Nikki DeLoach Invites You to the Mickey Mouse Club Reunion

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Nikki DeLoach talks about life after the Mickey Mouse Club and the upcoming 30th-year reunion.

(Newswire.net -- May 16, 2019) -- *The Mousekeeters are finally coming home for a grand reunion to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the show's debut episode and the 90th birthday of Mickey Mouse himself. Featuring cast from all seven seasons of the Mickey Mouse Club, #MMC30 is organized and produced by alumni Dale Godboldo, who is behind the Always In The Club Foundation, and Chasen Hampton in support of Give Kids The World Village, and onePULSE Foundation. Hosted by Joey Fatone, the event is happening on May 18-19 at Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando, FL.*

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down for a series of interviews with some of the Mousekeeters who are going to be part of the event. One lady who needs little introduction is Nikki DeLoach, who, after her stint in the Mickey Mouse Club, went on to have a successful acting career, starring opposite Mark Wahlberg in the film Traveller, as well as a bevy of roles on TV.

Tell us the story of how you became a MMC member.

Well, like a lot of the people on the show, I was a kid in a small town who was obsessed with singing and dancing and acting. I wanted to be a performer and I had done small things here and there—gone to New York for a summer, went to L.A. for summer and whenever I was in L.A., there was a bunch of agents out there that was wanting my family to move out there. And my mom was like, "Absolutely not. I am not moving my child to Los Angeles, California. You've lost your mind." And they were like, "Okay, well, if that's not something you want your family to do right now, they're going to be having auditions for the new Mickey Mouse Club members in the next year or so. So if you have an agent tell your agent."

I had watched the Mickey Mouse Club. I had seen it, I was obsessed with it. I literally did chores and worked very hard. We didn't have a lot of money so I earned the Disney channel because we had to pay extra for it. It was like a huge thing to me. And so I worked really hard waiting for that audition to come through. Finally, it did. My first audition was in Jacksonville, Florida. My callback was in Atlanta and then we did the casting camp in Orlando. There's 24 of us and then I got the call that I was one of the seven. And until this day I still don't know how it happened. There were so many kids that auditioned, and if you would have been down there, around the 24 kids that were at that camp, every single one of them were so incredibly talented.

Now, of course, there were the standouts. Christina Aguilera, she opens her mouth and you're like, where's that voice coming from? I had never heard anything like her in my life. So you kind of knew if they don't pick her, they're insane. But for someone like me, I just think I was just extraordinarily lucky and really blessed that they saw something in me and ended up choosing me. I'm so grateful because it changed the course of the rest of my life.

What was one of the most important lessons that you got from that experience that helped you get to where you are today?

Hard work pays off. You know, just keep at it. Be the last man standing. At some point in time, somebody is going to say 'yes' if you just keep going. The one thing that I look at all the kids and all the people that I know, I've never met a person who works harder than Dale [Godboldo], or Justin [Timberlake] for that matter. I mean, that kid works, puts in the hours. He really, really, really does. And I think that's the one thing that all of us have in common, besides the fact that we all bring a certain talent to the table. But all of us have a work ethic that is just beyond. I think that's from being an entrepreneur and in my life now creating content, thinking of other ways to kind of expand whatever I'm doing now.

That's okay. That's one of the things, is really learn how to just show up and do the work and not make excuses. And to

be perfectly honest, when I was on the show, it didn't feel like working and it still doesn't feel like work. Being at home with my two children all day—that's work. But going to set for 15 hours and claim/pretend for a living, you know? Yeah. The days can be long, but it's fun. It's so, so, so fun. In that last season, we were doing six-day weeks and putting on three live shows a week. That, in retrospect, is an insane amount of work. For me—and I think most of us—it just felt like we were doing what we loved. That's a real gift. My grandfather always told me, “The second it doesn't feel fun, the second it doesn't feel rewarding or fulfilling is the second that you walk away from it.” I'm in my late thirties and it's always felt good. You know, I'm having more fun at it now than I ever did in my life.

Tell us what you’re doing as an entrepreneur or business person today.

The one thing I will also say is just like probably chasing down, you fail a lot at this. You know, there's not a lot of us that are there. Justin's where, you know, the career kept just getting more and bigger and better. And, you know, there are many of us that were told ‘no’ about 2,000 times and continued to be told ‘no.’ So there's been a lot of times where I've had to start my career over and I think I learned from doing it at such a young age that that sometimes just comes with the territory. That's a part of it that I wanted to share, too, because I think sometimes people from the outside looking in and think, “Oh, you have the life, you have this” and they don't really see what it looks like behind the scenes.

They don't see that. I went into the music business and after that, I lost everything and had to put the pieces of my life back together again. They don't see that the writers’ strike happened. I had been on shows, series regulars and all of that, and then I couldn't get hired for almost two years. So it's a lot of ups and downs and you really have to love it so much that you'll keep going in life. Now I'm developing a lot. I'm producing, I'm writing, so I work a lot with Hallmark. I've got four shows in development with them right now. And so I'm trying to manage two children and producing and writing and also then going away to do three movies for them a year. It's a lot.

