

Follow your Dream and make things happen.

**Qurrat Kadwani, the hostess of
100% Desi at Namaste America**

Actor, host, performer, philanthropist, producer are just a few passions of Qurrat Ann Kidwani. She manages all these professional responsibilities by being an efficient time manager, a skill she learned during her college year. "I saw someone just like you on TV. Was it you?" is a question Qurrat, the talented young hostess of 100% Desi at Namaste America, frequently gets. She notes that while women may look a little different on TV, male artists do not have to face the same. She has been preparing herself to work on screen since her high school years at The Bronx High School of Science. She was part of the Speech and Debate team at high school, and had competed nationally to bring back trophies that made her parents happy. For the change of scene and to live by herself, she went to Liberal Arts school at State University of New York at Geneseo, near Rochester New York. Here she got a feel for rural life where neighbors actually knew their neighbors. It was the perfect time for her to learn about Dramatics and Theatre, and to give feel to people of this "cute campus" to interact with a South Asian.

She is also a Muslim, and firmly believes that religion is "individual's conversation with God," and is therefore "a very very private matter." Qurrat added thoughtfully that religion and culture is one and the same. She believes in

one God and does not find it helpful to get into a debate as to whose God is better. The belief of this liberal woman is that universal principles of all religions are

**Interviewed By
ASMA AMANAT**

the same- be honest, be respectful and give back to the community. She has been giving back to the community through a charitable organization called eyeBLINK. Her passion for performance and drama has over the years translated into being a head of Drama department of eyeBLINK. The NGO organizes various activities like PIZZA FOR THE HUNGRY to give back locally. The eyeBLINK William J. Carabano Scholarship Award is a result of a partnership between eyeBLINK and NYU College of Arts and Sciences in order to grant 2 students scholarships of \$1500 min.

screen as the background of studio is blue. She has to ensure that she dresses modestly, so that families can watch her show, and also not to offend "a lot of uncles and aunties" who tune in. Another challenge is that on screen she cannot wear dresses with too many patterns or too loose clothes as camera adds on to the weight of the person. Of course fitness is another thing to take care of. Laughingly she tells me that she eats everything and drinks a lot of water. She used to have a personal trainer, and has a personal hair stylist. She has participated in Washington DC 26 mile marathon, and will be part of NYC marathon in the coming summer. Working in the industry she has learned to notice what common people miss while watching drama on TV plays or in movies. Among her favorite artists are Meryl Streep, Halle Barry, Robert Dimitro.



Qurrat finds the issues of South Asian youth to be the same as any other youth. She finds South Asian youth to be thoroughly immersed in the American society. The notion that color of the skin will make you less or more of an American is not appreciated by this youth, however they "are afraid to talk about it and to say that I'm a Muslim but I'm not a terrorist." South Asian youth have to struggle somewhat to balance the family traditions and societal norms. "There are of course issues about dating, relationship with your parents and the community." How should youth tell their parents about their date, I asked her? She responded that "you've to look at both sides of the coin to see what you're family is comfortable with..but it should be done in a respectful manner." For herself, Qurrat feels that "men are attracted to independent women" who are proactive and balance, successfully, their homes, jobs, family and friends.

Like any star on TV, Qurrat has to be careful with her appearance and fitness also. She cannot wear her favorite color - blue - on

She believes that India (where she was born) and America is in her blood. America is a place where she has been raised since the age of 3; she has all her education from this land of opportunities; and India is a place from where her roots come from. She reveals that she wept with joy when she saw Taj Mahal and was overwhelmed with the feeling that "O my God! This is my home" in India. She remains connected with her people and her family in Mumbai. About Mumbai carnage, she feels that "the attacks are very disappointing. People are trying to work things out, make peace in the world and this senseless act are only making things worse. It's sad to see how many innocent people have to continue to suffer because of the logic of a few individuals. My thoughts are with all the victims and their families."

"My dreams are limitless," she says passionately. As someone who is right on target about what to achieve in how much time, she advises the youth to "follow your dreams; make happen what you want to happen."