# Ala. native Ray Johnston focus of national documentary

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A screen shot of Johnston in his upcoming documentary. (Courtesy: HDNet)

DALLAS, TX – After nearly a year on the road with the incredibly tenacious Alabama native Ray Johnston, HDNet is ready to present the upcoming documentary series "Ray Johnston Band:  Road Diaries."

The special will premiere Sunday, April 25 at 7:00 pm CT. The eight-part series follows Ray, a cancer survivor and former Dallas Maverick point guard, as he and his band travel across the country trying to make it in the music business.

While the documentary chronicles the band's journey, the true focus and backdrop is the uplifting, behind-the-scenes story of the band's leader, Ray Johnston, and his heroic battle with leukemia.

"I realized my dream of making it in the NBA because I was determined, knew my strengths, and had the best talent around me," said Johnston.

"As this documentary will showcase with the band, it's the same deal here."

**A clip for the program can be found HERE.**

Johnston, a walk-on at the University of Alabama, was a 24 year-old loan officer with Mavericks season tickets, when he was discovered by a scout at the 2004 Hoop-it-Up tournament in Dallas.  Johnston's ensuing tryout won him a spot on the Mavericks' summer league team, making him teammates with the likes of Josh Howard and Devin Harris - but then his life would change forever.

A bump on the shin from a pickup game led to surgery - and a coma. All because of the leukemia no one knew he had – a rare form of the disease known as acute promyelocytic leukemia.  During this battle with this deadly disease, Johnston would be shocked back to life, twice.  His lungs collapsed, five days apart, with an irregular heartbeat in between. His kidneys failed twice and blood clots in his brain led to seizures.

And now, while still battling leukemia, Johnston is relentlessly pursuing a new dream, traveling across Texas and the Southwest trying to find success with "Ray Johnston Band." The talent of Ray's bandmates is un-matched, with some of the members having toured or recorded with Herbie Hancock, Kayne West, Eryka Badu, and Kirk Franklin.  Also, some of the band's performances have been fundraisers for The Ryan Gibson Foundation or TRGF.  TRGF (www.trgf.org) is a Dallas-based non-profit organization that supports leukemia research throughout the U.S. Ryan Gibson, like Ray Johnston, had a passion for finding a cure for leukemia. Now, through his travels with the band, Ray has been spreading the word about the importance of leukemia research as well as raising funds for TRGF.

"Ray Johnston Band" recorded its first album 'Sweet Tooth," in early August of 2009 at Palmyra Studio in Palmer, TX. The album is currently available on iTunes and at www.rayjohnstonband.com/music.

INFORMATION COURTESY: HDNet

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