

# THE DEAF BULLETIN

*Restoring Dignity to the Deaf and Hard of hearing!*



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From left Kuda Mapeture from Zimbabwe 1<sup>st</sup> Princess, Christi Greeff Miss Deaf Africa from South Africa and Kemmonyne Keraetswe from Botswana 2<sup>nd</sup> Princess

## *Beyond Deafness: Kuda Mapeture*

*By Paidamoyo Chimhini*

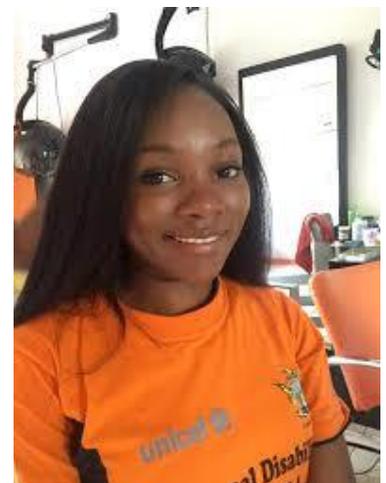
*24 year old Kuda Mapeture is just like any young woman her age. Kuda is fashion conscious and very confident. Just by looking at her, one would never guess that she cannot hear. She is a perfect example of an individual rising above disability and making a name for herself.*

*Kuda's latest achievement was being crowned the first princess and Miss Photogenic in this year's edition of the Miss Deaf Africa Pageant held in Cape Town South Africa. This comes after she won the Miss Deaf Zimbabwe title in 2014 and represented Zimbabwe at the Miss Deaf World pageant that same year. For her, this victory is a step in the right direction in her modeling career. As a young advocate in the Deaf community, Kuda is a role model for Deaf girls. She refuses to allow her disability to limit her in any way. She has dreams*

*and aspirations of a successful life and is working towards that. Kuda is a Programme Officer for Sign Language at Deaf Zimbabwe Trust and is responsible for designing Sign Language programmes for Deaf children. She is passionate about the empowerment of Deaf people and envisions a world where Deaf people are treated with respect. Kuda is proudly Deaf and is always eager to teach a new acquaintance a word or two in Sign Language.*

### *Did you know?*

- ❖ *Heather Leigh Whitestone McCallum was the first Deaf person to win the Miss America title in 1995*
- ❖ *The Miss Deaf World Pageant is held every year in Prague Czech Republic.*
- ❖ *Miss Deaf International which advances and supports opportunities for young deaf women was spearheaded by Bonita Leek a former Miss Deaf America*



**Kuda Mapeture**



*Have something positive to say about people you never know who is listening*

*By Precious Nkomo*

*I spend a lot of time in the company of the Deaf and this has made a significant contribution to my Sign language skills. I have become proficient in Sign language that if I am around deaf people one would think that I am also deaf. The moment people around me see me singing with my Deaf friends in town, in public transport or at meetings, they are quick to assume that I am also Deaf. Without knowing that I can hear they start to speak negatively about the Deaf. I have heard them saying ‘ohh*

*look at those Deaf people! They look smart and well dressed as if they can hear’.* *“Zvimumumu zvine hashu usazvidenha hondo yacho haiperi zvose zvinouya zvikakukutsira”* meaning Deaf people are short tempered, if you provoke them they will retaliate. Our African beliefs have painted the Deaf as violent people who are always ready to fight.

*Many of us expect to see people with disabilities in rags or dirty scruffy clothes and begging on the streets. While disability is often associated with poverty, this should not be the case. I have noticed that even on television, whenever directors of movies or dramas want to bring out sad scene they use a person with a disability to act that part. This sends out a wrong message about people with disabilities. Our perception of people with disabilities should be based on the social model that seeks to empower them to be independent. We should not view PWDs as charity cases. Given the opportunity, people with disabilities can achieve anything they set out to do. We say no to **DISCRIMINATION** and **MARGINALIZATION** of PWDS.*

### ***Young people with disabilities and poverty eradication celebrating International Youth Day***

***By Barbra Nyangairi***

*The constitution of Zimbabwe contains promises for all Zimbabweans and young people with disabilities are included in “all” Zimbabweans. These include that Zimbabweans will lead prosperous and contented lives. But we need to reflect on this as we celebrate the International Youth Day. With more than 90 per cent of children with disabilities not attending school, what kind of a future are we preparing for them?*

*Education empowers and as long as children with disabilities are not attending school then we will not be able to meet the SDGs and we are preparing poverty for young people with disabilities. Zimbabwe has adopted the inclusive education model for children with disabilities but the infrastructure available is not in tandem with this model. Simply placing a child with disability in a classroom with non-disabled children does not guarantee that learning will take place. The inability of children with disabilities to attend primary school and secondary school precludes them from competing from a point of equity with their non- disabled counterparts. In addition, the marginalisation of young people with disabilities begins at home when they are born. Disability within the home is located in the discourse of shame and a curse. This has resulted in parental neglect and low expectation. This leads to parents not taking proactive measures to invest in the education of children with disability. They are not a priority in resource allocation in the home thus the marginalization and the set up for poverty begins at an early age. Let’s reflect. What futures are we creating for children and young people with disabilities?*





### ***A blind eye and a Deaf ear to Disability: Where is the Inclusion?***

**By Rosemary Mundhluli**

*As I sat listening to the speech being given by the guest of honour at a function concerning HIV/AIDS issues, “inclusion of all in efforts to eradicate AIDS by 2030” was at the core of the address. The guest speaker talked about key populations being at risk of contracting and spreading HIV. He spoke briefly about People with Disabilities (PWDs) mentioning a bit on blind people and totally forgetting the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. His reference to key populations was mainly focused on gays and lesbians as well as sex worker. Do people think of the Deaf people as part of key populations? As a nation we are lacking implementation of our own set policies which protects and talks of inclusion of PWDs. Let us practice what is written in our HIV laws, policies and programmes. Implementation of these obligations will help in reduction of spread of HIV. For how long is it going to take for us all to realise that PWDs are citizens of this country just like non-disabled people and they are entitled to enjoy the same rights as everyone else. We should do away with the mentality that PWDs are asexual. Despite their disabilities, they have the same feelings, same biological structure and they also have the same rights just like any other human being. Let us all join hands, open our eyes and ears to issues concerning People with Disabilities. They are citizens too. If we continue to pay a Deaf ear and a blind eye to their needs we will not meet the target to eradicate AIDS by 2030.*

**HIV DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE**

***The Deaf Bulletin is an initiative by Deaf Zimbabwe Trust to raise awareness about Deaf issues and to disseminate information to the Deaf Community in Zimbabwe. For more information contact***

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