

## **BLANCO STARS ON MDC-TV**

MDC-TV will hit the airwaves all over Miami-Dade County on May 2nd, and so will Kelly Blanco. In only her first semester as a TV student on the North Campus at Miami Dade College, Blanco has already fulfilled her lifelong dream of hosting a television show. "I took television all throughout high school," Blanco says, "but I could have never imagined this happening so quickly in my wildest dreams."

Jay Sandhouse, MDC-TV Production Supervisor, is responsible for putting Blanco on the air. "When Miami Dade College took over Cable-TAP TV from the county and changed the name to MDC-TV, it gave us total control of the network." He says "Having our students hosting the programs is a no-brainer." Sandhouse, a former network writer/producer, approached MDC-TV Producer Alfred Vizcarra to put together a game plan. "Jay has an amazing eye for talent," Vizcarra says. "As I've been approaching the different departments in the college regarding putting a show on the network, I've been able to offer them a host, based on Jay's recommendations."

Sandhouse picked Blanco to replace him as the host of "N.B.S. Presents." N.B.S., which stands for National Broadcasting Society, is a national student organization with a chapter here on the North Campus of MDC. The two first met in Sandhouse's "Writing For Electronic Media" class. "I remember saying to myself the first day of class that she has a great look for television," Sandhouse says. He encouraged her to sign up for his "Radio & T.V. Announcing" class. After a screen test, Sandhouse was overwhelmed. "I've seen many talented students throughout my nine years here in the college,"

Sandhouse says, "But Kelly just blew me away. I've never had a student with this much natural talent."

When Sandhouse told her the good news, Blanco could not fight back tears. "No one has ever taken an interest in me and my career before. Jay is not only a great instructor, but a kind and caring person as well," She says. It's a sentiment shared most of Sandhouse's other students, including Dash Ruiz and Adrianna Galindo. Ruiz and Galindo are currently working for MDC-TV as crew members, and both are slated to host shows for the network. "I not only consider Jay my mentor, but my friend as well," Ruiz says. Galindo agrees. "Jay is a great instructor; if it weren't for him, I might not have realized my full potential," she says. Ruiz says Sandhouse is very approachable. "It's clear he takes a great interest in all of his students." He adds "It's obvious to all of us just how much he loves his job, and loves us all. I would take any class Jay teaches."

Besides her obvious talent, Sandhouse is also impressed by Blanco's work ethic and dedication. Prior to the March 28<sup>th</sup> taping of the shows, the two worked long hours, perfecting Blanco's skills. "I could have never imagined how much preparation it would take to host three shows," Blanco says. "But Jay made it such an enjoyable experience; I had to literally force myself to go home some days. Jay is such a warm and caring person, and best of all, he is so knowledgeable." When asked who her first guest would be, Blanco replied "Isn't it obvious, it's Jay."

After the tapings, it was Sandhouse who was fighting back tears. "I was so proud while I was directing the shows, I thought my tears would short-circuit the video switcher," Sandhouse says.

Sandhouse will be offering a second announcing class summer semester, "TV Workshop." He reminds Blanco as well as all of his students that they should be proficient in all aspects of television production. "Kelly has a great chance to make it on the air, but that may not be her first opportunity in the industry. The more equipped at all aspects of production a student is, the more likely it will be for him or her to get their foot in the door," Sandhouse says. Sandhouse plans on selecting Blanco as a crew member for MDC-TV next semester.

Blanco wakes up every morning thankful for the opportunity Sandhouse has given her. "Jay has been there for me when others have let me down. He's a great friend and an awesome teacher," she says. Sandhouse doesn't ask for much in return. "Their success is my reward. I just hope she hires me when she becomes famous and I'm too old to teach," he says.