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Sanaa

opens up about her new love, playing
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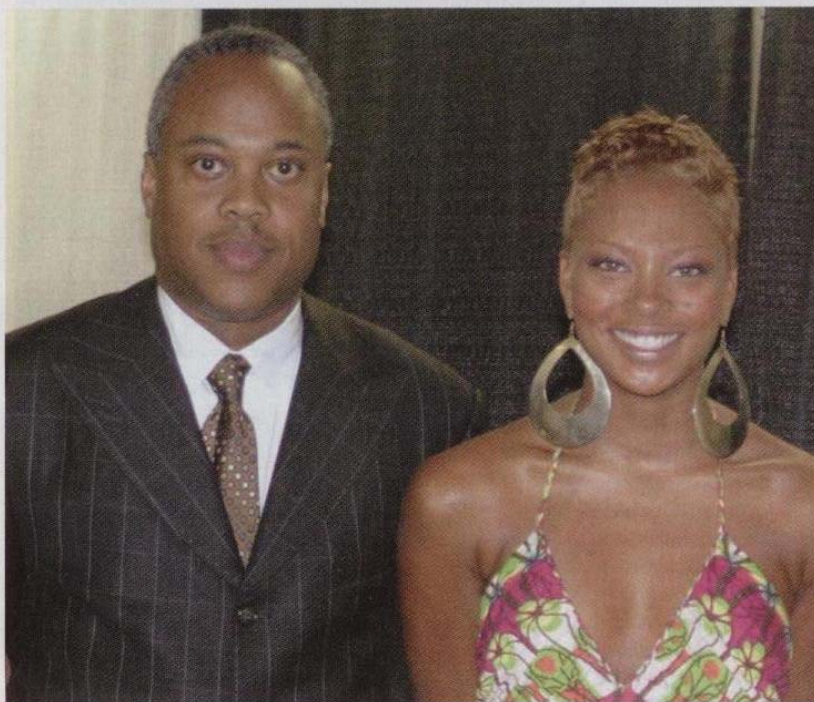


Monica, Sleepy Brown
& Nick Cannon

OCTOBER 2006



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passion play

"Money and material possessions are important but are only a part of success. Most of the time, realizing your dreams gives you the joy of living a truly fulfilled life."

Education and careers go hand in hand. Improve your education and you will improve your career. Improve your career and you will improve your life. Money and material possessions are important but are only a part of success. Most of the time, realizing your dreams gives you the joy of living a truly fulfilled life. Keeping in mind our goal of improving the lives of our readers, **upscale** brings parents the first installment of our education series. "Left Behind," (page 44) takes an in-depth look at some of the problems facing our nation's school systems and offers suggestions as to what we can do to improve them.

Realizing that education is the unshakable foundation on which success is built will help us all achieve our personal life goals. *America's Next Top Model's* most famous winner, Eva

Pigford, recognizes that. I recently had the pleasure of meeting the former Clark Atlanta University college student. Not only did she utilize her education to catapult her career, but she is also realizing her dreams by working with top actors such as Jamie Foxx and Taye Diggs. Eva also stars in the new hit movie *Crossover*, which I truly loved. *Crossover* picks up where *Love and Basketball* left off and takes it to the next level.

A master herself of switching things up, it's only fitting that Sanaa Lathan graces our cover. We fell in love with the gorgeous actress in movies like *Love and Basketball* and *The Best Man*, but since then the Yale-educated thespian has wowed us over and over again on stage (*A Raisin in the Sun*) and now, with a new role on one of cable TV's hottest shows (*Nip/Tuck*). We also feature

California entrepreneur Jan Emanuel, who conquered death and disease and still found the time to make a career of helping others defeat cancer—all while riding out on her Harley ("The Diva Difference," page 42). That is what I call having a serious passion for that in which you believe.

Passion helps propel us to face and overcome challenges in our lives, whether they are personal, professional or educational. Life itself is like a major university—there are valuable lessons to learn. I can still hear my parents saying, "You live long enough, you'll learn." Just look at Sanaa, Eva and Jan Emanuel and learn from their examples. They have gotten education and training and have the passion to pursue their dreams.

Back in 1989, my wife and I decided that there was something missing in black publishing. Where were the books that appealed to those who lived and desired to live an affluent life? In the basement of our Atlanta home, we took our passion and turned it into a magazine. Now, after 17 years **upscale** has become one of the nation's top black publications, but my passion remains the same—to produce the best product we can offer at the best price possible.

As we continue to share our passion with you, make sure you share the knowledge with others. Give **upscale** subscriptions to everyone who needs to be empowered, entertained, informed and inspired.

Remember, **upscale**—you are what you read.

Bernard Bronner

www.bernardbronner.com

the diva difference

A MOTORCYCLE ENTHUSIAST PUTS HER ANGER ON ICE AND HER PASSION INTO A GOOD CAUSE. BY JAN EMANUEL



By the time I turned 30, I was one angry sister. I had already survived three bouts with cancer, a cardiac arrest and a stroke. I was also a struggling single parent who'd accumulated overwhelming debt and was managing poor health with very little emotional or financial support.

The good news is that when you're going through trials, you find out who your true friends are. For me, there were a few people who helped and encouraged me through that tough period.

Carolyn Cotton, a retired Navy Chief and consultant, encouraged me to find a job that would tap into my true talent. She said, "Find a job doing something that you actually like, not just something you are good at." My big sister and mentor, Pam Walker-Williams, told me, "You are going to have to let go of your bitterness and redirect that energy into something positive, so it doesn't consume you." So Pam, a programmer at NASA, taught me web design and Internet marketing. With these newfound skills, I launched RealDivasRide.com. I simply took lemons and made lemonade.

I used the Internet to reach my target audience—women motorcycle riders. In almost no time, I managed to captivate a sizeable Internet audience. The website gained respect in the motorcycle community and the attention of the motorcycle industry. I was almost single-handedly changing the image of women in the motorcycle community by giving them their own online forum—promoting camaraderie, motorcycle safety and discussing women's health issues.

I also wanted to help change the image of women in motorcycling because I was anything but a typical motor-

cycle chick. Fellow motorcycle riders, who said they liked my ladylike appeal, polished look and diva attitude, gave me the nickname "Sunny The Diva." They appreciated the fact that I was not trying to be one of the fellas.

After the death of my aunt, who was also my godmother, from breast cancer, I decided to dedicate my efforts to bringing awareness to the disease, ultimately leading me to launch DivasForACure.org, which allowed my passion to truly have a purpose.

Divas For A Cure (DFAC) is a nonprofit public benefit corporation based in Oakland, Calif., with a seven-member board of directors. Unlike most nonprofits, there are no paid employees.

The organizer, riders and supporters all being volunteers allows Divas For A Cure to ensure that 90 cents of every dollar raised goes directly to breast cancer awareness and research. Having unpaid employees also allows us to reach women who would not ordinarily seek medical attention due to socio-economic conditions.

Today, I am no longer angry for what I have experienced. Every morning when I wake, I know that my mission and purpose on this planet are still incomplete. Divas For A Cure is committed to riding as a tribute to every woman who has ever been angry, bitter or felt alone in her fight against breast cancer.

So, ladies, please start your engines!

An Oakland, Calif.-based administrative consultant, Jan Emanuel recently completed "Divas Ride for A Cure," a 23-day, 7,800-mile motorcycle ride from California to New York to benefit breast cancer research and awareness. For more information, visit DivasForACure.org.