

ZIMI MABUNZI – EQONCE (KING WILLIAM’S TOWN), EASTERN CAPE

Name: Zimi Mabunzi

Region: eQonce (King William’s Town), Eastern Cape.

Age: 26 (January 29, 1995)

Occupation:

I am a student at the Nelson Mandela University in eGqeberha in my final year of a BCom Law degree.



Previous beauty competitions or pageants you have entered and either placed or won:

Winner of Miss Eastern Cape – Beauty with a Purpose 2015/16.

Why did you decide to enter Miss South Africa 2021 and why do you deserve to win this title?

I entered Miss South Africa because the time feels right and as an honour to my commitment to myself over the years, to honour a dream I was not willing to let go of once I realised it and to live a life of impact on a broader scale.

Tell us about your biggest disappointment and how you bounced back from it.

My biggest disappointment was getting financially excluded in my first year of university in Cape Town. I was selected by a certain bursary programme that was declared insolvent during my year of study and I was left with a huge debt that my family could not afford to pay off which led to me being excluded. But I bounced back by centring myself in my faith in God and immersing myself in what I was passionate about – living a life of impact. It was actually after my exclusion that I took a leap into unknown territory, entered Miss Eastern Cape and won. It was also after winning, that I received sponsorship to go back to school.

What do you think is the biggest problem facing young people today?

Without a doubt, unemployment. I think this is one of the biggest contributing factors to most challenges we face as a country. Our rocketing crime rate, inequality, the vast differences in our standards of living and mental illness issues are also huge problems.

Who are your role models?

My mother. Not only for our family but for everyone that crosses paths with her.

Tell us a bit more about your family?

My mother is a pensioner. I have two older sisters, Yolisa (32) who works while funding her psychology studies and Lulama (44), a Warrant Officer with the SAPS, who is also furthering her studies in law.

What do you do in your spare time?

Working out, cooking, singing or working on the next session/event for a local girl empowerment organisation that I volunteer for.

What is your single biggest achievement?

Finally reaching this point in my undergraduate degree. At some point it really seemed impossible and I used to shame myself for the difficulty I encountered. Embracing my journey and finding myself in a place of eagerly anticipating my future is huge for me.

In what way do you think beauty pageants are still relevant today?

Look at a Zozibini Tunzi, who through her success, has inspired women all over world to no longer be oblivious to the need for transformation, representation and inclusivity. I think for as long as inclusivity, self-confidence, authenticity and unrealistic beauty standards are things we still need to champion, there is a big need for pageants. Especially a pageant such as Miss South Africa, that embraces diversity as much as it does.

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

I pray that our hope for better, stays alive. There is no society that thrives without the heart of women. Conditions may not always be favourable for us to be but all of us, in all our differences, are absolutely necessary.

What do you love about South Africa?

Although, I wish we did not have to be as resilient as we are, it is our resilience as a people that I love, appreciate and has fed into who I am as well. Our country's history is not the most glamorous and our present reflects so much crisis. However, our resilience and our constant fight for better never dies.

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

The disheartening amount of corruption.

2020 and 2021 have been extraordinary years and difficult for people around the globe. Do you see any positives in what has happened in the past 18 months?

This may not be the case for all but I think most can definitely appreciate how the pandemic has revealed what is truly important and the essence of time.

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

Caster Semenya. I think that woman is powerful but there's something in her grace and the way she handles all that she is dealt with that resonates with me and always shifts my perspective.

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

I also have a huge passion for music. I would love to study it one day and make music of my own.

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

Believe in yourself.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

Describe yourself in three words:

Calm. Intentional. Willing.

What's the best advice you can give in exactly four words?

You're your best bet.

Who's your favourite designer and why?

David Tlale. Not only has he made me gain a new appreciation for the colour black, I got the opportunity to meet him at a show once and I will never forget his kindness.

You have to give up one of these? Handbags or shoes?

Handbags. Only because they can be replaced with cute little wallets.

What is one thing that we would not know about you just by looking at you?

That I also sing.

What would be your dream holiday?

Anything to do with Santorini in Greece!

If you could have any superhuman power what would it be?

To be able to disappear and appear anywhere around the world, whenever I want to.

What are you reading?

I am currently re-reading *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brene Brown.

What music are you listening to?

Maverick City, old R'n'B and Amapiano when I am working out.

What is your favourite TV shows?

NCIS, Law and Order: SVU, Chicago PD, CSI, The Blacklist

What is your favourite meal?

Umphokoqo and umngqusho.

Who is your local and international celeb crush?

Local: Lawrence Maleka. International: Michael B. Jordan.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Blueberry cheesecake ice cream and frozen yoghurt.

Social media tags:

- Facebook: Zimi Mabunzi
- Instagram: @zimi_mabunzi
- Twitter: @MabunziZimi