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According to the World Health Organisation, there have been over 430 000 malaria deaths in 2015 – so far. Almost half the world's population is considered at risk of contracting the disease, and our region, sub-Saharan Africa, was home to 89% of all malaria cases and 91% of malaria deaths in 2015. Thankfully, malaria is treatable, but early diagnosis is key. This is where innovations like reliable, fast and affordable testing kits can help – just like those developed by scientist and business owner Ashley Uys.

#### Serial success

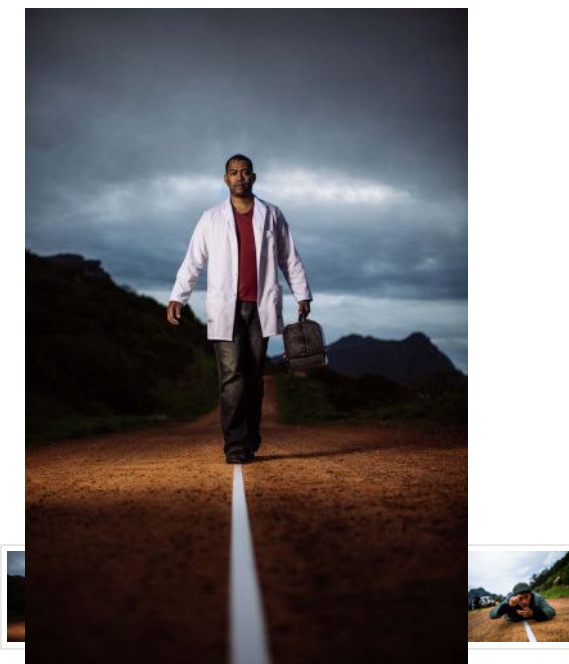
Ashley's company [Medical Diagnostech](#) manufacture these tests, as well as others for detecting the presence of drugs, the HI virus, and to confirm pregnancy. If that isn't impressive enough, consider that this is only one of this serial entrepreneur's three medical innovation-related companies, and he is only 33 years old. In fact, Ashley founded his first company, [Real World Diagnostics](#), in 2006 at just 24.

#### Titles galore

It is these kinds of achievements that have landed Ashley the recognition of being 21 Icons's latest portrait and short film subject, as well as a host of other titles and honours. In addition to his BSc Honours degree in Biotechnology and a Wits University management development programme certificate, Ashley won the South African Breweries Social Innovation Award in 2012, was named the Western Cape Business Opportunities Forum (WECBOF) Young Entrepreneur of 2010. He has also been featured in the *Forbes* Top 30 under 30 and the *Mail & Guardian's* 200 Young South Africans.

#### Locally made and priced

Not bad for a young guy from *iKapa*, hey? Ashley's companies produce homegrown solutions for local issues, and with the local budget in mind. Yes, one of the most impressive attributes of these products is their pricing point. Instead of slapping on huge mark-ups, Ashley believes his products must be within reach of those who most need them.



### Inspirational Icon

In the opening sequence of his 21 Icons short film, Ashley says he felt the need to set an example as the oldest of six children in his family. Moreover, he has set an example for every young South African. The 21 Icons project is a film and photographic initiative that commemorates South African leaders and 'showcase[s] the pivotal moments of South Africa's nation-building journey'.

This season is titled 'The Future of a Nation', and it shines a spotlight on our youth leaders under the age of 35. You can connect with 21 Icons on Twitter, @21Icons, or with the hashtag #OurFutureIsNow

**For more coverage, check out our stories on the third season so far:**

- [Michaela Mycroft](#)
- [Ludwick Marishane](#)
- [Thato Kgatlhanye](#)
- [Laduma Ngxokolo](#)
- [Catherine Constantinides](#)
- [Lucas Sithole](#)
- [Thulani Madondo](#)
- [Jes Foord](#)
- [Athi-Patra Ruga](#)
- Photographer [Gary van Wyk](#)

See [21icons.com](http://21icons.com) for more.

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**21 Icons celebrates Jes Foord**

Rape survivor and activist Jes Foord has turned her experience of sexual violence into a beacon of hope for others.



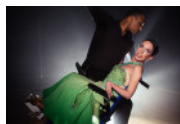
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**21 Icons celebrates Laduma Ngxokolo**

Xhosa-inspired design has landed textile designer Laduma Ngxokolo some major global wins, and a #21Icons portrait too.



**lifestyle**  
**21 Icons celebrates Ludwick Marishane**

21 Icons's Ludwick Marishane shows vision and drive as SA's youngest patent holder, and a successful entrepreneur by 25.



**lifestyle**  
**21 Icons celebrates Michaela Mycroft**

The ninth 21 Icons portrait (Season III) features ballroom-dancing, mountain-climbing ability activist Michaela Mycroft. #ourfutureisnow

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