

Minaret Academy: Episode 1

PHQ #: 24092654501

Project Lead / Lead Producer: Kareem Soussan

Writer: Kareem Soussan

Director: Ganesh C. G. (Year 2 Graduate Student in the Directing Program)

October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## **Minaret Academy**

A Chapman University Production

10-minute Digital Pilot

Union/Non-Union

Writer/Producer: Kareem Soussan

Director: Ganesh C. G

Casting Director: Kareem Soussan

Shoot Dates: 01/18/2025 - 01/20/2025

Location: Anaheim, CA

Pay Rate: \$125 per day

### **Contact:**

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### The Show:

*A coming-of-age story about two cousins in their senior year at an Islamic school, each seemingly headed in opposite directions in life, yet longing to follow the path the other is on.*

A rift forms between the two cousins when one of them, against everyone's expectations, enters the school's highly competitive Quran competition, threatening to take what the other cousin feels is his only path forward in life - a full-ride scholarship to a prestigious Islamic seminary.

### Synopsis of Pilot:

Hamza, an aspiring writer, dreams of leaving his community to attend college and pursue journalism, believing he can best serve his community from the outside. However, his parents want him to follow a different path by attending an Islamic seminary and taking on a leadership role within the community. Hamza resents his cousin Ismael, whose wealthier family affords him greater opportunities. When Ismael's sister, Nour, is forced to leave home, Ismael begins questioning his materialistic life and grows disillusioned. Tensions rise between the cousins, culminating in a Quran recitation showdown that deepens their rivalry and challenges their familial bond.

[HAMZA MAYET] 18 to play 16 - 21 years old, male. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. Special skill preferred – ability to recite Quran.

A straight-laced, no-nonsense, overachiever high-school student who cares deeply about the Muslim community he is a part of. Hamza, however, is a bit arrogant. He looks down upon and underestimates people who, in his view, don't take things as seriously as he does. This is especially the case regarding his cousin, Ismael. LEAD

[ISMAEL MAYET] 18 to play 16 - 21 years old, male. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. Special skill preferred – ability to recite Quran. Laid-back, easy going, and just cruising through life with very little care about anything. Unlike his cousin, Hamza, Ismael's parents are very wealthy. However, after his older sister, Nour, who he looks up to, leaves their home, Ismael becomes disillusioned by his materialistic family environment. Moreover, reality starts to set in for Ismael as he suddenly finds himself under a mountain of expectations from his mother Nadine, regarding his future after graduation, plaguing him with a deep sense of purposelessness. LEAD

[AKRAM MAYET] mid 40s – mid 50s, male. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. Hamza's father and the Imam of the community's mosque. Also teaches at Minaret Academy. As the leader of the community, Akram is commanding and assertive while also being very softhearted. Akram is compassionate toward his son but he wants Hamza to fulfill the dreams that he has of his son's future rather than Hamza's own, making him a little controlling over Hamza's career ambitions. SUPPORTING

[NADINE KAMANI] 40 – 50, female. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. The Director of Financial Operations at a major hedge fund and Ismael's mother. With her determined and cut-throat personality, Nadine uses her influential position in finance to secure prestigious futures for both Nour and Ismael at top universities and companies. Nadine constantly lives in survival mode, seeing the world as split into two groups – Predator versus Prey. She's willing to sacrifice almost anything for material wealth and comfort. SUPPORTING

[NOUR MAYET] 18 – 29 to play 24 years old, female. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. Attended Minaret Academy like her younger brother, Ismael, and is now in her Junior year of college. Nour often finds herself at odds with her mother's materialistic and career-driven worldview, leading to frequent clashes as their values and priorities diverge. Even though Nour is also navigating her own faith journey, being a few years older, she tries to offer Ismael whatever guidance she can. Despite feeling a bit lost herself, she still tries to be the best older sister she can be. SUPPORTING

[BILAL] 18 to play 16 - 21 years old, male. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. Caring and always looking out for other people, Yusef is a good friend of Hamza's and is very involved in the Muslim community. He's passionate about including people and getting people involved in the community who otherwise wouldn't be. SUPPORTING

[NASIR] 18 to play 16 - 21 years old, male. Open to all ethnicities but prefer either Middle Eastern, South Asian, or Black. Another friend in Hamza's crew. Nasir has a sly yet playful personality. He's always teasing his friends, particularly Hamza, whose arrogance makes him an even more deserving target of Nasir's witty humor. SUPPORTING