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# WESTVILLE

MAGAZINE  
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Entertainment Tonight's

**SAMANTHA  
HARRIS**

**FRANCES  
FISHER**

Master of Her  
Own Ship

**TRAVEL**

Getaways for  
Guys and Gals



ENTERTAINMENT  
TONIGHT'S

# Samantha Harris

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## How did Samantha Harris, a seasoned entertainment news journalist and two-time Emmy-nominated TV personality, come to trade in her small town mid-western roots for the Hollywood spotlight?

**D**rive southwest, astones throw from Minneapolis, Minnesota and you will stumble upon the small town of Hopkins in Hennepin County. Originally founded in 1887 and incorporated as the Village of West Minneapolis, Hopkins (prior to becoming a city in 1947) has been primarily known as a factory town but also recognized for its hometown raspberry festivals.

Entertainment news journalist, Samantha Harris, was born and raised in Hopkins, Minnesota, however, she now resides North of Los Angeles with her husband, Michael and 2 year-old daughter Josselyn. Samantha is one of the newest sensations seen nightly on the #1 entertainment news programs in the country, CBS Television's *Entertainment Tonight*. Although, she maintains her wholesome "girl next-

door" presence, she is far from the girl next door. Harris covered President Obama's inauguration in Washington, D.C.; surfed the North Coast of Oahu during an interview with 19-year-old surfing champion Bethany Hamilton, interviewed Oprah in Chicago and Hollywood's A-list on the red carpet at the Emmys, SAG Awards, Golden Globes and Oscars.

She is best-known for her eight seasons co-hosting the live hit ABC series *Dancing With The Stars*, which averaged more than 30 million viewers weekly and was the #2 most-watched show in the U.S. in each of those years.

Co-host Tom Bergeron said, "I think Samantha is powered by an invisible energy source. During our eight seasons together, I never started a morning script meeting unless caffeine was close by. Samantha, on the other

hand, despite juggling motherhood with several jobs, always came bounding into the room like she'd just had ten hours sleep at a spa (she may dispute this assessment but, trust me, she did). When she danced during a results show in season two, I told her she was the only person I'd ever seen who needed to slow down during a Jive! Forget about offshore drilling. Harness Harris energy!"

When we asked Samantha why she made the decision to leave DWTS, she replied, "Working on the show was the most incredible journey and I remain a huge fan. I am so grateful for the experience and for what it added to my career. I miss shooting *Dancing* very much in many ways, but the move to *Entertainment Tonight* (a show I interned at in college at Northwestern) has long been a dream of mine."

Additionally, the multi-talented Harris made her Broadway debut in the summer of 2009 in New York City, singing and dancing for sold-out audiences playing the role of the killer-diller "Roxie Hart" in the long-running musical *CHICAGO*. This comes as no surprise as Harris grew up with mega-creative parents. Her late father, Richard Shapiro, was a rock 'n' roll promoter; and her mother, Bonnie Harris Shapiro, was a dancer. In 1972, the two founded one of the country's first renaissance festivals, King Richard's Faire, which continues to this day. Samantha says that "Chicago" had been following her since she sang "All That Jazz" in a variety show in ninth grade. Samantha graduated with honors from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism in Evanston, IL. In 1995 and hit the ground running.

Samantha's talents were discovered within her first years living in Los Angeles. Hot off the North American musical tour *Eric Idle Exploits Monty Python* (where Samantha's comedic, vocal, and dance performance electrified audiences at Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, and other prestigious venues), CBS cast her as America's



sweetheart, "Dawn Wells aka Mary Ann", in its made-for-TV movie *Surviving Gilligan's Island*. Samantha's other acting credits include the multi-award winning *Reefer Madness! The New "Hit" Musical* (original cast) as well as multiple feature films and television shows.

No doubt that her diverse background and hometown essence has contributed

to her landing a number of positions on prime-time television, including: filling in for Meredith Vieira as a guest host for a week on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*; multiple times as a guest host on ABC's *The View* and contributing as a special correspondent on ABC's *Good Morning America*.

She says that one of her greatest honors was hosting, alongside Regis



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Philbin, the live official red carpet pre-show for ABC's *80th Annual Academy Awards: Road To the Red Carpet*, which garnered nearly one billion viewers worldwide.

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A known sports enthusiast, Samantha has graced the cover of a myriad of magazines including *Muscle & Fitness HERS* magazine (a record



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four times) in addition to *USA Today* magazine, *FIRST* for Women, *Fit Parent*, *YogaMom*, *Sun Country Airlines in-flight*, *Pilates Style* and *Pregnancy & Newborn* (while pregnant with her daughter) and now, of course, *Westlake Magazine*. She has been featured in a number of publications including *SHAPE*, *People*, *Health*, *US Weekly*, *In Touch*, *Life & Style*, *FHM*, and *SELF*.

Paying it forward, Samantha is actively involved with a number of charitable organizations. She is on the Entertainment Council of Feeding America, [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org). The organization says that having Samantha on their team has been extremely

beneficial in helping to raise awareness and educate the public on the work of the organization. "Samantha Harris joined Feeding America's Entertainment Council in the Spring of 2009. She has eagerly participated in numerous campaigns and events for the nation's largest hunger relief organization. Samantha is a genuine champion in Feeding America's fight to end hunger in our nation."

Additionally, she has actively supported the Revlon Run/Walk and What A Pair for cancer research, Operation Smile, P.S. Arts and the Crohns and Colitis Foundation of America.

When asked how she stays grounded while working in such a captivating industry, Harris replied "To be honest, it's not something that I give a lot of thought to, but yet, it is something important to me. Growing up in Minnesota, and with parents who were loving and supportive albeit strict -- i.e. no calling boys -- helped to set a firm foundation for me before moving to L.A. I have a sister who always has been there for me and now a husband that is my true partner in all things. Although my work life is a lot of Hollywood glitz and red carpet glamour, the moment I am off camera I wash off the make-up, throw on a baseball hat and jeans then hit the park with my daughter. Motherhood has grounded me more than anything before it."

As a professed, dessert-fanatic, it can't be easy keeping her extraordinary figure. Fortunately, she has a passion for dancing, cardio-sculpting, yoga and hiking. No doubt, chasing a two year old around while juggling an intense work schedule also contributes to her amazing physique. However, there is something to be said about one's disposition that clearly stems from good genes and a bright energetic attitude toward life and Samantha is the proof in the pudding ... or possibly Hopkins, Minnesota Raspberry pudding. **WM**



Samantha Harris and David Arquette  
St. Joseph's Centre Dinner

David, who is the Chairman of Feeding America, received an award for his weekly involvement volunteering at the centre and Samantha Harris, who is on the Entertainment Council, was also the MC that evening.