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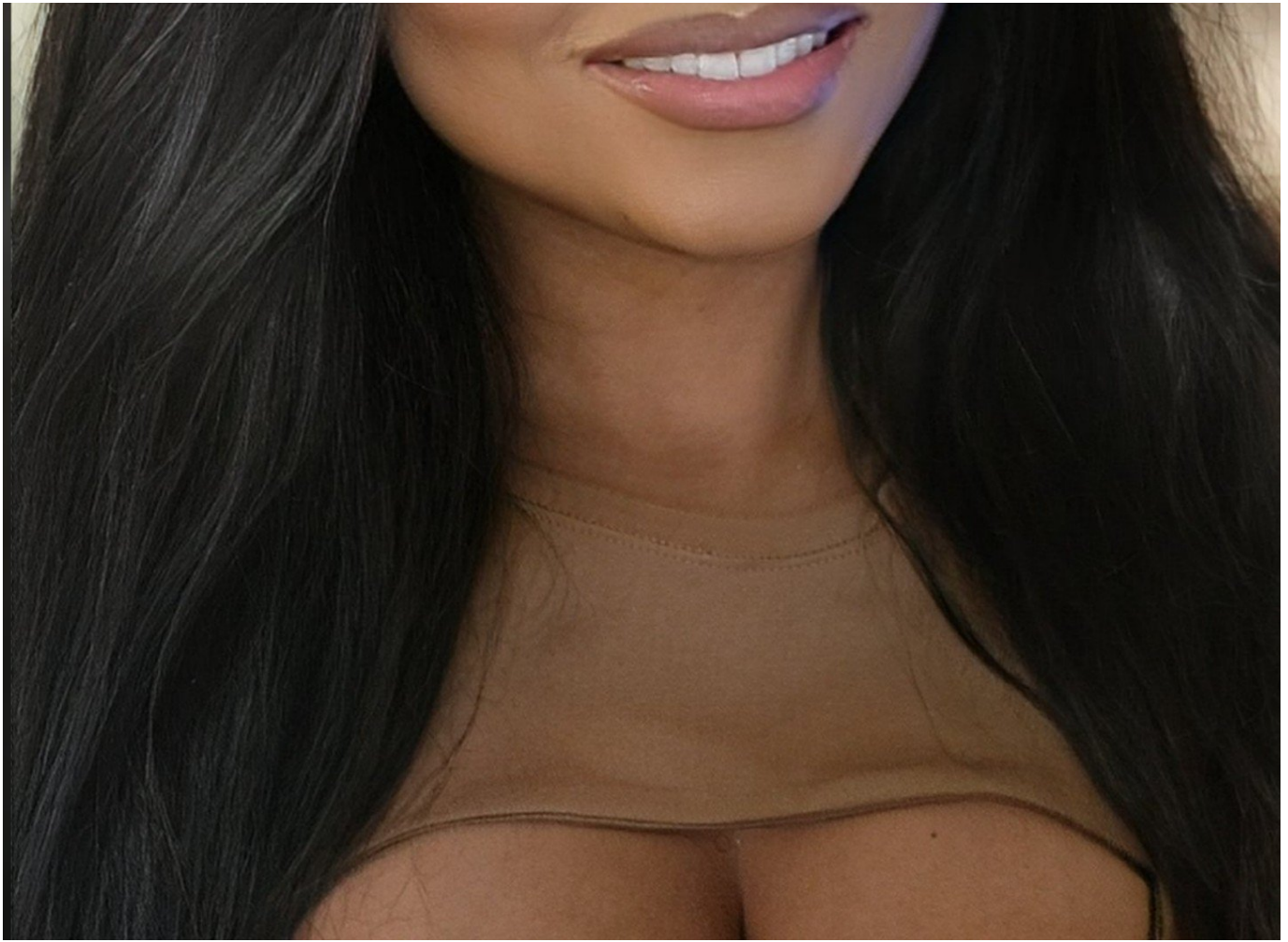


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Meet: Abby Ayoola-Williams

Abby Ayoola-Williams is what we like to call a “jack of all trades”, because she is doing it all, honey. She is a producer, podcast host, proud vegan, editor, mother, wife and the creator of the [“Naija Wives of Toronto”](#); a reality TV series that Abby created and produced alongside two of her co-stars.

