



IAWF

Iranian American Women Foundation

The mission of the Iranian American Women Foundation is to provide a platform of empowerment and mentorship for Iranian women of all ages.

Since its inception in Orange County, CA, in 2012, the organization has inspired, empowered, and connected thousands of women nationwide and globally. It has served as a home away from home; a community that celebrates creative, innovative, tenacious, compassionate women who are problem-solvers and a growing force for the greater good.

The organization has hosted 17 sold-out conferences with approximately 400-700 attendees in Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City, Washington D.C., London, and Toronto over the past seven years.

Our vision is a world where every woman realizes her full potential and joins forces to positively impact our global community.



On behalf of the Iranian American Women Foundation, I welcome you to our very first gala honoring the achievements of the Women of Influence in our community.

IAWF was founded with the mission of “Inspiring, Empowering, and Connecting” Iranian women around the world and have invariably created a platform for participants to connect with many accomplished women of the Iranian heritage, get inspired by their stories of overcoming challenges, and become empowered by women with spectacular stature from different walks of life. Although the uniqueness of their journeys differentiates them from each other, the common denominator among them is their commitment to their dreams and continuously rising above the challenges on their path.

Our goal is to light up the torch of inspiration, to celebrate the achievements of Iranian American women, honor their inspiring characters and convey their message of resilience and triumph to the next generation.

I invite you to celebrate the achievements of the Iranian American Women of Influence and collectively create a space for the future generations to thrive and soar to new heights.

Warmest Regards,

Mariam Khosravani, Founder

Iranian American Women Foundation



***Welcome to this night of brilliance,
excellence, and benevolence.***

It's an immense honor and privilege to be part of this necessary and important organization. The Iranian American Women Foundation has provided a platform to highlight those among us who have made great contributions to society.

Tonight, we are thrilled to celebrate some very accomplished women. Each and every one of these magnificent ladies being honored are brilliant of mind, excellent at what they do, and benevolent through their actions.

We salute them and thank them for lighting the road for others to follow!

Soheila Adelipour

ZaZa Saleh

Event Co-chairs

Honorees



Nina Ansary

Dr. Nina Ansary is an internationally recognized women's rights advocate, thought leader, scholar, and public speaker. As a UN Women Ambassador for Innovation and Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics Centre for Women, Peace & Security, she regularly presents her work on women's rights and the global impact of institutionalized gender discrimination at major universities and conferences in the US and UK, including Columbia, Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard, as well as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington D.C, the US Senate Human Rights Caucus, and the World Affairs Councils of America. Dr. Ansary's book *Jewels of Allah: The Untold Story of Women in Iran* received international attention and garnered multiple awards – including the 2016 International Book Award in "Women's Issues." Dr. Ansary is the recipient of The 2018 Trailblazer Award from Barnard College, Columbia University. She has also been recognized as one of "14 Privileged Women to Change the World" by *Marie Claire*, been featured in *Angeleno Magazine's* "Living Legacies of 2016" and selected as one of "Five Iranian Visionaries You Need to Know" and "6 Women Who Build Bridges Not Walls" by *The New York Times*. Dr. Ansary has appeared on Fox News, Larry King, the BBC, and been covered in a variety of top publications, including CNN.com, *Newsweek*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The UK Daily Telegraph*, *Teen Vogue* and the *Yale Journal of International Affairs*. Dr. Ansary holds an MA in Middle Eastern Studies and a PhD in History from Columbia University. She serves on the Board of Directors of the New York based organization The Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI), Columbia University's Global Leadership Council, the Board of Trustees of Barnard College, the Iranian American Women's Foundation (IAWF), and Persia Educational Foundation. Connect with Nina on Twitter (@drninaansary) | Instagram (@ninaansary) | Facebook (facebook.com/ninaansary).



Bitia Ardalan

Bitia Ardalan is managing director and head of the Commercial Banking Group at Union Bank, N.A., which includes Business Banking and Middle Market Commercial Lending. The Commercial Banking Group provides financial expertise to commercial clients including but not limited to: debt financing, depository and cash management, global trade, foreign currency exposure, interest rate and commodity management, syndications, private placements, high grade & high yield financing, securitizations, structured finance, leasing, mezzanine financing, ratings advisory, and private banking services across a broad range of industries. Prior to her current role, Ms. Ardalan served as the head of Middle Market Banking. Previously, she founded and oversaw the bank's National Specialized Lending Group, including commercial finance, environmental services, non-profits, healthcare, aerospace and defense, public finance, and funds finance which supports the needs of sponsored investment funds, including bridge capital and subscription facilities. Ms. Ardalan earned her Bachelor of Science degree in business management from Williams College. She has completed numerous Executive Education Programs in corporate finance, leadership, strategic planning and finance at the Kellogg School for Management at Northwestern University. Ms. Ardalan is a frequent speaker and author on senior financing related topics. She currently serves on the Iranian-American Women's advisory board, as an Ambassador for the Looking Beyond Foundation, and as a Board Member for the Town Hall, Los Angeles. Ms. Ardalan is also a member of the Young President's Organization (YPO Gold) Santa Monica Bay Chapter, and the Jonathan Town & Beach Club.



Shahrzad Ardalan

Shahrzad Ardalan was the producer and host of a popular radio show called, "Life is Beautiful" on 670AM-KIRN Radio Iran. In her show, Shahrzad dealt with a variety of Iranian-American issues, with a positive approach, covering a variety of topics, such as family matters, parenthood, health, and other day-to-day aspects of life. She is now the host of a weekly radio show called, "peyk e hafteh." Shahrzad is an active member of the community and has considerable experience working with social and charitable organizations. Her previous involvements include her role as president of Rancho Park Rotary club, president of Coalition of Iranian Entrepreneurs, board member of PAAIA, and a position on the advisory board of ISCC and Pars Equality Center. Shahrzad is also a real estate agent and manages the Westwood branch of HBC Realty. Additionally, for the past 11 years she has been conducting wedding ceremonies.



Bitia Daryabari

Bitia Daryabari embodies the spirit of humanist philanthropy. She received her bachelor's in computer science then master's degree in Telecommunication Management at Golden Gate University in California. Upon graduation, she joined GammmaLink, Inc., one of the pioneers in the field of telecommunications. She later moved to MCI Communications where, more than once, she received distinguished awards & recognition for her work. She has started Pars Equality Center, a community foundation in 2010 to support the full integration of people of Persian (Iranian) origin in the USA, including refugees, asylees, immigrants & the American-born; & to advocate for their perspectives in American society. In 2008, she created the Bitia Daryabari Endowment in Persian Letters at Stanford University, enabling the university to not only hire visiting & full-time professors of Persian literature, but also providing the necessary funds for the Iranian Studies program. Her International charitable work, primarily focused through the Unique Zan Foundation is not limited to Iran & its literature, or Asia & its women. In 2008, Ms. Daryabari joined forces with Relief International & the Skoll Foundation, to build a women's center in West Bank Palestinian Territory. Other philanthropic endeavors include collaboration with Moms Against Poverty educating & empowering girls at Shaheed Shojaie Orphanage in south of Tehran, Iran, donation to the British Museum & Iran Heritage Foundation for the Shah Abbas Exhibition; funding Iranian Artists through Venice Biennale to display their work for the first time after 30 years of solitude in 2009; & contributions to the UCSF Mission Bay Neuroscience Research Building, which opened in 2012; Bitia Daryabari Scholarship Program For Women of Middle East in Business & Law at Golden Gate University since 2012. Grant to UC Davis for Iranian Studies, Bitia Daryabari Endowment in Shahnama Project & Centre at Cambridge, England. Daryabari co-sponsored the San Francisco exhibition of the Cyrus Cylinder at the Asian Arts Museum of San Francisco & also serves as a Visionary Circle Member of the X-Prize Foundation. Her Honors include Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Golden Gate University, World Affair Council Honoree of the year, Ellis Island Medal of Honor, the United Nations Appreciation Award for Outstanding Leadership, Commitment & Support of the UN & Achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals, PAAIA Philanthropist of the Year Award & Golden Gate University's Alumni of the Year Award.



Sussan Deyhim

Sussan Deyhim is a composer, vocalist, performance artist and activist. LA Times quotes Sussan as one of Iran's most potent voices in exile. In 1980 she moved to New York embarking on a multifaceted career encompassing music, theatre, dance, media and film. Her work has been presented at The Carnegie Hall, Royal Albert Hall, Royce Hall, The Wallis and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Sussan's wide-ranging collaborations include: Peter Gabriel, U2, Bobby McFerrin, Richard Horowitz, Deepak Chopra. She can be heard on the soundtracks of the Oscar Winning "Argo", The Last Temptation of Christ, The Kite Runner, She has collaborated with Shirin Neshat on multiple projects, including Turbulent the winner of the Golden Lion at The Venice Biennial. Her activist works include collaborations with Eve Ensler, Saatchi and Saatchi's children benefit, The United Nation's gathering of the spiritual leaders visioned by Ted Turner. Her most recent projects include her acclaimed stage production The House is Black Media Project inspired by Forough Farrokhzad's works and life, recently presented at The Wallis and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her upcoming recording releases include La Belle et La Bete a jazz influenced album to be released by summer of 2019 and an all female vocal composition based of the Mystic Persian Poet Attar's masterpiece "Conference of The Birds".



