

Wedding Contest Essay: Jenell Carapella and Kalyana Krishnan

Antoine de Saint-Exupery once stated that, “love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking together in the same direction”. Sharing the same philosophy on how to live and what to live for seems to be a common theme among happily married people and might be the reason it has taken my fiancé and I this long to find each other. We couldn't have been raised in different circumstances; he spent the first 21 years of his life in southern India, and I was raised in a rural east coast town of no more than 11,000 residents. Somehow though, we couldn't be more similar in our outlook and our goals for the future. A wedding at the Athenaeum Hotel at Chautauqua Institution would be a direct reflection of our love for educational pursuit, respect for culture, religious tolerance, and appreciation of beauty.

Both Kalyana and I have made sacrifices to continue our education. He left his life in South Africa to study at the University at Buffalo, and I returned to school to pursue a second career in teaching. We connect each day by sharing what we have learned. We are life-long learners who believe that education can set a person free and free up time to give back to the community. I share this philosophy with my high school students like I will share it with our own children in the future.

We enjoy experiencing new cuisine, as well as learning to prepare traditional southern Indian dishes. It is our hope that those family members who are able to make the trip won't go hungry when they stay with us after our wedding! Kalyana and I both enjoy spending time with our friends and family in addition to frequenting local galleries, shops, and the natural phenomena for which Chautauqua County is known.

Kalyana's reflections about Chautauqua Institution the first time we visited involved the beautiful architectural features of the historic buildings. He wanted to know more about its obvious history. When this contest was made known to us, we didn't think twice about applying.

If we won the Media One Bridal's 2012 Destination Wedding at The Athenaeum Hotel at Chautauqua Institution contest, Kalyana and I would be able to go to India to celebrate with those family members not healthy enough (physically or financially) to make the trip. This would be my first trip to the country that made my fiancé into the driven, compassionate, worldly man that he is and his first trip back home in more than six years. We would also be able to contribute to the Cassadaga Valley Faculty Association College Scholarship fund. We thank you for this tremendous opportunity and hope you select us for our unique circumstances and that we, as a couple, reflect the wonderful culture and talent that resonates within the Chautauqua Institution each year.