The Harry Potter Alliance & Magical Thinking

September 8, 2010 By Shawn Decker

A couple of months ago I posted a request to help The Harry Potter Alliance win a 250k grant from Chase Morgan... and they won! I choose to help them out because they fight for the little guy, advocate for GLBT issues and are just an incredibly awesome and motivated group of do-gooders.

So I was very happy when they pitched in to help get me and Gwenn some votes for the Pepsi Refresh grant, in which my little positoid pecker is currently being knocked in the dirt in terms of our ranking. *Pleaaaaaaaaase, vote. Links below.* Here's what I posted over on the Harry Potter Alliance web site, it's an introduction and explains why winning this grant is so important to me.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

Hello! My name is Shawn. The kind folks at the Harry Potter Alliance have graciously posted my bid to educate 50,000 teenagers in all 50 states about sexual health through the Pepsi Refresh Project. So I thought it would be a good idea to tell you a little bit about myself, and why I think the HPA rules.

My friend, Andrew Slack, told me about the HPA. I was inspired to spread the word via my POZ Magazine blog when the HPA was in the running for the Chase Morgan grant, and was thrilled when you guys pulled off the victory because I knew the money would go to many great causes that I believe in. I met Andrew years ago when we were both attending a college speaking conference, he as a member of a comedy troupe (The Late Night Players) and me as one half of an HIV/sexual health educating duo (with my wife partner, Gwenn). We all became friends, and years later Andrew told me about the work that he was doing with the HPA, how a group of people inspired by the Harry Potter books banded together to create magic in real life... off the pages, and off the big screen...

Where it counts.

I'm no stranger to real life magic, and I've needed a lot of it.

The reason why I educate about safer sex and HIV prevention is because I was diagnosed with

HIV when I was 11 years old, having been infected through tainted blood products used to treat my hemophilia. I was the victim of discrimination as a result, and was even kicked out of my 6th grade class when my status became known. When I was diagnosed with HIV in 1987, effective medications for the virus were about a decade away... my parents were told that I probably had two years to live. My imagination and the ability to distract myself with it is probably one of the ways I was able to survive. Now, at age 35, I still carry around those same qualities- that part of me was frozen at my diagnosis. In some ways, that aspect of my diagnosis was a gift.

WAYS TO VOTE DAILY: (you can vote twice daily, once online and once via text)

On the Pepsi Refresh site: http://refresheverything.com/shawnandgwenn

Via text message: text 102299 to PEPSI (73774)

Sign up for Shawn and Gwenn's daily email reminder: ymlp.com/signup.php?id=guswjbygmgm

VOTING ENDS on SEPTEMBER 30!

SHARE THE BLOG. NOT THE VIRUS.

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