Nazie Eftekhari

Ms. Eftekhari is the CEO and principal architect of HealthEZ and founder of The Araz Group, the first Preferred Provider Organization in the country. In fact, the term PPO was coined to describe her innovation. Her other innovations include the first medical management services, the first consolidated insurance and consumer payments to doctors and hospitals, the first healthcare consumer statement, and the first paperless statement. www.healthez.com She is a graduate of the London School of Economics and she attended the University of Southern California (UK) Graduate Program in International Relations and the University of Minnesota, MHA. She serves on the Board of Visitors of the University of Minnesota Medical School, the Board of Overseers of the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management, the Speaker's Cabinet Leadership Circle (DCCC), and the boards of the Nonviolent Initiative for Democracy (NID) and the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA). Often honored and recognized for her leadership in business and service to the community, Ms. Eftekhari most recently received the 2011 International Immigrant Achievement Award from The International Leadership Institute. In 1991 she established The Foundation for the Children of Iran, dedicated to enabling indigent Iranian children to receive life-saving health care services in the United States that are not available to them in Iran. www.childrenofiran.org Ms. Eftekhari has a son, Sahm McGlynn, and a daughter, Raz McGlynn, who are unabashedly her pride and joy.



Hon. Tamila Ebrahimi Ipema

The Honorable Tamila Ebrahimi Ipema received her Bachelor's Degree from Damavand College in Tehran, Iran. She received her Master's and J.D. degrees from University of Louisville in Kentucky. She also has a LL.M. Degree in International and Comparative Law from Georgetown University School of Law. Judge Ipema has served as a judicial officer for nearly 12 years. She has family, criminal, and civil experience. She has worked as an immigration defense attorney, Assistant District Counsel with the U.S. Department of Justice in immigration matters for DHS; as a judicial research attorney, and supervising research attorney for the Los Angeles Superior Court. She has also served as a California Superior Court Commissioner in both Los Angeles and San Diego Counties prior to her appointment as a Judge to the San Diego Superior Court. Judge Ipema has extensive teaching experience and is very involved in her community mentoring children and law students; she also has programs training incarcerated women to become productive members of the society. Judge Ipema received National Association of Women Judge's (NAWJ) Mattie Belle Davis Award in 2013 for furthering the organization's mission of "Access to Justice for All." She also received Lawyers Club of San Diego's "International Woman of Color" award in 2015, and "Friend of the Community Award" from Tom Homann Law Association in 2016. She also received two "Outstanding Jurist Awards" from both La Verne College of Law and San Diego County Bar Association in 2016.



Shahpar Khaledi

Born in Iran in 1949, Shahpar Khaledi entered business school and graduated with a degree in Business Administration in 1972. She moved to California with her husband and two children in 1976. Then continued her education and obtained a Master's degree in Business Administration from Northrop University. In 1997, Shahpar and her husband; Darioush Khaledi, founded Darioush Winery in Napa Valley. Their lifelong aspiration is to share the art, architecture, wine, craftsmanship and culture on their journey. Darioush is a harmonious blending of traditions, and honors the culture of their native motherland; Iran. Shahpar's vision for Darioush Winery is shaped by her experience in fashion, retail, and trendsetting sensibility over decades as Founder and Director of Echelon; a European Boutique. Shahpar has been actively involved with Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. She is also assisting underserved communities to receive access to affordable healthcare with Ole Health, the Saint Helena Hospital Foundation. Moreover, she provides access to music and performing arts education to underserved communities through Los Angeles Philharmonic and Festival Napa Valley.



Parisa Khosravi

Parisa is a keynote speaker, a strategic adviser and a multi-award-winning veteran journalist and news executive. With over three decades of experience on the global stage, Parisa has first-hand experience dealing with world leaders, dignitaries and high-ranking officials across the globe in order to open doors to difficult and dangerous parts of the world where freedom of speech is in no way guaranteed. Throughout her career as CNN's senior vice president for international newsgathering, domestic newsgathering and first ever global ambassador with editorial, operational and administrative oversight of CNN's bureaus and assignment desks, Parisa led the network's global coverage. Parisa directed CNN's award-winning coverage of the most significant stories including Tiananmen Square, both Iraq Wars, the Fall of the East Bloc, the end of Apartheid, the genocide in Rwanda, 9-11 and Hurricane Katrina. She directed CNN's coverage of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, and the award-winning news coverage of the devastating earthquake in Haiti; and the duPont-winning coverage of the tsunami disaster in South Asia. Parisa led the network's Peabody and Emmy Award-winning coverage of the Arab Spring. In addition, Parisa oversaw The CNN Freedom Project, an award-winning, multi-platform initiative that aimed to expose the horrors of modern-day slavery and push for change, as well as numerous other CNN global initiatives such as girls' education. Parisa directed CNN's largest investment in international newsgathering in its history. She strategically increased the number of bureaus around the world, placing new operations in emerging global centers. Parisa left CNN IN 2015. CNN lauded Parisa in its farewell to her by stating: "No one has played a greater role in emergence and then dominance of CNN international news gathering than Parisa." Parisa's joy and passion both in her career as a journalist and as a mother to her special son is to help give voice to the voiceless. She leads with empathy, compassion and integrity earning her the nickname of "Mother Parisa". Parisa is an advocate for individuals with autism and has focused her efforts in helping ensure the "silent champions" have their voices heard. Parisa has spoken about compassionate leadership at NASA, United Nations, Delta Airlines & numerous other private and public organizations and companies.



Avid Modjtabai

Avid Modjtabai is responsible for Wells Fargo's Payments, Virtual Solutions & Innovation (PVSI) group, & leads nearly 38,000 team members. The PVSI group brings together the company's robust payments platforms, digital capabilities, & virtual online, mobile & phone channels. PVSI also invests in research & development & strategic partnerships to design & build next-generation products & customer experiences. PVSI includes Consumer Credit Card, Retail Services, Consumer Deposits, Treasury Management, Merchant Services, Payment Strategies, Virtual Channels, Innovation, Operations, & enterprise Marketing. Since joining Wells Fargo in 1993, Avid has served in several senior leadership roles. Prior to leading PVSI, she was the head of Consumer Lending & the enterprise-wide Operations group. Consumer Lending included Home Lending, Dealer Services, Consumer Credit Cards, Student Lending, Personal Lines & Loans & Retail Services. She led more than 65,000 team members who served more than 22 million households, helping consumers with their borrowing needs. The Operations team, which remains under Modjtabai in her role, includes check processing, statement processing, ATM operations, ACH & wires, fraud disputes, cash vaults, & lockbox. Previously, Avid served as the head of the Technology & Operations Group & Chief Information Officer. As CIO, she was responsible for all core technology functions across the company including computing, data centers, connectivity and voice & data networks, end-user services, enterprise architecture, application development, information security, & technology governance. She was also responsible for the customer conversion activities & the systems & operations integration for Wells Fargo's merger with Wachovia. Avid also has served as head of HR & led the Internet Services Group. Her early roles at the company included management positions in Consumer Deposits & the Savings & Investment Group, following work at McKinsey & Company, where she focused on strategy initiatives in financial services. Avid has been named one of the "Most Powerful Women in Banking" by American Banker. The San Francisco Business Times named her one of the "100 Most Influential Women in Bay Area Business" & Bank Technology News recognized her as one of "The Innovators." She received the "Ellis Island Medal of Honor," awarded for her outstanding personal & professional achievements, coupled with preserving the richness of her heritage. Avid serves on the board of directors for Avnet, Inc.



Neda Nobari

Neda Nobari is an Iranian-American business woman, philanthropist and humanitarian. She was born in Tehran and raised in Abadan until she moved to the United States at the age of 15. Her childhood memories of Iran are mostly from Abadan and Khoramshahr since her father, Iman, worked for the National Iranian Oil Company, and was a life-long Sherkati. After graduating from San Francisco State University in 1984 with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, Neda spent the next 22 years on building a global fashion brand and raising a family. At bebe, Neda served as the Vice President of Design and Vice Chair of the Board and at home she served as Chief Mom and Vice President of Hospitality. In 2015, Neda earned her Master's Degree in Liberal Studies from Dartmouth College while raising her two sons in New England. Neda's graduate research, which focused on the intersection of diaspora and cultural identity of Iranian-American women, connected her with IAWF Foundation Founder, Mariam Khosravani. Since their connection in 2013, Neda has served IAWF as a trustee, Northern California Chapter Chair, and Co-Chair of the last two conferences held in San Francisco. In addition to leading her own foundation for the past 13 years, Neda has also served on over a dozen nonprofit boards and advisory boards catering to both Iranian and non-Iranian communities. Her philanthropic philosophy and living practice strives to empower the human potential especially those living in the margins of society. To support her commitment to an equitable future, Neda has contributed over \$10 Million in grants and endowments to date. In 2016, Neda established the Center for Iranian Diaspora Studies at her alma mater, San Francisco State University. The first and only academic institution of its kind, the Center is dedicated to interdisciplinary inquiry of Iranian diaspora experience, its impact on transnational identity, and the exploration of overlooked narratives about what it means to be a hyphenated Iranian. Neda's conviction for the importance of California's public higher education system and San Francisco State University's legacy of racial, ethnic and social justice, made SF State the perfect home for this innovative research center. Besides her philanthropic support, Neda also serves on the Board of Directors of the University Foundation, bringing to bear institutional and financial practices in pursuit of social and environmental justice.



