

Awards

(Continued from Page 10)

This year, Yard Out Entertainment was the recipient in recognition for sponsorship of the evening's special guest artists Az Yet, Jazz of Dru Hill and Kel Mitchell.

"We have received overwhelming positive feedback from the Las Vegas Music Awards [launch]. Most were amazed by the young talent that graced our stage. Expansion is definitely in the making as we hope to host this event on The Fabulous Las Vegas Strip next year. More categories will also be added to next year's event," Banks

said. "The Las Vegas Music Awards embraces all genres of music and will give unique exposure to performers looking to increase their visibility and find that much needed 'break' on the road to success," he explained.

"One of our priorities is making the Las Vegas community aware that supporting an event of this format identifies emerging artists and assist them at critical junctures in their educational and professional development, and raises the appreciation for, and support of arts in urban youth," he added.

After the awards show,

the LVMA hosted two official after-party events. The first was for adults, and was hosted at the Icehouse Lounge.

The other was held at the Luxor. According to Banks, this was attended by Kel Mitchell and Jazz of Dru Hill. Both signed autographs and took photos with their young fans. They also took the time to speak with the kids about staying positive and pursuing their dreams.

For more information on the Las Vegas Music Awards and a complete listing of the nominees, go to www.lvmusicawards.biz.

Rock

(Continued from Page 9)

good. You'd rather have that than no support. The downside is, you don't want to believe the hype."

That hype makes it worth raising a few cautionary notes. UPN has never been able to rival CBS, NBC, ABC and Fox in terms of attention and is rarely a first choice for people who turn on their televisions. Ratings that would get a series canceled on those other networks define a hit on UPN. Bucking that reality to get wide exposure would be a challenge for any series. UPN also has aired wrestling

on Thursdays for many years and is counting on Rock to establish a beachhead for comedy on what is already television's most-watched weeknight.

"I think this will be the catalyst behind TiVo and DVR acquisitions," analyst Brill said. "This is an hour when I wish I could be watching two things at once."

(The shows that will be opposite "Chris": "Survivor:

Guatemala," "Joey," "Alias," "The O.C." and "Smallville.")

LeRoi is instead worrying about what is within his power — making the best comedy he can. "We just want to do a good piece of work," he said. "We're not going to do a good piece of work just because everyone says it's so great. We didn't have any hype when we wrote the pilot."

Missing

(Continued from Page 8)

press attention for the Huston case, says she was forced to tell Huston's mother, Simehehe, over the phone about the break in the case so that she wouldn't learn about it from reporters covering the case. The grieving mother says she does not want to discuss the case at this time.

"Whereas I was expecting us to find her remains, I think when my sister heard that news it really rocked her foundation," explains Howard.

Because of an expected prosecution, the medical examiner has yet to release Huston's remains. A memorial service was held for her last week. Figueroa's funeral was held Aug. 26.

Howard says Huston's case has opened doors for other missing people of color to have an advocate for media attention. The new Tamika Huston Foundation for the Missing, established by the Huston family, can be reached through www.TamikaHuston.com. It will provide resources to search for and draw attention to missing persons that the national media may ordinarily refuse to feature, says Howard.

She explains, "We really want to serve as a resource to those families, particularly, with an emphasis on families of African-Americans and Hispanic persons who are traditionally kind of left out of what the national media thinks are important stories."

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