

# CONNECT, INSPIRE, AND LEAD



**Who She Is – [Ivana Alvares-Marshall](#).** Among the many impressive hats she wears, she is a pilot for a corporate company based in [Malawi](#); the founder and first Governor of the African Section of Ninety Nines International Organization of Women Pilots (the “99s”); Founder of Girls Wings for Africa Project & STEM; a member of [the Department For Transport UK Aviation Ambassadors Group](#), which is working to build the pipeline of skilled, diverse, and sustainable workforce for the aviation industry; and a Global Goodwill Ambassador.

**[Why You Should Listen to Her](#)** – Ivana is a profound proponent of bringing men AND women into the aviation industry within Africa and is an advocate for both the aviation industry and STEM. She is humble about her accomplishments and her smile and laugh quickly puts people at ease. She dreamed of becoming a pilot since the age of 10 and worked on three continents as a pilot. Unlike the female pilots in North America or Europe, the number of female pilots in Africa is minimal – approximately 1%. While inspired by women in the industry, it was the men who welcomed her and continue to support her career.

In our podcast, we speak about Ivana’s path to leadership that is forged upon letting go of her fears and pushing herself out of her comfort zone. As a child, she was bullied and overcame her concern about being the sole woman in her flight class because the men were supportive. While she was initially hesitant to organize a flying event, doing so enabled her to realize this was a previous untapped skill that caused people in the industry to take notice of her leadership skills. From a work perspective, she let go of a path that was no longer working and through connections, found her current path. She reflects on discomfort being temporary and how it is important to see the situation from a long-term perspective: When one door closes, another opens.

She speaks about sisterhood, particularly in Africa and the unique issues that people face on the Continent that bring everyone together to lift one another up. She speaks about the STEM activities in Malawi as well as the forthcoming women’s pilot conference that will be held in Tanzania during 2024 that includes a safari – If IAWA members want to join or speak, please contact Ivana!

We also speak directly about how education is a privilege and not a right and addressing this is critical to ensuring that women join the aviation industry in Africa.

**How You Can Apply Her Wisdom To Your Career** – A few of the take-aways to contemplate:

- How are you pushing yourself outside of comfort zone?
- What are you doing to develop your support system, including men in addition to women?
- How are you looking forward to new opportunities and walking through the other door?
- Through your actions, how can you foster sisterhood within and throughout the industry?