Katy Saei

Katy Saei earned her bachelor's degree from Marshall Business School of University of Southern California with a minor in accounting. Before her first daughter was born, Ms. Saei had worked at GW Savings and Loans as a senior accountant. Ms. Saei launched R.J. Equity Partners in 2003 with her husband, and later founded First Financial Capital in 2005. Both companies are family-owned and operated as finance and real estate holding companies. Katy is a managing member of a multi-million dollar family office and is a member and founder of the student housing real estate investments. Ms. Saei has been a managing partner of the firm since its inception. During her sabbatical from the workforce, she spent most of her time with her two daughters while volunteering at schools and after-school programs for children. It was during this period that she found her passion for philanthropy and her interest in social responsibility. Katy believes in creating opportunities for underserved communities. She is aware that providing resources for those in need would not only significantly improve human welfare, but also it will make a difference at a larger scale. She is an active member of Farhang Foundation; co-chair of the Foundation's Gala Committee, and a member of its Arts Council. Katy is also a major contributor to the LA Philharmonic and serves on the board of Overseers of the organization. She is also on the Board of Trustees of the IAW Foundation.



Homa Sarshar

Homa Sarshar is a published author, award-winning journalist, writer, and media personality. She is the author of four books and the editor of eleven other volumes, including five volumes of the *Iranian Women's Studies Foundation Journal* and four volumes of *The History of Contemporary Iranian Jews*. From 1964 to 1978, she worked as a correspondent, reporter, and columnist for *Zan-e Ruz* weekly magazine and *Kayhan* daily newspaper in Iran. From 1972 to 1978 she worked as a television producer, director, and talk-show host for *National Iranian Radio & Television*. In 1978, Sarshar moved to Los Angeles where she resumed her career. In 1982 as the co-producer, writer, and talk-show host of Omid Radio she co-founded a daily AM radio broadcast. In 1985 Homa Sarshar joined Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation's Friends in Columbia University, NY. An established women's rights activist, in 1989 Sarshar joined the board of Iranian Women Studies Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Boston. In 1996, Homa Sarshar founded the Center for Iranian Jewish Oral History (CIJOH) in Los Angeles. In 2006, Homa Sarshar founded Honar Foundation (HF) in Los Angeles. Since 2006 Sarshar has been producing, writing, and hosting a two hour weekly radio show at 670AM KIRN called "Breakfast With Homa Sarshar" every Saturday at 8:00am. She has also been a member of the Middle Eastern Art Council for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) for different terms over the past 30 years. Homa Sarshar has received numerous awards for her work, including the Medal for Special Achievement in Women's Rights, given by The Iranian Women's Organization of Tehran, Iran; Journalism Award: Distinguished Iranian Women by the Encyclopaedia Iranica; Commendation for Community Affairs Services by the County of Los Angeles; 2013 Ellis Island Medal of Honor; And 2016 American Heritage Award by American Immigration Council. Homa Sarshar was born in Shiraz on 1946. She earned a BA in French literature from Tehran University; a MA in journalism from the Annenberg School of Communications, USC; and a Ph.D. (HC) in Journalism from *College of Letters and Science* at the American World University – LA, CA.



Simin Taghdiri

“Simin Couture” designs have been a staple of high fashion since 1970s. She has exclusive designs and handmade exquisite pieces and have garnered elite clientele. Simin Taghdiri was born in Iran and immigrated to Manchester, England at a very early age. She studied fashion design at Manchester Metropolitan University. She excelled at her craft and the university sent her to Paris, France, where she learnt the art and discipline of haute couture under renowned designer Pierre Balmain. During her time in Paris, Simin embraced Balmain’s philosophy, he believed “dressmaking is architecture of movement”. Upon completing her studies abroad; Ms. Taghdiri returned to Iran and opened her fashion house. About 800 guests attended her first runway show, among them were 200 members of the time royal family. Simin created over 100 original hand-made pieces, including a custom- made gown for Ms. Farrah Diba, the time queen of Iran. Ms. Diba later named Simin Taghdiri as one of “Iran’s most talented designers”. On 1979, Simin and her family moved to Los Angeles. She has crafted custom gowns for a board range of top clientele and ceremonies including Academy Awards, Grammy awards, BAFTA awards, ESPY awards, Golden Globe awards, BET awards, Emmy awards, Latin Emmy awards, Daytime Emmy awards, CMA awards, the Noble Prize Award ceremony, Royal weddings, Presidential Inauguration and Costumes for television shows and three big screen movies. On 2007, Ms. Taghdiri collaborated with a jewelry; designer and presented the most expensive wedding gown. The gown was valued at \$19 million and was featured in over 500 media outlets. And on 2011, Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum selected Simin Taghdiri to present a collection of her finest wedding gown for a period of three weeks. The timing of this collection was coincided with Kim Kardashian’s wedding and as a result, Simin was selected to design one of her bridal gowns on Kim’s wax figure. Later on 2011; Ms. Taghdiri was invited to present her couture gowns in Kensington Palace and her gown showcased among the “world’s most prestigious designers”. Simin has received “Distinguished Designer Award” at Mercedes Benz fashion week. She has also been honored by IJW Organization as ‘Woman of the Year’. Simini Taghdiri is a talented designer and in the past decades, she has been involved in numerous charitable causes.



Fatemeh Ziai

Fatemeh (Fati) Ziai has held a number of leadership positions at the United Nations over the past two decades. She is currently Chief of Staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, supporting the UN's 15 peacekeeping operations and over 100,000 personnel around the world. Fati has served twice in the Executive office of the UN Secretary-General, most recently as Chief of Staff to the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General and, earlier in her career, as Special Assistant to the Chef de Cabinet of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. As a Director in the Office of Human Resources Management, Fati oversaw Human Resources Services and Learning and Development for the United Nations Secretariat. She was also involved in internal UN reform efforts, negotiating the adoption of a reform package by the General Assembly. As Chief of the Policy Best Practices Section, Fati led the policy development process for UN peacekeeping and ensured that lessons were captured and applied to future UN operations. She then headed the Peacekeeping Training Service, which is responsible for training of the UN's civilian, police and military peacekeepers. Fati has served in several UN peace operations. In 2010 and 2011, she was Chief of Staff and Director of Political Affairs for the UN's Special Political Mission in Lebanon. In 2001-2002 she was Special Assistant to Lakhdar Brahimi, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan and was a member of the UN team at the Bonn Peace Talks. She then moved to Afghanistan to help set up the UN Mission and work with the Afghan authorities to establish the Afghan Interim Authority and prepare the 2002 Emergency Loya Jirga. Fati started her UN career as a Legal Adviser to the UN Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on implementation of human rights aspects of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Prior to joining the United Nations, Fati served as Counsel at Human Rights Watch from 1993-1996, where she covered North Africa, Israel and the Occupied Territories and Tajikistan. She was also an attorney at Clearly, Gottlieb, Steen and Hamilton from 1990 – 1993, working on sovereign debt restructuring in Argentina and Mexico and a range of public finance transactions. Fati received her BA in history from Brown University (1986) and her JD from Harvard Law School (1990). She lives in New York City with her husband and teenage son.

Master of Ceremonies



Asieh Namdar

Asieh Namdar is an Anchor for CGTN America in Washington, D.C. She comes to CGTN with more than 20 years of experience at CNN, where she served as an anchor for CNNI, a senior writer for HLN, and a contributor to CNN.com. Namdar has written and reported on many international stories, including nuclear negotiations between Iran and world powers, wars in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, the tsunami disaster in Asia, the disputed 2009 election and protests in Iran, and typhoon Haiyan as it hit the Philippines in 2013. Namdar has conducted a number of high-profile interviews, including Nobel Peace-Prize Laureate Shirin Ebadi, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Jordan's Queen Rania, Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and best-selling author Azar Nafisi. She has also conducted one-on-one Interviews with Iran's foreign minister, Javad Zarif, on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly. In 2004, she traveled to ancient city of Bam in Iran for a humanitarian mission after a deadly earthquake. It was her first trip to her native Iran since she left at the age of 12. Asieh has been recognized for her work by numerous Iranian-American organizations. Asieh is originally from Iran and speaks Farsi fluently. She graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, where she earned a bachelor's degree in communications. Asieh is married to a CNN Journalist and has two daughters, Leila and Roya.

