



## *What Our Girls Need to Know Forum Moderator*



**Amanda Diva, Artist, Actress, Poet,**

### **Radio Personality: Woman of Many Talents**

Straight to the point lyrics with a comedic edge, sang in her raspy from the gut voice over big production combining live instrumentation with an alternative kick, she defies genre, and expectations of what a popular female artist is “supposed” to be. She’s spunky, she’s sharp, and she’s got jokes for days. Her live show is like a venerable stand up routine coupled with soul moving music that is undeniably innovative, spontaneous, just plain awesome.

But music wasn’t always the goal. Starting off as a young actress on Nickelodeon sitcom, “My Brother and Me” Diva is no stranger to the madness that is showbiz. Moving to New York in 1999 she was exposed to the hip-hop culture in a completely new way than that of her hometown Orlando, FL and she was hooked. Soon she was writing and performing on the spoken word poetry scene before being chosen to appear on Russell Simmon’s Def Poetry Jam (’02 & ’05). While performing at a political fundraiser she was discovered by a Program Director at Sirius Satellite Radio and was quickly hired as a radio personality right out of college where she continued to thrive from ’03-’08 with her morning show “Breakfast at Diva’s.” During that time she also obtained a Master’s in African American studies from the prestigious Columbia University and served as the face of hip-hop on MTV2 interviewing close to every relevant hip-hop/R&B artist of the last 10 yrs including Jay-Z, Nas, Mariah Carey, Pharell, and even acting heavyweights like Tom Cruise and Jamie Fox. Her love affair with the small screen continues to grow as currently she serves as comedy commentator and music expert on VH1, writer & creator of “Diva Speak TV” a weekly humor based news/sketch comedy show featured on the extremely popular ThisIs50.com & “Diva Diva Ya’ll” an interview based lifestyle show rooted in showing audiences another side of their favorite artists/personalities and exposing them to some and cultures that they should know featured on heavily trafficked Karmalooptv.com. In addition Deev is also an accomplished visual artist who shows in exhibits, does live painting events, and has a hand-painted bag line, Spectrum, available on Karmalooptv.com and AmandaDiva.com.



### **Amanda Diva [con't]**

All of that experience, has come to influence Amanda Diva the recording artist and is at the crux of what sets her a part from everyone else. Her latest release, a FreEp titled, "Spandex, Rhymes & Soul" epitomizes that growth combining hip-hop, soul, alternative, and a touch of electronica with sustained melodies and poignant lyrics on life and love that speak universally to human nature.

Originally, some questioned Miss Diva, writing her off as another personality looking to use her connections to parlay a stream of income from the music realm but as Deev would say, "No Dice." Understand. A. Diva is the real deal and her peers have come to embrace her as such. Recently featured on Q-tip's "ManWoman Boogie" on his album "The Renaissance," she also replaced Natalie Stewart in the Grammy award winning R&B group, Floetry in '07, and has worked with notable artisans Questlove, James Poyser, Green Lantern, Estelle, The Cool Kids, and more.

There is an abundance of artists on the planet, writing, singing, producing, etc. But there are only elite few that stand out. She's known to rock a lot of neon colors but that is not what sets Amanda Diva a part from the crowd. Her uniqueness lies in her uncanny ability to always be herself but ardently feel the emotions of others and articulate them vividly and honestly through music that excites, ignites, and tears the roof off of any venue she sets foot in.

## ***What Our Girls Need to Know Forum Panelists***



**Nichole M. Dossous, Anchor, MarketNewsVideo.com**

"Early is on time, on time is late and late is never" thought the girl with the perfectly coifed hair who stared approvingly at her watch. The tips of her fresh French manicure beat lightly against the wooden veneer of the table in the waiting area. One beat of the pinky, one beat of the ring finger, one beat of the finger she symbolically gave to the "boy's club" by choosing this career path and then one last beat of the index finger.

She looked down at her resume to assure herself of who this company was about to hire. Her eyes darted to the top of the parchment colored paper where *that* name - Nichole M Dossous - stood as proudly as she would moments later to greet the early interviewer.



**Nichole M. Dossous, [con't]**

Nichole had a deep well of respect for MarketNewsVideo.com and she felt that after a proper display of her abilities the sentiment would be a shared one. The interviewer recognized her immediately from her news clips on MySpace and was pleased that her warm, punctual smile was the same in person.

Most would have found difficulty trying to net the frenzy of butterflies in their stomach, but Nichole knew she was right for this job long before she called them and set up interview. A 7-year old Nichole with a fluffy puff of ponytail had remarked to her mother that she wanted to be a reporter in their Lefrak apartment. Hairstyles changed as did zip codes; but her passion never wavered.

Nichole had a keen interest in the financial market and even started a company called *Budget Bug* while attending LaGuardia High School of music & art to help her friends understand the importance of credit, capital and stocks. They just wanted the lead in the musical and weren't easily distracted but she managed to reach a few. The Baruch Grad school grad felt that this anchor position at the finance and market information website would be the perfect marriage of her skills and said as much to the interviewer who urged her to go on...

Ms. Dossous (as he called her), recounted some of her experiences at *News 12*, *Transit Transit News magazine* and *CBS/Cuny bootcamp*. She relayed a particularly funny story of an angry tenant she met while working in NBC's popular *Ask Asa* department. What drew the interviewer most was that while working for *Fox News Channel*, Nichole had been a guest runner and talent booker for the Republican National Convention. Nichole was confident, charming and had a silly streak that belied the calm professionalism of her news clips. The job was offered to her immediately and she quickly embraced both it and the one who offered it.

