



Ignite the Passion. Restore the Pride.

## GETTING GRANGER

### **Q. When you do have free time, what do you like to do?**

A. I'm really into video games. I'm kind of a sci-fi junkie. I was always a fan of Star Wars movies and I love Lord of The Rings. You know, movies like that. I watch a lot of movies and play a lot of video games. The kind of stuff to relax me. Not too much physical activity because I'm always playing.

### **Q. What kind of sci-fi do you like?**

A. I'm really into Lord of the Rings right now. I've bought each movie at least twice because every time I'm in the store I pick it out because I couldn't find my other one so I get it again. I'm actually watching the second one right now but I've watched them over and over again. As the video games, I play online. The multiplayer games where you play with other people around the world and stuff. I'm really into the whole storyline of that.

### **Q. When you play online do people know they are playing Danny Granger?**

A. Oh no. I have a usertag just like everyone else. I'm a normal person just like everyone else. They would never guess it was me on the other end.

### **Q. Is that from your childhood? The whole LOTRs growing up?**

A. I've just always been into mythical stuff. Stuff that wasn't really real – fantasy, which is why I was always into Superman and superheroes, stuff that kind of takes you out of this world. I really was into it. I have a robe with the Superman emblem on it.

### **Q. Do you have action figures?**

A. There's about a 6-foot or 7-foot figure of Superman I've always wanted to get. But it would just look really weird in my house. I was thinking of having one of those statues made with me in the suit. I don't know how much it would cost but I really want to do it with me in the suit. That would be pretty cool. I'm going to have to work on that.

### **Q. Is that from your childhood too?**

A. I remember when I was 5, I had Superman shoes and I loved them. My mom was trying to make me throw them away and I was crying because those shoes were everything to me.

### **Q. You're from Metairie or New Orleans?**

A. Yeah, it's just seven minutes away. It's basically New Orleans. It's just a suburb of New Orleans. I'm about 10 minutes from New Orleans at the most.

### **Q. What was it like growing up in New Orleans?**

A. It was fun. I had a rough childhood because the neighborhood I grew up in and what-not. Luckily, I had good parents and good uncles and aunts and we all kind of stayed in our own little circle. We stayed out of everything. For the most part, I had fun growing up.

### **Q. It just seems like an interesting culture with the food in particular.**

A. It's very interesting. I just went back for my best friend's wedding a couple weeks ago. Eating the food is just amazing. I would go back just for that. Just to eat the food. It is soo good. Man, I forgot how good it was because I'm always up here.

### **Q. What's your favorite food?**

A. Gumbo. By far. That is one of the best meals you can get in New Orleans.

### **Q. Do you eat gumbo anywhere else?**

A. No. They don't really make it too many places. My uncle comes here and he will cook a big pot and we will store it in the freezer. So we can eat that for probably about three months.



**Q. Your uncle has a special recipe he has passed down to you?**

A. He does. He makes great bread banana pudding which is unbelievable. I know how to make it by heart now. He comes and he cooks so well. He was a chef at a big restaurant in New Orleans. What he can do in the kitchen is really amazing. So every time he comes here we are ready. We go to the grocery store, buy whatever and have him come cook it.

**Q. Would you call yourself a foodie?**

A. Oh, yeah. I love to eat. I think the reason I love to eat is because I don't gain weight. I was talking to somebody and the season was over for almost a-month-and-a-half and I gained a pound. And I really haven't been doing anything. I always have problems gaining weight. So I just eat and eat and never have to worry about the consequences.

**Q. When you're in Indy, do you have a favorite restaurant that you go to if you have time?**

A. I like Sullivan's. And I probably eat a Ruth's Chris a lot. And there is also a great soul food spot called Country Kitchen right off College Avenue that I like a lot, also.

**Q. If you weren't a pro ballplayer, what do you think you'd be doing?**

A. I'd be a civil engineer. That's what I think I would do. Or a pro golfer ... no, I'm just kidding. My golf game is struggling. I probably would have just pursued civil engineering.

