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**AURORA'S PEDRO GONZALEZ WINS REEBOK'S TALKIN' KRAZY DESIGN CONTEST
SPONSORED BY SLAM MAGAZINE**

*Boys II Men Fraternity Alumni uses talents to speak his mind and
pursue his dream of becoming an artist and graphic designer*

AURORA, Ill. (Nov. 25, 2008) – If you look at the shoe design penned by Boys II Men Fraternity Alumni Pedro Gonzalez, it is clear that he is a gifted artist. Not only is the design on the Reebok hi-top creative and extremely detailed, it also stirs up emotions and tells the story of many young men like him – those who have had to work extra hard and ignite a flame within their spirit to overcome hurdles in every day life. As Boys II Men Founder Clayton Muhammad put it, “He has a gift. A great artist does,” which is probably one of the reasons why *SLAM* magazine readers chose Gonzalez’s design as the winner of Reebok’s Talkin’ Krazy Design Contest.

“This was the first time we did this contest, in partnership with Reebok, for the debut of their new shoe, the Talkin’ Krazy,” said Susan Price, managing editor of *SLAM*, the number one media outlet in print and online for all things that matter in the world of basketball. “Since the readers voted, I can’t comment on why his was chosen, but from my own point of view, his design was creative and extremely detailed and the work put into it was clear to me.”

Gonzalez, 20, is a subscriber to *SLAM* and was intrigued by the contest. The rules were simple: print out the shoe outline off of *SLAM*’s website and draw whatever comes to mind. Gonzalez did his whole design in simple, creative freehand with black pen ink. There was no computer technology or Photoshop involved. The design is completely original.

To enter the contest was complicated and Gonzalez was named a top 10 finalist from more than 35 talented designers. Online voters from all around the country made him a finalist and then named him the winner.

“The whole design has a story to it,” said Gonzalez. “The bottom skyline is an outline of where I’m from. As you go further up the shoe you see noises and speakers, voices being heard. Between them are three doves that represent freedom to speak your mind. That’s where I come from, the town that I used to represent me. But wherever you’re from, speak your mind.”

His theme is a product of the underlying mission and message of his fraternity – “to shatter the stereotypes, break the barriers, and overcome the obstacles that have become the norm for young men by promoting the life-transforming power of education, discipline, service, culture, and brotherhood.”

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“This is why he is such a leader in Boys II Men,” said Muhammad. “He’s coming from a place where people say maybe you can’t do it. He’s been able to take his wings and fly. He’s definitely going to get to that place where he wants to achieve, but will never lose sight of where he came from. He has that gut of using that voice. He is the personification of young men in urban America. Pedro is one of the deepest young men that I know and he speaks so many more years than he is. He is that dove.”

Since he was young, Gonzalez has always dreamed of being a designer and continues to pursue that dream to this day, backed by those who believe in him, including himself. He is currently studying visual communication at Westwood College in Woodridge and has plans to transfer to a different school to pursue his masters in fashion design. He has just entered another *SLAM* contest to showcase his leadership and how he is giving back to his community. “Can You Represent?” is calling for entries from those who are leaders, inspire those around them and who are doing their own thing or making a difference in the community. The winner will be the subject for a future Michael Jordan advertorial. Gonzalez wrote about Boys II Men and how he is giving back to his own community.

To view Gonzalez’s winning shoe design, visit

<http://www.slamonline.com/contests/1008.reebok/templateForm.php>.

SLAM was founded in 1994 as the “in your face basketball magazine,” covering all things hoop-related, from NBA, college ball and high school hoops to old-school stories, kicks, streetball and the fashion of the game. From Kobe and LeBron to Iverson and Durant, *SLAM* brings the reader face to face with their favorite players, and slamonline.com brings breaking news and rumors in real time.

Boys II Men was created in 2002 to engage young Latino and African-American men to focus on what they had in common, to build a bond of brotherhood, to redefine manhood, and to shatter stereotypes in the process. The Fraternity’s founding was a direct response to stopping the gang violence that took place in Aurora that summer, when 25 young men died as a result of 12 gang leaders who were wreaking havoc in the streets. Gearing up to celebrate its sixth anniversary, each year 100 percent of the graduating members of Boys II Men enroll in post-secondary education institutions. Their college and adult lives are the testimonies of the leadership they developed in B2M while still in high school. For more information, contact Muhammad at 630.774.9306.

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