

Twin Cities newswoman Robyne Robinson launches jewelry line

On Saturday, September 9, it seemed to be a full-circle moment for Robyne Robinson. The FOX 9 News lead anchor took center stage in Macy's jewelry department as the major department store celebrated its recent name change from Marshall

Field's. Robinson premiered her jewelry line Rox Mpls, which was recently picked up by the department store.

Robinson planted the seed for this occasion as a preteen, and now it's grown to large proportions. "I started making and selling jewelry when I was about 12, 13. My mom was a school-teacher and didn't have a lot of money, and we would want to make Christmas

presents for our friends. So our mom would get up early on Saturday mornings and drive us to the north side of Chicago, and they had a little bead and jewelry store there. And we would be there from 10 in the morning until it closed making jewelry for our friends," Robinson recalled.

Although Robinson's life took a different turn by gaining success in the broadcast journalism field, her knack for jewelry making graduated into producing one-of-a-kind handmade pieces made of precious stones.

Robinson started Rox Mpls three years ago by accident. After closing the doors on Flatland Gallery in Northeast Minneapolis, a project where she featured the works of local artists, Robinson took a vacation to Greece and indulged her creative side by making a bracelet out of precious stones from the area. The bracelet caught the eye of a Greek woman on the street who grabbed Robinson's wrist and asked how much she would sell the item for.

The question pleasantly caught Robinson off guard, but it fueled her curiosity on the jewelry's value, so Robinson replied, "\$100." The bracelet was sold, and Rox Mpls made its first transaction on the streets of Greece before the company had a name.

Since those early days, success for Rox Mpls has never wavered. Robinson is thrilled with her partnership with Macy's and never imagined her small business taking flight so soon. "Who would believe that Macy's would pick up your jewelry? I am overwhelmed by that," Robinson exclaimed. "But at this point I want to grow that company as large as I can, but I want to be mindful of the fact that small businesses are tricky. I have had a small business before.



BUSINESS WITH
STYLE

By Maya
Beecham

"Life takes you in some strange places. I would have never thought this would have happened. But not that it's happening, it just encourages me to think large and think big and to take on a new adventure. Folks say, 'Are you going to quit your day job?' No, I am not going to quit my job. But

it gives me an opportunity to think broadly about what directions I can go in my life with it. So why not try to make it as big as you can and make it do well. Anything I do I want to do well in. We'll see where it goes."

Known for giving back to the community in the way of supporting youth, local artists, and being on hand to host various community events, Robinson continues to give as she reaps the benefits of her generosity to the community. "[Macy's] is really trying to be a part of the community, and they like the fact that I have a community name; and it will help people coming in. So we are going to try to do some things where if people buy some of the jewelry, then part of the proceeds will go to some art charities," said Robinson.

She also offered advice to burgeoning business owners who are as passionate about their product as she is about jewelry: "You have to hustle. You have to hustle constantly. There is nothing wrong with the hustle. You just have to get your name out there. If you have a business that needs a lot of promotion, then you have to sit down and explore where the best opportunities for me to meet people are. Get business cards, even if you have to get a rubber stamp.

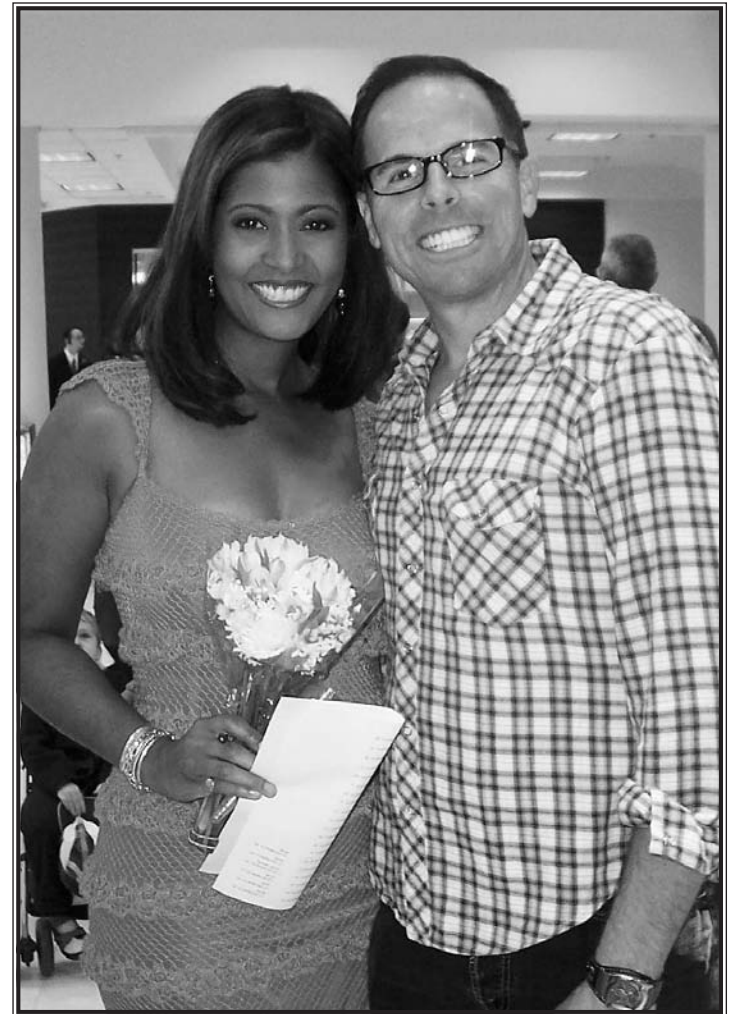
"Sometimes you are going to be tired because you have to stay up late. You have to drive places. You have to make yourself seen and known. Figure out who your clientele is...and what clientele

you want," Robinson explained.

As her clientele begins to hit the roof, there is one goal that is very important to Robinson. "I want my clients to be just as pleased," she said. "I want to have as many things that I can make everybody walk away happy. Large pieces, small pieces, colorful pieces, more subdued pieces. I want everybody to be happy."

For more information on the Rox Mpls jewelry line, go to www.RoxMpls.com, or stop by Macy's Department Store in downtown Minneapolis.

Maya Beecham welcomes reader responses to mjbeecham@aol.com.



Robyne Robinson with chef Patrick Doyle

Photo by Maya Beecham



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