**Q. You studied that in college, right?**

A. I didn't get my degree in it but I studied it. I've got a few more hours left to get my degree in it but I did study it.

**Q. How did you manage to study engineering and play a sport at the same time?**

A. My first two years it was so hard, because at Bradley University the engineering program was really good and really hard. Trying to balance basketball and studying physics and calc. It was a whirlwind at times. I remember times when I had to do my engineering homework which was like three or four hours and then it was like one o'clock in the morning and I had practice at nine. It was rough.

**Q. Is it discipline or what is it?**

A. It's discipline. It's a drive that you have to have to want to succeed and do better. As I got better at basketball my focus turned more toward basketball rather than my engineering degree because I realized I could have a future making money in basketball. I think it's just a drive you have to have to want to better yourself.

**Q. So you went to college thinking engineering and then while you were there you started to realize?**

A. My focus changed. My whole approach to college was to use my basketball ability to get my degree. That's what I really wanted to do. I loved engineering. But I when got good at basketball – I kind of got good out of nowhere. I wasn't really expecting that. But I was winning awards and I was just a freshman and a sophomore. Then I was like, "I can probably go to the NBA." Then my focus switched.

**Q. If you could design anything (bridge or building) what would it be?**

A. You know what I would design? I would design my house, of course. My next house. I don't know. I haven't really thought about that. That is one I'd have to think about. ... I'd like to design a skyscraper. It's really hard to do. You'd probably need a few people to do it but I'd like design one. Because it's amazing how a building that high can stand so sturdy. So I would like to do that.

**Q. I think Mike Dunleavy said that you change yourself in the NBA video games to play a point guard or something.**

A. It's funny. Some of the games – it depends on what NBA game you're playing but some let you change your attributes to make yourself invincible and some don't. I've found ways to do it in all of them. I'll dunk from the 3-point line. It's just unbelievable.

**Q. So who wins: you or virtual Danny?**

A. Virtual Danny. Virtual Danny is unstoppable. And I shoot like 30 times. The rest of the team doesn't even touch the ball when I'm playing on the game.

**Q. Here in your house do you have your sanctuary, your man-room or man-cave where it's all about you?**

A. I do. It's in the basement where I play my video games. I think when I build a house a couple years down the line, I was telling my fiancée I wanted to have – once again with the superhero thing – you know how Batman drives into a hidden cave? I'm serious. I even met with like a builder and ask if this would be possible -- have a secret entrance to my house that no one

knows about. Make it look like whatever, but have a secret way I can get to my house that I could drive my car in. It would probably cost way too much money but I really may think about doing that. Like seriously. I'm dead serious.

**Q. So what are you going to have in your mythical manroom?**

A. Here, I've got the pool table. I haven't really finished doing the room yet but I have my video games and the piano's down there. The theater is on the side. My basement is kind of like a whole new house with a kitchen and everything down there. It's a nice little sanctuary.

**Q. Who was your biggest influence in your life?**

A. My dad influenced me a lot. My grandmother, who I love to death. Probably my high school and my college coaches. I think those people really had a big influence in my life. My uncle, too. I had an uncle Mike who really helped me with basketball.

**Q. So they formed you as a man?**

A. Yeah, they did. I think (it was) the way we grew up as a family. My dad had a lot of brothers and sisters and we had a lot of kids so it was a close-knit group. And if I did something wrong I would be disciplined by my aunt. It didn't matter. The mothers in the family would discipline us so it kind of kept us all in line.

**Q. What three words would you use to describe yourself?**

A. Disciplined, motivated and probably outgoing. I have a very outgoing personality.

**Q. So when you go home for Christmas is it just crazy with all your family there?**

A. It is. The family is so big. There's always some drama going on but it's all fun.

**Q. You wire your own electronic stuff? It sounds kind of geeky.**

A. There was a time when people would call me a geek, when I was in like middle school. My dad had me with these Steve Urkel glasses with the strap that runs around my neck so if they fell that would just wrap around my neck. And then I was smart, too. I was good at basketball then but I had been pegged the nerd at one point. But then in high school I was the tallest guy anywhere around and I was the star basketball player so I kind of got away from that.

