

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 2, 2010

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UPTOWN

A Novel

“DeBerry and Grant capture timely and increasingly universal themes with this dramatic, epic and often tragic story of triumph and failure...a novel that is both relevant and entertaining.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“...the prime cast makes for a terrific urban family drama as secrets explode into the open threatening everyone. Fans will appreciate this strong look at Central Park North due to a deep story line that makes the case solutions to problems whether they are family, community or borough not easy when people fail to find common ground.” —*Harriet Klausner*

The 2000’s have witnessed both the real estate boom and the real estate meltdown. The fluctuating market has made headlines nationwide. In the seventh novel by Virginia DeBerry and Donna Grant, they too reached for the headlines in undertaking a story about a mogul’s dreams to build a real estate empire.

What is the true price of greed, unfettered ambition—and forgiveness? *New York Times* bestselling co-authors and best friends, Virginia DeBerry and Donna Grant, who brought you *Gotta Keep on Tryin’* (2008) and *What Doesn’t Kill You* (2009) are back with a story as big as New York City itself, following a wealthy, prominent family caught in a storm of sexual scandal, secrets, betrayal, and politics.

In **UPTOWN: A Novel** (Touchstone Books/Simon & Schuster Trade Paperback; March 2, 2010; ISBN: 9781439137765; \$14.99) Dwight Dixon’s dream is to take over the Harlem real estate empire his father King has painstakingly built and to bring to fruition Dixon Plaza, a luxury high-rise complex on Central Park North. Everything, including his wife and daughter, comes second to his goal of changing the face of Harlem, and finally earning his callous father’s approval.

Avery Lyons, Dwight’s estranged cousin, returns to New York City after the tragic death of her mother, who also held a stake in King’s real estate company. After nearly two decades abroad, Avery reluctantly re-enters the life and neighborhood she had fled after Dwight, with whom she once shared a close bond, betrayed her trust. To Avery, Dwight’s lies cut deeper than the hurt and shame she felt after being attacked by one of her cousin’s friends. With her sassy and hot-tempered high school best friend Alicia at her side, Avery wades

through the papers and deeds her mother left her, including the key piece of property Dwight needs in order to get his precious Dixon Plaza off the ground.

Unwilling to waste energy on Dwight, Avery is quick to agree to sell Dwight the building he so desperately needs, but after she meets and falls for *New York Spectator* reporter Jasper Christmas, aka Jazz, she begins to realize that she was not the only one her cousin has hurt or is willing to run over in order to get what he wants. The more Avery looks into the changes in the neighborhood that will result from Dwight's project, the more she is inclined to join Jazz on his mission to uncover the lies and shady dealings that surround Dixon Plaza.

With new obstacles threatening to put an end to Dixon Plaza, how far is Dwight willing to go and who is he willing to destroy in order to keep his dream alive? And now that Avery knows the truth, is she ready to break away from her past and the passive role she has played in her own life to do the right thing?

Although **UPTOWN** uses New York City/Harlem as its backdrop, DeBerry and Grant state, "*Uptown is that place in your world that you can make better. What can you do to change the way you see where you are?*" In a very organic way DeBerry and Grant have created a novel where real life affects fiction/their art. DeBerry and Grant fans will not be disappointed with this look into the high rolling, no holds barred world of real estate development.

About the Authors:

VIRGINIA DEBERRY was formerly the vice-president of BB/LW, an agency for plus size and petite models as well as a spokeswoman for Hanes hosiery. She currently lives in New Jersey. **DONNA GRANT**, a Brooklyn native, currently lives in the borough with her husband. Before becoming a novelist, she spent more than a decade as a plus-sized model. DeBerry and Grant have co-authored **seven** novels including—*Exposures (as Marie Joyce)*, *Tryin' to Sleep in the Bed You Made* (Merit Award/Fiction, Black Caucus of the American Library Association), *Far From the Tree* (New York Times Bestseller), *Better Than I Know Myself* (Open Book Award, *Essence* Bestseller, Best African American Fiction 2004 Borders and Waldenbooks) and *Gotta Keep on Tryin'*—turning a 25-year friendship into the most successful and enduring writing collaboration in fiction.

UPTOWN: A Novel

by Virginia DeBerry and Donna Grant

Touchstone Books / Simon & Schuster Trade Paperback

On Sale: March 2, 2010

ISBN 10: 1439137765 / ISBN 13: 9781439137765

Price: \$14.99

For more information on **UPTOWN** please visit:
www.deberryandgrant.com or www.simonandschuster.com.