

Matt Is Honored With The Maverick Award

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY/SCAD

02/27/2020



CINDY ORD, GETTY IMAGES - SCAD aTV FEST

I want to share a quote with each of you.

“ Those times when you get up early and you work hard, those times when you stay up late and you work hard. Those times when you don't feel like working, you're tired, you don't want to push yourself but you do it anyway: That is actually the dream.

It's not the destination, it's the journey. And if you guys can understand that, then what you'll see happen is that you won't accomplish your dreams. Your dreams won't come true, something greater will. ”

That quote is from Kobe Bryant.

I want to expand on that last line for a moment... Your dreams won't come true, something greater will...

If you asked me about Cary Agos' character arc in season two of *The Good Wife*, I don't think I'd be able to fully remember. But what I do remember, is after a very long day at work... grabbing a bourbon at midnight in New York City with my friend Archie Panjabi who played Kalinda on the show.

And over those drinks in 2009 before the show ever aired on television, she and I would chat about how when she was a child... there weren't people on TV that looked like her. And then on Sunday August 29th 2010, I sat in a theatre in downtown Los Angeles and saw Archie walk across the stage and win an EMMY, the first woman of Asian descent in the supporting actress category to do so.

If you asked me to recite a couple of lines Logan Huntzberger said to Rory Gilmore in the 100th episode of *Gilmore Girls*, I wouldn't be able to. Well, that's not exactly true... I'm sure Logan called Rory "Ace" at some point in that episode. But, what I vividly remember from that episode is the feeling of how terrified I was to have my first on screen kiss with Alexis Bledel. I was holding on so tight to my preparation for that scene because I wanted to get everything exactly right for the audience. And in that scene, I had to open this bottle of champagne. And my master plan was to open that bottle in such a cool way, cool like Logan is supposed to be, so I popped that bottle and the champagne went flying all over Alexis' beautiful dress. And I felt horrible. And I felt so uncool. And I felt like maybe I was taking the 100th episode a touch too seriously... and I just had to let go a bit. In my work. And in my life.



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If you asked me, what did Dr. Conrad Hawkins do in episode 5 of *The Resident*... All I could confidently tell you is that he was probably wearing scrubs. But, what I will never forget is meeting Charles Johnson. Charles lost his wife during childbirth. And episode 220 of *The Resident* is based on his life story. Charles, in our very short time together, showed me how to love life despite unthinkable loss. Charles' smile is wide and bright, his joy is infectious, and his deeply authentic gratitude towards everyone connected to the show was inspiring. While on set Charles wanted a picture with me because my work has positively affected him. And I wanted a picture with him because his soulful perspective on life changed me.

The Dream, for me, was and is to have jobs like *The Good Wife*, *Gilmore Girls*, and *The Resident*. But... Experiences... that is the currency. That's greater than the dream.

Being an artist, being a Maverick, it's not about awards. It's not about money. It's not about fame. It's not about the dream. It's about something bigger than the dream... The currency you gain from working impossibly hard, 4:30am wake ups, doubting your talent, being unemployed, the currency you gain is in all the life you experience as an artist. Good, bad, and everything in between.

Thank you to *Entertainment Weekly*, thank you SCAD president Paula Wallace, thank you to the students of SCAD, and thank you to everyone here for so generously giving me this experience that is a product of 21 years of hard work. This is a life experience that is most certainly greater than the dream. Thank you.