

SISTER ACT
PAULA CUDDLES UP TO KARA AS 'IDOL' CAST GETS TO WORK



By MICHAEL POPE
Kara DioGuardi and Paula Abdul make nice yesterday.

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IT was all smiles as Simon, Paula and Randy appeared for the first time together in public with the newest "American Idol" judge, Kara DioGuardi.

As the iconic black stretch limo pulled up yesterday at Chelsea Peirs on Manhattan's West side to begin a day of shooting audition hopefuls for the new season of "Idol," Kara rushed out to greet them at a carefully orchestrated, curbside scene.

Paula was the first out of the car and gave the new cast member a hug that was so hearty it looked like the two might topple over. Randy and Simon then gave her a welcoming hug, as well.

With fans shouting and cameras clicking, Paula and Kara made it clear that they were determined to get along great and that the biggest change in the history of the talent show was no big deal.

"This is kismet," Paula said, clasping Kara's hand in a show of solidarity. "It's about time, and it couldn't have been a better person."

Paula even took some credit for Kara's new-found success - noting that the two once lived together: "I was the one that picked her off the streets of New York. I saw potential in her, and I brought her into my home and fed her."

Touching nearly the entire time they appeared in public, the pair laughed and whispered to each other.

Because they were standing so close, at one point Kara nearly struck Paula in the face by accident.

"It's starting already!" Randy joked.

When asked why they picked the Grammy-nominated songwriter, Randy replied: "She's the most like us." And how does Simon feel?

"She's alright," he said with a wink and a smile before slinking into the building to begin auditions for several hundred of "Idol" hopefuls.

The four are judging those singers who got past last week's cattle call auditions at Giants stadium where an estimated 3,000 "Idol" wannabes showed up for a chance to win a spot on the show.