

## The Fixers: That entrepreneurial spirit

**Twenty-four-year-old Tatiana Grant is her own public relations boss and that seems like just a start. She has plans to bring a fast food franchise and a date planning Web site to Detroit.**

By Steve Hargreaves, CNNMoney.com staff writer

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**DETROIT (CNNMoney.com) --** Tatiana Grant is young, exudes energy, has big ideas, and loves Detroit.

At 24, Grant's already self-employed at her own public relations company, having spent time working for the Detroit Pistons, a shopping mall company and the Detroit Super Bowl Host Committee before that.

In addition to her for-profit public relations work, Grant volunteers her time promoting the city through Detroit Synergy, a loose network of downtown business owners and community groups. The group meets twice a month at a downtown location as a means of promoting the businesses, and also organizes beautification projects and other events in the city. She's been on the organization's steering team since college.

"There were so many negative things in the news about this city," she says. "And then I just found this group of volunteer individuals working their tails off to see something positive going on. That's kind of what pulled me in."

Attracting and keeping young, educated people like Grant is a main priority for the city. Business leaders say too many talented young Detroiters leave the city for opportunities in places like Chicago, New York, or Los Angeles.

A lot of young people in town say people don't just move to Detroit unless they have a job or have family here.

Grant fits that profile. She grew up in a largely upscale suburb north of Detroit and returned from New York City to work the Super Bowl gig, saying it was something she had wanted to do since her teens.

But if Grant feels like she's settling by living in Detroit, it certainly isn't reflected in the energy with which she talks about her projects. And for her, public relations work is just the beginning.

Since college she's been trying to open a Chick-fil-A franchise in town, after falling in love with the food on a trip down south.

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"I stalked them," Grant said over lunch at a downtown Mexican restaurant. "Finally they said 'Tatiana, when we're ready to move to Michigan, we'll call you!'"

She also wants to open an online company that plans nights on the town for people too busy to do it themselves. She would have got it up and running a while ago, she said, but the public relations work just took off too fast.

Grant, whose father is a retired test car driver for Ford, did her senior thesis on the different marketing strategies other Midwest cities have used to reinvent themselves, and why Detroit's wasn't really working.

Her conclusion:

"Regardless of how much money you put into a city, until the people that live there buy into it, take care of it, and keep it going, you will never have success."

Grant's certainly trying to bring something to the city. She's just hoping people in Detroit buy into it.

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