## TRAILBLAZE THAT!

AND KEEPING IT REAL AT THE SAME TIME

At the age of 27, Balini Naidoo is a talented young fashion designer who has created a fashion range to help improve the lives of others. Balini's clothing line, with the use of a Braille identification system printed on each item, assists the visually impaired in identifying what they are putting on. 'I believe that what we do for ourselves dies with us, but what we do for others lives on forever,' she says. After obtaining a Bachelor's degree (cum laude) in fashion design at DUT, she decided that she wanted to do more than just design pretty clothes and rather use her abilities as a fashion designer to 'give back and inspire people' and to push boundaries to change the way people think. Having a blind family member and knowing the daily struggles they face was the inspiration behind her range. Looking ahead, Balini says, 'My future aspirations are to encourage more designers to think out of the box and use design to address some of Africa's challenges.' This year she will be launching her online store at balini.co.za, making her range available to local and





of the SOL-SOL clothing brand yet, check it out. This sleek, simple and stylish menswear label is all thanks to the ingenuity of 32-year-old Capetonian clothing designer Mathew Kieser. His brand can be described as good-quality. basic streetwear, and it's even being sold in Thailand and the UK right now. Luckily for us, there's an entire shop dedicated to SOL-SOL in Cape Town: Orphan Street Clothing Shop, which Mathew opened in 2017. Developing his brand into what it is today, and opening his own shop, has been his passion project for the past few years and he attributes his success to 'Lots of hard work, lots of mistakes, lots of people putting faith in me and me returning that favour to other people. It's incredible what you can achieve being polite and working hard.' But now he just enjoys riding his bicycle as often as possible ('Yup, I'm that guy now,' he says) and hanging out with his wife and their two pets. In 2019, he hopes to continue growing his brand both locally and

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old. Although she just graduated with a degree in speech and language therapy, she has a unique hobby that many of us would never even dream of trying. While the rest of us are letting off steam at the beach or cinema, you'll most likely find Aqeelah behind the wheel of a car, burning some rubber with her mean drifting and wheelspinning skills. She got into it at age 14, while sitting in the passenger seat and watching her uncles do it. Then she convinced her dad to let her try it, and she owned it. Since then, she's joined a team called the Drift Squad and participates in events with them. 'I love the adrenaline rush it gives me and the crowd's reaction when they see a female coming on to the pitch. I always feel that I need to prove myself because some people might not think I can do it,' she says. Being able to do this unique sport gives her a whole other identity. As she says, 'I'm a very shy person and when I'm on the pitch, it allows me to become more confident in myself.' She also loves it because it brings people together and offers her a great support system. This year, however, she wants to focus on her career and make a difference in people's lives through that. Also, she says, 'I'd like to make everyone who believes in me proud and show them that I can be independent.' X