Performers



Mona Tavakoli

Mona Tavakoli is a Los Angeles-based drummer, singer and performer who believes in making music that unites, elevates and connects. While Mona is equally comfortable performing as a both a drummer and a percussionist, she is perhaps best known for adapting the traditionally Peruvian cajón to unexpected genres such as rock and pop. Mona began playing the drum kit at age 11 and grew into a tenor drum star in her high school marching band. She began playing the cajon at UCLA as part of a flamenco dance class and began her professional musical career in 1999 as a founding member of Raining Jane, an all-female rock band. In 2008, Raining Jane and Jason Mraz met at a college show and began collaborating soon after. Mona toured worldwide in support of Mraz's 2012 album, *Love is a Four Letter Word*, as percussionist, and she and Jason have performed together as a duo with Mona on percussion and Mraz on guitar/vocals on programs such as *The Today Show*, *The David Letterman Show*, *Ellen*, *Dancing with the Stars*, and *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*. The pair also performed in Antarctica with The Climate Reality Project <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/> and was proud to help honor Ellen DeGeneres as she received the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor at The Kennedy Center. In 2014, as part of Raining Jane, Mona co-wrote and recorded *YES!* (Atlantic Records) with Jason. As a solo percussionist, Mona has appeared on A&E's *Private Sessions*, where she performed as a trio with Pat Benatar and her husband, Spyder Giraldo. She has been the featured percussionist with the Pasadena muse/iqwe orchestra (led by maestra Rachel Worby), and played with musicians such as Andy Grammer, Colbie Caillat, Keaton Simons, Lindsay Mac, Lucy Schwartz, Natalia Zukerman, Sara Bareilles, Tristan Prettyman, Willy Porter and Borns. Mona believes that music can inspire and connect people to a larger purpose. She is a co-founder and co-director of the Rock n' Roll Camp For Girls Los Angeles, a nonprofit that encourages girls to find their voices through music. In 2016, Mona travelled to Africa on behalf of the U.S. State Department as a cultural diplomat alongside Chaska Potter and Natalia Zukerman.



K-von

K-von is the most famous half-Persian comedian in the world. He is also the only one! The star of MTV's hit show "Disaster Date", his comedy has received rave reviews on NBC's 'Last Comic Standing', NETFLIX, SHOWTIME, CNN's "HLN", Good Morning America, BBC, & NPR to name a few. K-von has garnered millions of views online with sketches, standup comedy clips, and a viral 'TED Talk'. He also produced an award-winning documentary about Persian New Year, and is currently working on a book which details his unique upbringing and journey into comedy. Stand-up has taken K-von around the world several times performing in comedy clubs, theaters, colleges, and for large non-profit organizations. His style is versatile yet relatable with fun storytelling and high-energy performances about a variety of mainstream topics.

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Soraya Jewelry
Starlite Vinyards
Sussan Deyhim
Zahra Soroush
ZaZa Saleh

Committee Members

Soheila Adelipour

Josiane Cohanim

Lily Gilani

Marjaneh Hashemi

Mariam Khosravani

Roya Mashayekh

Nooshin Meshkaty

Soheila Motamed

Sunny Nassim

Marjan Rajabi

Yeganeh Saleh

ZaZa Saleh

Marjan Zohoury

Program Design by

Nasim Attaripour

Congratulations
to
The Iranian American
Women Foundation
and
All Honorees who Inspire
and Empower our community
Your Hard Work and
Dedication is Greatly
Appreciated

Dr. Nina Ansary & Ali Saffari



Neda Nobari Foundation congratulates IAW Foundation for expanding the professional and personal growth opportunities of Iranian women leaders in the United States and internationally.



PARS EQUALITY CENTER is proud to Support the Efforts of Iranian American Women Foundation

Pars mission is to act as a catalyst for social, cultural and economic integration of Iranian-Americans, and other Persian-speaking countries into mainstream American society.

Social Services

Social services anchor the mission of Pars and are an integral component to overcoming many of the barriers faced by newcomers and ensuring self-sufficiency.

Our Persian-speaking staff helps new arrivals and other low-income families and individuals successfully adjust to living in the United States through a wide and comprehensive set of Bilingual social programs such as the following:

- Career Development
- Mentorship
- Provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes
- Computer Training
- Assistance navigating the social and medical system
- Assistance with tax preparation
- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Workshops and Information Sessions
- Entrepreneurship



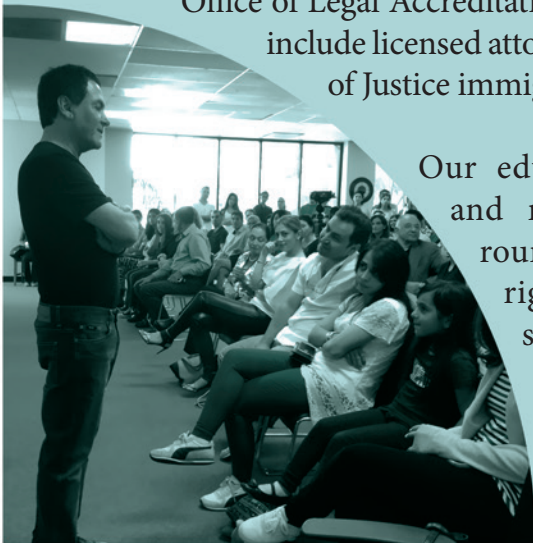
از صد هم میسر است
یک کار که در کتب و لسان



Legal Services

Pars Equality Center provides free or low-cost legal immigration services to qualified individuals. We provide community members with integration support by offering immigration education, representation and advocacy.

Pars Equality Center's offices are recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Legal Accreditation Program. Our legal staff members include licensed attorneys and accredited U.S. Department of Justice immigration representatives.



Our education services include in-house and mobile workshops, seminars and roundtable discussions on immigrant rights, ICE arrests and detention, police stops, rights at the border, and other Know Your Rights issues concerning immigrant communities.



PARS
EQUALITY CENTER



Pars Equality Center, San Jose
1635 The Alameda
San Jose, CA 95126
Tel: 408.261.6400

Pars Equality Center, Los Angeles
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www.parsequalitycenter.org
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Proceeds benefit FCI, IAWF, Iranian Studies at UC Davis, and Pars Place Iranian-American Community Center



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foundationforthechildrenofiran.org



**Thank you IAWF and Mariam Khosravani
for your contribution to building a
dynamic forum of women leaders.**

**A special congratulations to our dear
friend Katy Saei for always going the
extra mile for our community.**

**And a heartfelt congratulations to all
the honorees!**

- Fariba & Hormoz Ameri

Union Bank congratulates Bitá Ardalan

We salute Bitá and all the 2019 Iranian American Women Foundation Women of Influence honorees for their outstanding leadership and commitment to excellence.



Bitá Ardalan
Managing Director and
Head of the Commercial
Banking Group
MUFG Union Bank, N.A.



A member of MUFG, a global financial group



Congratulations
Ms. Shahrzad Ardalan

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for
MEN

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Wynn Las Vegas • + 1-702-998-6454

bijan.com



*Dearest Katy Joon,
Congratulations on your well deserved
honor. There isn't a person who deserves
this more than you. You are not only a
role model to me, but to so many women
in our community. You are the epitome
of kindness, generosity, and an incredible
friend. A thank you for being my best
friend, confidant, backbone, and of
course my partner in crime. I hope we
will be cheering each other on for many
years to come.*

*All my love,
Orna Delrahim*



**We love you,
Mom.**

Mom,

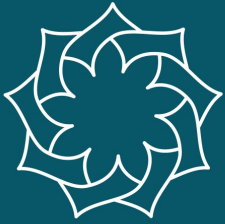
Congratulations on yet another amazing accomplishment. Your actions continue to inspire and shape us into the individuals we are. Thank you for being the most influential person in our lives.

Love,

DARIA & IMAN



Dearest Bitajoon,
We salute you for your exemplary
contributions to humanity.



Your tireless efforts have left a footprint
worldwide.

It not only inspires us as women to
rise up and make a difference in our
community, but also do better as
humans for mankind.

Keep shining your bright light. We are
so very proud of you, congratulations
on this well deserved recognition.

With Love,
Laleh & Nazila



Congratulations to my amazing and exceptional friends for receiving this much deserved honor.

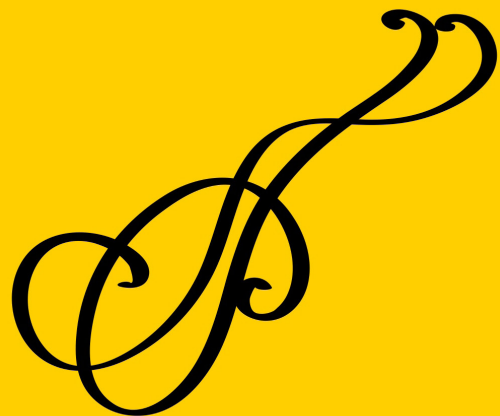
My dearest Shahrzad,
you are my role model and biggest inspiration in life.

