

FAMU Student Heats Up BET's 'College Hill'

Contributed by Khambria Taylor -- Black College Wire
Wednesday, 25 March 2009

Kyle Washington displays over-the-top personality

Being in the spotlight on a top reality show is not as glamorous as viewers may think, according to Kyle Washington, one of the stars of the sixth season of BET's 'College Hill: South Beach.'

'I learned how to interact under surveillance,' Washington said. 'But my favorite moment was coming back home.'

Washington, a senior public relations student from Tallahassee and a Florida A&M University student, auditioned for the show last May. Washington said he believes his over-the-top personality won over the casting directors.

'Honestly, I don't know why I was cast but I guess it's my crazy personality,' Washington said.

He explained he did not have difficulties balancing school and being on the show.

Washington said the series began filming in mid-September while he was enrolled in several classes. To remain in school, Washington had to persuade his professors to allow him to complete all of his assignments online. 'I had a discussion with teachers and administrators to do all of my work via Blackboard, so it all worked out,' he said. 'During the day, I focused on my school work, then at night I focused on partying.'

Although Washington's overall experience was good, he had several concerns.

He said BET's cast profile, which described him as 'the instigator,' is false.

'It caught me off guard,' Washington said.

He was also referred to as a 'drama queen.'

'I am not upset, but I had to think about it,' Washington said. 'Is that the best they can come up with?'

Washington said he was initially excited about filming and meeting the other cast members.

'I was the first to get off the boat and run in the house,' Washington said.

Upon arrival, Washington proclaimed the South Beach house was the 'best College Hill house yet.'

However, the excitement was short-lived and conflict soon erupted.

A short meet and greet between Washington and fellow cast member Milah set the mood for the season.

When a cast member asked him if he was gay after a comment about her shoes, Washington immediately made a statement.

'I told her, 'Well, I go to FAMU, a very fashion-oriented school, but to answer your question, yes I am. I am super gay.'

In the online sneak peek of College Hill, many cast members said Washington was their least favorite roommate. However, Washington denied the characterization.

'I was real,' Washington said. 'I did not have time for their mess. I was not going to be fake; I wore my 'I Believe in FAMU' shirt every day.'

Sam Prince, a sophomore business finance student from Miami, said he is excited to watch the show because it features a fellow Rattler.

'He will represent FAMU, but I am not sure how well,' Prince said.

Some Rattlers believe Washington will bring positive exposure to FAMU.

Michael Hayes, a second-year business administration student from Boston, said he believes the show will do a good job showcasing FAMU.

“Any public exposure is good for FAMU,” Hayes said. “He might not represent FAMU as the administration would like, but he is representing good enough for a regular student.”

Washington said an opinion of a university should come from research and not a student at the school.

“I pay my tuition just like everyone else,” Washington said, “I am not representing FAMU, I am just a student at FAMU.”

Many question the authenticity of College Hill.

The show was created to highlight black college students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. However, only two of this season’s cast members attended an HBCU.

Courtney Warren, a second year architecture student from Houston, Texas., suggested that BET create another show.

“This show is focused around drama and not real college students at HBCUs,” Warren said.

Washington cautioned viewers about reality television.

“Reality television is real,” he said. “However you must remember you are watching a 28-minute show that happened over a three month period.”

While filming the show, Washington said he missed FAMU and could not wait to return to “The Hill.”

“I would not change anything about the show because I was me, but I was ready to come home,” Washington said.

Washington said he was grateful for the opportunity to be a part of “College Hill.”
“I love BET for giving me my shot at fame, but next time I hope it’s under different circumstances,” Washington said.

Because of all the exposure Washington is getting, he said his television career looks bright.

“There are things in the works,” he said. “People are talking.”

{moshaloscan}Khambria Taylor writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.