

Student Profile

Name: Mercy Chisala
Gender: Female
Date of birth: 24th October 1991
Place of birth: Mansa, Zambia
Guardian: Mary Mwewa
Relationship: Aunt
Profession: Telephone Operator at
Ministry of Education
Primary School: Chibelo Basic School
Secondary School: **Leopards Hill
Secondary School**
2010 Level: **Grade 11**



Family Background:

Mercy was born in Mansa, in Luapula Province, the northern-most province of Zambia. She moved to Lusaka early in her childhood with her parents and four siblings.

Mercy's parents passed away soon after coming to Lusaka. She is therefore an orphan but fortunately she has found a home. Mercy and her four siblings live with their aunt, Mary Mwewa. Sadly, Ms. Mwewa is blind and struggles to provide for Mercy and her siblings. She works for the Ministry of Education as a telephone operator. She gets to work with the assistance of friends and neighbors, who help her get to the bus stop. Unfortunately, some days there is no one to assist Ms. Mwewa and she stays home from work. Ms. Mwewa would like to have more work, and has looked, but struggled to find any organization that will employ a blind person.

Mercy's Educational Background:

Primary – Chibelo Basic School

Mercy attended Chibelo Basic School in Lusaka and earned the 3rd academic position in her Grade 7 class. Her favorite subjects in school were mathematics, English, and science.

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Outside the classroom, Mercy was an active member of the HIV/AIDS Resource Center at Chibelo School. She loved the center because she could learn more about HIV/AIDS and she could also work as a peer counselor and educator.

At Leopards Hill Secondary School

Grade 8

In her first year at Leopards Hill Mercy made a noticeable impression by the way she behaved. This led her to win an award for the best behaved student in her class. Undoubtedly, this behavior has contributed to her academic improvement and progression. One thing she noted a great improvement in was her ability to express herself in the English language. She also managed to do well in German as a foreign language, earning first academic position in that subject. As Mercy continued to study hard, improvements could be seen throughout the year in Mathematics, History, English and Office Practice.

Grade 9

In grade 9, Mercy demonstrated even further improvements compared to Grade 8. Her performance brought her higher in class positions although she felt she will continue to do even better. Her favorite subjects in Grade 9 were Mathematics, Religious Education and History. The subjects she worked hardest on to improve in were French, Civics and Geography.

Grade 10

At first, Mercy struggled with the transition from junior to senior level. However, with hard work and perseverance she has improved in all her classes—jumping from number ten in her class to number four! She improved most in history, chemistry, biology, and additional mathematics and in term three attained As in five of her classes. She also took an Advanced Mathematics course as an elective, which explored advanced topics including statistics. Advanced Mathematics and Physics were Mercy's favorite subjects this year. While she at times struggles with English, she is working to improve her composition writing skills and is intent upon improving next year.

Mercy's Interests:

Extracurricular Interests

While Mercy was in primary school she liked reading books, cooking, and drawing. Now at Leopards Hill, she takes part in soccer as defender and competes in cross-country running, javelin and discus. She earned first place in the javelin and discus events during her grade 9. In grade 10 she took part in the 100m race and is looking forward to her upcoming matches with David Kaunda High School.

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She also enjoys playing netball as a wing attacker. “I want to unlock my potential in the sports which I usually enjoy—soccer and netball,” says Mercy.

She also has joined the JETS club as an extracurricular activity, which primarily focused on science and mathematics. She competed with the Leopards School team in a quiz competition against a number of other schools, creating projects and answering question in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, and general knowledge. While their team did not receive any prizes last year, this has only motivated Mercy: “My plan this year is to study hard, research more and have all the equipment for our project.” In grade 10, she participates in traditional dance club where she learns and performs traditional Zambian dances from a variety of tribes for school events. She also takes part in Scripture Reading club.

Community Service

Mercy regularly visits and helps out at Mother Theresa, a local orphanage. She works with children from ages of 2 to 6 years old. She reads to them, keeps them company, and helps distribute the meals. She said while it makes her sad, that she feels empowered by helping them.

Career Interests and Work Experience:

Mercy is an ambitious young lady, deciding between the career paths of electrical engineer, accountant, or doctor. Her interest in electrical engineering comes from her natural ability with technology and wiring. Mercy’s attraction to accountancy sprouts from her facility with numbers, and finally, her interest in medicine comes from her enjoyment of attending to others and helping those in need.

For her work experience, Mercy worked at King Pharmaceuticals Limited in the accounting division. She helped with filings, typing invoices, recording sales, and writing receipts for people. She also worked with excel, a process she found challenging but rewarding. In the course of her experience, Mercy improved her computer and communication skills.

Mercy’s Role Model

Mercy’s role models are her mentor, Dr. Mugala-Matale, and Ben Carson, a famous African-American pediatric surgeon. “I admire my mentor who is a medical doctor because I like the way she handles her work and the simple life she lives. Secondly, I admire Ben Carson who is also a doctor but was a surgeon. I admire him because where he came from and he made it in life and was very courageous.” She especially admires and identifies with how Ben Carson overcame adversity in his life—he was brought up by a single mother, and, while at first he was at the bottom of his class and doubted whether he could succeed. However, with the encouragement of his mother, he started to apply himself. He

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worked his way through medical school to become a surgeon and became the first African American to separate Siamese twins.

Mercy's Thoughts:

“I have learnt a lot of things including how to be a hard-working person, being competitive, socializing and helping other people. I really enjoyed when KF went to Pestalozzi and Fountain of Hope. The reason being I socialized, knew others' situations, and we had fun.

KF has changed me in such a way that I have become more sensitive and caring to whatsoever I do.

I stay with my sister, nieces and brother, and Kucetekela has really helped my family in such a way that as helping her pay for school fees for the other people in my family. They have helped to carry my sister's burden by providing clothing and education.

I enjoy this school very much. This school offers a very good education and allows us the opportunity to participate in sports and to keep physically fit. I also have a good number of friends because the people here are friendly including the teachers.

As a KF member I have been helped in many things. I have come to meet different people with different characteristics. As far as I am concerned, it is good to know different people and their behavior.

I am really thankful for the opportunity to be at this school. I will do my very best to achieve my potential.”

For more information and pictures of the KF students, please visit the KF website.