

9<sup>TH</sup> UNPLUGGED

HONORABLE GABRIELLE N. SANDERS-MORENCY

OSCEOLA COUNTY JUDGE

MARCH 23, 2022

HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Hi, I'm Judge Sanders-Morency.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you are listening to 9<sup>th</sup> Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So before we get unplugged, would you please tell our audience, Judge, what it is that you do, what division you're assigned to, how long you've been on the bench and anything else you'd like to share?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: All right. I have been on the bench for three years now. And I'm currently in the criminal division.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And prior to becoming a judge, tell us what was your career?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Prior to taking the bench, I was an assistant state attorney for the Ninth Circuit. I worked in Orange County initially and then transferred over to Osceola County to start the domestic division. I worked my way through domestic violence. I did sex crimes, homicide, and I was the Deputy Bureau Chief prior to taking the bench.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, now, you are heavy. So what do you do when you leave work to become unplugged and unwind?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I listen to music.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What kind of music?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: All sorts. I listen to – in the mornings, it's Gospel because I have to get my head right.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Because you know in the criminal division you come across a lot of people from different walks of life and you – I need the Gospel to keep me together.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There you go.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: And then after work, it's different, R&B, some country music.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Who's your favorite artist?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Right now?

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, right now. Today.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Oh, my gosh, so hard. H.E.R.

JUDGE LATIMORE: H.E.R., she is just amazing.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: She's so soulful. She reminds me of Jill Scott.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Um-hum.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Like the younger version of Jill Scott.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, I'm just amazed how talented she is.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Super talented.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, playing – that guitar playing. Also –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Everything.

JUDGE LATIMORE: -- she has the Oscar – the Emmy thing, whatever they call that, but yeah, she is amazing.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Um-hum, I love – I love her.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you play an instrument?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I do not.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You do not.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I have a flute though.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what do you do with that flute if you don't play it?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I entertain my daughter.

JUDGE LATIMORE: With the flute?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. That's sounds good.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Not very good, but I do have a flute.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And how did you end up with a flute if you're done?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I'm not quite sure. I don't know, but it showed up at my house. I have a nephew. He's four so maybe it came from him.

JUDGE LATIMORE: It could be.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I have a flute.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, is it a plastic flute like or a real flute?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: No, it's a plastic flute.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, okay. I thought you –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: It's not legit. It's – it's like a flute.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I heard that. All right. What is the hardest lesson you've learned in life?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Don't be angry more than 24 hours.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That sounds like it came from a bridal shower, right. Did you get it from there?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Right. No, not quite sure.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Tell me this, what skill would you like to master? Is there a particular skill you really would –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Be gentle with myself.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Do you practice that?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: No. I'm my worst critic. Yeah, be gentle with myself. Allow myself some grace.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And when you're allowing yourself some grace, what are you doing? Tell me how you envision that. What do you do to kind of – to unwind, give yourself a break?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Well, Judge Jancewicz and I took a nice walk last week and it really made a difference. Just getting out of the office. I normally eat at my desk and I work

through lunch, but just having that time to go outside and look at Mother Nature, and get an opportunity to speak with her and just unload. It's always good to unload.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. That is good. Well, I was going to ask you, what's the best thing you did last week but I think you just told me.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: That's what it was. It was a nice walk. I think we walked for like three miles.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, great.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: It was really nice.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That is nice. So when you spend time with friends, is there something that you all tend to gravitate to do as a group?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Well, with the pandemic, it's really hard to see friends and all my friends have little babies now, just like me so unfortunately we don't see each other often.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now after COVID, after the babies, what would you do when you – before, back in the day, what is it that you –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Back in the day. Before taking the bench?

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, while taking the bench because you know we might not be able to broadcast before the bench.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Yeah. Let's see, we would do, what is it, painting with a twist, that's fun. We, let's see, we did Zumba classes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Because I love dancing. And we would just have girl's night.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. And you exercise a lot, isn't that correct?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I do. I do.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what is your – what type of exercise do you do? How do you stay in shape?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Oh, my gosh. So I have a Peloton.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, nice.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: And I ride my bike every day at 5:30 in the morning.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wow.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: And I mix it up with strength training and the Zumba.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: And I run with my neighbor. Run a 5K.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh. Boy to be young again. I tell you. Okay, and so in your group of friends, what role do you play? What's your role in the group of friends?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Group of friends. I'm the mother.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You are the mother.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I am the mother.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So you're keeping everybody in check.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I keep everyone in check. I make sure everyone is taking their vitamins, doing their mental health checks, taking a break. I know, I'm doing this motherly role that I don't even do it with myself. But that's – that's my role.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. Okay, and so if you were – if you had all the money that you could stand, all the money, other than paying bills, and you know buying your mama a house, you know how we usually say that.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What would you do with –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: With my money?

JUDGE LATIMORE: With your money, what would you do?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I would invest in Haiti.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I think Haiti gets a bad rap and I think it's a beautiful – obviously, it's a beautiful country. I was born there, but there's so many different places. There's just the people are just beautiful and I just feel like I would invest in my country, but also would encourage others to invest in Haiti as well.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you travel to Haiti frequently?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I have not been in Haiti. There's a lot of political unrest right now so it's not safe. But I haven't been in Haiti for quite some time.



JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. And when you are able to travel, other than Haiti, internationally, where else would it be that you'd like to visit?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I would love to go to Bora Bora.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, Bora Bora is the place today.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Why, did someone else say that?

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes. Yes. And we all agree. We would love to go too so you all be sure to invite the team when you head that way.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Costa Rica is nice too. It's beautiful

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what would you do when you go to Costa Rica?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Oh, my gosh. Everything.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Everything. There's a lot of zip lining going on.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Zip lining. Hiking. Swimming with sharks, no, I'm kidding. I'm kidding.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Don't –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I would not do that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: No.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I would not do that. But let me tell you, St. Lucia is beautiful as well. It's a tiny island but the people are awesome. They speak French and Creole.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Um-hum. I didn't know they spoke Creole.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, nice. Just to share, that's one of the places on the top of my list that I would like to visit.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: You should totally go to St. Lucia.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I will if I am able to do that one day.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I will go with you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I will take you with me too, I surely would. What makes you feel inspired or you know, like your best self? What does that for you?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: What inspires me? My family.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Yeah. I want to do right by them. I always want to make them proud. And now as a mom, I want to make my daughter proud of me, and I want her to be better than me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right, and just last, we've got to talk about food, you know. Just that comes with – with the territory –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: And I love to eat.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, I do know that about you. And what is your favorite food? What's your favorite –

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Of course, it's Diri djondjon, it's a black rice.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you make the black rice?

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: No. Black rice takes too long to make.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, we're going to work on that, okay.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: My mom makes it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, that's all you need.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Let me tell you, that's all I need. She makes the best black rice.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, the next time your mom makes some, please invite me, okay.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: I got you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, sounds good. Thank you so much for being unplugged with me today.

JUDGE SANDERS-MORENCY: Thank you for having me.

(Music)