Bitazizam,
you are an extraordinary woman whose kindness and generosity is above and beyond belief.

Siminjoon,
your talent and creativity makes the world smile.

I am so honored to have you incredible ladies as my dearest friends and mentors. Congratulations, You are all my shining stars...

With all my love,
Baharak Jaber



Congratulations Shahpar
on receiving the
IAWF Woman of Influence Award



from your devoted Darioush team





Congratulations to my beloved
wife, Shahpar Khaledi.
Proud to be your partner for
50 years.

Darioush Khaledi

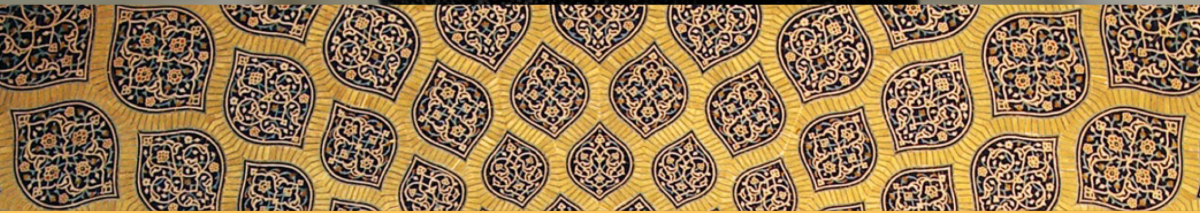
KATY SAEI

IT IS WITH PRIDE, ADMIRATION,
AND LOVE THAT WE CELEBRATE
YOUR INSPIRATION, HARDWORK,
AND DEDICATION TO THE
IRANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY.

CONGRATULATIONS, MUM!

FROM YOUR ADORING CHILDREN

Roxanne, Jasmine, and Jordan



We are delighted to honor our dear friend

Dr. Nina Ansary

*May you continue to be a source of strength to the
Iranian community.*

Your friends in Orange County

The logo for Mazarei Law Group, Inc. (MLG) is displayed in white text on a red rectangular background.

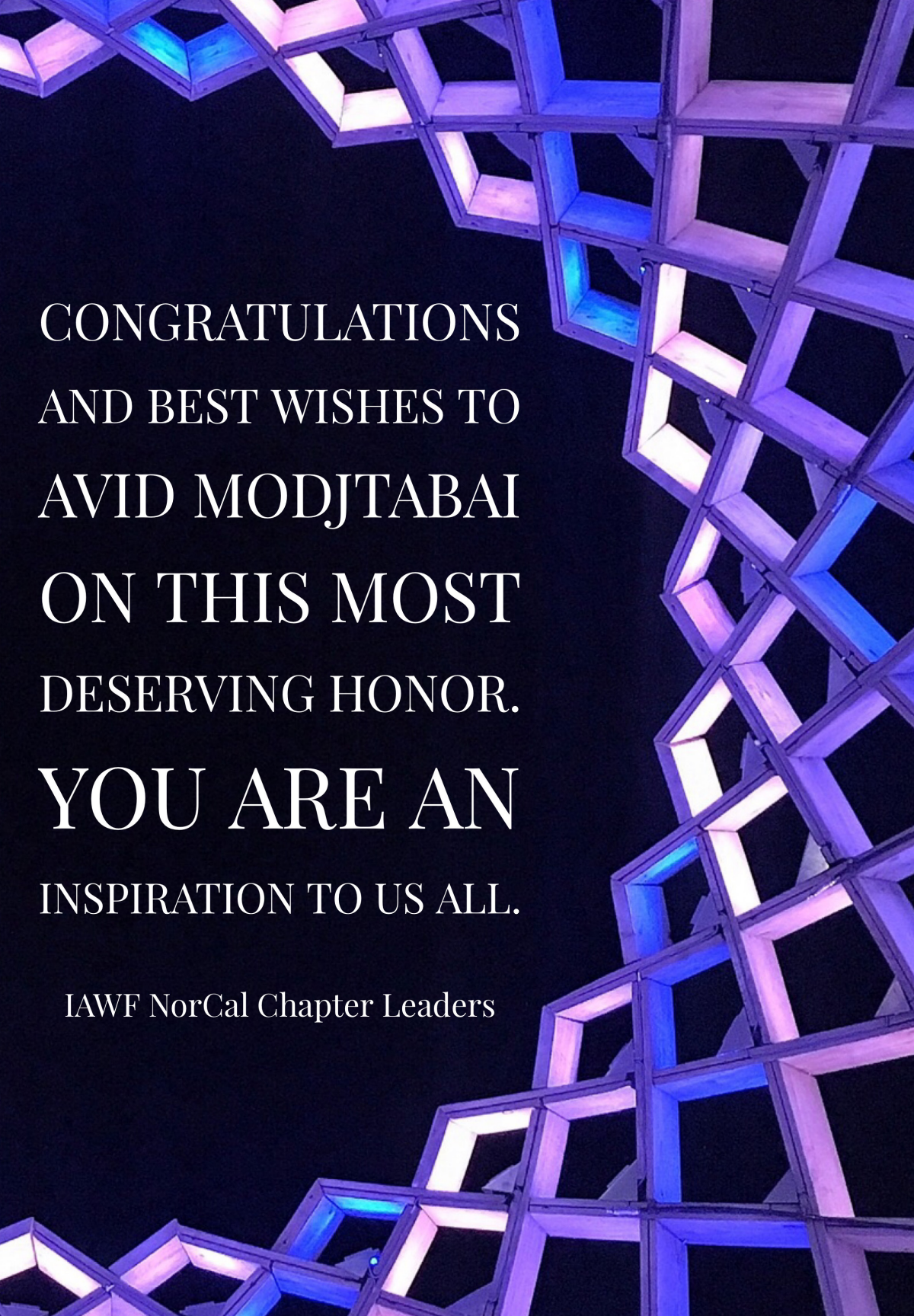
MAZAREI LAW GROUP, INC.

A large, light gray watermark of a pair of scales of justice is centered in the background of the page.

**Mazarei Law Group, Inc.
would like to
congratulate all the
Honorees in the
Women of Influence
Soirée**

Tannaz “Tawny” Mazarei

18881 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 1620 Irvine, CA 92612
Tel: (714)418-5797 | mail@mazareilaw.com | www.MazareiLaw.com



CONGRATULATIONS
AND BEST WISHES TO
AVID MODJTABAI
ON THIS MOST
DESERVING HONOR.
YOU ARE AN
INSPIRATION TO US ALL.

IAWF NorCal Chapter Leaders



Congratulations Shahpar

May you continue to be
an inspiration to the entire community.
We admire and respect your dedication.

Kashy, Laura, and Vivienne Khaledi



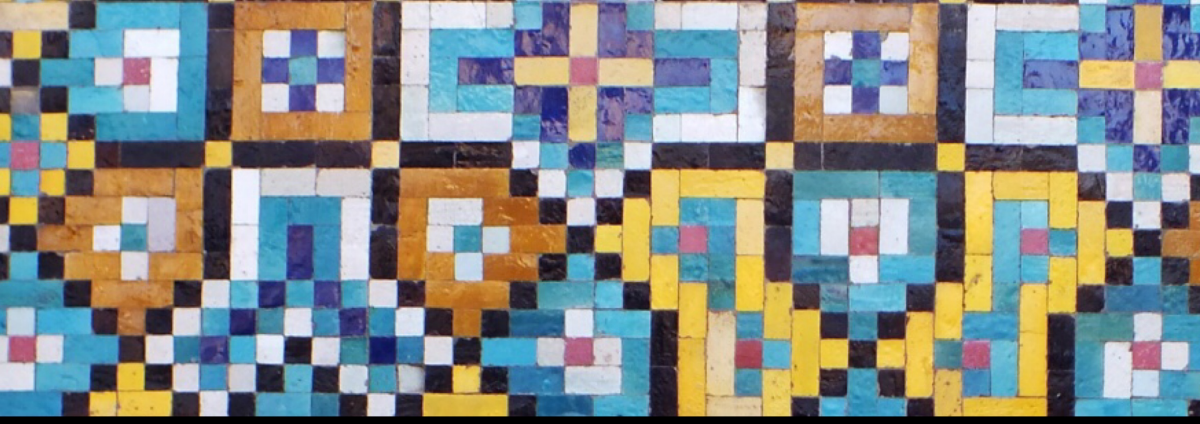
Dear Homa joon,

Congratulations on your well-deserved honor.

You have devoted your whole life and your strength to help our community. Your feminism has paved the way for our future generations.

Thank you for all your tremendous contributions to our community, daughters, and sisters.

Love,
Orna Delrahim



DEAR PARISA KHOSRAVI,

THE WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT.

