She is the Founder and Chief Realisation Officer, of Honeysuckles PTL Ventures, which engages principally in farming, food production, processing and distribution of a wide range of products, which works with a subsidiary arm, Farmshoppe TM, a retail store for freshly processed farm produce.

What does International Women's Month mean to you?

Every year, it's different and it's becoming more interesting. With all of the celebrations of international women's month and black history month, it is truly significant. For instance, in the US, it's a big deal for them to celebrate Black History month,

Generally speaking, the fact that women have evolved from just being home makers to now becoming leaders and change agents in the society at large is admirable.

Also, the recognition that they now begin to give to women who have charted certain courses, who have led certain change agendas within the society, who have not been conformist but aggressive enough to drive change at whatever level, is truly commendable.

I began to appreciate it more, to recognize that women are just phenomenal beings, they're just all-encompassing and so for me, March has become the month where there is a lot of reflection and celebration, all entwined in one. I don't think we're celebrating women enough.

When a woman is down, that tends to be magnified, but when a woman is happy, and cheerful, that is usually underscored.

March has suddenly become that month where I want to hang out for tea with my girls, I want to have a cook out with my girls, I want to be a lot more loving. I don't want to wait till it's my birth month to start celebrating other girls. I'm now beginning to appreciate it. So, last year, it was different, we were just enjoying it and then we transitioned into COVID.

This year, I had just come out of a big grief so, it's been a month of reflection for me, and it's been a month I have shown a lot more girls care, empathy, love and support. I've been a lot more patient,

intentional about living and deliberate about investing in other girls.

I've been a lot more humane to see that there are women like me, they may not have had the kind of opportunity that life has shown me, can I be that opportunity and door that they can walk through to find their own opportunity? Can they ride on my shoulder because I've risen on the shoulders of many giants in women form?

There are young ladies that are going through a whole lot. What would you tell them?

I think that the beauty is for everyone to own their own journey. So, I will always say every woman should enjoy where she is on her way to where she is going. Society tends to put a lot of pressure on girls, there's the pressure to marry. There's pressure to give birth to children, there's the pressure not to want to be you, there are so many issues girls deal with. From body shaming to skin colour, just enjoy where you are and be deliberate about living your life.

There's pressure and there's pain and it's a reality we have to deal with, but the only thing that can stop you from being the best version of you is you. And you owe it to yourself to do you. Do life on your own terms. Learn from other women and men alike, older people, people who succeeded. Let every girl get busy and whatever your hands find to do, do it with all diligence.

Everyone wants to succeed but nobody wants to pay the price for success. I'm ready to pay the price now so that later. I can reap the rewards of hard work, diligence and commitment. And that's one thing that this generation is beginning to lose.

There's plenty of time to spend money,

make the money first. But be sure that you're making it legitimately because if it's from an illegitimate source, it will go as quickly as it came, or it would leave you worse off than you were.

So, be very clear about what you want from life, life will deal with you, the way you deal with life. Therefore, if you want to be dubious and fraudulent, life will cheat you big time when the time comes, but if you're consistent, focused and committed to what your hands find to do, regardless of how small it is from the early stage, weeping may endure for a moment and joy comes in the morning.

Let us all find something. Volunteering is something, don't say you're unemployed, you can't find a job. There are job opportunities everywhere. Cease the opportunity.

I recently became a consultant and coach, if you're a business owner or entrepreneur and looking to start or you do not know how to join the economy, we have what we call the employ module, start the module, scale and create modules. I am lead facilitator on the employ module.

My priority is to show you three routes to joining the economy again. You can join as an entrepreneur, a self-employed person or as an employee. I love the employee category because you're able to add more value. As an entrepreneur, you carry the entry burden more.

So, I tell young people, why are you in a hurry to carry that burden when you don't have a solid foundation? Build your foundation in employment first, that's one I think I missed out on and I went to look for it as I grew older.

Working in a structure led environment gives you a certain type of discipline and exposure than going on a solo entrepreneur journey you're not prepared for.



OOPS! I DID IT AGAIN AND YES, IT WAS NO FLUKE.....

Impostor syndrome (2)

IFEOMA WILLIAMS

As we continue to explore the impostor syndrome, we must bear in mind that communication is where it all lies. Most importantly, to reiterate and reconnect with the first part of the series, it is important to reflect on our “self-talk”. What do you say to yourself even when no one is listening? How you see yourself is what truly reflects on how everyone around you perceives you.

We had stated in the first part of these series on impostor syndrome, that a great way to overcome the impostor syndrome is to understand and apply the confidence cycle.

