



INTERNET ARTICLE

What women's month means to me as a woman - Pulane Shabe

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I had a very interesting interview with a DWS employee name Pulane Shabe, from HR recently and we touched on the month of August. Seeing that it is women's month she explained what Women Month is meant to her. Below is her take on how she feels about women in general as well as the importance of Women's Month.

"In South Africa women played a prominent role in the struggle for ages, even before women's organizations were formed," said Shabe. "They fought for gender equality, challenged the idea that a woman's place is in the kitchen instead of anywhere they chose, fought for their emancipation and that of their families and they were outraged by the system of discrimination; they became anti-apartheid activists and in so doing risked imprisonment, torture and exile".

The march of 20 000 women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to present a petition against the carrying of passes to Prime Minister J.G Strydom continued to inspire women for decades until democracy was finally realized in 1994. The first national Women's Day was celebrated in 1995 and since then the celebrations are annual.

"This initiative will always remind us that we need to look continuously at the future, also to inspire generations of women to come and learn from the legacy of the past. Hence the celebration of those women who marched paved a way for us, created opportunities for the future generations of women as well," said Shabe.

In recent years South African women made and are still making great strides in the boardrooms, yet both the public and private sectors still have more work to do; particularly when it comes to leadership positions. More and more women are joining working environments which they have never been to and were previously dominated by men. Still a small percentage has access to economic opportunities. "I have read somewhere that currently women hold less than 4% in higher positions in both sectors, this is a shame and needs to change because I believe women have the capability to thrive in these sectors," she said.

"I am inspired by Advocate Thuli Madonsela. Her leadership style is non-reactive and very clearly on point," said Shabe. She signals her intention and she holds her place. This gives her enormous integrity and adds credibility and moral authority to her. She is steadfast and does not allow herself to be drawn into derogatory comments about herself.



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“I also draw inspiration from Mme Winnie Mandela. We all know Winnie Mandela as the beloved wife of South African legendary president Nelson Mandela; but I believe there’s more about her that still remains unknown in the public eye. When Mandela was caged at Robben Island, Winnie stood by him through thick and thin, supporting his legacy like a responsible loving ‘woman’ does to her husband. In fact I believe it was Winnie’s loyalty, strength, and courage that ultimately instigated Mandela’s release after being incarcerated for 27 years. This is the strength of women,” Shabe concluded.

Larry Crisp