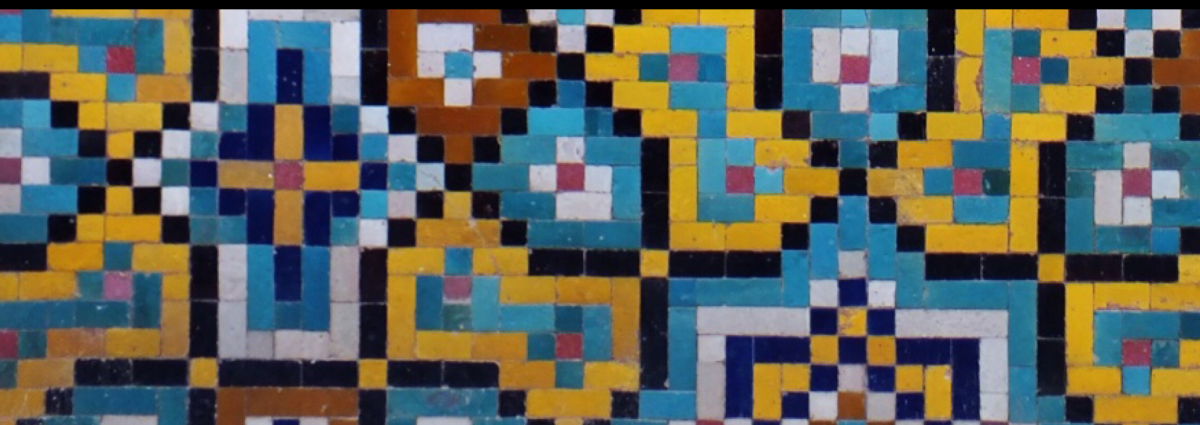
SO PROUD OF YOU AND ALL YOU'VE DONE.

A TRUE “SHIRZAN”.

I WISH YOU CONTINUED SUCCESS PARISA JOON - AS YOU TO

LEAD THE WAY TO EVEN BIGGER AND BETTER THINGS.

ASIEH NAMDAR

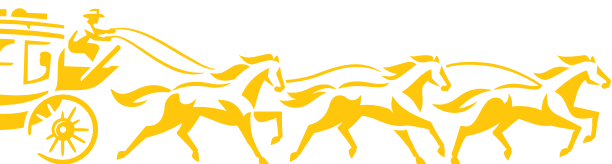




Avid Modjtabai
Senior Executive Vice President,
Payments, Virtual Solutions & Innovation

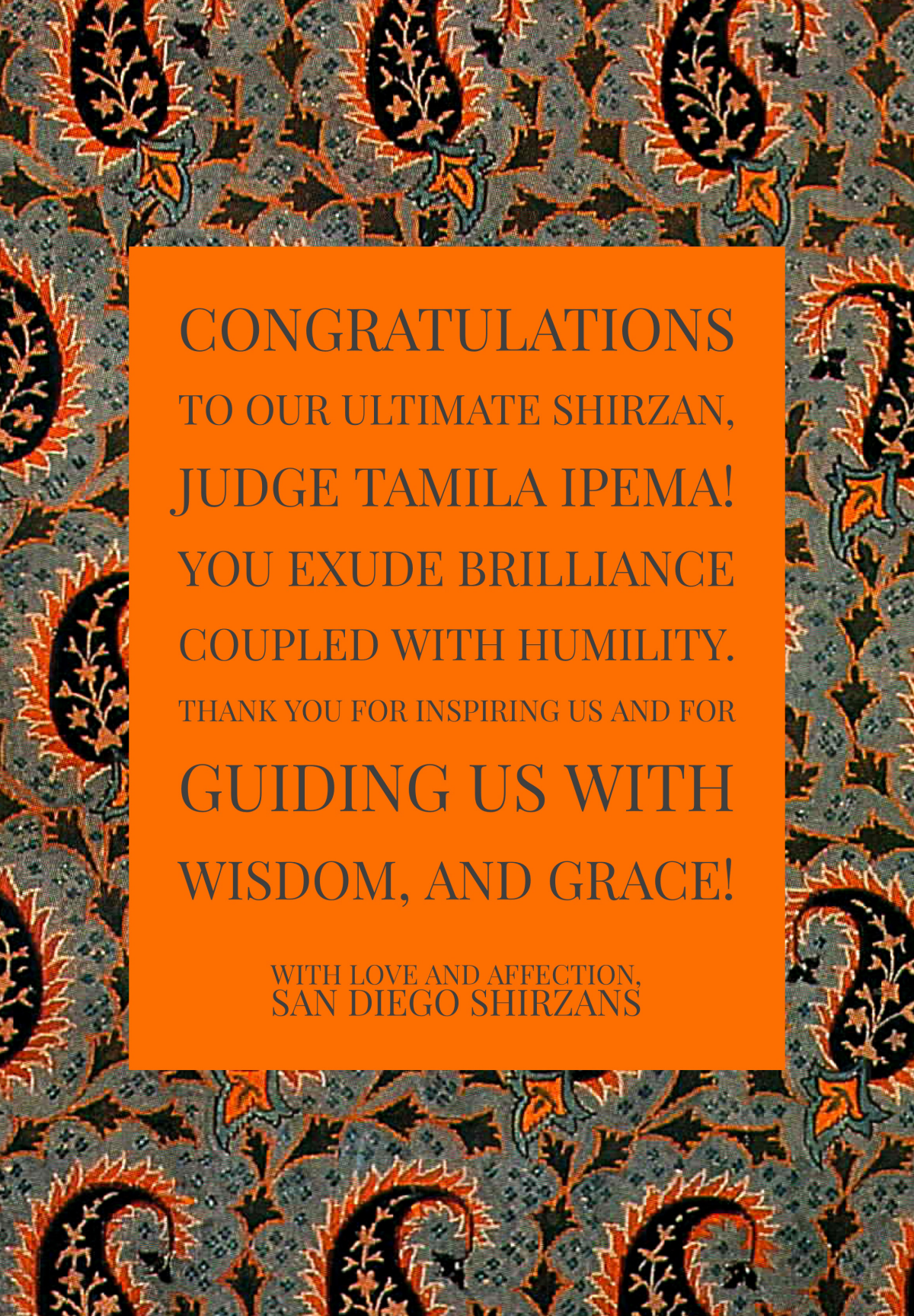
We celebrate and salute Avid Modjtabai and the community of 2019 Iranian American Women Foundation Women of Influence honorees.

This is empowerment. This is forward momentum.



