

## KIARA KABUKURU

Ugandan-born Kiara Kabukuru and her family fled the country as political refugees when she was six and moved to Los Angeles, where at the age of seventeen she was discovered by a local photographer. Her rare mix of all-American beauty and exotic African allure have made her a successful model in the fashion industry.

From the moment she began modeling, Kiara's consummate professionalism, youthful joie de vivre and soulful expression have attracted the industry's most esteemed photographers and designers including Steven Meisel, Paolo Roversi, Gucci and Versace.

Kiara has graced the cover of *Vogue* and was nominated as VH1's model of the year. She has made appearances on the Oprah Winfrey Show and America's Next Top Model and made commercials for Victoria's Secret and enjoyed multiple contracts with both L'oreal and Covergirl.

In 2000, her career as a fashion model was reaching new heights when she suffered a horrific bicycling accident where she was hit by an 18-wheeler and drug beneath the truck. Kiara spent two months in a wheelchair with broken bones and injuries requiring seven reconstructive surgeries. Her career could have ended there but she reentered the modeling world in 2008 with new determination and strength.

Kiara learned of the work of Momentum Bike clubs which provides mentoring services to at-risk youth encouraging healthy exercise while forging positive relationships. She became drawn to the good work of the clubs and decided to get on a bicycle for the first time since her accident in order to ride with these children. Since she first connected with Momentum Bike clubs in 2011, Kiara has made several trips to the Upstate to ride with the club's youth, sharing her story of resiliency and hope.