Walking out of the building, she reached for her metro card. Next to it, her birth date keychain reminded her that those born on January 22<sup>nd</sup> "show a deep interest in other people". She committed herself afresh to making sure she'd do that with this job, and stepped into the subway. As the train passed the Lefrak Houses she'd once called home, Nichole saw a group of girls smoking cigarettes who were neither old enough to smoke or to be out of school at 1:15 p.m. If only she could speak to them, she thought. To make them understand that despite the perils, the challenges and the naysayers that there was a world yearning for their talents. If only they could see that the girl their older sisters grew up with had found a way out. She resolved within herself that they would see her because each take on camera was another opportunity to make that happen.

Nichole closed the door behind her in her Elmhurst condo, excited that bright and early Wednesday afternoon and every day after, she'd have another chance to reach those girls and all the girls like them.



**Tiffany Griffin, Digital Strategist, Arnell**

Tiffany Griffin is a Digital Strategist with brand innovations firm, Arnell, where she counts Tropicana, SoBe and GNC amongst her list of clients whose online social media initiatives she services. Tiffany is also responsible for a variety of trendspotting duties at Arnell, including general consumer trends and tracking Gen Y lifestyle trends. Prior to joining Arnell, Tiffany worked for Steelcase, Inc, in Chicago as an experiential marketer producing showroom campaigns and coordinating the NeoCon tradeshow (the most important annual event for architecture & design, and commercial interior professionals). Tiffany is a proud member of both the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College – New York chapter and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Tiffany received her B.A. in English from Spelman College in Atlanta, GA and M.S. in Integrated Marketing Communications from Northwestern University in Evanston, IL where she co-founded MAAPSO (Medill African-American Professional Organization) to help bridge the gap between African-American students and professors across the Northwestern graduate programs. In her spare time, Tiffany enjoys fundraising, event planning, travel and theater.

**Jeff Lopez, Founder, Star Wild Media**

Jeff Lopez, the young entrepreneur responsible for the launching of Star Wild Media Group, a youth empowered and oriented company, has accomplished things individuals twice his age have yet to attempt. With his goal driven focus, youthful zest and industry insight, Lopez has built Star Wild Media Group into a well-established and respected marketing company whose clients have included; Nickelodeon, The Joyce Hawkins Company, Keke Palmer, Niecy Nash, Elijah Kelley, Chris Brown, and others. Lopez started as a journalist for the Courierpost in South Jersey covering the Static for Teens section of the paper. He then founded his marketing and communications company to help businesses and consumers understand the tween, teen, and college age market.

Jeff's company Star Wild Media Group is an Interactive/Digital Marketing Company composed of an active team dedicated to our client's success. We connect consumers through the use of Digital Marketing, Viral Marketing, Social Media, and technologies. We initiate different strategies and communication tactics to help businesses and consumers understand the tween, teen, and college age market.



**Thereze Ovid, Senior Human Resources Executive, TNS Media**

Thereze Ovid is a Senior Human Resources professional with over six (6) years of hands-on experience in the area of human resources and business management. Thereze has an MBA in Human Resource Management from Fairleigh Dickinson University, New Jersey and a BBA in Business Management from Monroe College, New York. Her business management experience and training have allowed her to go beyond the realm of human resources to achieve performance targets and deliver quality results. Her job responsibilities include, developing and maintaining strategic relationships with special interest groups to promote company-wide recruiting efforts as well as promote positive company culture through diversity initiatives, reward & recognition programs, company newsletters and employee events.

Currently at TNS Media, Thereze is responsible for day to day HR functions such as Recruitment and Staffing, Compensation and Benefits, Payroll, Employee Relations and Training for the New York corporate office. Thereze is fully conversant in human resources management policy, practice and procedures as well as specific industry requirements and applicable laws.

As an active member of the Monroe College Alumni Association, Thereze is a strong believer of giving back to the next generation and mentors and provides job search and resume assistance as well as career guidance and advice to graduating seniors. Thereze is also a member of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) as well as the Human Resources Association of New York (HRNY).



**Tomasina-Sams Riddick, Co-Founder, BLACK LAW**

**ENFORCEMENT ALLIANCE**

Tomasina-Sams Riddick was born in Harlem, New York. She received the Bachelor of Science in Social Welfare at South Carolina State College. Tomasina is presently employed with NYS Department of Correctional Services for the past 17 years as a correctional counselor, currently



**Tomasina-Sams Riddick [con't]**

assigned to Sing Sing Correctional Facility. Prior to this, she worked with NYC Dept. of Corrections as a counselor. She has devoted the past 23 years to working for the empowerment of adolescent, adult, male and female incarcerated people in the areas of drug and alcohol addiction, crisis intervention, HIV/AIDS, employment training, parenting skills, individual and group dynamics. Tomasina is dedicated to returning people to their viable state of being. She is a member of "UNDOING RACISM", a group of community organizers working towards confronting racism in our systems and communities. Tomasina is co-founder of The BLACK LAW ENFORCEMENT ALLIANCE, a civil/human rights organization. Her most prominent work with The ALLIANCE is her undying willingness to fight for the injustices of Brown and Latino people, and organizing them to become activist for their rights.

She facilitates workshops throughout the city on "WHAT TO DO WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE" , "GANG VIOLENCE- OUR COMMUNITY TERRORISM", "SENOIR SAFETY", and "WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU GO TO COURT".

Tomasina works towards the cultural, spiritual, and physical awareness of children and young adults. She is a foot soldier. Tomasina has been married to Vincent Riddick for 22 years and mother to Keyana and Vincent Jr.