Our first step is to acknowledge our achievements and celebrate them, devoid of ego and over confidence. That is a willingness to learn the basic acceptance that true intelligence is about learning, unlearning and re-learning.

The second step is to study and understand our feelings and the triggers to those feelings. This way, we begin to identify and understand our feelings, particularly when self-doubt or “imposter feelings” attempt to take over. We soon realise that it is simply a vicious cycle that beats down our confidence further, if we allow it to fester and not properly deal with these feelings. Unfortunately, some people are permanently in this vicious cycle.

In practice to begin with, we need to stop being ruled by our feelings. We must accept that feelings are always the last to change in the confidence cycle.

Secondly, we need to intervene at the DO or THINK stage, depending on the situation and person. For example, an executive I coached on raising her leadership presence and voice, started with the DO. It happened that other leaders often interrupted and spoke over her at the 99% male management team meetings.

Due to impostor syndrome, she usually kept quiet. Going forward, whenever anyone took over what she was saying, she waited for them to finish and asked, “May I please finish now?” Sometimes, she stopped their interruptions saying “If you could kindly let me make the point.” Within five meetings, other leaders stopped speaking over her and listened. She learnt to hold her own and command the room.

Another coaching client's impostor syndrome showed up in him not taking appropriate risks or asking for opportunities, for fear of rejection, due to the feeling of inadequacy. As a Black director, he often thought “What if I am here to make up the numbers?”

This resulted in him playing it safe. He started to dispute this faulty thinking using evidence-based thinking. For instance, he accepted the fact that he was making as much or more money than his peers, even those that had been promoted ahead of him to managing director level. For the simple reason that he was able and qualified for his role, which trumped the race argument, he gradually became better and over time, he started speaking up, taking appropriate risks and began enjoying his rewards.

The final step is to stick with it. Overcoming impostor syndrome is not easy, it can be a sticky habit to break. It takes present mindedness, reflection, courage, discipline and consistency. The clients above were persistent in spite of their feelings, until it became comfortable.

The philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote: “The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of

themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts.” Whether on a local or global level, the problems we face requires the best people to step up.

Once we study ourselves closely, we begin to understand our strengths, weaknesses and triggers. This enables better identification as we study ourselves to know what works best and then follow it with successful implementation. Effective communication is really at the centre of it all.

See you soon and please drop a line to let me know how you are getting along!



IFEOMA O.E. WILLIAMS

Executive, Leadership & Civility Coach | Speaker | Author | Corporate Trainer | Image Consultant.

Ifeoma is a communications and Influence hypnotist!

She can coach you to convince anyone to do your bidding in just about any situation, by letting you in on the best kept secrets of effective communications that readily engages and converts your target audience successfully, with your intended message, through her A.B.C.D model; an acronym for Appearance, Body Language/Behaviour, Communication [Verbal] and Digital Presence. This Project could be anything from sales, convincing a panel at a job interview, even to winning a presidential election. Working with Ifeoma will ensure that you wield maximum influence in your chosen sphere.

A Lawyer, accomplished image enhancement, media, personal- brand coach and is successfully identified as one of Nigeria's leading effective communications experts; A public speaker of note across Africa. A seasoned trainer in diverse discourse, as well as a leadership and executive coach with the world's no. 1 Leadership thinker and executive coaching organization- Marshall Goldsmith.

Ifeoma is Principal at The Civility Institute of Nigeria; A Wholesome Communications, Life Skills Development & Brands Company with multiple expressions.

She has built top-performing teams, across Africa. She has succeeded in honing c-suite executives, transforming mindsets and building great teams in both the private and public sectors, with ready testimonials on hand.

Without discipline, there'll be no progress

BY BIODUN DA-SILVA



Take a moment to imagine the world without any form of governance or a company without policy or restrictions. Can you imagine a country without any ruler, limitations, constitution or democracy?

A country where everyone does whatever they wish to do at the time they want to do it. Obviously, there will be chaos, anarchy and confusion. Essentially, there will be no definition on earth and there won't be any regard for time and every other element that adds value to our lives.

Same thing applies to every human life. When we wake up in the morning, our day has no meaning or definition. We give our day meaning by planning every detail of our activities for that day or the days prior.

Our activities determine how we utilise our time. We can do a lot or get a lot done; it's completely up to us. Our life is measured in time and we have 24hrs in a day. We make every day count by filling it with productive activities. To ensure our undertakings are fertile, we must be intentional about making the most of our 24hrs.

An undisciplined person can be likened to a world or a country without a ruler or constitution that sets guidelines on how to function effectively. Such a person is a ship without a sailor and a ship that has no captain to guide the ship or find a direction that'll lead to his destination.