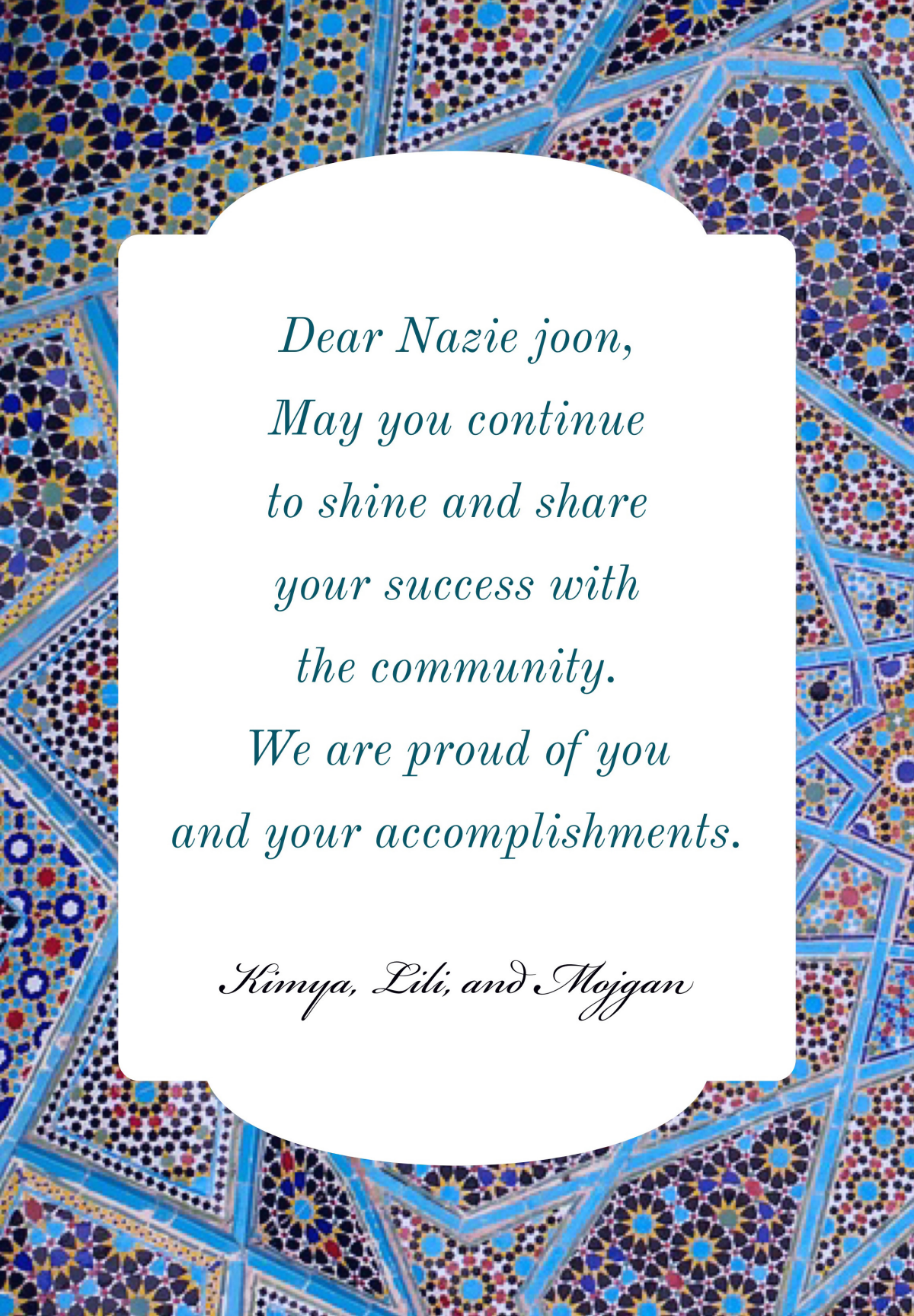
This is

WELLS
FARGO



CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR ULTIMATE SHIRZAN,
JUDGE TAMILA IPEMA!
YOU EXUDE BRILLIANCE
COUPLED WITH HUMILITY.
THANK YOU FOR INSPIRING US AND FOR
GUIDING US WITH
WISDOM, AND GRACE!

WITH LOVE AND AFFECTION,
SAN DIEGO SHIRZANS



*Dear Nazie joon,
May you continue
to shine and share
your success with
the community.*

*We are proud of you
and your accomplishments.*

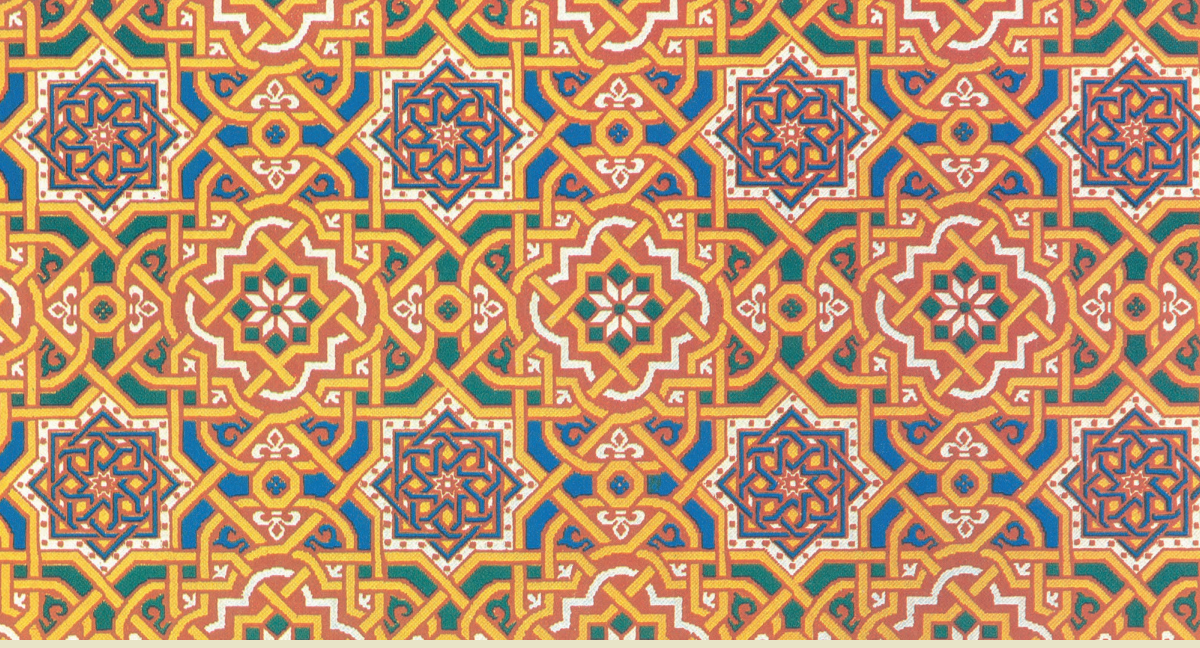
Kimya, Lili, and Mojgan

KATY SAEI

GRATEFUL TO HAVE YOU AS A
GUIDING LIGHT AND DELIGHTED
THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO
SHARE IT WITH OTHERS. BEYOND
HONORED TO BE A PART OF YOUR
STORY.

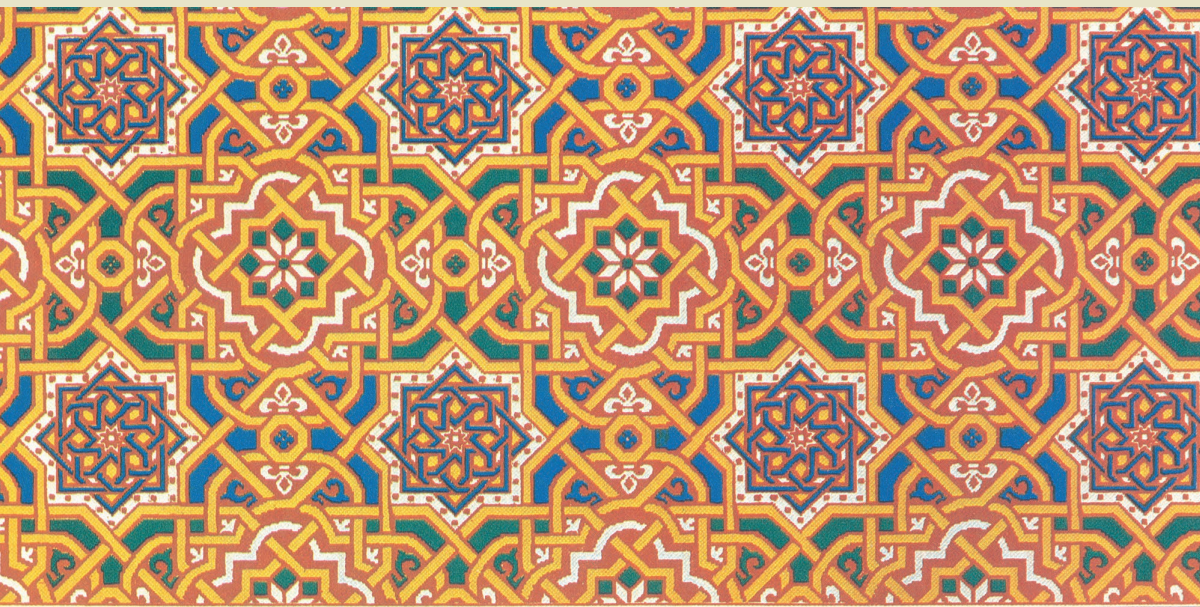
CHEERS TO 30!

Michael Saei



Very best wishes to our dear
Shahpar Khaledi
Congratulations on this most deserving honor.

Iraj & Jaleh Nouri



Congratulations to our super woman!



From being the most involved and caring mother to dedicating the other half of your time towards helping strengthen the Persian community, we couldn't be prouder. You inspire us everyday with the work you do, and serve as a role model to the three of us and beyond. Love you tons!

Misha, Milan, and Caspian

Congratulations to

Shahpar Khaledi,

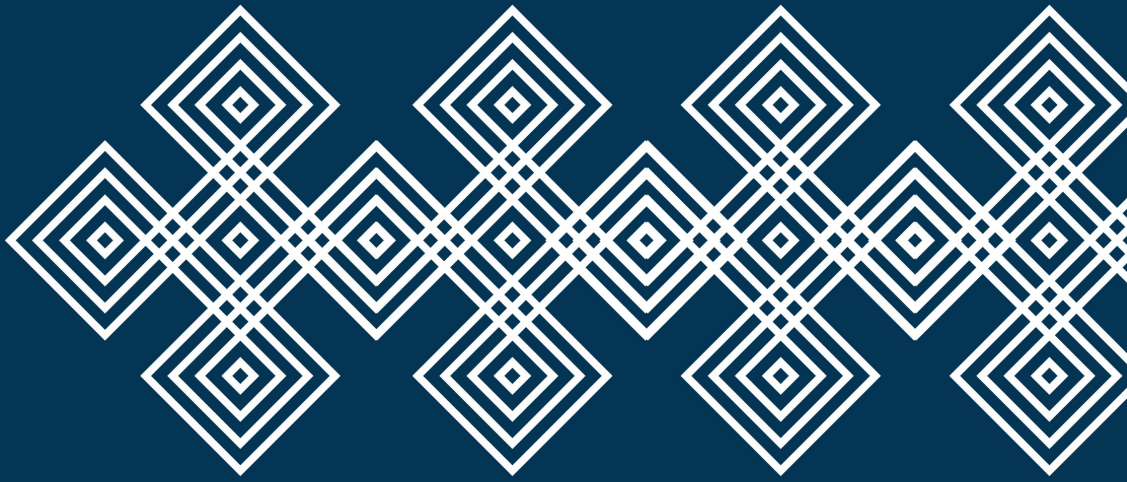
Neda Nobari,

& Katy Saei

on all your accomplishments!

