



De La Salle hosts Channel One's 'Hacienda on Wheels'

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By **ELIZABETH A. PERRY**

De La Salle students were television stars for the day as the Channel One News' "Hacienda on Wheels" rolled up St. Charles Avenue Nov. 18. The school was one of five schools selected to host a daily taping of the satellite show.

De La Salle cheerleaders and band members cheered, danced, strutted and played their hearts out on a cloudy, misty day through two hours of rehearsals and 10 re-takes. That was just for the opening scene of the show!

Later in the day the students and Channel One anchors Derrick Shore, Seth Doanee, Sofia Lidskog and Errol Barnett joined the rest of the student body for the indoor shots in the gym.

Channel One senior vice president of research Lisa DeFelice, a Metairie native, selected the school. She said De La Salle, a coed school, most accurately reflects the viewership of Channel One and has worked hard to promote the show among students.

"DE LA SALLE really wanted us to come," she said. "This school has been very supportive of us and is in the perfect location."

Sophomore Cassie Schwartzman and senior Vincent Cronley were awed by how much work it takes to put together a television show, especially one that is on the road. There were whole crews of people to handle everything from lighting, set design, scripting and producing, to public relations and catering.

"I didn't know it took so many people to do a show," said Cronley.

Adults and teens who have never seen Channel One might have wondered what all the fuss was about, but for the eight million 12- to 17-year-olds who



DE LA SALLE cheerleaders and band members worked hard, re-take after re-take, to show their school spirit. (Photos by Elizabeth A. Perry)

watch the show in their homerooms every morning around the country, the 20-something co-anchors might as well be rock stars. The group posed for pictures, signed autographs and talked to fans between takes and after the shoot.

STUDENTS WHO weren't in the band or the on the cheerleading squad made themselves helpful to a few stray adults and Channel One anchors trying to find their way to the gym for the second round of filming. Student council president Chantell Wilkerson has been a fan of the show for five years, and named Lidskog as one of her favorite anchors because "she's so cute and happy."

The anchors were good sports, smiling for the cameras and even attempting to harmonize on "When the Saints Go Marching In." But viewers will be happy to know their anchors are more than just four pretty faces.

Doane for example, shoots much of his own footage and travels around the world to cover international stories. Some of his riskier assignments have included the Philippines, Iran, Afghanistan before the war, Iraq during the war and most recently a solo assignment into the Dar Fur region of Sudan. He went without a government escort so he could talk to teens in refugee camps. Along the way he saw people fleeing their villages and a mass grave. He also came upon a school that met at 6 a.m. in the middle of an open dirt space because there was no building. His footage and reporting turned into a three-part series for Channel One, but it also nearly cost Doane his life.

"I WAS HELD up by 10 guys with AK-47s," he said. "Thankfully my guide and translator were able to come up with an excuse as to why I was there. They said I was a foreign aid worker, but all they would have had to do was to look in the back seat of the car to see the video camera equipment."

When asked how he is able to go from the Sudan to having fans fawning all over him at publicity events, Doane said the antidote was to stay grounded in the reporting end of the job and present the story as accurately as possible.

When shooting wrapped for the day, the show was edited and sent via satellite to the main Channel One studio in California, where it was edited again. Early the next morning the show was sent again by satellite to special receivers at 12,000 schools around the country and recorded so students could watch it in their homerooms.

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[Front Page](#)

[Top](#)

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