A ship without a captain will not only not arrive at its destination, it will get destroyed by turbulence. An undisciplined person's life is characterised by failures, disappointments, laziness, regrets, irresponsibility and isn't respected in the society. Such a person wakes up in the morning without a definitive course of action or a set plan for the day.

Sometimes, it is hard to understand the meaning of our lives. For example, when I was born, neither I nor my parent had a premonition that I'll become an entrepreneur. My whole life was in front of me yet no set course or manual to navigate life. As I began to grow, my consciousness started to grow, my sense of awareness increased.

I got educated to expand my knowledge and I start to understand right from wrong. I also began to understand the differences between all the choices of careers that were available. Education, my life's experiences, and all the decisions that I have made led me up to the point where I am at this time. Nobody has a chart of life, we all learn as we go and to stay committed to the journey, discipline is an important ingredient.

We give our lives meaning through our decisions, choices and through effective and actionable planning. If you want to be successful, you'd have to plan for it. Success is a destination and to get there, you must be willing to adhere to its guidelines. A successful person is a disciplined person. You can know what a man will become just by studying how disciplined, efficient, committed and organised he is towards his work and life.

Discipline ensures you stay grounded, sets a limit for you, helps you follow and understand the rules that'll lead to your destination. When you live a life of discipline, you'll go through life with little or no hitch. You'll be respected and build dependability, and that will add a new dimension to your personality.

To ensure a peaceful, healthy and successful life, you must embrace discipline and apply it to every areas of your life. Life without discipline is no life. The most important lesson to learn is to know your limitations. What you will stand and not stand for, to apply a reasonable amount of discipline to every decision and

choices you make. When discipline drives your decisions, you'll not live a life of regret.

To be successful, you must be disciplined. To be financially independent, you must be disciplined in how you handle your finances. There's no enterprise without discipline. Most importantly, you'll need discipline to overcome the challenges of life and navigate them successfully.

Final note, there is no progress without discipline!



Biodun Da-Silva is a writer, a columnist, an entrepreneur and a Humanitarian. She was born and raised in Lagos, but originally from Abeokuta, Ogun state Nigeria. She is a licensed manufacturer, a wholesaler, a certified food manager, handler and the President of Business Development for Masidas Enterprise LLC. A Limited Liability Company, registered in the State of Texas in 2019, which specialises in the manufacturing, importation, wholesaling and distribution of African food products and clothings sourced from various countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa Region. She is an ardent investor with interests in real estate and stock investment respectively. She is a domestic violence advocate and a proud feminist.

ARE YOU SELF-REJECTING TO AVOID REJECTION FROM OTHERS?

BY GLADYS AGWAI



“There are plenty of places where you will face rejection...the mirror should not be one of them.” N.R. Shepherd

“**T**hey probably won't like my proposal.” “I will never be good enough to get that promotion.” “They will never accept me in that school.” “No one will ever pay me that much.” “It is not my best work. I shouldn't submit it.” “They will find some excuse not to give me what I deserve.” “I won't ever qualify for that loan to start my business or get my home or get into that school.” “I can't start a business.” “I want to get married but he will never propose. I am too fat/ugly.” “I don't have enough experience to go after that position.” “That executive will never want to mentor me.” “They will never give a woman that level of responsibility.” “I really want to go after this client. But my business is too new.” “What will others think of me if I quit?” “They won't buy into my vision” “What if I fail?” These are all self-rejecting quiet thoughts that turn into actions that will have a significantly negative impact on your life, business, or career. During a coaching session with a new client, I looked up and saw tears streaming down her face. She was choking on her tears until she could not hold back. She burst into a loud cry! I did not interrupt her moment because she had been choking back tears for far too long. Once she had calmed, she said that she was fired from her job

a while ago and was scared that “no one would hire her because she was fired”. She had told no one! Not even her husband. She only looked for opportunities that were below her skill and experience level. She was miserable and burdened carrying around all the weight of self-rejection to avoid being rejected! What are your self-rejecting thoughts?

Self-rejection is a form of self-sabotage. It typically occurs after you convince yourself you are not good enough, worthy, or capable. You believe that you lack the desire or cannot persevere to reach your goals. Your belief system around these mind viruses will determine if you propel yourself forward or hold yourself back. You begin to dwell more than usual on your failures and flaws whether big or small. You then progress thinking your downfalls mean you are not cut out for success. As a result, you do not even try. You may think self-rejecting thoughts and behaviors only impact you. They do not. Those within your circles of influence are also impacted. They are impacted because you are not modeling the right way for them to follow.

