

The Weekly

FS LEARNER SPEAKS HER WAY TO THE TOP

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Speaking her mind ... 18-year-old Zinhle Novazi from St Michael's High School is ready to represent the province at a national speaking competition

The 18-year-old Zinhle Novazi is a confident, opinionated and well-spoken young lady.

It comes as no surprise that she is going to represent the Free State at the national Young Communicators Awards (YCA).

She is one of the nine youths from every province in the country, who have been selected to represent their province in the YCA to be held in Newtown, Johannesburg.

Novazi, from St. Michael's High School in Bloemfontein, recently stunned judges and the audience with her delivery as she shared her insights about the "Born Free" generation. Her sterling performance landed her a spot to represent the province.

"My speech was a reflecting on my peers who were not born under the apartheid era and grew up in the new South Africa. I wanted to make a point across that we have the right to be treated equally and not according to race like it was during the apartheid era."

"I chose the topic because I felt very strongly about it and I believe in choosing a topic that one is passionate about. I find it easy to make a point about something I believe in, because it makes it easy to try to convince people of something I already believe in myself," said Novazi.

She said her topic came from a friend who told her that universities were giving black student preferential treatment when it comes to entry requirements. She felt insulted by the insinuation that black students were not competent enough to make it into universities.

The young orator has expressed the desire to occupy public office in the future. She wants to become the president of the country or a member of parliament.

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“I want to go into politics and have realised that public speaking is a stepping stone into politics. In politics, you need to be vocal, convincing, confident and firm. At first, I wanted to study law but have come to realise politics is the direction I want to take.”

She said her experience in public speaking has also made her realise that it's easy for people to judge any situation from the outside, looking in, but a picture is always different looking from the inside out.”

Her confidence and achievements have also made her popular amongst her peers at school.

The young orator has a formula for anyone who wants to excel as a public speaker.

“Anyone can become a good public speaker. The trick is to just speak about something you are passionate about and all fear will fall away. Focus, research, confidence and believing what you are speaking about will set you apart from others.”

She only started her debating career in 2008 when she was in grade 8.

Novazi said her athletics teacher, Rufus Botha who is now a radio personality, encouraged her to pursue public speaking. He took her to make public announcements during the South Africa's cross country championships held at the University of the Free State (UFS).

She has also participated in the Speak Out Crime Prevention competition last year.

She however is keeping her cards close to her chest about which topic she will be speaking on at the national competition. Despite her confidence, she said speaking in front of people can be very intimidating.

The competition is sponsored by Anglo American and in partnership with the department of basic education and the Sowetan.

The participants not only get a platform to showcase their talents and represent their provinces and schools but also stand in line to walk away with great prizes.

The winner stands a chance of walking away with an incredible R65 000 study bursary and R15 000 for their school. The first runner up will win a R45 000 bursary and R10 000 for their school, while the second runner up will win a R35 000 bursary, plus R7 000 for his or her school.

Godfrey Gomwe, executive director of Anglo American in South Africa said the YCA is proving to be a significant catalyst in rewriting the future of the country.

“For 19 years, the YCA has been making a vast difference in South Africa by cultivating young talent, helping them to find their voice, and providing them with the skills they require to excel in their lives, both professionally and personally.

“It is Anglo American's firm belief that these young people will use the knowledge and experiences they have gained from the competition in creating positive change in their communities, and becoming acknowledged leaders that make a real remarkable difference.”

[Source: www.theweekly.co.za]