



First Annual Women Mentoring Women Walk to be Held in 15 Countries Including Kenya by Fortune 500/Vital Voices Alumni

A women's mentorship event, will be held in 15 countries across the world, including Kenya, on 29th November 2008.

The Women Mentoring Women walk is an initiative of the Vital Voices/Fortune500 mentorship programme alumni, and is supported by the US Embassy in Kenya. The mentorship walk will bring together experienced women from every field to walk with and mentor the next generation of women in those fields. The programme is mobilizing business leaders, professionals and women from every sector of the society to walk besides and mentor other women, aged between 21 and 30, who aspire to break into similar fields. The walk will create opportunities for younger women to jump - start their careers and build their character and leadership skills.

"Women Mentoring Women program envisions a community of empowered women living lives worthy of emulation," said Ms. Nyokabi Njuguna, the flag bearer of the WMW Kenya walk and the CEO of Marketing Strategies & Solutions (MSS), a marketing services consultancy firm based in Nairobi. "The program seeks to establish a connection and build a sense of responsibility to the next generation for successful women." She adds.

The initiative is modelled against the Fortune 500/US State Department-in-conjunction with Vital Voices International Women Leaders Mentoring Partnership, which selects and places extraordinary entrepreneurs and business leaders from emerging markets with Fortune 500's most accomplished women in the business world. Ms. Njuguna is an alumnus of this programme.

The walk has so far attracted over 150 executives and professional women and 150 mentees. It will be held in 15 countries on the same day by all the Vital Voices-Fortune 500 programme alumni in their respective countries. Here in Kenya it will be flagged off by the US Deputy Head of Mission.

"There is enough evidence to show that mentoring is an effective platform for creating positive change in the lives of women," said Ms Njuguna. "My personal experience demonstrates that positive, character-building interaction with hardworking, successful women, even for a short period, can create change in life-work balance," said Ms

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1



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Njuguna, who is also an entrepreneur, and an alumna of the Vital Voices/Fortune 500 program. So far five enterprising Kenyan women have been on the program.

A host of volunteers are being mobilised to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the program. Other scheduled activities include separate workshops for the mentees and mentors.

The Annual Mentor's Walk is aimed at building relationships early in a young woman's professional life aimed at laying the groundwork for long-term, meaningful community leadership.

"This will be an annual event that will connect experienced women who are eager to give back, with younger women in mentoring relationships," said Ms Njuguna. She said it would demonstrate the immeasurable value of mentorship in society. "Right now in Kenya and in the Diaspora, there is a large under-utilised pool of talent and resources that can contribute immensely toward inspiring a new cadre of young women leaders through participating in the walk."

This walk concept is a first in Kenya. The idea was borrowed from the successful model of the Oxygen Mentor's Walk - a national program organized by Mrs. Geraldine Laybourne the chairman and CEO of Oxygen Media. Every year since 2005, Mrs. Laybourne organises a walks in New York in the month of June where women mentor other women. The walk has now spread to four other States including Washington and Chicago. In addition to this, she walks for one hour every morning and takes a mentee along with her.

-END-

If you would like to register as a mentee; a sponsor/partner or for more details please write to

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2



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Notes to Editor

About Ms. Nyokabi Njuguna

Nyokabi is the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Marketing Strategies & Solutions (MSS).

In 2007, Nyokabi's extraordinary entrepreneurship and business acumen saw her selected by the US State Department to represent Kenya in a U.S. government-sponsored program dubbed the Fortune 500/State Department International Women Leaders Mentoring Partnership. The program placed 32 selected emerging businesswomen from the around the globe in a mentorship program with Fortune's most acclaimed women leaders in the business world. Ms Nyokabi had the privilege of training under the mentorship of one of America's most powerful women, Ms. Kathleen Vaughan who is an Executive Vice President at Wells Fargo where she leads one of the many financial services companies for the Fortune 100 bank. Other mentors were branding gurus behind the Wells Fargo, Oracle, Sybiel and Morgan Stanley brands.

About the Vital Voices/ FORTUNE/ State Department International Women Leaders Mentoring Partnership

This is a partnership between Vital Voices- Fortunes' powerful women's summit and the US State Department. It is an annual program that serves to promote international women's leadership in business.

Vital Voices Global Partnership is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that identifies, trains, and empowers emerging women leaders and social entrepreneurs around the globe, enabling them to create a better world. Vital Voices honorary chairs include Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison; board of directors Melanne Vermeer [Chair of the Board Former Assistant to the President of the United States and Chief of Staff to the First Lady]; Dina Powell [Director of Global Corporate Engagement, Goldman Sachs]; Mary Yerrick and with Ms Alyse Bloom as President.

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3



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Fortune 500 mentoring partners include Wells Fargo; UCLA's Anderson School of Management; Time Inc; Morgan Stanley; Walmart; Raytheon Missile Systems, Raytheon; Goldman Sachs, GE, ExxonMobil, Motorola among others.

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4



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