

Firefighter Lives the Dream

by Camyle Cryderman
The Schoolcraft Connection

At seven years old, Mona Markabani knew what she wanted to be when she grew up—and she stuck to it.

Markabani, a Schoolcraft College alum and Michael Bettley Fire Academy Scholarship recipient, has gone on to become Lincoln Park Fire Department's second female, first Arab-American, and youngest

firefighter.

Alumni Focus with Mona Markabani

In the tough career of firefighting, it takes a lot of passion to con-

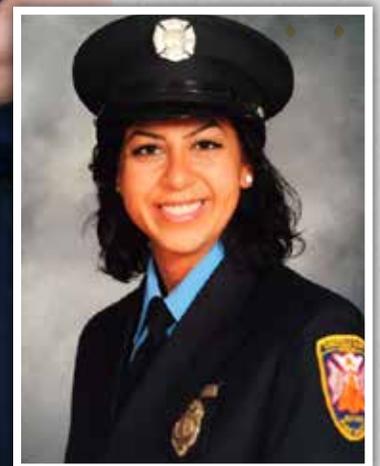
tinue day-to-day. Markabani has had this passion for as long as she can remember and continues to display it with each task she performs.

"I was in an elementary school assembly, learning about fire safety," she says, "and one of the firefighters happened to be female. That's when it stuck with me, and I continued on believing in my dream until I finally achieved it."

Her own hard work and dedication played a big part in accomplishing her goal of becoming a firefighter, but another important aspect was the Schoolcraft Fire Academy. The Academy and proactive instructors provided Markabani with all the tools needed to become successful in her field. Aspects like the hands-on fire training and a strict ranking system used in community fire departments gave her a taste of what she would face under actual conditions.

"What keeps me going," says Markabani, "is self-motivation, positivity and determination. The rest of the guys at the station, they push me to do my best every day.

"You should never give up on your dreams, no matter how many hurdles you come across. If you have your mind set on a certain path, go for it. Don't let anyone stop you from pursuing your goals. In the end, it's your future and your happiness—nobody else's."



Mona Markabani reports to Lt. Mike Prinz, one of the senior officers who was on the hiring committee. He previously worked under the Lincoln Park Fire Department's first and only other female firefighter and welcomes diversity in the department. Inset: Mona Markabani
Photo by Jessica Strachan, *The News-Herald*. See more photos at <http://bit.ly/schoolcraftmona>