Love,

Nellie Keyhani



CONGRATULATIONS
TO THE LOVELY,
IMMENSELY TALENTED AND
INSPIRATIONAL
SUSSAN DEYHIM

WITH MUCH LOVE ALWAYS,
NINA ANSARY

Dear Homa Sarshar,

You deserve to

be honored every month

You amaze me more and more as

I get to know you more and more.

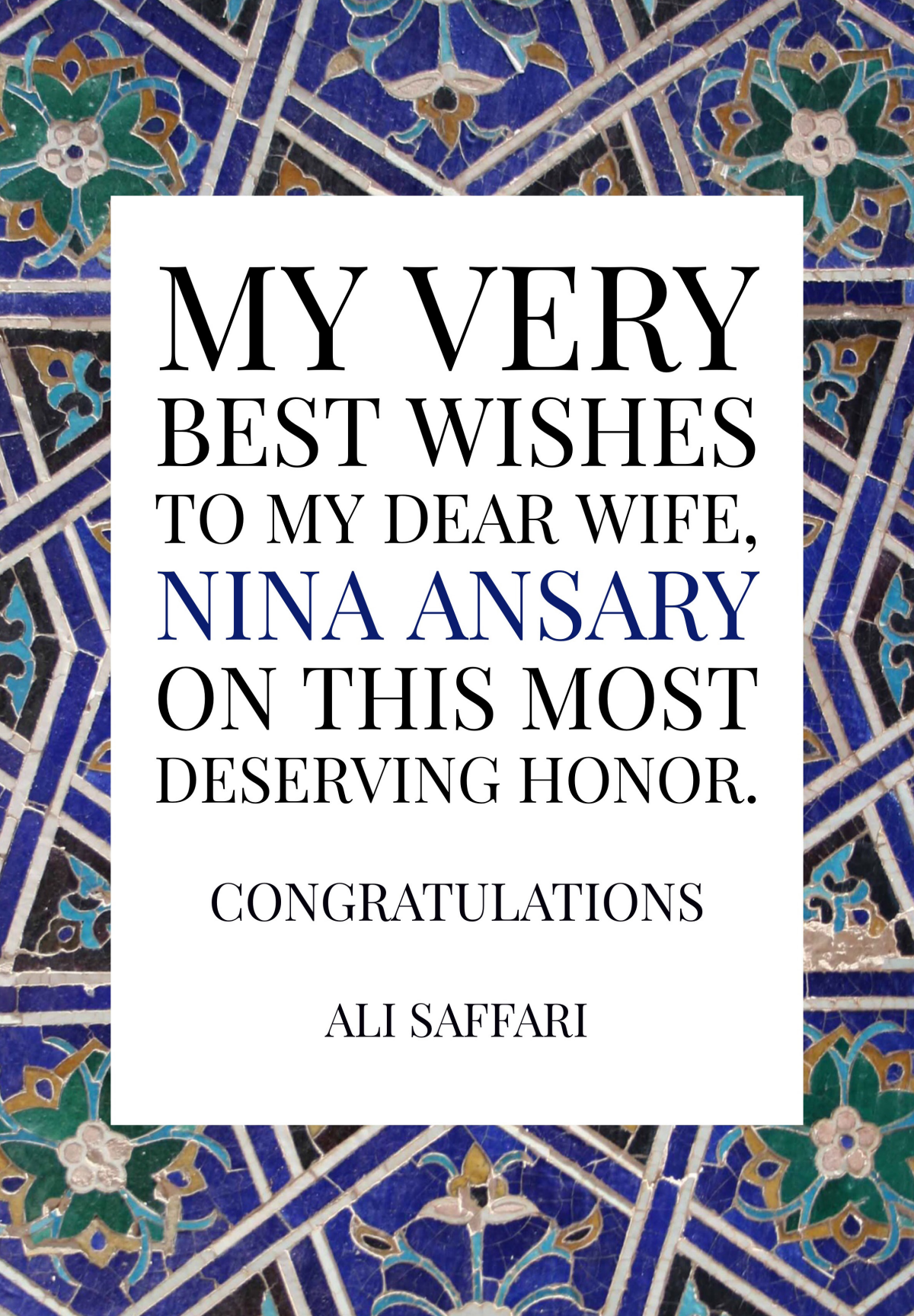
You are my 'claim to fame',

My role model,

My cousin and 'to go to' person.

I love you dearly,

Soheila Adelipour



MY VERY
BEST WISHES
TO MY DEAR WIFE,
NINA ANSARY
ON THIS MOST
DESERVING HONOR.

CONGRATULATIONS

ALI SAFFARI



May you continue to shine
and share your success with the community.
We are very proud of you.

Sally Khaledi Beck, Tatiana & Ashley Beck

Congratulations!

To our beloved sister

Fati Ziai

We are very proud of you

From the Ziai Family



We are delighted to honor
our dear

Shahpar Khaledi

May you continue to be a source of illumination
to the Iranian American Community.

Parviz & Vida Vazin





Dear Bitajoon,

Congratulations! thank you for your charitable commitment to our community. You are proof of an angel on earth. You are the example of goodness and kindness, leadership and commitment, compassion and support, true friendship and continues to be a source of strength and inspiration to me and our community.

*Love,
Orna Delrahim*



Congratulations
to our dear NY Chapter
leader, Fati Ziai!
We are grateful to count
you as one of our own.
Thank you for all you do
and always so graciously.
You make us all so proud!

With much love,
IAWF NY Chapter

Congratulations to our dear Katy



With much love and gratitude

Mojgan, Mitra, Aida, Haleh, Shabnam, & Roya



Our dearest one and only Katy Saei,

*Congratulations on the well-deserved recognition
of all your hard work and contribution to our
community. You truly do inspire, influence and
empower everyone around you!*

*We love everything about you; your heart, soul,
humanitarian spirit, loyalty, generosity,
compassion, style ... and all your other attributes.*

*You are a humble instrument of true love in
action; we could not be prouder of you.*

Keyhaneh Fiouzi & Fariba Mahjoor Salim

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Congratulations
Neda Nobari!

*You are not a drop in
the ocean. You are the
entire ocean in a drop.*

~ Rumi

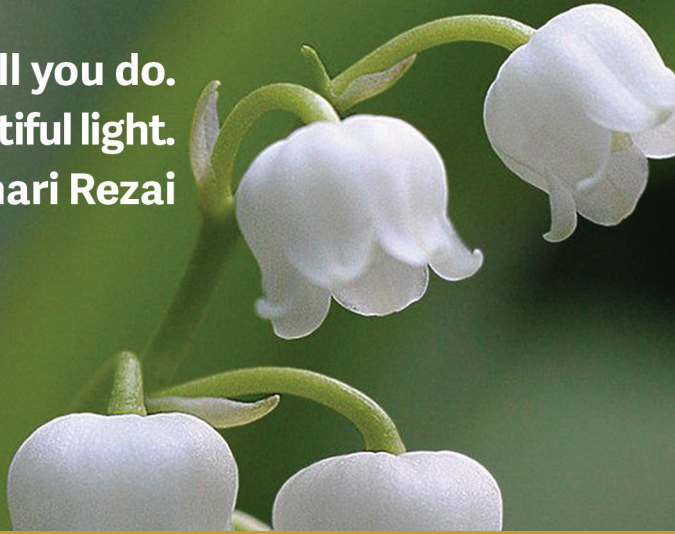
big
BigImagination Group

Congratulations to all the brilliant ladies being honored.

Love and Gratitude for all you do.

Keep on shining your beautiful light.

Shari Rezai



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The Center's research, programming, and projects examine overlooked and underemphasized narratives, advocate for new forms of scholarly engagement, and support collaboration between individuals and institutions.

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**Congratulates Dr. Nina Ansary
for her advocacy for women's rights and her genuine compassion
and dedication to numerous charitable and humanitarian causes.**

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*So proud of you Khaleh Katy
for your accomplishments
wishing you all the best!*

*Much love,
Mandana Akbar Tassara
Natalia and Shana Azad*

CARLYLE AVENUE

Congratulates IAWF and all the honorees



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL

IRANIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

OF INFLUENCE.

AVID MODJTABAI

Congratulations to my dear friend and mentor Shahrzad Ardalan that stands tall like a mountain to provide security for her friends.

Maryam Rahimian



Inspire

Empower

Connect