Your internal signals of emotional anxiety (sadness, frustration, anger, shame, guilt) and physical anxiety (stomach churning, blood pressure rising, heart rate increasing, or headaches) always comes up during moments you

do not like. You dare to want to step outside of your comfort zone with these quiet thoughts and feelings that something is just not right. You know you want and deserve better, but those self-rejecting thoughts keep you immobilized. You then choose to act based on what someone else wants or dictates for you to then be miserable. All is to satisfy your powerful human need to belong. Do not become numb to these signals. It is important that you do not believe everything you think but believe ‘everything’ you feel. It is telling you to act!

During this period of uncertainty, it is difficult to understand if you are judging the situation based on merit or fear. Too often you do not even realize you are the culprit of your own demise because you are too close to the situation. You must put distance between self-rejection and self-criticism, between judging and pre-judging to have clarity to make right decisions.

Below are some of the common signals that you are self-rejecting:

- Constant feelings of inadequacy and inferiority.
- Regularly comparing yourself to other people.
- Patterns of unworthiness with irritability (perfectionism, anger, overbearing).
- Self-image issues (shy, pas-

sive).

- Lying to hide defects and weaknesses.
- Neglect key responsibilities and priorities.
- Extravagant spending to gain acceptance/admiration.
- Give off sense of superiority when underneath feels inferior.
- Difficulty receiving love from others or giving love.
- Addiction to food, drugs, alcohol, TV, sex, internet (often hidden ones) with self-isolation.

Too many people believe other people are responsible for making them feel safe and worthy. Your parents had this responsibility when younger. However, as an adult the responsibility is now yours to give yourself the loving attention and approval needed to know your worth unapologetically. Even if you are highly regarded, respected, and loved, and you are rejecting yourself in the ways mentioned, you will not feel and will miss the regard others want to give to you. You must address the pain you are feeling which includes seeking the support needed.

Can you avoid self-rejection? No! But you can ensure you do not dwell in it to your detriment. How?

1. Acknowledge and accept that rejection is normal. You are not alone.
2. Forgive yourself for doubting you and your abilities. Forgive others who doubt you.
3. Know the good (personal and professional) that is within you. Say the good out loud when self-rejecting. Disrupt that negative pattern.
4. Understand your strengths/weaknesses. Know where you are, where you want to be, and your personal and professional gaps to achieve your goals. Know what you are willing to sacrifice. Close your gaps.
5. Expect the better that is to come. Take the appropriate action to be better.

Take ownership and lead with the fact that change is inevitable, the need for change exists, and with

change, rejection and self-rejection will follow. It is just a fact! However, when you understand rejection and self-rejection and use it to your advantage, you will live an overall BETTER life that is filled with more money, freedom, and fun all with less stress!

“Rejection is a gift, a golden opportunity for self-love.” Tal Gur



Gladys Agwai spent 30 years as a corporate executive leader within IBM in the US, Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. Her leadership experiences spanned across multiple functional areas, such as, Sales, Marketing, Financial, and Operations, key industries in Public Sector, Banking, Telecommunications, and Small Medium Enterprises, and cultures. She received multiple top leadership and sales awards throughout her career. She was sought out for an IBM Executive Loan program where she spent seven years working with the Committee for the Olympic Games with game changing thought leadership on its resource strategy that was implemented for future Olympic games. She is the Founder & CEO of Ignite Within.

Gladys Agwai can be reached at ignite-within.org.

Designing and Implementing Effective Collaborations

BY NONNY UGBOMA



In my last article, I wrote about disaster management solutions arising from my speaking session at Ehingbeti: Lagos Economic Summit 2021. Another question that I addressed was the critical success factors required for the implementation of effective collaborative models in Lagos State to solve societal problems.

To start off, one must commend the government of Lagos State for setting the direction with its THEMES agenda, which maps out its developmental areas of priority as well as for forming partnerships with different organisations in the private sector and other sectors, in the spirit of SDG 17. One will argue that a collaborative approach to problem solving ensures that implemented solutions are sustainable.

Still, in implementing sustainable collaboration models from a design point of view, it is recommended that the state follows a human centred design approach when designing public services and policies to enable the creation of social and environmental value and not just economic value. This approach involves not just bringing public and private sectors together but involving citizens and users/recipients of the services in the design of solutions especially YOUNG PEOPLE, to ensure that we have a more INCLUSIVE SOCIETY and to reduce the gap between the HAVES and HAVE NOTS. This will provide the state with better understanding of the actual needs, challenges and requirements of the people of Lagos State in order to provide good quality and relevant services that meet those needs.

The human centred design approach will also allow trust to be built with citizens as partnerships will be formed; people will feel that they are actively involved in coming up with solutions to solve problems and not only being informed or consulted. The fact is that active involvement and participation enables co-creation of viable bottom-up and cross-sectoral solutions not just imposed top-down answers.

