

CLIMB FOR ALBINISM

Transform

CHALLENGING THE STIGMA
ASSOCIATED WITH ALBINISM

Inspire

OPENING LIMITLESS DOORS TO
PEOPLE WITH ALBINISM

Empower

AMPLIFYING OUR VOICES FROM
AFRICA'S HIGHEST PEAK



JANE WAITHERA - KENYA

Jane Waithera is a Kenyan activist and change agent, whose work centers on persons with albinism in education and advocacy. She is also the co-creator of Climb for Albinism.

Jane did not have an easy start to life. Her mother abandoned her as a toddler, because she was born with albinism. Her grandmother, who did her best to create a supportive and healthy environment in their rural farming community, raised her. However, beyond her grandmother's home, Jane was constantly bothered, insulted and excluded in her village. This drove her to be depressed, and at times suicidal.

Jane's experiences have inspired her to be a catalyst in promoting inclusion, and improving the living conditions of Persons With Albinism in East Africa. She previously worked for Under the Same Sun in Tanzania, and now heads albinism awareness projects for Positive Exposure from Nairobi, Kenya. Her work has been recognized across the globe, in 2017, Jane was selected to be part of the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. She has spent 2 years planning the Climb for Albinism, and will continue her advocacy efforts beyond the climb.

27.09.2018

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REGINA MARY- SOUTH AFRICA

29 years old, Regina Mary is revolutionizing her life. Her vision impairment due to albinism was a hindrance to her education and she was passed through the South African education system without learning the basics of how to read and to write.

Yet she knew in her heart that she had a mission and purpose to help those who were similarly suffering from discrimination and abuse.

Using social media tools that transferred voice into text she wrote the story of her childhood sexual abuse and bullying into a play, "Mary, Mary, Mary" which debuted at the Johannesburg Theatre complex. An audience member was so moved that she arranged for Regina Mary to receive intensive educational tutoring. After a few months, her competency was so accelerated that she was accepted into a University-based drama programme.

The revolution began. Now Regina Mary is an accomplished actress, using her fierce talent and forceful determination to educate the nation about albinism. Over the past 6 years she has been performing in a play "Mama I Want the Black that You Are" which highlights the coming of age challenges of a young woman with albinism. She performed the play in the National State Theatre and has recently (September 2018) completed a national school tour as lead actress performing to thousands of youth.

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MAAH KEITA- SENEGAL

Maah Koudia Keita is a Senegalese musician and activist. She is recognized as 1 of only 3 women bass-guitar players in Africa.

Since 2006, Maah has been the bassist for the band "Takeifa", which is made up of herself and her four siblings. Under the band, Maah has recorded 3 albums, and toured Senegal, and Europe. She is also the co-founder of the association 'Care Albinos', an albinism awareness and support organization based in Senegal. Since it was formed in 2012, "Care Albinos" has also provided necessary resources and medical assistance to persons with albinism afflicted with skin cancer. Maah has been at the forefront of albinism awareness initiatives in West Africa run by the United Nations, and Open Society West Africa.

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MARIAM STANFORD- TANZANIA

Mariam Stanford is an entrepreneur and vocal albinism activist from Tanzania. She grew up with supportive family and friends, but was bullied in school because of her albinism. Some classmates even feared her, due to societal misconceptions about albinism. Her low vision made reading a challenge, which increasingly discouraged Mariam. By age 12, she was continually skipping classes, and eventually dropped out of school. She became a helping hand on her family's small farm from then on.

On October 17 2008, 28 year old Mariam was brutally attacked by criminals who entered her home while she and her infant son slept. Both her hands were cut off, and she had to spend many weeks in hospital, and years recovering from the traumatic incident.

With help from Under the Same Sun, and a generous donation of prosthetic arms, Mariam was able to attend a vocational boarding school. Since graduating, she started her own knitting business, while continuing to upgrade her skills by taking additional courses in commercial knitting and sewing. She makes and sells shawls, sweaters, skirts and dresses, which she makes on a commercial loom. Mariam is still furthering her activism work and has in the past spoken on albinism issues at the United Nations, and for Under the Same Sun.

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ONYINYE EDI – NIGERIA

Dr Onyinye Edi is an optometrist and entrepreneur from Nigeria. She runs a successful eye clinic in Lagos.

As a child with albinism, Onyinye was an easy target for bullies. She would often be called derogatory names, and harassed by other children in school. Fortunately, her family and friends provided her with a happy and supportive upbringing. Her parents even made a lasting arrangement with her school for Onyinye to sit at the front of the class, closest to the blackboard so she could see.

While studying optometry, Onyinye would often struggle to complete some of the delicate procedures. Undeterred, she would then device simpler ways to complete each difficult task, and consequently, she was the clinician vice president by the time she graduated.

Onyinye has worked as a volunteer for the Albino Foundation in Nigeria for 11 years, and has also completed projects for children with albinism under *Standing Voice*. She is passionate about using her story and skillset to champion albinism advocacy across Africa.

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NODUMO NCOMANZI- ZIMBABWE



Nodumo Ncomanzi is a Zimbabwean educator, brand strategist and creative, who is currently working from Kenya, and traveling around Africa.

Nodumo grew up in a supportive home, but her albinism was a difficult topic for her family to discuss and acknowledge. She was also subjected to bullying in school, and public harassment and insults, which made her feel isolated, and removed from her society. As a college student and working adult, Nodumo has experienced prejudice in many forms while traveling in different parts of the world.

Nodumo recently graduated with from Yale University, where she got a full scholarship to study Political Science and African Studies. Since 2017, Nodumo has been running a creative consulting firm, where she connects young emerging creatives to diverse opportunities. She has also been the director of a youth empowerment program, which helps smart high school graduates apply to internationally renowned schools. Nodumo works in communications under the United Nations Independent Expert on albinism, and has contributed to the development of actiononalbinism.org; a monitoring platform for albinism advocacy in Africa.

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