San Bernardino With You

August 21, 2008 By Shawn Decker

Am about to hop a redeye back home in a few hours, but wanted to post about this afternoon's orientation talk at Cal State San Bernardino: it totally rocked!

The students were great, very attentive and, as is always the case whenever I speak without Gwenn, they were very curious about Gwenn. Near the end, after so much about this Gwenn character, one girl asked. "Where is Gwenn right now?" (I said she's busy managing a rock band, which is true.)

At the end, I got a couple of pics with my cell phone. This is only half the room- the other half didn't turn out. It was funny, just as I snapped it this whole gang of students came in, just in time to raise their hands and shout out victoriously.



The class of 2012, a classy group of students.

I sent the picture to Gwenn, who shot back a photo of her own and a nice message that the pic made her day. Her photo- and the great reception from Cal State San Bernardino- made mine.

(Notice the signed, framed Depeche Mode record in the background. Relevant to next paragraph.)

One of the most surprising moments of the talk was when I spoke about meeting Depeche Mode through the Make-a-Wish Foundation. There was a pop of approval from the audience at the mention of their name, and a sizeable pocket of impressed students smiled widely after the cheer died down. Later, during Q&A, I was asked what it was like meeting Depeche Mode. (Have I mentioned how damn cool the Class of 2012 is?) I talked more about the 2nd time I got to meet them, with Gwenn in 2001 thanks to Poz Magazine.

Of course, I was brief in talking about the guys who brought us "Master & Servant", since it was a talk on sexual responsibility, but I did hit upon the reasons why that second encounter was even possible: my access to HIV medications when I got really sick in '99.

The real “Master & Servant” video, featuring Depeche Mode.

A tribute video featuring awesome dudes. God I love people.

As I was driving back to L.A. in my rental car, I was listening to a cool station called “The Jack”. In one of their station tags, they had a medley of 2-second snippets of songs, strung together. Barely noticeable to most, I caught one phrase fromDepeche Mode, taken from their cover of The Rolling Stones’ “Route 66”. The line? Martin Gore signing the words, “SanBernardino with you”.

Definitely a talk to remember.

Positively Yours,

Shawn

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