Ultimately, this approach will facilitate the design of interventions based on actual needs and not assumed requirements. It will also allow resources to be applied, without waste.

However, in order for this to work in solving societal challenges, three things need to be in place according to Alexander Lau and team from the Singaporean Prime Minister's office in their paper titled Design-led Innovation in the Singapore Public Service.

The first is the need for empathy towards all stakeholders. This entails the state knowing and understanding, without making assumptions, where all the relevant stakeholders are coming from- their needs

and concerns as well as their roles and responsibilities in resolving the problem being considered. This is an essential element for this approach to policy and service design.

Secondly, there must be strong willingness to work collaboratively. Lagos state is already excelling in this area with the various strategic partnerships with other organisations. This willingness to collaborate should now be extended to include users, recipients of services and citizens who are affected by the policies to ensure more viable and sustainable solutions that create social, environmental and economic value for the state.

The third prerequisite is that there needs to be willingness to experiment, to try new ideas and test assumptions with the different stakeholders involved in the design process. This is particularly important because having different stakeholders involved will allow for multiple viable options to be formulated, before final selections are made. Although, critics might argue that this approach could be costly and time consuming, nevertheless, it is still better to pay more and spend more time at the beginning when the problem is manageable rather than implementing non-viable solutions that are subsequently discarded. After all, the right stitch in time saves numerous more in the future!



Nonny Ugboma is an enthusiastic and experienced Director and Executive Secretary of MTN Nigeria Foundation. Her history of excellence in social development, corporate social responsibility, public policy, stakeholder and relationship and project management, have allowed her to effectively collaborate with governments, executive committees, board members, communities, and other key stakeholders. With past experience as a business and financial analyst in the high tech and telecoms industry, she meets professional challenges with unique abilities and thoroughly enjoys solving problems in innovative ways.

Dealing with Special Children

(Part 1)

BY LONGJOHN DEBORAH



“**S**he's special”. “No, my child is not special”. “Madam please calm down, her condition is not a death sentence”. “My daughter has no condition, she's just being misunderstood. How can you stand there and boldly tell me that my child is not like every other person; that she needs special attention and should be sent to a special school? What do you want my friends to say? How do you want the society to see me and my family? So are you insinuating that madness runs in my family?” “Ha, madam I'm sorry if that's what you're thinking, I can't insinuate such. I never meant to, if I did. All I'm saying is that if we keep denying the fact that Lauren isn't exactly like everyone, she can't be helped. How would you feel knowing that you could have made your daughter's life better but didn't because of shame and pride? How can you allow what you think people would say affect the life and future of your daughter? Why do so many people think that having a special condition implies madness?”

Since when did a special condition become a disease so strong that we're even ashamed to identify with the fact that one of our own might just have the condition? As I sat there and listened, all these and more kept flying. The verbal war between my Mom and the doctor continued. I couldn't for sure tell what exactly the matter was because I could barely understand the condition the doctor talked about; but these were times I wished my Dad was around. Even if he doesn't do anything, I was certain he won't let Mom talk this long and by shortening her speech, he would have bought me some time to go eat; God I'm starving!

Growing up in a family of intellectuals was one of the hardest things ever. Everything is checked and debated before considered and accepted. Meanings are read to virtually everything, even harmless occurrences that did nobody any wrong. You're having a headache in the morning...you'll hear things like “no that's not normal, don't you think it's a rare case of brain tumour?” Huh? I think being overly informed could

sometimes pose a threat to one living a normal life. Don't get me wrong, I'm not running an ignorance campaign, I'm just saying that not knowing that much could sometimes be a blessing in disguise.

Please allow me introduce you to my family. I am the 5th child of Prof. and Prof (Mrs) Jones. Rumour (and by rumour I mean my older siblings) has it that I wasn't planned. My immediate elder brother is 8years older than me. Now, this could have been a normal case if they all were that spaced but that wasn't the case.

The other four children were about 2years older than each other. The maximum age gap was between my 1st older brother and my second older sister (the second and third children of the house), and that's 2years and 10months whereas the others had records of a year 11months and 2years 1month. Hope you now see why my 8years was a serious matter. Being the youngest in such sibling arrangement came with its pros and cons, which could sometimes be overwhelming. But, if my only challenge as a human was the age difference between my siblings and I, then we wouldn't be having this talk. There was more, and that more is why I'm here.

