



# young citizen



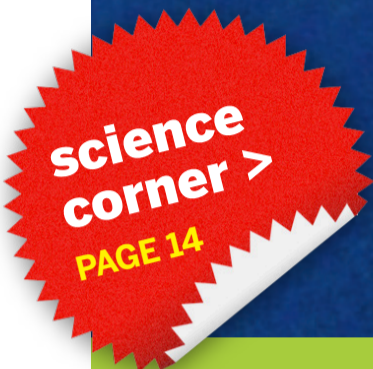
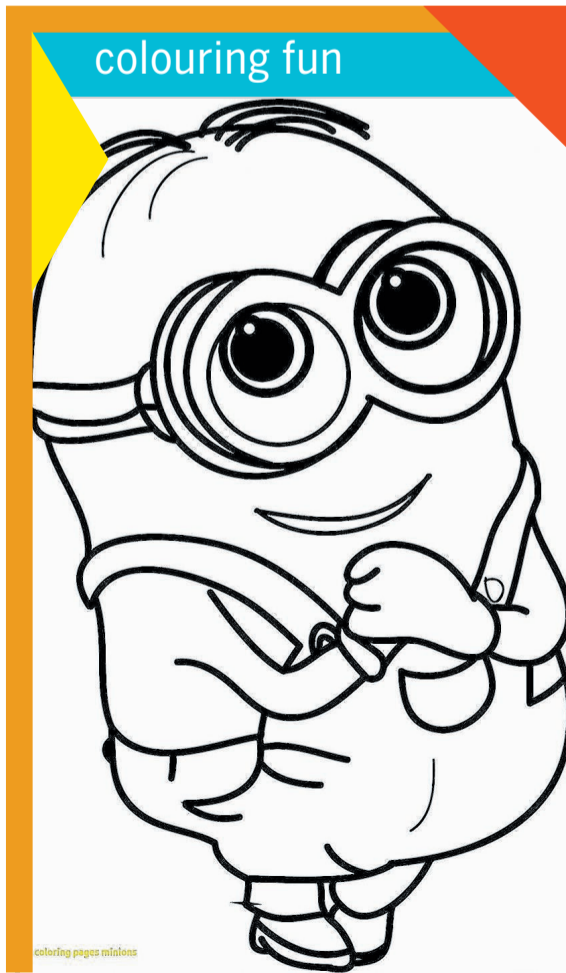
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## Alena Analeigh- going to state uni for STEM at 12

By Diana Elinam

Lately, we have seen growth in the number of young scientists including young girls.

In Africa and in Tanzania we have witnessed several organizations that have come into existence to empower Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). These organizations have brought camps and clubs that have programs that equip young and aspiring scientists with more knowledge in STEM.

Meet 12-year-old Alena Analeigh, who will be joining the Arizona State University to do a double major degree in Bachelor of Science in Astronomical and Planetary Science and Chemistry. Alena has had her eyes set on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) since she was 4-years-old.

*Young Citizen* approached Ms Daphne McQuater to speak about her daughter and she had this to say: "Alena has always stood out and been different. From a young age I always noticed how differently she did things. She's always been a free spirited child and as she got older, I encouraged that."

"She has always had an obsession for Legos which I thought was just a phase. She started building them when she was about 3 or 4-years-old. As she got older, she would ask for bigger sets to challenge herself" says Daphne.

"At that point I just knew she would



do something in science. I wasn't quite sure what but she always told me she wanted to work for NASA. In addition to her love of Legos she loves stars. She would sit outside and just stare at the stars. I started taking her to different events such as astronomers' night. To this day I have watched her love and passion grow."

We spoke with Alena who after the Texas snow storm, has been able to get back to her assignments and studies.

She had this to say to us:

**YC:** Tell us about your journey and what inspired you to focus on science?

**A:** I have always had a passion and love for science, I always loved Legos and creating things. I want to work for NASA. My desire is to be an engineer on the Mars Space Mission.

**YC:** Do you watch TV? If yes what's your favorite show if not? How do you manage that?

**A:** I don't watch TV much. I love to read instead.

**YC:** How do you balance normal daily life activities with your studies?

**A:** I keep myself on a pretty strict schedule with school.

**YC:** Are you excited to go to college? Tell us about the course you will be pursuing.

**A:** I am very excited to go to college. I will be doing a double major in Astronomical and Planetary Science & Chemistry

**YC:** What are your aspirations?

**A:** My desire is to work for NASA; I also desire to create a platform for other girls of color in STEM

**YC:** Who inspires you?

**A:** My mom inspires me. She's always been my biggest supporter.

**YC:** What can you say to kids who have big dreams but fear because they are young?

**A:** My advice would be to never stop dreaming when people tell you that you can't do it. The best thing you can do is show them that you can. Work hard, do good in life and always remember integrity matters. Always put Faith over Fear.

**Managing Editor**  
Mpoki Thomson

**Sub-Editor**  
Lucy Tomeka

**Contributors**  
Anwar Aliamin  
Diana Elinam

**Graphics Designer**  
Rajabu Kanju