

International Women's Day 2019: the voices of professional young women around the world

Ladies in Forensic Science



Ebony Lyall-Nicholas,
*Forensic Firearms
Examiner, National
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In an ever-evolving world, women in science have become a vibrantly pleasant norm rather than an exception. I am proud to be one of those women who can now help to set

the trend for other young women with a dream of pursuing their passions for sciences. I earned a bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Belize in 2006 at the tender age of 19. After some years of non-science related employment, I was blessed in 2011 to land a job in the exact area I dreamed of being – Forensic Science.

In an effort to enrich myself with more knowledge and to further qualify myself to give superb service to my country, Belize's justice system, I applied for and earned a Chevening Scholarship awarded by the government of the United Kingdom. This allowed me to pursue and successfully complete my MSc in Forensic Science with Distinction from the world renown University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland (2015).

I am currently a Forensic Firearms Examiner at our National Forensic Laboratory. **Firearms has been generally thought to be a field which most people automatically attribute to be solely for men. Daily we have proven this to be a bold misconception as some of the most meticulous and successful and best examiners in the world are women – Go ladies!** Women of science, we are here to go against the grain, to prove that we belong, to prove that beauty and brains is not a saying but a reality. I implore all young ladies and girls to take every avenue necessary to get to where they need to go with their integrity intact, for you deserve to be there just like anyone else.

Science is as beautiful as we all are so let's take charge and share it with the world. I am a 32-year-old mother, wife and lover of science, Ebony Lyall-Nicholas... Happy International Women's Day to all.

Ladies in Law



**Cuquie (Q-Key)
Melville, Attorney-
at-Law, Trinidad
and Tobago**

"We as women are powerful beyond measure and once we stick together we are undoubtedly a force to be reckoned with!"

My name is Cuquie (Q-Key) Melville, Attorney-at-Law and a native of Trinidad and Tobago. I am a holder of a degree in General Management from Delaware State University, United States of America; an International Masters in Business Administration from Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business, Trinidad and Tobago; a Bachelor of Law from the University of London; and a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice from Northumbria University, Newcastle, United Kingdom.

As we come together to celebrate the achievements of women around the globe, and in keeping with this year's theme **"balance for better"**, I wish to take this opportunity to pay homage to all the women who to date, have fought relentlessly to shatter the invisible glass ceiling that has for centuries, attempted to cripple our efforts to level the playing field in a male dominating world.

As a young strong black woman, I am aware of the various challenges we as women face in a profession generally dominated by men. Nonetheless, I wish to encourage all my strong resilient sisters of diverse backgrounds, seeking to pursue a career in law or any other field, and those who possess the desire of

eventually rising to the top, to never allow these obstacles to deter you from pursuing your dream and purpose. We as women must continue to unite to create an indelible force capable of achieving what our female ancestors have fought so long and hard for – a world where we are privileged to equal access and participation, a world where gender balance finally exists whether it be in the field of law, science, education, culture, or otherwise.

As Muhammad Ali Jinnah enunciated: *"There are two powers in the world; one is the sword and the other is the pen. There is a great competition and rivalry between the two. There is a third power stronger than both, that of the women."*

Happy International Women's Day Ladies!

Ladies in Biochemistry



Pheonah Badu, PhD
Candidate in Biological Sciences, University at Albany, USA

I am Pheonah Badu. I am currently enrolled in the Biological Sciences PhD program at the University at Albany, USA. My study

concentration is on Molecular, Cellular, Developmental and Neural Biology. I have an MPhil in Molecular Cell Biology of Infectious Diseases and a BSc. Biochemistry degree from University of Ghana and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), respectively.

Putting this piece together really makes me reflect on my refining phases in life and highlight 4 traits that I call my solid ingredients for the life and career I'm cooking. They are ambition, hard work and discipline with confidence as the garnishing ingredient. Sometimes all you need is to be ambitious. In your mind's eye, envision yourself as that great influential person in your little corner. Play that vision over and over in your head and never lose sight of it. From my own experience that alone is a great self-driver. With that foundation, materialize the vision with hard work. I cannot overemphasize this. **Nothing worth having comes easy and a thing worth doing is worth doing well. This might mean being the odd one within your circle, don't let petty comments sway you, never quench the ambition fire in your belly.** The only way to do this is to be disciplined. Finally, bundle these up with just a little bit of confidence that certainly works the magic.

I use this opportunity to wish every woman a Happy International Women's Day! I hope you grow to love yourself more and identify your own ingredients to a successful career and life in general. We will definitely celebrate your story and success in due time in the meanwhile, keep the fire and be the best version of you!

Ladies in Business Management



Patricia Akweley Akudjedu, MSc
International Management, National University of Ireland, Galway

My name is Patricia Akweley Akudjedu, a graduate of KNUST with a BSc. In Business

Administration (Accounting Option) and currently on the MSc International Management Program at the National University of Ireland, Galway for my postgraduate training with an award from the Higher Education Authority – Government of Ireland Scholarship 2018-2019. I am a wife and a sister with about 5 years' experience as a Senior Audit Assistant before embarking on the new challenge of postgraduate training. I am self-motivated and a woman of few words who loves volunteering, especially with organisations and charities focused on improving healthcare in deprived regions.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, my message to all women (both young and old) of the world, especially in Africa, is that we should not only be domestically focused but rather be making choices that have great influence on home and life as well as the fulfilment of one's career goals. Today, I celebrate all women especially the tons of women out there changing lives but haven't just been discovered yet, I celebrate all women who are giving hope to the hopeless. I say, **YOU** matter, the difference you make matter and your impact is needed irrespective of how small or big it is.

The very successful women making waves today will say "there is no smooth road to success". Hence, I want to encourage young women including myself to not give up on our dreams and aspirations only because we are faced with unseen challenges. Whether your field is in academics or outside of academia in the world of work, chase your dreams to be able to get to the point of self-actualisation and fulfilment.

Let's join forces to help maintain gender parity, mindset and celebrate other women no matter how small their difference in society may be.