

The Gem of the Tactical Operations Center

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Kavita Patil at the HQ

THE GEM OF THE TACTICAL OPERATIONS CENTER By Becca Bryan CBS announced last spring that they wanted to bring more strong female roles to their roster of shows. Unit fans questioned this as we already have four strong women. One of those women is Kavita Patil, who plays "Sgt. Kayla Medawar" in the TOC. "Kayla" is the stunningly beautiful soldier who is calm under pressure and the master of her job. She is often seen managing more tasks at the same time than most of us can handle. The same can be said of the actor who is very active when off the set. Kavita is an experienced TV actor with many fine credits under her belt. She's appeared on such shows as Moonlight, Life, Las Vegas, Bones and Strong Medicine. She recently filmed an episode each on new shows Eleventh Hour, Sons of Anarchy, and the returning Lincoln Heights. Not one to sit and be idle when not working, Kavita did take some time to talk to us about her character "Kayla" and gives us a glimpse into the actor herself and what her aspirations are. HQ: I have to say, we love "Sgt. Kayla". She is so cool and such a stable in the TOC. I mean, the TOC just ain't the TOC without her in it. KP: Why thank you! HQ: So how's it going so far this season? KP: It's going very well. I enjoy playing a character that's smart and competent and knows what's going on. HQ: Who is "Sgt. Kayla Medawar" and what is her function in the TOC? KP: Kayla is support staff to any of the higher ranking officers in and related to The Unit, their right hand woman so to speak. She monitors and assists in missions where support is needed. KP: Have you given any thought to her backstory? HQ: Yes, some of which is she's single, independent and whose career is very important to her. She might even be a single mother, which could give Kayla an edge. HQ: So how many are in the can? KP: There's 8 in the can and they're working on 9. Seven and eight are big ones. HQ: That's the two parter. Can't wait for that! What is the best part of being on this show? KP: Being able to work as a recurring character- it allows me to hone my skills, make adjustments along the way. And the people. I work with a great group of people. HQ: And the most challenging? KP: In the very beginning, it was having to memorize the technical jargon, esp. if it was just rewritten that morning, then deliver it as naturally as possible. This season, in the first episode, I was asked to push the envelope a little, since I'm usually pretty calm, and I enjoyed showing some other colors. But it was only a bit. Wouldn't mind showing some more.. HQ: It's true. Kayla is always the calm one in the TOC when the pressure is on. I'm going to have to go back and re-watch the season premiere to see Kayla get a little shaken up. What other projects are you working on? KP: The Unit is the main one right now. HQ: If given the choice of equal roles on TV and stage, which would you take? KP: You know, it would have to depend on the project. If it's a story that raises awareness or is important to me in some way, I would choose to work on that, whether it be stage or on film. I'm in this business for the stories and the impact they can have on their audience, though I truly enjoy both mediums. HQ: What's your dream project? KP: Oh wow. Working on a historical drama. Like Cleopatra or Spartacus. I just love those epic dramas! It's probably because they're warriors fighting for what they believe in. Another is writing or doing a project of my own. Seeing my stories out there. That would be exciting for me. HQ: Oh, so you're a writer too! I can relate to that. What are you working on? KP: I'm working on a screenplay. HQ: What's the story about? KP: I like to write about issues relating to humanity. How cultural, emotional, social issues can affect the dynamics of a family, society, etc. It sounds really serious but I'd like to convey these issues with a sense of humor. How's that for being general? J HQ: I recently joined a writers group here in Florida. Have you found one to join? The positive feedback I get really spurs me on to writing more, kicks up the creative juices. KP: Oh absolutely. Yes, I do belong to one. When we meet, we ask each other questions about our characters that we might not have thought about. That fuels my creativity and inspires me to keep writing. Without the group, I'm not as disciplined. HQ: I can relate to that too. A little about your family history. Do you come from a large family? KP: There's five of us. I have two sisters. HQ: And what do you like to do when you're not working? KP: I like to write, sail, go rock climbing, hike...to stay active. I've started a form of martial arts as well. And of course, I love to watch my movies! Beauty and strength are great qualities for any woman. But Kavita displays these qualities every week on The Unit and off the set. As one source who was close to the production recently told me, "the make up artist has to work double overtime to make her less stunningly beautiful and more natural on the show." We double that statement