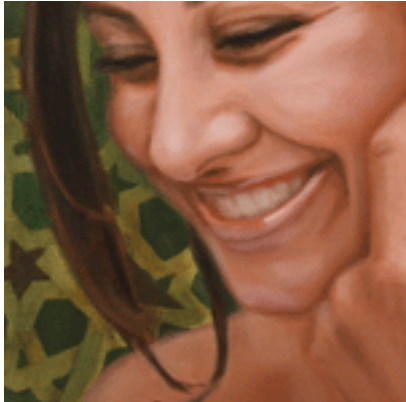


# GLO(B)AL CITIZEN PROJECT

**Name: Fatima Born: 1983 Birthplace: Islamabad, Pakistan**



My parents married in Pakistan: My mother, a tea harvester, was a Sri Lankan Hindu, and my father, a Creole American, was studying to be a Sufi Muslim (he was raised Roman Catholic). After I was born, we moved to Sri Lanka where we lived until we immigrating immigrated to the states; I was five years old.

As a Sufi, I was required to wear a hijeb (head wrap) and non-form-fitting clothes (in my case, maternity shirts!). I was so different from my peers, I didn't have the typical "American" teenage experiences, but even as an "outsider" I was very happy. My parents taught me to be grateful for all that we had in America. In Sri Lanka, we had no running water, electricity, or even toilet paper! My happiness sprung from my thankfulness and strong, close-knit family. Friends in high school endearingly nicknamed me Prozac, which I thought was hilarious!

At George Washington University, I joined the Muslim Students' Association—I was at school with other Muslims for the first time. Halfway through school, I removed my hijeb and exposed my hair to the world; I realized I could practice my religion without displaying it on the outside. I am still a Sufi, regardless of my physical appearancewardrobe. My husband (who's who is Lutheran, ironically) brought me and our kids and me to Manhattan for his culinary career. My children will be raised with in both religions; I want them to be proud of what makes them different, as I do.