World AIDS Day, Tomorrow and 10 Years Ago

November 30, 2007 By Shawn Decker

I just saw a newsflash on TV. A red ribbon is hanging on the White House, and President Bush is meeting with and thanking unnamed people for their work in HIV/AIDS prevention. Likely Abstinence-Only pushers.

The newsflash made me think back to ten years ago, when I had the privilege of being invited to the White House, where I met then AIDS Czar, Sandra Thurman and, briefly, Vice President Al Gore. I was nervous as hell, and couldn't believe that, at 22, I was *actually in the White House.*

Politically, the ten years since then have been so hard to deal with. Everything I try to do in sharing my experiences with HIV, and how condoms have helped keep Gwenn- my wife partner- safe from HIV for 8 years now is not supported by the current administration. Teachers in public schools are restricted from talking about condoms, for fear of losing federal funding. It's been a major step backwards, and I'm hoping that next year's election results begin to repair some of the damage that has been wrought.

So much of politics are personalities, but there is a great site that matches you up with the candidates who most closely resemble your own views. Check it out: www.vajoe.com. For me, Kucinich ranked #1, Obama #2, and in dead last place was Fred Thompson. The highest Republican for me? Rudy.

Give it a whirl, the results could surprise you.
Hope everyone has a decent World AIDS Day tomorrow. Here's to all the positoids we've lost, and to what we all have to do to create an environment where the stigma of living with HIV is lessened.
Positively Yours,
Shawn

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