

Iranian American Women Foundation

Annual Report 2019-2020

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Founder's Message

As Iranian American women, we share a unique identity that brings a sense of unmatched togetherness. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, we were still able to come together virtually and provide quality services to our community members. We continue to take precautions for the health and safety of our community, and unfortunately the future is unpredictable. There is comfort knowing that there remains power in uniting with our sisters across the diaspora, and that is why I founded IAWF back in 2011. You are not alone.



IAWF is dedicated to creating a platform for empowerment and networking among Iranian American Women and to provide mentorship to younger generations of Iranians locally and globally. I am thankful that we have continued to offer our services to our community and uphold our vision to positively impact the community at large.

It has been humbling to witness the support of our members blossom into so many inspiring connections, and I look forward to seeing what else we can accomplish together.

Mariam Khosravani
Founder, IAWF

About IAWF

Since its inception in 2011 in Orange County, California, IAWF has empowered, inspired, and connected thousands of women both nationally and globally. It has served as a home away from home; a community that celebrates creative, innovative, tenacious, and competitive women who are problem solvers and a force for the greater good.

The organization has hosted sold-out conferences in Orange County, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Washington, D.C., Boston, London, and Toronto. By offering a platform for open dialogue, IAWF creates lasting connections, inspires women to follow their dreams, empowers Iranian American women to achieve their highest potential, and contributes to the very heart of the American dream.

With more that 6,000 members nationwide, the organization showcases the diversity of America, celebrates the confluence of American fabric and Iranian heritage, and propels women forward by helping them develop dynamic professional and leadership skills.







Conferences

IAWF conferences inform, inspire, educate and invigorate Iranian American women. Born from a desire to empower and connect, IAWF's conferences, held nationwide, offer a place where Iranian American women from all walks of life can celebrate their heritage, network, promote personal and professional growth, and showcase their community's contribution to the American fabric.Speakers are hand-selected based on their impact on society, success in business, and/or ability to share their stories and motivate others. Most participants walk away from IAWF conferences feeling rejuvenated and energized.

IAWF events are more than just conferences, they are an experience. At these conferences, women make new lifelong friendships, expand their career opportunities, commit to personal and professional achievements, and celebrate their culture.

San Francisco Conference

June 2, 2019

IAWF's Northern California Chapter hosted the 18th Women's Leadership Conference at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront. Lily Jamali was the Master of Ceremonies of this conference which was full of new and exciting discussions. We had over 400 attendees join us to hear from 32 speakers from across the country, and topics included "Women Leading Disruption" and "Leading Millennials." Shahin Hedayat, Lily Sarafan, Susan Akbarpour, and Farzad Naimi also served as judges for our first Young Entrepreneurship Showcase. It was a great day full of connection with our passionate community in Northern California.





Boston Conference
November 10, 2019

IAWF hosted its 19th Women's Leadership Conference and its very first event in the historic city of Boston, MA. Close to 300 attendees joined us at the beautiful Harvard Club to hear from accomplished women across diverse professional fields. Panel topics included "Leveling the Playing Field" where our speakers shared their work in bridging gaps in inequality, as well as "Interpreters of Change," featuring women who aim to engage and mobilize youth to push for change. Our attendees also enjoyed a unique performance by the Boston-based Safarani sisters who closed out the day on a high note. It was incredible to connect with our Iranian American women in this beautiful city.





Chapter Events

Over the years, IAWF has expanded its reach throughout the United States. We have four active chapters on both coasts of the country where our members can connect with each other at various events throughout the year. Here's a look at some of our activities, and we look forward to starting new chapters in even more regions!



Orange County



Northern California



Los Angeles



New York

International Women's Month Celebration

March 9, 2019

We partnered with our friends at UCI's Jordan Center to host our annual International Women's Month Celebration. We had a great lineup of speakers join us to share their stories and celebrate our sisterhood.



Summer Wellness Retreat

August 28, 2019

IAWF's Orange County chapter hosted its first Wellness Retreat at The Boardwalk in Irvine. After the success of the Los Angeles Rising Leaders Chapter's inaugural Wellness Retreat, we were inspired to bring this day of renewal to other members. Attendees joined us for day of activities including yoga, meditation, and sound meditation led by experts in their fields. Our speakers also shared information about making healthy lifestyle choices and everyone enjoyed a nutritional lunch.





