

# #InternationalWomensDay - Form, Function and Joy With Hyundai Motor's Olabisi Boyle

*Auto Futures*

In celebration of International Women's Day, Auto Futures is profiling an international woman executive working on the cutting edge of mobility technology - Olabisi Boyle, Vice President of product planning and mobility strategy for Hyundai Motor North America.

Boyle offered insights into her work at Hyundai and the future of mobility. She advises women and others who want to work in the mobility space.

## **From Nigeria to Harlem to Detroit**

Boyle described her early years. "I am originally from Lagos, Nigeria. I grew up there till I was ten. When my parents divorced, my mom brought my brother and I back to New York. I grew up in Harlem, New York."

She holds a Bachelor of Science in physics from Fordham University. She earned a Bachelor of Science in industrial engineering and a Master of Science in mechanical engineering from Columbia University.

"I went to school in New York. First, I started working at IBM in New York and then went back to grad school," says Boyle.

She was mainly doing electrical engineering and computer science.

"I wanted to get more hands-on and do mechanical engineering. Then Ford hired us (she and her husband). We moved to Ford and got into the auto industry."





## **Form + Function = Beauty**

What Boyle loves about the auto industry is the perfect combination of form and function.

"On the stylistic side, you design a beautiful vehicle. Then you also have the function, you have to have the AR (all-electric range), or you have to have best-in-class charging or you have to have this much horsepower. The function piece is married to a beautiful design-the form piece. I came to really appreciate the auto industry," she says.

"You have deliverables that you have to meet and targets that you have to meet from a functional standpoint. You also get to choose the colours of the vehicle and the design of the vehicle and the shape of the vehicle. That combination of performance and function---the car industry brings that together the best," she adds.

Boyle spent over twenty years in the automotive industry serving in leadership roles in engineering, product strategy, and manufacturing at Fiat Chrysler Automobiles and Ford Motor company.

She was the chief engineer for Chrysler Town & Country and Dodge Grand Caravan Minivans. The Dodge Caravan is well-liked for being able to carry a standard plywood board which was part of the function strategy.

"That's the thing about function. That was one of our technical targets to see if you can fit a standard four-by-eight plywood in when you stow those seats and fold the floor flat. It was one of the things we measured. That's understanding the customer what they use and how big that cargo space needs to be to accommodate their use of the vehicle. That was a very specific target," says Boyle.

She describes Genesis vehicles as beautiful examples of design and performance.

"Our Genesis vehicles, to me, are the ultimate marriage of design and function. They are just gorgeous to look at. They also perform from a safety aspect and from a performance aspect. They bring that together harmoniously."





## **Current Hyundai Projects**

Boyle described her job at Hyundai, "I lead the product and mobility team. Our goal is to ensure that our Hyundai and Genesis products are the most competitive in North America."

She also leads Mobility, Electrification, Connectivity, and Autonomous (MECA)

"These initiatives will support Hyundai's transition to this smart mobility company. We will have new EV sales models. We will have new infrastructure partnerships and technology for the journey to electrification," says Boyle.

She reports that Hyundai is building electric vehicles using the EGMP, Electric, Global Modular Platform, a dedicated platform for electrification.

Last year Hyundai successfully launched the IONIQ 5. It won many awards using the EGMP platform.

"We will launch the IONIQ 6, a mid-sized sedan. We hope to do as well as IONIQ 5 in what we have done from a form function."

"The IONIQ 6 is streamlined and beautiful and very aerodynamic. The IONIQ 5 has over 300-mile AR. Now the IONIQ 6 is over 360 miles on that same platform. It's got the form. It's beautiful, and it's got the function," she says.

She also talked about the IONIQ 7, XRT Line, and performance models. She reported that the EVOLVE+ electric vehicle subscription service only requires credit for using the vehicle for 28 days at a time for up to a year.



## **Advice to Women And Others**

Before starting at Hyundai in 2020, Boyle was the vice president of connected commerce at Visa.

"One of the reasons that I was convinced to leave Visa (which I enjoyed) to come back to work in the auto industry--- was you just don't see a lot of vice presidents of product and mobility that look like me. It is important for women that are coming to the industry to show that they can be seen. They can be seen in their full selves," she says.

"I felt at this point in my career, I should work as an example--- show that you bring your competence and dedication and hard work.--show that you can be seen and that you can make a difference."

Being a woman in a predominantly male industry can be a big challenge. She gives advice for women in any predominantly male industry, such as auto, tech and finance, "It is important to stay strong by ensuring you are built up and never puffed up."

"To be built up, do your homework, make sure you are prepared and educated on the topic and work

to persevere and remain resilient and positive in all these situations. Because once you're built up, you will be able to allow your competence and your excellence to speak for you while you're going through any tough times," she recommends.

"If you work to hold on to your peace, you'll always be on your best game," she adds. "You want to come in every day, show up with the right attitude in the sunshine and the rain."

## **Disruption And the Future of Mobility**

She is excited to be in the mobility space at Hyundai, mentioning Hyundai's dedication to driver safety, autonomous driving, Urban Air Mobility and connected vehicles.

"It's a real inflexion point, and an opportunity to be disruptive in the auto industry. It's a really good time for females, girls, men, women, boys, everybody to be excited about the auto industry."

"Auto is not only old school - it is involved in the new exciting tech of the future and with our journey to electrification, the connectivity in the car, software-defined vehicles versus hardware-defined vehicles, getting autonomous to where it is accepted. This is one of the most exciting places to be. We have so many opportunities," she says.



**Joy x Joy = More Joy**

Boyle notes showing up and being positive is a choice. "When I say you show up, that means you have to make a decision. It is a choice. You have to show up there even if it is raining - positive, smiling and resilient."

Currently, she is enjoying driving a Genesis GV 80 with her eight-pound Shi-Poo and Labrador. She confided that one of her friends from Ford recently also bought a Genesis GV 80.

The meaning of her name aligns with her job and goals. "My name Olabisi is Yoruba and means 'joy multiplied.'"

During the pandemic, she made a painting of all her inspirational sayings.

She describes the painting this way: "When you stand way back away, it is a 48" by 48" blank canvas. Then you see, it's a big pink circle. In the middle of the picture, it says joy, and then outside the pink circle - everything is in blue. When you get up close to it - it has all these little squares where you can see all the things I've said over the last 30 years. Hopefully it brings some joy. Then when you stand away from it, it's just a pink circle with the words joy in it...Joy is multiplied," she concludes.