

Interview with three young women who created the BC Girls podcast

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Clockwise, from top left: Akane Ueda, Natascha Phillips, Matogba Nelson, and Han Phil Olgado

Matogba Nelson, Akane Ueda and Han Phil Olgado are the founders of BC Girls, a new podcast with the mission to "create a better version of yourself." Based in New Jersey, these young ladies felt inspired to contribute positively to society by engaging in valuable and timely discussions. They kindly agreed to an interview with WFWP USA and shared about the vision behind their podcast, as well as Black History Month, the focus of their latest episode. You can listen to their podcast on [Spotify](#) or [YouTube](#).

Could you please introduce yourselves?

Akane: I'm a graphic designer. I graduated in December [2020] and am currently freelancing.

Han Phil: I'm 22 and I'm majoring in family science and human development, which [is applicable] for fields like education, psychology and counseling. I'm currently working with kids at a private daycare center and that is my passion.

Matogba: I recently graduated [last] spring and right now I have a part-time job. I studied music performance, specifically singing. I was part of an all-female singing group, and we traveled and performed at many different events.

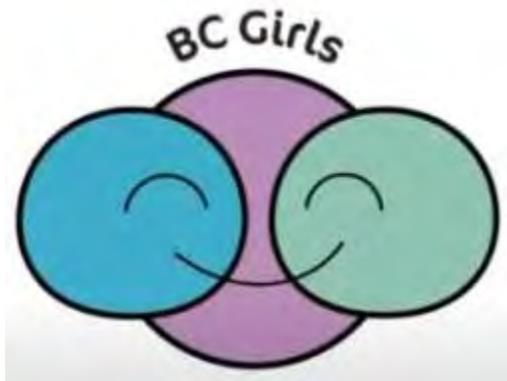
How did you meet and decide to start this podcast together?

Matogba: We are childhood friends. I met Akane first and then Han Phil a bit later. We all met in New Jersey. I initially came up with the idea of BC Girls when I was 14. I wanted it to be a little club that we did at my church youth program, where we could talk about our beliefs and relevant topics. I brought it up

with my friends and we've really been developing it since that time. So this has been a long time in the making. We had more friends that originally wanted to be part of this project, but [...] it ended up being the three of us who continued pushing through with it.

Akane and Han Phil, what made you stick with the project?

Akane: I'm an introvert. I watch videos on YouTube and feel very inspired watching creative people using their gifts. I wanted to do that too, and then this opportunity came. It felt fun and I also wanted to help others. At my university, I had to do a portfolio as a graphic designer, and I wanted to use BC Girls as one of the projects.



So in a way that helped revive and kickstart this project, right?

Matogba: That really helped us push forward and focus on what we want this to really be about now, evolving it from this little club to something bigger and more impactful.

Han Phil: Throughout the years that we've known each other, we would meet up once and then not see each other for months. But we managed to keep in contact. I was the one who was more reluctant doing it because I was uncomfortable being in the spotlight. I've seen a lot of YouTube creators, and I thought it was cool, but I never thought I could do it myself. [Matogba and Akane] really encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone and I discovered there was something I could also contribute.

What would you say is the mission or purpose of your podcast?

Matogba: We always end our videos with "BC Girls - creating a better version of yourself." Essentially we wanted to share our lifestyle, meaning a principled life with God. We wanted to show that through YouTube, but because of Covid we had to change our plans and turn it into a podcast. I think the best way to witness [about your faith] is to live by the ideals you stand for. Most people are craving that high moral standard, but don't have an example in their lives of what that looks like, so that's what we want to bring in. We have these conversations about self-love or Black History Month, to see these topics from a more God-centered point of view. We're still growing and we're not perfect, but we want to get to that place where we give people encouragement and help them see life in a more positive light.

What goes into the planning of the episodes and do you have a set schedule?