IAW Connect: Rising Up in the New Year

January 14, 2020

For our first event of the year, Soheila Adelipour and Dr. Sherry Nooravi spoke to a full house about learning to change and persevering through life's challenges. It was a great way to kick off an eventful year, and we were happy to see many new faces.



Up Close va Personal: Mother Daughter Panel

March 4, 2020

In celebration of International Women's Month, we invited 3 incredible pairs of mothers and daughters to join us for an uplifting conversation at Hotel Irvine. They shared the power in their bonds, and discussed how their definitions of success changed with time.



Startup Art Fair

February 15-17, 2019

IAWF hosted "Three Generations of Iranian Women Artists," showcasing the art of Guity Seif, Marjaneh Afkhami, and Yasaman Moradi. Members joined us at The Kinney in Venice Beach to take in the work of these talented women.



International Women's Month Celebration

March 5, 2019

We celebrated International Women's Month with a screening of Fery Malek Madani's documentary, "The Girls." Attendees joined us at the Monica Film Center to watch the film, followed by a beautiful and touching photo exhibit.



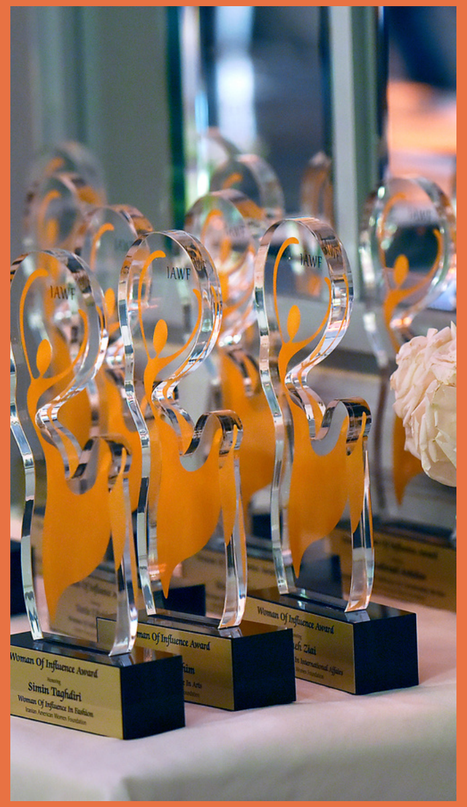
Women of Influence Soirée

April 13, 2019

IAWF's Los Angeles Chapter hosted the first Women of Influence Soirée at the Beverly Hilton. Attendees joined us for a night of music, dancing, and celebration in honor of the achievements of women of Iranian heritage. We recognized the contributions of 15 visionary women who are making a difference in the areas of philanthropy, business, community service, arts, and science.



Our Honorees (from left): Katy Saei, Shahrzad Ardalan, Sussan Deyhim, Hon. Tamila Ebrahimi Ipema, Simin Taghdiri, Avid Modjtabai, Fati Ziai, Bita Daryabari, Nina Ansary, Nazie Eftekhari, Bita Ardalan, Homa Sarshar, Shahpar Khaledi, Neda Nobari, and Parisa Khosravi





Poker Tournament Fundraiser

September 15, 2019

Our Los Angeles Chapter hosted our very first Charity Poker Tournament at the Bicycle Hotel & Casino in Bell Gardens. We had a great turnout of supporters who came out to play poker and raise money for scholarships benefitting mentees in our Mentorship to Internship program. There were some great prizes to be won, including $5,000 and $10,000 seats for the 2020 World Series of Poker Tournament. We are grateful to everyone who participated and raised funds for these life-changing awards.

LA Rising Leaders Fall Mixer

September 26, 2019

Our Los Angeles Rising Leaders Chapter hosted a Fall Mixer at Fellow restaurant in Westwood. Old friends and new faces came together to learn more about the foundation and our plans for the future. It was a great night full of good food, drinks, and connection.



Winter Wellness Retreat

February 10, 2019

IAWF's LA Rising Leaders Chapter planned the first ever Wellness Retreat, aimed at exploring the mind-body connection. The day featured panels focused on health and wellness, and physical movement of yoga, sound therapy and qigong energy healing.



Winter Wellness Retreat

February 23, 2020

Our Rising Leaders brought back their successful retreat for a second year in a row. Members joined us in Topanga Canyon for a day full of wellness-centered activities, including meditation, movement, enlightening workshops, and motivational panels.



