

Local woman throws hat in the ring to be 'America's Next Fitness Star'

By Bethany Bray
Staff Writer

NORTH ANDOVER — Amy Constantino has a dream of hosting her own health and wellness television show.

The North Andover resident brought herself one step closer to that dream recently when she attended an open casting call for the cable network ExerciseTV.

She tried out to host "America's Next Fitness Star," a new show. The gig would have made her an instant fitness guru to millions of ON DEMAND television watchers when the show launches later this year.

"It was just one of those things that I did," she said recently. "Hey, nothing lost, nothing gained. I just ad-libbed it, it was kind of fun."

Fitness fans from across the country were invited to audition for their own show, and were required to show a little bit of how they would motivate millions to work out.

The winner of the national competition will be announced any day now, but Constantino says she isn't packing her bags for Hollywood just yet. The fact that she hasn't heard anything from the show since her tryout last fall (and she's not listed on the program's Web site as a finalist) means she's likely out of the running.

Even so, Constantino said she was glad for the experience. At the casting call, she was given 30 seconds in front of a camera with cued music. Constantino said she did what comes naturally to her — she introduced herself and began as if she were leading a warm-up for a fitness class.

Constantino said she pictures herself hosting a wellness show, a way to reach people and "show how to get well and stay well in this busy world."

"I don't want to be just another person on TV that says 'Come on, exercise, breathe!' But I want to be in the (fitness television) industry," she said.

Constantino has been involved in fitness for more than a decade and currently teaches classes at Cedardale Health and Wellness in Haverhill — from yoga and Qi Gong to step aerobics and fitness ballet. She also does workshops and lectures on nutrition and holistic health and medicine.

"I teach everything. It's what I do, it's my life and I love it," she said with a laugh.

She said she wasn't nervous about her audition because the time passed so quickly and she is familiar with the process, having been in commercials in the past. The open casting call was held in Boston at the CN8 cable studios. The day was hosted by Jake Steinfeld, fitness personality and host of "Body by Jake."

Constantino got her start in holistic health and medicine when she felt ill and wanted more answers than traditional medicine was giving her.

"There's a lot more that you can do for yourself than you think you can," she said.

She said she keeps working and teaching to share that idea with others, and eventually hopes to share it through television as well. Sunshine, clean water, sufficient rest and wholesome food can make a person feel so much better than just popping a pill, said Constantino.

"I wish people knew how it felt to feel really, really healthy and really, really vivacious. To have energy, but not in a crazy caffeine way. People don't know what it is to feel great, to feel amazing. They get so used to feeling mediocre that it feels normal," she said. "I love what I do because people don't realize it's easier than they think. Life's too short to feel lousy."

Constantino is also the founder of T-Ripple-E, LLC, a holistic health, nutrition and exercise practice. She is certified to teach aerobics, yoga, pilates, and is certified as a personal trainer and lifestyle coach. She has a bachelor of arts degree from Syracuse University.