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Balls in the air: 'Kidpreneur' Dallas Crilley has a heart on for men's balls. But not in a gay way

Apr 7, 2011



FATHER AND SON TESTIFY | Dallas Crilley, pictured with dad Jeff, may be a teenager, but has raised a lot of money for testicular cancer research with his wristband idea. (Arnold Wayne Jones/Dallas Voice)

ARNOLD WAYNE JONES | Life+Style Editor

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Dallas Crilley stops by my office unannounced one workday morning, asking me to write a story about him. That takes balls.

Then again, balls are very important to him right now. You might say he has balls on the brain.

Crilley, the son of former local TV personality Jeff Crilley, is only 18, but he has big ideas. And the one he's been working on lately is a fundraising effort for testicular cancer: Putting the statement "I heart balls!" on wristbands.

"It kind of started as a joke," Dallas says. It was not an original idea: There were already wristbands announcing "I heart boobies" meant to raise money and awareness for breast cancer. "Somebody said to me, 'Why not an 'I heart wieners' wristband?' I'd heard the joke so many times, it began to sink in."

Dallas changed the logo to “I heart balls” in order to target testicular cancer.

“I didn’t want it to be a parody. Cancer isn’t funny, but the ‘I heart boobies’ [bracelets] are ingenious because they made the subject of cancer something people could talk about at the dinner table,” Dallas says. “But the undertones are definitely serious. This year, 8,000 men will be diagnosed with testicular cancer and 300 will die. It’s the most common form of cancer for men aged 18 to 35.” Which puts Dallas himself in the risk group for his foreseeable future.

Crilley is putting his money where his wrist is. Last month, his company made its first donation to a cancer charity — before he had even paid for the cost of producing the bracelets, he says. He wanted people to know he is serious about doing good deeds and is not some kid with a gimmick.

“We are not a non-profit yet, but we are in the process. Until then, it doesn’t mean we can’t donate,” Dallas says. “Me and my girlfriend and my friend walked into that American Cancer Society’s Dallas chapter with a check for \$1,000. They were like, ‘Oh my gosh! We don’t usually get walk-in donations that big.’”

He plans to make donations to a variety of testicular cancer-research charities and forums, including some that are Internet-based, to “show them all some love,” he says.

“So far, his success is totally through word-of-mouth,” brags dad Jeff. “This is the first interview he’s conducted about his product,” which launched in

November. “Everything has been viral. He mails out three or four packages every day. I’m proud of him as a dad.”

The bracelets are available in a variety of colors, including orchid – the official testicular cancer ribbon color – which is the most popular.

Most of the orders, Dallas notes, have been from girls, but they cross a gamut socially and geographically: He’s shipped packages as far as the U.K., Australia and New Zealand. And he thinks his efforts at awareness would be of serious interest to the gay community. (Next year, he hopes to have wristbands for sale at the Texas Bear Round-Up, and possibly other gay events before that.)

If you’re impressed that an 18-year-old would start a company, it’s old hat to Dallas Crilley. He wrote his first book, *Kidpreneur*, at age 15, a guide to teenaged entrepreneurship. (He beat his dad by 30 years, Jeff jokes.) That makes him, before he can even legally drink alcohol, a serial entrepreneur. He even has some other business ideas on his mind. But he’s not talking specifics.

Hey, the first lesson a magnate learns is, don’t give away a million-dollar idea.

This article appeared in the Dallas Voice print edition April 8, 2011.

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2 Comments



J.R. Sullivan on April 11, 2011 at 4:22 pm

Great Idea! And I would buy one if I knew how. Where is the contact information in this article? I first read this in the paper, then came to the website assuming there would be some kind of contact information. Am I overlooking this somewhere? Did the editor fail to include this info, or is it that Jeff didn't want his son's contact information included in this article?

- J.R. (Plano)

REPLY



Ben on April 19, 2011 at 8:26 am

@J.R.

The website is <http://www.iheartballs.org>
I just ordered one!

REPLY

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