

## Lebogang Mahlangu - Soshanguve, Tshwane, Gauteng

**Name:**

Lebogang Mahlangu

**Region:** Soshanguve, Tshwane, Gauteng

**Age:**

24 (Born April 1,1997)

**Occupation:**

I am a food scientist working in research and development for a large multinational FMCG. I am also a social entrepreneur and own a community bakery in Soshanguve. It is a community bakery because it has the financial needs of the community at its heart with the objective of providing the most affordable bread and baked goods and while offering employment to people within the community.



**Previous beauty competitions/pageants won:**

Miss Mamelodi Sundowns Western Cape Princess 2018/19; Miss Mamelodi Sundowns 2nd Princess 2018/19.

**Why do you want to be Miss South Africa and what do you think you will be able to bring to the role?**

I believe in the potential and value of the youth and women of our country. I know that, if they are encouraged and empowered to take charge, we as a collective can create self-sustaining solutions to the problems facing our communities. Miss South Africa gives me a platform to champion this country's potential and help see it become a reality.

**How have you handled the lockdown due to the Covid 19?**

Self-isolation has also allowed me to prioritise my mental health and well-being. COVID 19 has also had a significant impact on the industry that I work in. It brought added complexity that my team and I have been working tirelessly to navigate, so I have definitely not been bored or under stimulated.

**What has this time taught you?**

The world went on lockdown to prevent the spread of the disease. This was possible because everyone had all the information of the potential impact on our communities if we didn't all work together to prevent the spread of the disease. I have seen that people - when properly informed and educated - will make the necessary sacrifices for the greater good. This proves that education is the key to success.

**2020 has been a tough year globally. Do you see any positives in what has happened in the past months and weeks?**

With everyone at home, people are spending more time on social media. Fortunately, it feels like our conversations have become more meaningful. Look at the re-ignited #BlackLivesMatter that is now a global conversation. Social

media has become a platform to champion human rights, a big step toward collaboratively creating an inclusive change.

### **What do you love about South Africa?**

South Africa's post-apartheid ongoing journey of reconciliation is a picture of hope for a non-racial world. We should be proud of the vibrancy and diversity of this land and the people within it.

### **What is one thing you would like to change about South Africa?**

We have more than enough potential. But our past has left systematic socio and economic challenges that limit the potential of our people. I want to champion this potential, especially in the youth and women of our country. I want to contribute to a country where our people are self-sustaining.

### **Who is a previous Miss South Africa who has inspired you?**

Bokang Montjane. I always wanted to be a part of Her Confidence School For Girls. This gave me a deep desire to someday create an opportunity like this for the girls of my own community. She is also a self-made entrepreneur who has created an impactful business in different industries. I admire her ability to create a legacy.

### **Who are your role models/who has inspired you?**

Dr. Precious Motsepe, who has made waves in the medical, fashion, education, and pageant industry. Her ability to re-invent herself and not let anything box her in is inspiring.

### **Tell us a bit more about your family:**

I have three siblings - my older brother is completing his LLB and I have younger twin siblings. My mother is employed as an administrator while working towards completing her communications degree. Her perseverance and belief that it is never too late to improve yourself have been my stepping stones to propel me to do everything I have done to this point. My father assists with running my bakery.

### **What do you do in your spare time?**

I love the feeling of adrenalin and adventure. I enjoy exploring new hiking routes, running and exercising and am currently learning new soccer tricks!

### **Do you think beauty pageants are still relevant today?**

Women of our country and the world need every opportunity to empower themselves and other women. Pageants allow women to speak to other women about the role and potential we have in creating a better world.

### **Name two of your female role models and why?**

My mother – Fridah Mahlangu because of her strength and dedication in raising me and my siblings with love. She has shown me that I can really do anything I set my mind to.

Dr Precious Motsepe – because of her dedication to empowering women through as many platforms as possible and her ability to adapt and re-invent herself and dominate in all types of industries.

### **What is your message to young girls and young women in South Africa?**

Since starting my Miss South Africa journey, I have received inspiring support of strong, capable, and beautiful women. I have been in awe of their support, and this has made my journey a more empowered and meaningful one. So, I know we are stronger when we stand together and lift each other up because I have felt this. We should always recognize and support each other's potential. This world has enough room for all of us to shine.

### **If you won the Miss South Africa crown and was able to meet one person, who would it be?**

Muhammad Yunus, a social entrepreneur from India. He started a bank that gives women and homeless people interest free loans to start businesses. I would like understand the principles behind his work ethic and what keeps him grounded and connect to his cause.

He has proved that profit and purpose do not have to be mutually exclusive.

### **What is the one thing people would be surprised to know about you?**

I was once an aspiring professional soccer player. I have represented the Gauteng provincial team and went to a sports school in hopes of playing for Banyana Banyana!

### **What is the No 1 piece of advice that you would give to your younger self?**

I thought I could only be great in one thing. We should teach young girls that they are allowed to be everything that sparks joy in their hearts!

### **Describe yourself in three words:**

Resourceful, adventurous, purposeful

### **What are you reading?**

Americanah by Chimamanda Adichie. I love African fiction

### **What music are you listening to?**

A lot of South African and international gospel music. The sounds of Lundi, Rebecca and Joyous celebration take me home and gives me peace!

### **Your favourite TV shows?**

Suits – it constantly inspires me to show up as my best possible self!

### **Your favourite meal?**

I can't choose between Doritos and cereal.

### **Who's your celeb crush?**

Bonang Matheba – her authenticity and ability to impact young women all over the African continent is inspiring!

### **What's your guilty pleasure?**

Sleeping. I can sleep through anything.

### **Social media tags:**

- Facebook: Lebogang Mahlangu
- Instagram: @\_LebogangM