



Joyce Mateza

Description

Forensic Analyst in Medscheme Group Forensics Department

Nominated by Anita Potgieter

Joyce started working in Forensics in June 2022 and from the day she started, she has been a positive influence on her team and the whole department. Joyce is an extremely bright and intelligent young woman. She's passionate and enthusiastic. She looks out for her colleagues, for example organising massages occasionally to relieve work stresses. She recently had to deal with an attorney and managed to reach an amicable settlement on a complicated matter. She has adjusted so well within our Forensic Team, forever open to learning and striving to have meaningful engagement. She is an exceptional young employee.

Tell us a bit about her background.

Joyce was always an inquisitive child and always had a million questions about everything. She learned at a very young age she would have to be open to learning new things at every chance she could get. So, throughout her school career she always worked hard and tried her best to be an all-rounder. She was always one of the academic top achievers, while taking part in netball, hockey, drama, debating and choir. She describes herself as charismatic and outgoing and she loves learning new things, pushing herself out of her comfort zone and she's always loved a good challenge. Her mom is her biggest advocate and her absolute shero.

What's her secret to being successful?

She always makes it a point to be the best version of herself. She sees the most important thing as making an impact and leaving a legacy. She's always regarded having a mentor as important, so she always has someone to measure up to, to help her navigate new paths and experiences, and someone to hold her accountable to the goals she wants to achieve.

“The most important thing has always been making an impact and leaving a legacy that lives on wherever I go”

What are her early achievements that she is most proud of?

She’s a lover of God, people, and all living things, especially animals. She always speaks up and tries to make a change wherever she can. After seeing the poor conditions the animals were kept in, she’s proud to have been a part of the group that started a petition to close down the Bloemfontein Zoo. She has never been prouder to have used her voice, especially for the voiceless.

Why did she choose to go into the sciences?

Her father is a math genius and her mother a science whiz, so it made sense that she went on to study in the science field. She initially majored in Biochemistry and Microbiology, then she changed her studies to major in Forensic Science once the course was introduced at the University of the Free State in 2014. “Growing up I always loved solving puzzles and playing chess, so this proved to be a well-suited field of study for me with the hope of working in ballistics,” she says. Joyce went on to do her honours in Forensics majoring in Pathology. She found it to be the most challenging year ever, but also so rewarding.

What did she achieve while studying?

Joyce was one of three students in her class whose research was used to appeal to the Health Department to allow the National Health Laboratory Services to assist and take over toxicology testing and results as there was a national nine-year backlog in toxicology testing. This was a major issue as it was holding back police investigations and not serving justice to affected families. “I’m proud to say our research was published and used to shed light on the extent of this national predicament,” she says. Although there is still a long way to go, she’s honoured to have contributed to this success

What does she do in her free time?

She grew up surrounded by a lot of boy cousins so thrill-seeking and having an adventurous spirit was inevitable. Her father taught her to drive at the age of 12 so she took up go-karting and has loved it ever since. She also loves visiting the shooting range, hiking, going paintball shooting and any other activity that gets the blood pumping. When she has time, I she loves partaking in charitable events, especially the annual Cancer Walk. To unwind, she goes to nature reserves and is very close to her family, so most of her Sundays are spent with family, having a braai and a family games night.

Category

1. Creative