

ENTERTAINMENT

THE BATTALION

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Out in the real world

MTV shows cast members tour the country in search of reality-TV talent

By Amber Grey
THE BATTALION

Due to his feisty attitude and boyish good looks, Omar Salinas said he thinks he would make an excellent candidate for any reality television show.

"I'm tall, dark and handsome," joked Salinas, a junior biochemistry and genetics major. "(On a serious note) I guess I'd be good on a show because I never put up a front; I'm always genuine with a good down home southern charm."

More than 100,000 people across the nation are expected to attend the Reality Bar Crawl Spring 2004 College Tour. The event will be kicking off Saturday, Jan 31, at the Texas Event Center located five minutes north of San Marcos, in Kyle, Texas. There will be an open casting call searching for new faces and talent for 40 new reality TV shows.

"I think I have a good shot for being picked for one of the shows," said senior agriculture development major Annie Shaffer. "I'm such an entertainer in front of the camera, plus I love to stir up drama."

Brian Olson, booking agent and public relations director for the Texas Event Center, said they are expecting between 4,000 and 5,000 attendants.

Former cast members from MTV's Real World and Road Rules are headlining the events across America. Ace Amerson, Christina Trainor and Adam King from "The Real World - Paris" along with Mark Long and Abram Boise from "The Road Rules Challenge," and current "Real World - San Diego" members Cameron, Brad, Randy and Robin will be the hosts of these events at bars and clubs across the country.

"This tour is going to be bigger, badder and longer," Boise said, who is headlining his second tour. "It's an entire four months, spending each night in a different major downtown across the country."

Cameramen will be taping 400 hours of live footage to be produced into a DVD/video release: the "Reality Bar Crawl: Volumes 1 - 8."

"Everyone (who attends) has a very good chance of hanging out with their favorite cast members," Olson said. "They will be walking around taking pictures, signing autographs and just partying with you."

During the interviews, King said it's important to just be yourself and explain what you're passionate about.

Salinas said the event should be fun and not weighed down by apprehensions.

"I am going to be completely confident; there's no reason to be



PICTURE COURTESY OF MTV.COM

Members of the cast of MTV's shows "The Real World" and "Road Rules" will be touring the country recruiting people for 40 upcoming reality shows.

nervous," Salinas said. "You're either going to make the cut or come right back to where you were."

Although College Station's own former Road Rules cast member Marybeth Decker said she is trying to stay out of the reality TV spotlight and will not be attending the tour, she was more than happy to lend some good advice to those awaiting their 15 minutes of fame.

"They want a cast that people watching can relate to," Decker said. "Talk to the person interviewing you just like you talk to your best friend. If you curse like a sailor in real life, then don't be scared to drop the f-bomb in your interview. Have fun. Lord knows I did."

Three live bands and a deejay will also be playing at the party on a designated half of the 50,000 square foot center.

"I get to be the professional partier," Boise said of his responsibilities at the events. "My job is to throw parties and get everyone hyped up."

Doors open at 7 p.m., with the nine stars from Real World and Road Rules making a celebrity entrance from their tour buses at 9 p.m.

King couldn't hide his enthusiasm about the tour and said he hopes to visit more universities across the nation.

"The college crowd is so energetic," he said. "Since I haven't been removed from that scene for long, I can connect to them better because I am going through the same things they're going through."

For everyone who wants their time to shine on national TV, King remembers how irritating the scene selections could be at times.

"We were in Paris for five months, but audiences probably only see about 11 hours of those five months," he said. "It's just frustrating because I can't reach out to them and say there's more that happened. There's so much on the show you didn't see."

King has also heard his share of negative comments from fans with their opinions on what could have been handled differently.

"I think it would be awkward to have cameras in your face all the time," Shaffer said. "Especially when the whole world seems to make judgments on what you look like and how you respond in every situation."

Although Decker agrees seeing your true self can be difficult, she encourages everyone to go audition for the reality shows to grow emotionally.

"Many times we tend to see ourselves how we want other people to perceive us. And a lot of times that's not who we really are," she said. "Road Rules forced me to look in the mirror and see myself for who I really am. I walked away feeling like a much stronger person."

For those lucky enough to find themselves cast into a starring role on a reality TV show, Decker reminds everyone to make the most of the experience.

Shaffer said she wishes to use the reality television experience to spread the word of Aggie hospitality.

"Going to Texas A&M has taught me to be who I really am, respect others and have pride in everything I accomplish," Shaffer said. "I'd love the opportunity to share the Aggie traditions with everyone else on national television."

Tickets for the tour are \$10 and are available through Sabin Steinbacher at (979) 255-1602.

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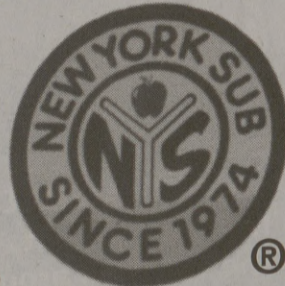
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