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Stanford Lambert

Hairdresser & Beautician

There's a saying that goes: Find a job you love, and you will never work a single day in your life. Meet Stanford Lambert. Stanford is a Hairdresser and Beautician, a driven and passionate 21-year old man who is making it big in a world dominated by women. This is his story.

Stanford grew up in the streets of Khomasdal, the youngest of four siblings. Asked as to when exactly he became interested in the beauty industry, Stanford laughingly responds that it all came naturally. "Somehow, growing up with my three older sisters and their girlfriends, I always seem to be surrounded by typical girl-talk conversations about the latest hairstyles, cosmetic treatments and nail and body care products. So, I guess you could say that I am the result of my early surroundings.

Regardless, the most important part, I would say, is that I love this world. I believe in my talent. It is my passion", he notes.

The Early Years

After completing his Grade 12 at the Academia High School, Stanford enrolled at the Shadonai Beauty Academy, in the capital. He did so with the full support of his mother and three sisters. "You often hear about friends whose families are pushing them to pursue careers they are not necessarily interested in. I've been really lucky and very fortunate, I guess, as I have had my family's full support and backing from the onset to pursue a career in the beauty industry. What matters to them is that I am happy, doing what I love", a confident Stanford says.



His advice to other young men wishing to enter the beauty industry is equally straightforward. “I have very little understanding of parents who saddle their kids with expectations that are really none of their business. You only have to answer to yourself. If it’s what you want to do and you know it’ll make you happy, then do it. Women are entering male-dominated areas. So, men too can enter female-dominated areas”, he says.

A Busy World

Although Stanford graduated as a qualified Beauty and Massage Therapist, he specialises today as a Hairdresser at the Shadonai Beauty Academy’s salon. He has over a relatively short period of time build up a sizeable clientele, and is well known for his skill in cutting the hair of men. “Yes, I have my male clients that always come back, as they trust

no one else to give them haircuts. But, what is so interesting about my job is that I am not limited to haircuts and trims only. I perform a variety of different tasks in the course of a working day, including conducting skin analyses, advising clients on skin and body care, performing facial or body massage and treatments, including spa therapy, reflexology and aromatherapy. This is also sometimes extended into nail and hair treatment”, he explains.

A normal working day for Stanford starts at eight o’clock and sometimes can continue until late into the evenings. “Although clients make appointments, you never know what lies ahead. A day at the office can include all three aspects of my training - hairstyling, doing nails and massages. It can be physically taxing and as such I make it a point to stay fit and healthy. It’s all about being on your feet for long periods, good

hand-eye coordination and steady hands”, Stanford shares.

Client Service

The beauty industry is a cutthroat environment. You have one opportunity to live up to a new client’s unique expectations. It’s all about grabbing the opportunity. If you don’t, you lose out on a customer. “The saying that you are only as good as your last job rings true, as dissatisfied or difficult clients prove to be challenging especially when it comes to hair and nails jobs. Comebacks clients and extending your clientele base has its fair amount of constraints. Injuries such as cuts or burns can also be a hindrance”, Stanford relates.

Stanford is passionate about what he does. His infectious enthusiasm for service and the support he gets from family, friends and peers motivate him to grow and achieve

more. “My mother and family have always been a pillar of support and strength especially with regards to encouraging him to go forth in a female-dominated industry. I base the core of my strength in Christ and I’m a strong believer in the church and its teachings. My colleagues are also a source of encouragement for me to continue in the trade and foster on”, he says.

Growth

The international cosmetics and beauty industry has always been a multi-billion dollar industry.

Africa has become the new frontier and international companies are investing millions into penetrating the African market with their product and service offerings. In turn, this creates opportunity for skilled practitioners such as Stanford to render such services.

“Doing what I do, I contribute to the growth of the industry, in the sense of rendering a service to clients who appreciate and value what I do. I am able to take care of myself and I am contributing to the upkeep of my family home, which has many returns of its own”, he notes.

Future Plans

Stanford has ambitious plans. He, one day, wishes to open his own beauty establishment that will offer a comprehensive service package to clients. He realises that he is operating in a very competitive market and that a successful transition will require him to acquire solid business management skills.

But, for now, Stanford is making the most of his opportunity to work at Shadonai, an established and leading service provider in the local beauty and cosmetics industry. More importantly, he embraces the fact that his choice to take up a career in a female-dominated industry is inspiring other young men to do the same – a role he is more than willing to play. “If you’re worrying about getting hired because you’re a man, you shouldn’t. Yeah, cosmetology is always gonna be a female-heavy profession, but it’s not that men aren’t welcome. They just usually choose something else. And hey, not for nothing here, but being the only man surrounded by tons of women is not always a bad thing. Plenty of dudes I know would love to be in that situation. In theory, anyhow”, he says.

Stanford Lambert - A man of many talents, a trailblazer, a torchbearer. His story teaches us that while we encourage girl children to enter male-dominated areas, we should equally support more boy children to consider career options in female-dominated areas. More importantly, that providing our children, regardless of gender, with the best opportunity for bright and fulfilling work, should always be the priority. That parents should support their children to pursue their own dreams, and not their dreams for their children. For some children, it may be the thrill to make a new scientific discovery or designing a new technology. For others, it may be the satisfaction and passion to give comfort and care. Stanford has opted for the latter. He is living his passion. And his family and peers are living his passion with him.

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