

## **RHSP PRESENTATIONS**

### **February 7-8, 2008**

**Location:** Princess Margaret Secondary

**Date:** February 7, 2008

**Contact:** Dr. Don Grant

**Presenters:** Don Alder & Dan Bauer (Ambassador)

There were 2 scheduled presentations for this school with 400 students to attend each session. The first session was to the Grade 10 & 11 students at Princess Margaret Secondary. The second presentation was in the afternoon, and it was to Grade 8 & 9 students, with some students coming from Skaha Lake Middle School.

Don Alder was the first presenter and he opened his presentation with a guitar piece that had all of the students focused on him. His message of “friendship” and how the friendships you form in your youth can last throughout your life really resonated with this group of students. Don’s call to action for youth to look within their community and see where there are challenges for access and inclusion and to get behind making a difference seemed to really capture this age group. He emphasized that if a person is passionate about something - that can move friends and others to get behind them and make a difference.

Don’s music really seemed to inspire the young people, especially the young males in the audience. Everyone was inspired and completely wowed by Don’s guitar playing and musical abilities. Many of the students came up after the presentation to meet Don and discuss his music – it was really great to see the connection.

Dan Bauer also gave a good strong presentation. His message of friendship and for youth to watch over and support each other really complimented Don’s earlier message. Dan’s story was direct – he was candid in letting the audiences know that prior to his injury at 23 he was leading a self-destructive life style. He was honest in sharing with the audience the emotional challenges he faced after his injury, and how overcoming those challenges changed him and the direction of his life in a more positive direction. He shared some funny stories about his time spent in rehab – which made the topic of relearning the basics in life easier for the audience to identify with.

In this session, Dan did share a funny story about rehab and sponge baths. It was a funny story; however, the principal requested that Dan not share that particular story with the afternoon audience as these students were from Grades 8 & 9 and it would not be appropriate for their age group. Dan did a masterful job of including a story about having to learn how to put on the circulatory stockings, and this had the audience laughing and appreciating the challenges Dan faced during his time in rehab. The students were really listening to Dan’s presentation and had some good questions for him after his presentation. They were very impressed with his “wheelie” demonstration.

**Note:** Both presentations went very well; however, both presenters indicated that they found it more difficult to “get themselves up” for the second presentation in the afternoon. They expressed it being difficult to do 2 presentations in one day as it is hard, from the presenters stand point, to feel like they are as inspiring and passionate in the second presentation.

Media attended at the first presentation. One reporter took pictures and requested an interview with both Don and Dan. The other reporter was there to take pictures only. If budget is not an issue (i.e., presentations in Metro Vancouver and Lower Mainland) it would be useful to have a Brand team member there to assist with media support.

## **RHSP PRESENTATIONS**

### **February 7-8, 2008**

**Location:** Penticton Secondary

**Date:** February 8, 2008

**Contact:** Dr. Don Grant

**Presenters:** Don Alder & Dan Bauer (Ambassador)

This presentation was held in the Theatre at Penticton Secondary and there were approximately 700 students from Pen-High and KVR Middle schools from Grades 8 & 9. This presentation took place from 1:50 – 2:50 PM on a Friday. My overall observation was that the students at the back of the theatre were not as engaged in the presentation as those closer to the “action”. This could be because of the timing of the presentation (later in the afternoon on a Friday) or could be attributed to where they were sitting.

Overall, as was the case in the earlier presentations, Don had the attention of the audience from the first cord of music played. The students were all very focused on Don’s performance and listened to his message of friendship as well. I believe that Don’s presentation is very well suited for middle and secondary schools. His message is timely and resonates honestly with youth as he describes his own life experiences and his special friendship with Rick, and how that has empowered his own successes.

Dan’s presentation was very good as well. His presentation was well received and the students did listen. Dan comes across as a “regular guy” who is not there to preach or tell the students what not to do. He shares his story honestly and without glossing over the challenges. He seemed to capture the students attention, and they did ask him some good questions, such as: “What other sports are available to people in wheelchairs?”, “If you could, would you want the use of your legs back?”.

### **Going Forward**

If you would like more feedback on these events you may contact Dr. Don Grant at Princess Margaret Secondary (Tel: (250) 770-7620 or Email: [dongrant@summer.com](mailto:dongrant@summer.com)). Dr. Grant has offered to help the School Program connect with other schools in the district to hold more of Don’s presentations. Dr. Grant’s idea is that his students would provide the production support for the presentations – which would assist the student’s in getting real hands-on experience in the area of event production. There could be costs incurred in doing this, so if we are contemplating going in this direction there would need to be discussion surrounding budget.