

I am currently a second year law student at the University of Zimbabwe and a youth leader for nutrition (YLFN) with the Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Network (SUNCSN) at global level and working in country with the Zimbabwe Civil Society Organizations Scaling Up Nutrition Alliance (ZCSOSUNA). In my role as YLFN the work that I do revolves around advocacy and lobbying for nutrition related issues at global level, this involves attending conferences, high level meetings, visiting key decision makers, world leaders and governments. At a local level my role as a YLFN involves mobilizing fellow young people to engage in nutrition related issues, and also lending a youthful perspective to the local actors and organizations that are calling for nutrition related financing in government, school feeding programs reform, breastfeeding awareness campaigns and community capacity building.















Women's nutrition is especially of real important because there are the portals of life. No one on this Earth cannot say I was not born by a woman, and for the reason making sure that all women and girls maintain healthy lives and eating nutritiously is key. Which is why in the community projects I did last year were focused on the adolescents especially girls, because I believe making sure that the girl child is healthy can make us achieve zero stunting, zero malnutrition by 2030, as healthy girls will grow up to be healthy women who will give birth to healthier babies, doing away with the current generational trend of malnutrition. Being an African learning from oral history and folktales of the great heroines and queens like Mbuya Nehanda, Yaa Asantewa, Queen Yennenga, Queen Nefertiti, Queen Nzinga, Empress Taitu. So, having such great examples of women warriors and queens who helped their kingdoms do showcase the role of women in fighting malnutrition and also that for most people the earliest memory of food is equally synonymous to mother.

I have been advocating for nutrition for over four years now as I started fighting for the cause in 2017. The reason why I chose engage in medical advocacy is mainly because of the pivotal role health plays in people's live; particularly how what we eat influences the make up of our bodies and its immune system.



I currently lead programming under the sports for development charity Lift4Life Worldwide. Lift4Life empowers marginalized communities through strength training and the sport of powerlifting. Powerlifting is composed of the squat, bench press, and deadlift, and is a low-cost accessible sport to build community and connect people around the world. It's a sport for all ages, weight classes, genders, and abilities.

I got involved in the work through my Master's Thesis research back in 2016 – as a Team Canada powerlifter myself, I was interested in learning more about how grassroots lifting, and gyms could be used as an avenue to provide humanitarian assistance and create positive community change. A small research study turned into what I consider my calling, and what I now pour my energy into.













Under Lift4Life, I've opened up a number of community gyms in Zimbabwe, as well as one community gym in the small country of Lesotho. All gym equipment is all built locally using local materials to provide employment and livelihood opportunities, and then donated and developed into a community space that is open to everyone. I have also recognized the need in my own back yard of Canada and over the past couple years expanded my work locally including running free strength training classes for girls in my local community.

A whole community approach is taken within the work, and local lifters are empowered to take on projects that are important to them to ensure sustainability. Developed powerlifting programming is evidence based in addresses community needs including substance and drug abuse as a drug free sport, nutrition and healthy eating, fostering the empowerment of women, facilitating education and development opportunities, providing employment, promoting health and so much more.

During COVID-19 the community gym space took an even more important role, and included incorporating distanced educational classes, developing community gardens for physical activity and ensuring access to nutrition, as well as starting community chicken farms to create employment and address hunger in the community.





Growing up in Calgary, Canada, I loved playing sports and I many different opportunities to excel. I've been jumping, running and playing as long as I can remember! But I recognized from a young age that not every girl around the world had the kinds of opportunities I did, nor the access to health and health care I had. For example, when I got a concussion I went to the hospital, when I was hungry I had a fridge full of food at home and there was always oranges at my soccer games. For many around the world, this is not the reality.

Sports, health, and nutrition played a special role in my life and allowed me to excel. Sports gave me confidence, travel opportunities, friends and a support system, was beneficial to both my mental and physical health. I wanted other girls around the world to have these opportunities and experiences as well.

While I've always been passionate about sports and helping others, I've been formally running Lift4Life for 5 years now. I see no end in sight, and beyond actual programming I continue to learn, lift, as well as speak at conferences and share research and findings to promote the use of strength sports for positive change.











My biggest inspiration comes from everyday people I meet who are breaking barriers + being the strongest version of themselves.

A key inspiration has been my friend in Zimbabwe, Audrey Svongwa. I met her when I was doing my Master's thesis research while living in her community for a time. She is a 35-year-old working single mother, who lives in a marginalized community with a lack of running water and electricity. But regardless nothing is a barrier to her, and she uses her strength to better her community.

Audrey took an interest in powerlifting and was inspired to get involved. What started out as not being able to lift a barbell, has turned into Audrey being a founding member of the Zimbabwe Powerlifting Federation and first Zimbabwe female powerlifter to compete internationally. She recently won a gold medal in the bench press, and continues to pursue leadership opportunities within the sport and support the sport's growth on the ground. Audrey volunteers her time and gives back to her local community, including coaching and organizing multiple youth training sessions a week. This past year she even helped set up a mobile gym in Zimbabwe where she uses a van to transport equipment from community to community to share the benefits of sport with others. The passion and leadership of others around me such as Audrey inspires me. Everyday people doing more than they ever thought possible











Fuelling myself appropriately has allowed me to achieve things I never thought I would be able to achieve. When I take care of my body and give it the nutrients it needs, my body is able to do things I never thought possible.

My own nutrition has shown me the value of nutrition, and importance of it in every aspect of our lives. Nutrition is an important piece of my sport for development work, as without proper nutrition and access to food the young athletes I work with wouldn't be able to train to their full ability, and fully recover from the activities.

I love simple meals that are quick and easy, but that have lots of protein and carbs to keep me fuelled and recovering. I've attached one of my go-to healthy recipes that is simple and easy to make. The recipe is also large enough to share with a friend or loved one.

See the right for the Chicken Pineapple Salad Pockets recipe!

- 1 cup diced cooked chicken breast
- ½ cup diced pineapple, fresh or canned
- 1/2 cup diced cucumber
- 1/4 cup shredded carrot 1 scallion, white and green
- parts, chopped 3 tablespoons fat-free plain yogurt
- 2 tablespoons slivered almonds Pinch sea salt
- Pinch freshly ground
- black pepper
- 1 cup shredded lettuce 2 (6-inch) whole-wheat pitas, halved

- 1. In a large bowl, mix the chicken, pineapple, cucumber, carrot, scallion, yogurt, almonds, salt, and pepper until well combined.
- 2. Divide the lettuce evenly between the 4 pita halves.
- 3. Spoon the chicken mixture into the pita halves and serve 2 halves

TIP: Making this tempting sandwich dairy-free is as easy as swapping the Greek yogurt with a soy, rice, or coconut yogurt substitute. Vanilla yogurt (either milk-based or vegan) is also a nice choice for a



Calories: 392 Fat: 7.4g Saturated fat: 0.0g Protein: 33.6g Carbohydrates: 50.6g Sodium: 577g Fiber: 7.1g Sugar: 11.9g