Los Angeles Chapter Meet & Greet

March 3, 2020

IAWF's LA Chapter hosted its first gathering of the year where some of our amazing members shared ideas and discussed plans for the future. Thank you to our gracious host and to everyone who joined us for a great afternoon.



Los Angeles Chapter

International Women's Month Celebration

March 3, 2019

Our NorCal Chapter hosted its own screening of Fery Malek Madani's documentary, "The Girls." Attendees joined us at the Roxie Theater in San Francisco to watch this film highlighting the hopes and dreams of girls in Iran.



Northern California Chapter

NorCal Fall Wellness Retreat

September 29, 2019

Our incredible team in NorCal hosted its first Wellness Retreat aimed at helping participants better navigate life with greater wisdom and ease. We spent the day in a stunning mountain venue and focused on relaxing and recharging.



Mental Health Talk with El Camino Hospital

February 5, 2020

Our NorCal Chapter partnered with El Camino Hospital to present a conversation about mental health. The talk focused on emotional first aid, and attendees learned how to support loved ones who may be struggling or emotionally distressed.



New York Chapter Mentorship Orientation

February 2019

Our New York Chapter welcomed its second cohort of our Mentorship to Internship program with a fun and informative orientation in the city. Our Mentorship Chair, Laya Khadjavi, graciously hosted our mentors and mentees for an evening full of connecting and learning more about our program. It was a great start for yet another incredible group of future leaders in our community.







Iranian American Women's Day

The City of Los Angeles first proclaimed April 27 as "Iranian American Women's Day" at our 2018 Women's Leadership Conference. Since then, IAWF has continued to receive proclamations from various cities and officials, and we are honored to accept this recognition on behalf of Iranian American women throughout the country. See the list of state officials and cities that have recognized IAW Day, and we look forward to future proclamations!



Cities:

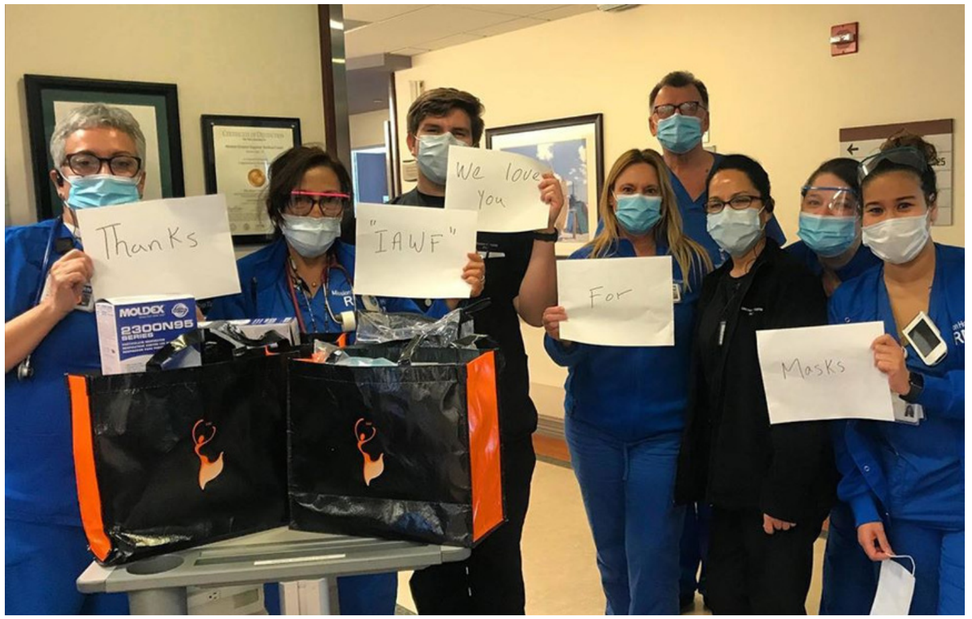
- Los Angeles
- San Francisco
- West Hollywood
- San Jose
- Long Beach
- Irvine
- Tustin
- Fullerton
- Saratoga
- Rancho Cordova
- Lake Forest
- Laguna Niguel
- Beverly Hills

