

MEET VERONICA

SHE IS A PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR AT FRANCOIS FERREIRA ACADEMY

MY STORY

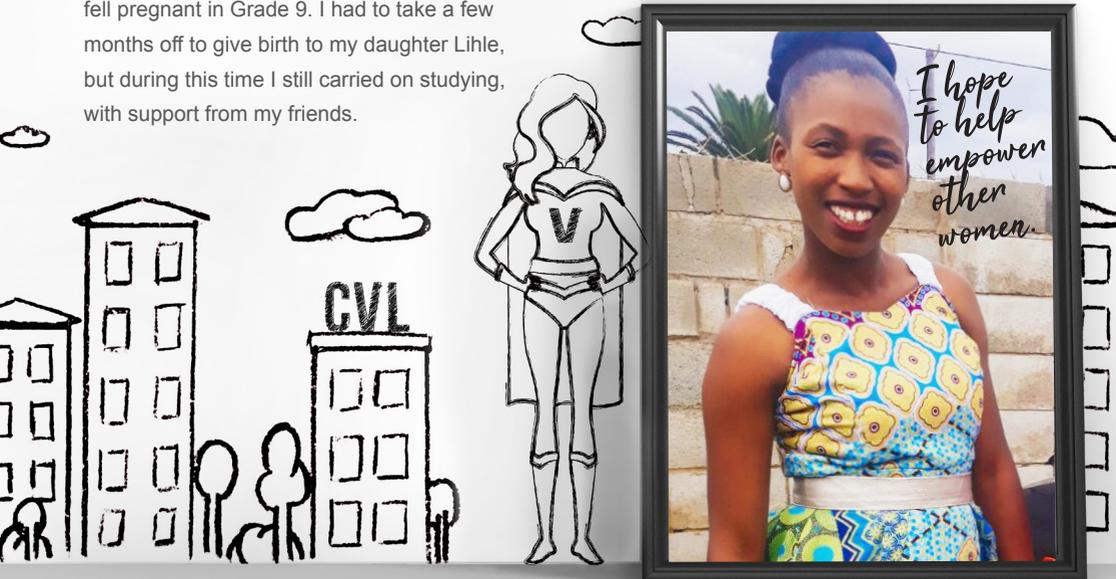
When I was eight months old my mom was murdered by my dad – and so I was raised by my grandmother. Although she was an alcoholic, she took great care of me and I had a pleasant upbringing. When I started primary school she stopped drinking and got a job as a domestic worker, earning R250 every fortnight.

The death of my mother affected my sister academically and socially, I however did my best to continue to secure an education.

Even though I was working hard in school, I fell pregnant in Grade 9. I had to take a few months off to give birth to my daughter Lihle, but during this time I still carried on studying, with support from my friends.

My grandmother stopped working so she could help raise Lihle while I finished high school. At the time our family was living off my grandmother's pension. In 2010 I was preparing to matriculate, and I would be the first in my family to do so. I didn't know, but at the time my grandmother was saving money to surprise me for my matric ball.

After matric I wanted to further my studies but I didn't have the money, so I completed an application for a learnership. I then got a job at Panarottis but after three months I received a call congratulating me on being accepted for the learnership.



POWER OF ONE

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MY FUTURE

In the 12-month Premier's Advancement of Youth (PAY) programme, I got theoretical and practical experience in social development work in a human resources department.

After my learnership ended I couldn't find work for two years and while I was unemployed I fell pregnant with my second child. I was desperately looking for work and took a part-time job waitressing at a hotel. At the same time I was attending a support group called Teen Moms, which provided counselling to single teenage moms and supported us with things like clothes. It was here that I was told about Signa Group learnerships.

I wrote the Signa Group assessments and was accepted. I had all but lost hope for my future, and this news made me ecstatic. In 2016 I started my Business Practice learnership, while also getting workplace experience at Francois Ferreira Academy. On the last day of the learnership, Francois Ferreira Academy management offered me full-time employment as a general administrator and after 11 months they promoted me to project administrator.

HOW MY LIFE HAS CHANGED

I am now the breadwinner at home and I can provide for my two children and my grandmother, even though I am a single mom. After completing the learnership I was offered permanent employment at the Francois Ferreira Academy – and this completely changed my life. I realised that working hard can take you from zero to hero. I am happy where I am, and I am filled with joy.

I love my current work and I just want to grow in the company. At the moment I am trying to get my driver's licence and I'm also studying Electronic Marketing at Unisa. I'm working towards my dream, which is to help other ladies out there, who are experiencing what I have experienced. I want to travel the world empowering and motivating young women who have lost hope and who went through pain, rejection and the loss of loved ones.

MY ADVICE

Believe in yourself no matter what your situation. Do not relax and just accept it – stand up and look for opportunities. Rise! Rise! With faith in God you will achieve the desires of your heart.

WHAT SIGNA MEANS TO ME

Signa is a place of hope, dreams and passions. At a time when I felt hopeless, doubtful and had nearly given up, they believed in me and brought back the passion I had to make a success of myself. I am grateful to Signa for the opportunity I was given to prove myself.

THE POWER OF ONE

Through the Power of One, Veronica has been able to send her two children to school and she believes they will be the next two children in her family to graduate from matric. Veronica has also started an NPO called Claiming Value in Ladies (CVL), where she empowers and motivates women to change their way of thinking in order to be successful, while also living with dignity and self-esteem.