

Rattler Makes Top 10 in MTVU Oscar Contest

Contributed by Skyy Sandifer -- Black College Wire
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Big chance for student journalist and videographer

The Academy Awards recognize Hollywood's most prestigious and respected actors, and this year a FAMU Rattler may have a chance to interview those celebrities on the show's red carpet Sunday, Feb. 22.

Chantell Black, 23, a Brooklyn, N.Y. native, and videographer Guy Lemonier, 31, from Miami, made the top 10 list of student journalists in the 2009 MTVU Oscars Correspondent competition, according to mtvu.com.

Black explained that students had to submit two 2-minute videos about why they should represent the student population. According to a press release about the contest, more than 90 videos were submitted and judges picked the 10 best candidates.

Applicants are judged base on "originality, creativity and [who has] most compelling" attributes. A panel of judges decided which teams deserved to be in the "Top 10".

Although both broadcast journalism students are excited that they are semi-finalists, their initial reaction was shock.

"I heard about the contest and went out on whim and applied," Black said. " When I got the call that I was chosen, I wanted to scream."

Lemonier expressed similar feelings.

"I was really surprised that we were picked because I kind of forgot about it," he said.

Black was slightly caught off guard, but still very prepared for this type of work.

She had similar experience as an intern with CNN's entertainment department.

"Last summer I attended red carpet events and movie premiers with CNN," she said. " I interviewed Chris Brown, Nayo, Rev. Al Sharpton, Kareem Abdul Jabar, and I met Will Smith."

Black said Florida A&M University is the only HBCU in the competition, and is overjoyed at the accomplishments the institution has made this year.

"This is a great opportunity to represent FAMU and add to the wonderful things we have been doing this year," she said. "The red carpet will be another place to leave our mark."

She also thinks this exposure will benefit the school.

"It really shows how good our journalism program is," she said. "I'm going against students from the University of Miami and New York University, and maybe this will help with enrollment. "

Black and Lemonier's work ethics are sure to help them get ahead.

"We work really well together," Lemonier said. "She is a very strong reporter and it would be awesome if we won."

The top three finalists travel to Los Angeles for the show, but only one will act as official correspondent, as stated on the MTVU Web site.

"I would feel extremely honored if I win," Black said. "It will show how many people support me, and how much I have evolved as a journalist."

To win, Black first needs to be voted into the top 3. After that, she can be chosen as the contest's overall winner.

"I am going to make a Facebook group and try to get something published in the Tallahassee Democrat," she added. "I am trying to reach as many people as possible."

Individuals can vote on the top 10 finalists until February 6 at 5 p.m. And On Feb. 9, fans can vote again on the top three finalists.

There are no limits to how many times you can vote.

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Skyy Sandifer writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published a version of this article.