I also run a website for women. That's kind of my love project where the focus is just highlighting incredible women and telling their stories, and they each write a piece for us. They contribute every month and we get to hear their remarkable journeys as mothers, as women entrepreneurs and it's not just celebrity-driven. We have a couple of people that are known, but most of them are people that nobody knows because women everywhere are just really killing it out there. So balance is really hard. But every single thing I'm doing in my life has a lot of purpose and brings me a lot of joy, so at the end of the day, I really can't complain about being tired some days, you know?

What would you say to an aspiring entrepreneur to become successful in today's age of tech and media? Please share tips.

Well, the first thing I would say—because this is big to me—authenticity. In whatever—a t-shirt line, makeup, build a website—like whatever it is. Why are you doing it? What is the purpose behind it? Because if the purpose is because you just want to be famous or you just want to be known, then I feel like if you rub up against the hard days—the really, really, really hard stuff—it can be easy to just quit. But if your intention, if what you're doing...you really believe in and you're authentically attached to it in a really purposeful way, then it's going to carry you through the valleys. The times when you know you lose everything or when you do get the doors or the windows closed in your face. It's going to carry you through because you really believe in what you're doing. It's going to get you out of bed in the morning. It's going to keep you up past your bedtime when you're really, really, really tired. So that's the first thing I would say—do you believe in what you're doing? Does it serve a purpose? Not just in your life, but I'm a big believer. What are you giving back to the world with it? So that's number one.

And then number two would be just, if you really believe in it, if it's something you really want to do, don't give up. Keep going. I will say this because I also teach at a local acting studio and I teach at UCLA. One of the things I tell people is when I say ‘don't give up,’ it doesn't mean don't do anything else in your life. You know, you have to pay your bills, you need to fill up your well with other things that bring you joy. Like for me, whenever the writers’ strike happened and I could not get hired as an actor, I started teaching. And I love teaching. I love doing that. And that's just an extension, another way for me to not just make money, but it brings me joy. It gives me a lot of purpose. So that would be another piece of advice for me.

Sometimes we become so singularly focused on this one thing we want to do that we miss out on all the other things that could happen in our lives, that could not only bring us success but a lot of happiness. I would not be where I am if I

wouldn't have said ‘yes’ to a hundred other things that weren't just acting, you know. That would be another piece of advice. The last thing would be, if you're miserable and you're unhappy and it's not bringing you joy, then say farewell.

Why is it important for you to participate in the MMC reunion event? Why would someone want to attend as a guest?

Well for me it's really important because, like I said earlier, I still can't believe that I was chosen to be a part of this legacy and I'm so grateful that it changed the course of my life and all of my dreams have come true in so many ways because the Mickey Mouse Club existed and because I got to be a part of it. So for me, it's just a way to be able to go back to the place where it really all started and to say thank you for all that you've given me and for all that you've brought into my life and the other people that you've brought into my life. So that's number one. I've been wanting this to happen for a really long time, so I’m really excited to be able to be there.

Then for somebody wanting to join, I think that Dale and Chasen [Hampton] have worked tirelessly to create an experience for fans, for the fans. This is for all the people who watched the show and loved the show and loved the people involved in the show. It is for you. And every single minute or second of this whole entire weekend has been planned for the people that are showing up to be a part of it. So that's what I would say.

You're going to get such a specialized, experience. You're going to get to see performances and Lindsey [Alley] is doing her show, Blood, Sweat and Mouseketeers. I personally can't wait to see that myself. And to all the other fangirls—it’s most of your favorite boys that are going to be there. So there you go. I mean, there's no reason not to go.

Outside the world of Disney and the MMC, who is the one person you'd like to meet someday? You never know who might be seeing this!

Oh, Obama! The Obamas for me. I also will add Ruth Bader Ginsburg to that list. I was watching On the Basis of Sex recently, it's not about one case in her life, but it's a movie about her life. I was watching it in tears because what she did for women was so huge and the courage and bravery that she had to have to make that happen. It's just every time I think about it, it absolutely brings me to tears. She is a remarkable human being and a legend so I would love to meet her and I would love to hang out with the Obamas. To this day, I think he's the best president that we've ever had. They're so smart in a way that he handled it—the office—with grace and integrity. I just love them. I would love to talk his ear off about the decisions that he made and the choices that he made and how he was able to be the kind of human being that he was when there's a lot of people in our country that weren't very kind to him. And what it takes to always take that higher road, you know? So for me, those people as of now would be at the top of the list.

I swear, if Ruth Bader Ginsburg, if I ever see her, I think I would just crumble. I think I would crumble into a million little pieces and just start crying. But yeah, here's hoping, right?

Mickey Mouse Club Reunion #MMC30

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