

# The Guelph Mercury

## Naughty girl has local ties; Firm behind Beyonce's launch of clothing line

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Illustrations: Photo: ASSOCIATED PRESS / Beyonce Knowles, seen here during a taping of MTV's 'Total Request Live' show last month in New York, will be front and centre today in downtown Toronto during the launch of her clothing line.

When American pop icon Beyonce Knowles launches her clothing line in Canada today, Guelph-based public relations and marketing specialist Diana Robinson will be at her side co-ordinating events.

"Headset and all, I'll be in the thick of things," Robinson said yesterday.

Almost 700 guests are expected at the late afternoon launch of Knowles' House of Dereon clothing line in downtown Toronto's trendy Ultra Supper Club restaurant.

Robinson's done everything over the past 2 1/2 weeks, from sending out limousine-delivered invitations and overseeing the decor to lining up entertainment and food, looking after media coverage, overseeing a fashion show, selecting guest gift bags and ensuring proper security and crowd control.

"It's been a bit of a whirlwind," Robinson said. "Every single little detail had to go through me."

But Robinson couldn't contain her excitement yesterday, despite trying to remain calm.

"Even I go, 'I'm doing an event for Beyonce!' How cool is that?"

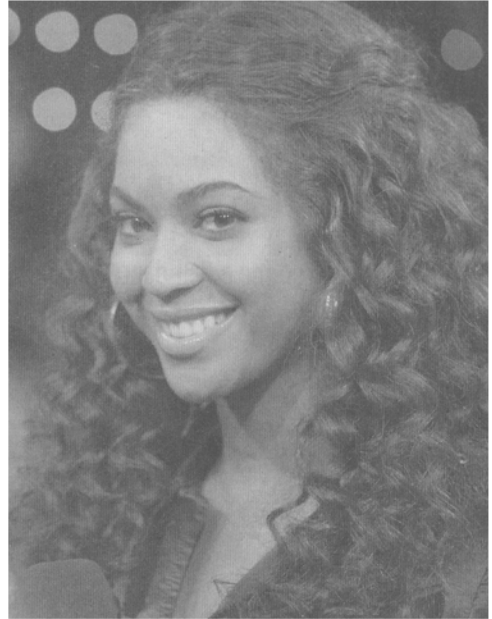
Yesterday was hectic for Robinson as she put final touches on the event.

"There's always last-minute hassles and things that come up," Robinson said.

When she's at the helm of her eponymous firm, Robinson is a trainer at the Guelph-Wellington Business Enterprise Centre, where she teaches local entrepreneurs how to get public exposure for their companies and products.

"She's very aware of the community and very conscious of giving back to the community and sharing her knowledge," centre business information adviser Hildred Nelson said, praising Robinson for her altruism.

The clothing line Knowles is launching before a concert performance at the Air Canada Centre is named after her grandmother, Agnes Dereon, a seamstress by profession. The line is designed by Knowles' mother, Tina Knowles, and has been



described as "affordable couture" by the singer, a star in the film "Dreamgirls" and founder of the multiple Grammy Award-winning musical group Destiny's Child.

How did Robinson land the gig?

In a word: experience.

When apparel maker Multiprint Inc. of Montreal, which is producing the Knowles line in Canada, was looking to launch a line of clothes for U.S. rapper and record company owner Sean "Diddy" Combs two years ago in Canada, it turned to Robinson for her more than 18 years of experience in public relations.

They interviewed quite a few agencies, she said, but ultimately chose her. However, luck also played a part, she added modestly.

"It's one of those being in the right place at the right time kind of things," she said.

Robinson has since won three industry awards relating to the Combs event, which brought the clothing line, called Sean John, millions of dollars in publicity at a fraction of that cost

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