Growing up I realised I wasn't the same with my classmates. When questions were asked, it took me forever to remember the answer. For a child that had professors as parents and siblings with genius IQs, one would expect me to be exceptional because of all the help I'll be getting from them. Being the last child meant I had everyone's attention. Maybe not my immediate elder brother since I rudely yanked off the office of last born from him; he had difficulties accepting the fact that I was actually existing and I'm sure he silently wished I was some kid that came for holidays and would be returning soon; but since that wasn't happening, we were stuck and it took him time to accept and adjust.

Because of the constant complains from my school, my parents hired a home tutor to help out. They believed I was having troubles blending with the

public since I was homeschooled until I turned 7. At first, my family felt since I'm growing up amongst near grown-ups, I was having difficulties being a kid and existing normally as a kid.

But I don't think that was the case. I was introduced to reading at a very early age so everyone believed I was going to be the one to skyrocket the genius record in the house and my parents couldn't wait for it to happen; that's why they got me homeschooled first so that they can closely monitor my progress and lay the right foundations before I'm plunged into the real world called school. So, my lack of understanding wasn't just a personal or family matter, it became a global pandemic because my extended family in diaspora got involved! But I just do not understand, or do I have a special condition that needs special attention? And why didn't my foundational home tutor notice? Or did she notice and decided to kept mute?



LongJohn Deborah A. is from Bonny, Rivers state. She is a Teen mentor and an Emotional Intelligence enthusiast. She is passionate about the next generation and is always elated whenever she gets any opportunity to share life changing experiences with teenagers. She believes she is blessed to bless others and her greatest goal in life is to live an impactful life and leave a lasting legacy when she exits this world.

WHEN YOU NEED A BREAK, TAKE A BREAK

BY OSARENOMA OGBEIDE



I don't know if it's just me, but times and things are going pretty fast, maybe faster than we planned. We're tossed with news here and there and forced to adjust to certain uncertainties just so we're not left behind. In the midst of all the 'craziness', I don't believe it's impossible to be stressed.

Through these times, I've told myself one thing: Take a break when you need a break.

You probably think your department at work can't function without you, or the outcome of a project won't be good in your absence, Lori iro! (translating to mean it is a lie).

The bare truth is, things will move on even in your absence. It might not be how you would've handled it, things will surely move on. So why not save yourself the stress of breaking down or growing grey hair before your time and take a break.

Breaks allow you to take a step back from the rush of work and enables you embrace moments to re-strategise and be powered up to work or act better. When you are stressed, take a break!

Listen to music: listening to cool music can help lower tension as well as your blood pressure. You need to relax? Listen to relaxing music then.

Practise mindfulness: No! This is not superstitious. It is in fact a good approach to maintaining mental health. Mindfulness and meditation is a good lifestyle habit to incorporate in order to reduce stress levels.

Work out: whether you're on a fitness journey or not, working out doesn't have to be lifting heavy weights. It could be a power walk, stretches or squats. Working out has proven to be helpful in relieving stress and improving ones mood.

Get some sleep: If your age group medically demands a certain number of hours of sleep daily, then try your pos-

sible best to get those hours, or close to them at least. Stress causes lack of sleep, and lack of sleep also causes stress, crazy cycle!

Honour your sleep time by setting the mood for sleep, put down your phone, turn off the TV, put off the light and clear your mind. Soon you'll be sound asleep.

Breathing exercises: take a fixed position, breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose and breathe out through your mouth. Deep breathing helps to clear your mind and oxygenate your blood. You should do this often.

We're bound to experience stress or the hustles and bustles of life once in a while, it is however important to be able to identify when this accumulated stress become toxic. Once you notice that, don't wait till you break down finally; take a break. It is

only one who is alive and well that can work.



Youngest producer, Marsai Martin to begin new Disney show with predominantly Black cast

BY DESMOND OKON

Guinness World Record holder for the youngest Hollywood executive producer, Marsai Martin, has permission from Disney to produce a Disney Channel original comedy series, *Saturdays*.

According to *Deadline*, the 16-year-old will produce the pilot for *Saturdays* under her Genius Entertainment production company which she runs with her parents, Joshua and Carol Martin.

“When we met with Marsai about this project, we couldn’t have been more impressed with her passion for diverse storytelling and commitment to female empowerment,” said Rafael Garcia, vice president, Development, Disney Branded Television. “We’re extremely excited to team up with Norman and Genius Entertainment team to tap into roller-skating culture in a way that’s truly both authentic and aspirational for our audience.”

This comes after Disney ordered a single episode of the series. Writer and executive producer Norman Vance, who executive produced *Moesha*, *Roll Bounce*, and *Girlfriends*, will do the same for

Saturdays, and Charles Stone III from *Drumline* and *Black-ish* fame will be the director.