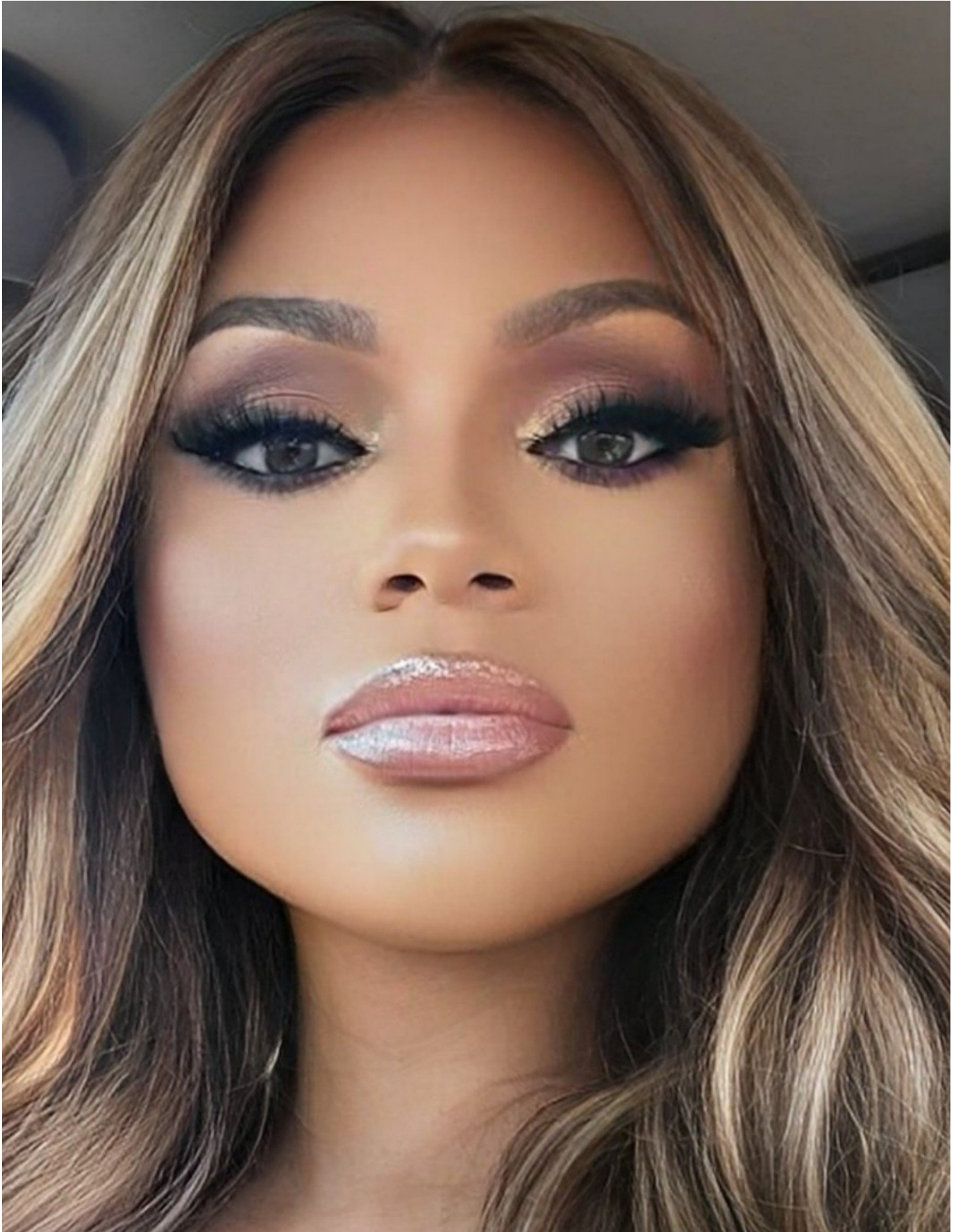




[Abby Ayoola-Williams](#)

We chatted with Abby about her endeavours, to which she started by telling us how she first started her media career. **“I got into media when I was 17. I used to act as an extra in movies, I also did commercials, print, and music videos. I was always in front of the camera. It was maybe about 3-4 years ago that I started doing work in front AND behind the camera. In 2018 or 2019 is when I started my producing career. I’m a creator overall, so whatever avenue I can use to create something, I’m all up for it. That’s just me in a nutshell”.**

Being a creative all comes down to finding out where you’re GOOD at something, and it can be at absolutely anything. Abby is one of the creators of [“Naija Wives of Toronto”](#), which is a reality TV show based in the GTA and follows the lives of [Abby Ayoola](#), [Rachael Omobude](#), [Emilian Andrew](#), [Becky Ajayi](#), [LA Wade](#) and [Pureness](#), as they navigate their home away from home. We asked what gave her the idea to start the show, to which she replied **“So, it wasn’t my idea at first. I’m going to tell you the whole story from top to bottom, so everyone can get the true story”**. Oop, we love a good story.