Akane: We have a list of topics on a Word document, and when we plan content for our next episode, we look through the list and think about which one would fit, depending on what's going on in the world. For example, right now it's Black History Month. For now, [we are releasing] bi-weekly episodes. Editing

everything takes time and we're all busy.

Speaking of your most recent episode, why do you think it's important to celebrate Black History Month?

Han Phil: For me, it's about continuously being educated about culture and the current history. You can't stay in your own bubble and not understand what's going on in the world. The more you are able to understand about other cultures, the more you are able to get along and get to know others better.

Matogba: Growing up as African-American, this was always present in my life. I think it's about taking ownership and responsibility for our history. It's very important as a country that we recognize those who came before us. We don't really get to study a lot of the great things that Black people have done for this country, and instead we're taught about slavery from a very young age. Although it's important to learn about that, it shouldn't be the only thing. It's important to know how we've pushed through, even when the odds were against us. It's important for others too; they can see how we persevered and be encouraged in whatever they're going through as a country.

Akane: To me, it's more about knowing the truth. Like I mentioned [in the podcast] about Rosa Parks, sadly I was lied to in elementary school and heard that she was in the wrong [by sitting in the white section of the bus], but she really didn't do anything wrong. She just stood up for herself. Only in college did I learn the truth. I want people to educate themselves on what really happened instead of believing what they want.



In your episode on Black History Month, you highlighted certain individuals such as Rosa Parks. Do you have any personal heroes or examples to live by?

Matogba: For me, personally, it's Beyoncé. She is somebody who is bringing Black art to the forefront and is currently making history in areas where people wouldn't normally look. For example, she did a Vogue magazine interview [and requested a specific photographer], and never before had there been a black photographer taking pictures for Vogue. I didn't even know that was a thing, and Vogue is supposed

to be all-inclusive with designers of different races and backgrounds. Recently, with her film "Black is King", she really helped open the doors for people to want to connect to their African roots. She went to different countries in Africa to film, and showed very beautiful images. So that is history currently being made and especially relevant for me as an aspiring singer.

Han Phil: I wouldn't say she's a personal hero, but I once listened to an empowerment speech by Oprah Winfrey. She was talking about how she got a specific role in a movie and the emotional and physical challenges she went through. Her role in the movie was similar to what she wanted to achieve, and I thought it was really inspiring.

Akane: I respect Naomi Osaka, the tennis player, very much. She is Japanese, but also of African American descent. Racism exists in Japan, and I respect that she is very confident in herself as a player, but she is also expressing her two different cultures.

Finally, what would be your message of hope for the future? What things are improving for you as young women today?

Matogba: One thing is the general improvement of women and our roles in society. Women used to just take care of the children and the house, and now we're seeing more women stepping up and getting into positions like the vice presidency. Even that is history being made.

Our involvement in society is what's improving and we'll see more of that reflected in our daily lives. I think of my mother and she's the breadwinner of our family. I think of the example of [WFWP Co-Founder] Mother Moon, who grew up during a time period when women were behind the scenes. She had to grow up and push through that, and now in her later years she is leading a global movement and she is doing it so eloquently and with so much love and heart. It really feels like a mother leading us into a new world. Seeing her as an example is also very precious. We don't have many examples of mother figures like her. She is really helping to pave the way for women to step up.

Han Phil: I'm hopeful for the youth that are growing up in this age. Social media has such a big influence on them, and I have seen a lot of good impact through women encouraging young girls to look at themselves with value and self-esteem. Social media can be good or bad, and I'm really just hoping that people will educate themselves. You can have your own opinions and ask, is this really true to me? People can build their own opinion and not just accept what an authority figure says blindly.

Akane: I feel like the younger generation sees what's wrong and knows how to make things right. I want younger people to have the motivation to do what's right peacefully and also have the mindset that they have to take responsibility to make this world a better place. They have to be leaders. For those who think women shouldn't be in power, I want them to understand that gender doesn't matter; if they are a good leader, then people will follow.