The lead character for the series has sickle cell, a disease that affects mostly Blacks. And many are excited about the representation this project will bring for those who have been diagnosed with sickle cell disease.

According to reports, the plot of *Saturdays* follows Paris, who, since the age of four, has been honing her skills on the cool parquet floor of *Saturdays*, a local skating rink owned and operated by a former '90s hip-hop back-up dancer.

With its neon lights, galaxy-painted rink and killer D.J. spinning the latest music, *Saturdays* is the place to show and prove. Paris is the leader of a skate crew and is determined to take them all the way to the top. However, she has sickle cell disease, and when it flares up, it’ll take every ounce of determination to prove the doubters wrong, including her concerned family.

While there is no apparent premiere date yet, the show’s principal cast has been revealed. Danielle Jalade as Paris Johnson will star as the determined 13-year-old roller skater who is determined to excel in her chosen sports de-

spite her disability.

Golden Brooks and Omar Gooding will play Paris’ parents and Jermaine Harris, her brother. Daria Johns and Samantha Smith will be her ride-or-die besties and per *Deadline*, rapper Yolanda “Yo-Yo” Whitaker was cast as the owner of *Saturdays*.

Martin broke into Hollywood after she was cast to play the role of Diane Johnson in popular sitcom *Black-ish* in 2014. The teen proved her talent went beyond acting when it was announced she was going to executive produce the movie, *Little*.

Then 14 years and 241 days at the time of the movie’s release in 2019, Martin wrote her name in the history books as Hollywood’s youngest ever executive producer. Martin, who successfully pitched the story to *Black-ish* creator Kenya Barris, said she had the idea for the movie when she was as young as 10 years old.

Besides executive producing the movie, Martin also starred in it alongside Issa Rae and Regina Hall. In the film, Martin plays the role of a younger Regina Hall after a little curse takes the strict businesswoman back to her little 13-year-old self.

UN harps on prioritising women, girls for global economic recovery

BY DESMOND OKON

The United Nations (UN) has emphasised the need for governments to prioritise women and girls at the centre of their efforts to recover from the ravaging effects of the COVID-19 pandemic disease as the panacea for economic recovery.

The deputy secretary-general of the UN and chair of the UN's Sustainable Development Group, Amina Mohamed, made the call to governments around world while speaking at Dangote Women's Network (DWN) webinar titled: "Choosing to Challenge for a Win-Win: Overcoming Challenges in a Gender-Biased World," to commemorate the International Women's Day, celebrated every year.

Mohammed, who was the main speaker at the DWN virtual gathering, said gender equality and women's rights are essential to getting through the pandemic, to recovering faster and to building a better future for the world.

She said putting women and girls at the centre of any economic recovery plan would fundamentally drive better and more sustainable development outcomes for all, support a more rapid recovery and place the world back on a footing to achieve the Sustainable De-

velopment Goals (SDGs).

According to her, everything we do during and after the COVID-19 crisis must aim to build more equal, inclusive, and sustainable economies and societies.

"This is perhaps the clearest lesson emerging from the pandemic. This includes gender-responsive economic and social policies and placing women's economic lives at the heart of the pandemic response and recovery plans," she said.

The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened the already existing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities in the social, political, and economic systems, so, for her, there is need for governments around the world to take urgent steps to protect women and expand support services that would reduce the impact of the pandemic on them.

Mohammed noted that recovering better would require drawing lessons from the current pandemic, to support and bolster economic recovery across the globe, while stressing the need to invest in energy transition, connectivity transition, empowerment and sustainable infrastructure to enable the world bounce back better from the current socio-economic crisis.

In addition, she also commended the president of the Dangote Group for his

contribution through social and economic investment in women and in other sectors of the economy.

"Let me begin by thanking my brother, Aliko Dangote's support not just in advocacy, he has put his actions and investment in women. You can see that in the work he does in the Aliko Dangote Foundation, in the group and in the spaces he occupies," she said.

Meanwhile, president of the Dangote Group, Aliko Dangote, in his welcome remarks at the event, reiterated the group's commitment to the empowerment of all categories of women as a top priority of the Aliko Dangote Foundation (ADF), the philanthropic arm of the group, stating that women empowerment would enable them to play important roles in supporting a sustainable future in society and the entire world.

It was learnt that the Dangote Group, through the ADE, has been fully engaged in women empowerment through the provision of nutrition to women and children as well as education of the girl child.

"This is a testament of our unrelenting efforts to promote the development of the girl-child and ultimately the empowerment of women, not only within the Dangote Group, but also within our communities and the nation at large," Dangote said.