Abby continued on, "In 2019, [Kartia Velino](#) contacted me telling me that she was creating a reality TV show about Nigerian women in Toronto, and wanted me to be a part of it. Obviously, I was interested and wanted to do it. **We filmed a few episodes, and while we were**

doing that, her and another cast member, Uche, had problems with each other. It was real high school stuff, a lot of “he said, she said”. Their drama was messing with the whole show and everything. I’m the youngest out of all of them, but I felt like I was the most mature because everyone was acting ridiculous. At a certain point, Uche stated that she was no longer interested in participating and that it was too much for her. We had a potential sponsor lined up for the show and I didn’t want to let it go just like that, so I said “whoever is serious, I’ll go with to the meeting with them”. So, Rachael, Uche and I went downtown, met up with the sponsor, and while we were there, also happened to meet the videographer. His name is Eni, and at the time, offered to help us film the show. From there, we totally rebranded from “Toronto Naija Wives” to “Naija Wives of Toronto”. We got two more cast members, started filming, and the rest of history. Now we’re 3 seasons in”.

Abby had basically taken matters into her own hands because she did not want to let a great idea go to waste based on pointless drama. And because of this, the show now is now on its third season (and counting). All of the women on the show are diasporic, repping their original countries on foreign land, so we asked Abby what she wishes to highlight most on the show. She responded by saying, “**What I would like to highlight about the show, is that it’s the first of its kind in Canada; There is nothing like that here.** So, because we’re trailblazing, it’s been a little bit hard to market to mainstream Canada, because it’s about Nigerian women living in the diaspora. So, they feel like it’s not really what Canadians are looking for. And this is so sad because we’re so very well received in the United States; we’re on a local TV channel in Chicago, Illinois, and also a streaming platform that’s based in Dallas, Texas”.

Reality TV is not as mainstream in Canada, as it is in other parts of the world, and this is exactly why Abby is working to expand their network. “**We actually filmed one episode of [“Naija Wives of Hollywood”](#) because we’re simply trying to expand”, said Abby.**





Abby at the [AfroGlobal Television Excellence Awards \(Toronto, 2022\)](#)

The demographic for an audience for a show like "[Naija Wives Toronto](#)" IS here, and Abby is adamant to push this platform because, as stated, there is nothing like it in Canada.

Since Abby and Rachael have taken over the production of the show, she says that the response has been great so far. "It's so funny because everyone has been saying that they're happy Uche is gone because she was problematic. A lot of people who wanted to help us, didn't want to come on because Uche was involved. **This is me being 100% honest**, it's been better without her, I'm sorry to say but...". She went on to say, "It's good to have drama on-screen. Life is drama in itself, so you don't even have to try with that. But not when it's affecting our thing". And honestly... Who doesn't like a *teeny* bit of drama? It keeps things spicy AND keeps people hooked!

One thing we cannot avoid as human beings is **struggles**, and Abby's had her fair share of them since taking over production of "Naija Wives of Toronto". "Rachael, Emilian and I have been self-funding the show since the first season. Self-funding a project is nice and all, but I fell like at this point we need investors so we can make it bigger. I **know we can do way more and have more reach**".





When asked about what hopes she has for the show, she replied **“My hope is that we end up on Bravo or ShowMax or VH1 or OWN. Tyler Perry where you at? I know you don’t do reality TV shows, but we can be your first, holla at your girl!”**. You hear that, Mr. Perry?

[Abby Ayoola-Williams](#) is one of the many trailblazers making a shift in Canada’s TV and Film industry, as well as shining a light on the diaspora, and she is making sure that no one stands in her way. At the end of FGM’s interview with Abby, we asked her if she could drop a gem for us and she said, “Just get started! If you’re waiting for something to be perfect, or someone to come along and say “I choose you”, girls and boys... You’ll be waiting a long time, so you better start it. The people will come”.

It is only the beginning for this trailblazer. Be sure to follow Abby on her [socials](#), listen to her podcast [“How to Survive Society”](#), and tune in to “Naija Wives of Toronto” (Find full episodes on [Afolandtv.com](#)).

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