

Beyond the Velvet Rope

By Paige Feigenbaum

Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson, A.B. ’95, and his wife, Dany Garcia Johnson, B.B.A. ’92, returned to their alma mater of the University of Miami on the weekend of September 8. With them, they brought a \$2 million gift to go towards the living room in the future Robert and Judi Prokop Newman Alumni Center that will be built on the Coral Gables campus.

The couple also attended several events over the course of the weekend to incorporate the Miami community, the university, and their charity into the release of his latest motion picture, “The Gridiron Gang.” The University of Miami Alumni Association hosted the Miami premiere of the film at AMC Sunset Place. University of Miami president, Donna Shalala, as well as other notable UM figures attended this red carpet affair.

Senior Emily Sandhaus attended the festivities at The Shops at Sunset Place. She said, “I was very impressed when he came out and talked beforehand and his wife also is an alumni and she seems to be a very successful entrepreneur in the area and they just donated a lot of money, so I am very proud to have someone famous and well-known and willing to give back to UM.”

Following the screening, the Johnson’s hosted a reception for The Rock Foundation to help underprivileged youth. Attendees filled a pick-up truck with toys to donate to the cause. Senior Alyse Kathryn Jensen represented a local public relations firm at this event to help facilitate the collection of the gifts. She said, “GM is sponsoring the event and they’re also donating... to local charities.”

The Johnson family visited campus that Saturday

[illegible]

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XX



XX
XX

While filming the movie, the Rock learned how important it is to be a good coach. He said, “The two main elements that I took out of the movie is, number one, to be a great coach you got to be a great parent to those kids. They’re the kids that are coming out of high school and coming into college. And not only that, you got to be a great motivator. And that’s not

Dany Johnson is now a member of the Board of Trustees as the alumni member and is going



“The most difficult thing would be to control your emotions, but to know where they’re coming from and why and then let go.” —**Ricky Martin**

to be serving as the new president of the alumni association. She said that she and her husband decided to donate to the alumni association because “that relationship is just so important to the growth of the university.” She added that “... creating an environment where alumni can come back; these are the people who continue to grow and push and fight for the university and so I thought our dollars would be well spent there.”

Shalala said she’s “thrilled with the fact that the Rock and Dany are back in the bold and involved in the university.”

It is alumni like the Johnson’s that help motivate the current generation of UM students to leave their own legacy on the university. Current student government president Annette Ponnock hopes to leave a mark on the school upon her departure from office at the end of the academic year. She said, “A lot of the initiatives and projects we are working on we’re hoping are going to continue and then obviously progress on the support of the student body.”

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX: XXX
XX
XX
XX
XX



Watch these shows
and more @
www.com.miami.edu/umtv