The LadyBeellionaire fashion brand

The LadyBeellionaire Fashion brand is branched out into three major lines:

'Ladybeellionaire Luxury' - the custom line that creates High end Pieces, merging exotic and contemporary details to create the ultimate apparel

'Elec3FyD' by LadyBeellionaire- The diffusion/Ready To Wear line

'Indigenous' by LadyBeellionaire which is dedicated to African prints and local fabrics.

They have offices in Lagos and Enugu Nigeria and their brand is a revival of vintage couture with a feminine modern edge.

Taking classic silhouettes and giving them an urban twist is their area of speciality, using bold and distinct colour stories that does not envision one woman, but many.



P H O T O K U L T U R E



























MEALS TO ENJOY

By ImmaculateBites

Oven Baked Pork Chops

Oven Baked Pork Chops - easy one-sheet pan meal with juicy and tasty pork chops and roasted veggies on the side. A perfect family-friendly meal for a quick week-night dinner!

INGREDIENTS

- 4 pork chops, bone-in, (1/2 -3/4 inch-thick)
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 tablespoon creole seasoning
- 1 1/2 teaspoons minced thyme
- 1 tablespoon garlic, minced
- 1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon worchestire sauce
- 2-3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons parsley, for garnish
- 1 pound potatoes, cut into 1 inch cubes
- 1 pound asparagus, green beans and/ or carrots



INSTRUCTIONS

- Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking or cookie sheet with foil or baking paper. Lightly, oil baking sheet or use a baking spray to grease it.
- Thoroughly dry pork chops, then season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
- In small bowl, combine creole seasoning (homemade here) minced thyme, garlic, dijon mustard, worchestire sauce, sugar and oil. Season the pork with marinade then place on prepared cookie or baking sheet.
- In another bowl, season the potatoes with salt, oil and creole seasoning, place next to the pork chops.
- Place in the oven and roast until the pork is completely cooked through, about 18- 22 minutes or an internal temperature inserted in the thickest part reads 145 degrees F.
- If desired broil for about 2-3 minutes, or until caramelised.
- Serve immediately, garnished with parsley, if desired.



One Pot Jerk Chicken and Rice

One Pot Caribbean Jerk Chicken & Rice – A flavour explosion in a pot! Comes together quickly- chicken thighs baked to crispy perfection on a bed of fragrant rice and beans.

INGREDIENTS

Jerk Chicken Thighs

- 2 1/2 -3 pound chicken thighs (about 5-6)
- 1 1/2 - teaspoon salt
- 1/2- teaspoon chicken bouillon powder (optional)
- 1-2 Tablespoons Jerk Seasoning (Homemade here)

ONE POT JERK CHICKEN AND RICE

- 4 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1/2 medium onion , diced
- 1 sprig fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2- garlic clove , minced
- 2 small bay leaves

- 2 cups uncooked long grain rice
- 13.5 oz . can (1 3/4 cups) coconut milk
- 15.5 oz . can red kidney beans , rinsed and drained
- 1 teaspoon white ground white pepper
- 1 1/2 - 2 teaspoons creole spice or Jerk seasoning
- Salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste
- 2 -2 1/4 cups chicken broth or water (If using 6 chicken thighs use 2 cups water)
- 1- teaspoon chicken bouillon (optional)
- 1 whole scotch bonnet pepper (optional)
- 1 teaspoons paprika (optional)
- 1 green onion (for garnish) optional

INSTRUCTIONS

Jerk Chicken Thighs

- Preheat Oven to 350 degrees F
- Wash chicken thighs, for faster cooking make a 1/2 " slit into chicken thigh meat on either side of the chicken wipe with a paper

towel. Season with salt (about 1 1/2 teaspoons) bouillon powder.

- Rub both sides with generous amount of the spice blend (Creole, Jerk or your favorite spice mix)

One pot jerk chicken and rice

- Add about 2 Tablespoons oil in a skillet / Dutch oven or oven safe pot/pan. Then add chicken thighs skin side up , brown for about 3 minutes each, side be very careful with the chicken, it shouldn't burn. Remove from the pan and set aside
- Wipe pan with paper towel or napkin to remove any burns from pan.
- Add another 2 Tablespoons oil, followed by onions, thyme, garlic, bay leaf and sauté until soft but not golden, about 2-3 minutes. Then add rice, beans
- And all the remaining ingredients, Chicken stock,Coconut milk, paprika, white pepper, jerk seasoning , salt and bouillon. Add chicken, bring to a boil.

- Place in the oven and cook , uncovered , for about 30- 35 minutes or until chicken is fully cooked.
- Garnish with chopped green onions if desired
- Remove let it cool and serve.

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