



LISA PRICE, *Founder, Carol's Daughter Bath and Body Works*

The Sweet Smell of Success, Thanks to Mom

MY IDEAS ABOUT HOW I want to run my business grew out of the way I was raised. None of my successes would have been possible without my family. I may feel frightened or scared or unsure about what I'm supposed to do next, but I have never felt alone. My grandparents emigrated from Trinidad. My mom's mom and dad had seven children; my mom was the baby. The seven children raised their children the way they were raised, so my cousins are like brothers and sisters to me.

I have loved fragrance since I was a small child. I used my allowance to buy perfume, not clothes. I was a huge Prince fan, and I read that he had a fragrance bar on his dresser so he could mix

scents. So I found a way to make my own fragrances blending perfume oils.

Over the years, it became something I did to relax. My mother was the one who suggested I start selling my body cream at a church flea market in the summer of 1993. By the end of that first day, I was pretty much sold out. I made another batch and spent most of that summer at street fairs and flea markets, paying close attention to my customers. I noticed that they were looking for hair products. So I started making things for hair to keep them from walking away from my table.

My day job was in television and film production, but customers started to call me for refills. The weather was too cold for flea markets, so I had

them come to my apartment. I continued selling out of my home until 1996, when I was expecting my first child. I quit TV because I knew I couldn't do that, be a mom, be a wife and do this business.

I came up with the name at the very beginning. I made a list of things that I was and a list of things I wanted to become. There were other things on the list, like Robert's daughter and Gordon's girlfriend. But when I said Carol's daughter, I got goose

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bumps. It sounded right.

My mother and I used to joke about it over the years. She would say, "Have you made enough money for me to sue you for using my name?" When she died, someone at her wake said to me, "It's so wonderful that you honored your mother while she was still here." My mother spent most of her adult life sick. When she was in her early 20s, she was diagnosed with polymyositis. It's a collagen vascular disease, and it attacks the muscles and the nervous system. She never complained, but I can remember times when I would hear her scream because her legs had cramped up. We would have to massage her legs and help her breathe through it.

As I was growing the business, I would sometimes feel overwhelmed. But my mother taught me to smile through adversity, to know that I wouldn't be given the job if I couldn't do it. It's appropriate that the company is named after her.

The other important person in my company's growth is Steve Stoute. He is a hardworking, self-made entrepreneur who began in the music business. He is also a brilliant marketer who has helped me take things to the next level by recruiting celebrity investors and spokesmodels like Jada Pinkett Smith and Mary J. Blige. We wouldn't be in Sephora if I were still on my own. We wouldn't be in Macy's. That's what you give up equity for. You do that to grow.

Carol's Daughter has made other people in the beauty business look at African-American consumers in a different way. When I first started to do this, the black products were always at the back of the drugstore on the lower shelves. They were always dusty, dirty and sticky; they looked like nobody ever touched them. That's changing. I can't begin to tell you how amazing it is that my products are in Sephora. It's great to be part of that shift.