

## The Diamond Life: Rocky Diamonds signs with Epic Records and remembers Fly Henderson

Written by Toki Wright @mrwrighttc

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When many look at north Minneapolis they see what looks like a coal mine.

Many see undeveloped dirt that gets thrown to the side as they search for something that shows more value on its surface. Anybody that understands what pressure and time does to coal knows that it creates diamonds. The Northside's own Rocky Diamonds is a product of that pressure. Fresh off a newly signed deal with Epic Records, Rocky sat down to talk with Insight News about his work-ethic and why it's starting to pay off.

Currently living in Atlanta, 22-year-old Rocky Diamonds has released more than 30 music videos, 15-plus mixtapes, and played countless shows in his career. He grew up in Tangle Town and was a basketball star at Minneapolis Edison High School before transferring to play in Columbia Heights. Often stereotyped as cocky and arrogant, Rocky Diamonds maintained a humble approach throughout our entire interview. When asked what he ultimately wants people to know he said, "It's actually some talented kids out here who aren't living negative lives, they're not in the streets doing what they say they think we're doing. We're actually out here traveling the country doing things that people would never imagine kids from where we're from would do."

Diamonds has inked a deal for his group MDMA along with St. Paul native LaRon Brant under platinum producer Polow Da Don (Usher/Rich Boy/Monica) and L.A. Reid for Zone 4 Inc./Epic Records. Rocky is one of the few urban artists to come out of Minnesota with major label support. He has a cache of songs featuring Chris Brown, Waka Flocka, and many more. Just by taking a look at Diamond's YouTube views or Twitter followers people can see the strong support from both the industry and the fans.

When I asked Rocky the significance of the "diamond" he stated, "my senior year I was always wearing Diamond (Supply Co.). I used to go by Young Rocky and me and Fly (Henderson) were

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just chilling and I wanted to change my name. We just kept thinking and he was like 'Diamonds you always wearing that.' Now it's more of a symbol – something that shines no matter what. You put it anywhere it's going to shine."

The untimely passing of his longtime friend and rising Twin Cities star, Fly Henderson took its toll on many.

"That was my Bro. We went through what a lot of what young (people) in Minneapolis go through, but we tried to stay positive. He wasn't on no gangbanging. I was really hooping. When he passed it shook a lot of people up. We look at it as a wakeup call; a blessing to let us know life is serious. Fly was a great person."

When asked again about dealing with hate and misconceptions Rocky Diamonds said, "Once you get to a certain place and you see how certain stuff work, and you see people actually make money off of it (music) you don't want to waste your time with it. It's serious. The people that understand that get it and the people that don't understand it I'm not meant to deal with."

He went on to say that his reactions in the past were unnecessary.

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