**Q. Do you have your own tools to strip wire?**

A. Oh yeah. I was stripping wires, connecting them. I was all in the ceiling, roof because we had a dead wire and couldn't find it. We had to bring in the meter and everything. Because my dad was a mechanic and an electrician also, he taught me. I can read with meters and find a short in a circuit and everything.

**Q. On a scale of one to 10 how nerdy are you do you think?**

A. I can't be that nerdy. I'm in the NBA. I know what you mean, though. I don't think there's anything wrong with being nerdy. I'm not a genius that's going to hack a computer and all kinds but when it comes to knowing things I've always prided myself in educating myself. So I would say seven.

**Q. A lot of kids are into the science stuff and have to wear the glasses. What would you say to them?**

A. Go for it. That's what it's all about, if that's what interests you. It interested me and I don't care what people call me. Build stuff, put something together electronically. If you want to design a building that's what you do. You don't worry about what other people say about you. Go for it. You do what you go to do.

**Q. I've got to ask you about your bulldog.**

A. His name is Bentley.

**Q. How old is he?**

A. He's 2 years and two months old. He's also the craziest bulldog in the world. I love him. He does a good job and he's like my son. He's really hyper. We have to give him shots once a week for his allergies. He reminds me of myself because I've got bad allergies. We have to do all this for him but my fiancée helps take care of him most of the time. He's a great companion to have.

**Q. I was going to ask you about your fiancée. When are you getting married?**

A. August of 2009.

**Q. Rock Band is in your man-room, right?**

A. I love it. It's one of those games you never thought you would love. I had one of my friends tell me, You've got to play this

game.' I'm like, 'I don't listen to rock and roll music. I'm not going to like this game.' For some reason I was bored one day and I went and bought it and I played it and we were hooked. Next thing I know I know all the rock and roll songs. We've got our own band and we go on tour. We play people online. She's more hooked than I am. It's great. It's a great game.

**Q. You're a big golfer, right?**

A. I'm a big golfer. I live near a golf course so I go and try to improve my game a little bit when I get a chance. I do a golf charity event in New Mexico every year. So I'm really into it. I'm trying to get better at it. It's kind of hard. But I'm getting it.

**Q. What kind of charity do you do? I heard you have a couple of camps you put on.**

A. We do camps in New Mexico. We did two last year, one in Albuquerque which is a very big metropolitan area and one in a very rural area where my fiancée was from. We did one there. This year we're doing one here and were doing one there. Were doing a golf event there.

**Q. What charities are you involved in?**

A. We donate to diabetes because my dad is diabetic. I also worked with the Shepherd Community Center this past season and enjoyed that. I'm hoping to do more with them. And I think at one point I'm going to start my own foundation and do things that way.

**Q. What other things in your life are you passionate about?**

A. Probably family. I take a lot of pride in family. I don't have any kids yet. But when I do I'll be really happy to devote my time to my children. I just love being around my family so much. It just kind of stinks because I'm so far away from them. But I grew up with all my friends being my cousins, my uncles, my aunts. I just pride myself in having a good family and having that relationship with your family. In the NBA I'm kind of far away. Some people get disconnected from their families because people always want money and what not. I just take pride in keeping my family.

**Q. So you're going to probably have a family some day.**

A. Oh, definitely.

**Q. How many kids do you think you're going to have?**

A. I want as many as I can fit in the house and this is a big house.

**Q. What do you see yourself doing after your NBA career?**

A. I see myself as a father that's in the stands yelling to my son to shoot the shot or whatever sport he's going to play. One of the advantage of playing in the NBA is we get to retire early. So I will retire and be with my kids. I'll take my daughter to ballet or whatever she's doing. That's what I know will make me happy. I will be a full-time dad.

*Watch for more Player Profiles this summer as we get to know a few Pacers up-close and personal. Danny Granger, the 6-8 forward, was the leading scorer last season with almost 20 points per game.*