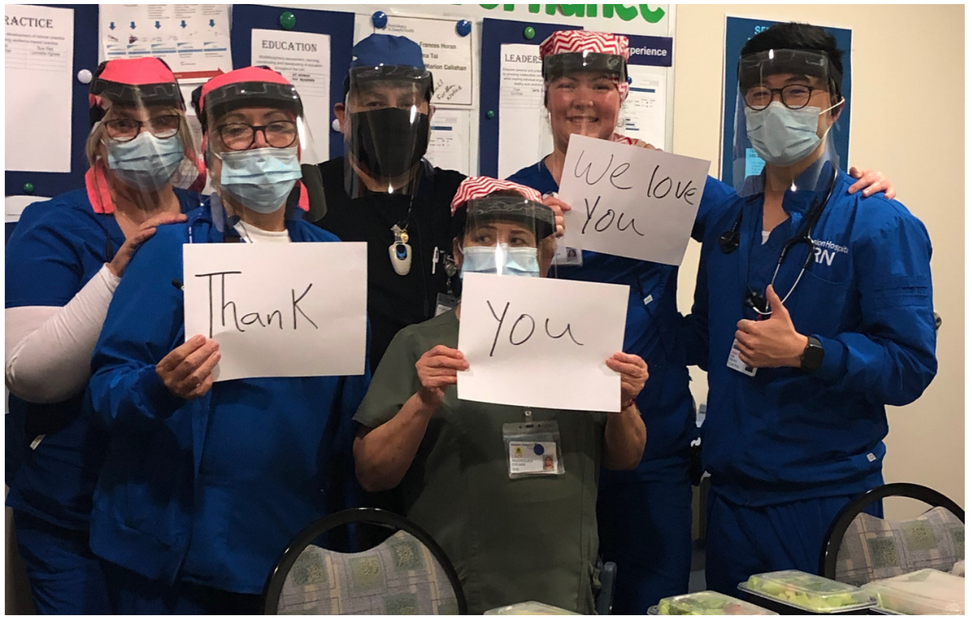
CA State Representatives:

- US Senator Kamala Harris
- CA State Senator Pat Bates
- CA State Senator John Moorlach
- CA State Senator Ling Ling Chang
- US Congressman Lou Correa
- US Congressman Gil Cisneros
- US Congressman Mike Levin
- US Congresswoman Katie Porter
- US Congresswoman Anna Eshoo
- US Congresswoman Anna Eshoo
- CA State Senator Thomas J. Umberg
- CA State Assemblyman Evan Low
- CA State Assemblyman Dr. Steven Choi
- OC Board of Supervisors (recognition to Supervisor Lisa Bartlett)
- Mayor of San Francisco - London N. Breed
- Mayor of Tustin - Dr. Allan Bernstein
- Mayor of Fullerton - Mayor Jennifer Fitzgerald
- Long Beach City Council (recognition to Councilwoman Suzie Price)

Virtual Events

2020 turned out to be an unexpected challenge for everyone. IAWF started off the year on a high note with some amazing local events, and we planned to host our first conference in Sweden. However, we had to adapt our events and programs to fit in the new virtual world. Luckily, our incredible chapter leaders rose to the occasion and helped us organize a variety of online panels and workshops to inspire, empower, and connect our community from the safety of their homes. From a unique Mother's Day celebration, to online fundraisers to support brave healthcare workers, IAWF worked to be a source of support for our beloved community.





Music of Hope: A Gift for Our Global Community

May 10, 2020

Our LA Arts Committee planned a unique virtual event to celebrate mothers around the world. We invited 20 Iranian female artists from around the world to share the gift of music with our community. It was a beautiful celebration and you can watch the performances here.



Am I Racist?

June 14, 2020

In response to the Black Lives Matter protests throughout the US, IAWF hosted a panel in Farsi featuring social justice advocate, Dr. Niaz Kasravi, and psychotherapist, Dr. Foojan Zeine. We discussed systemic racism in the US and how we can become more aware of our own biases.



The Gift of COVID: The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly

July 12, 2020

Our Northern California Chapter hosted a panel discussion on how families and individuals have been affected by the COVID 19 pandemic, and the ways we can bring more calm, clarity, stability, connection, and resilience into these uncertain times.



A Conversation About Race in the Iranian American Community: Taking Steps to Make a Difference

July 22, 2020

Social justice advocate, Dr. Niaz Kasravi, joined us for another enlightening and thoughtful discussion surrounding the current climate of race in the United States. Our LA Rising Leaders Chapter organized this panel in English to address the current climate of race in the US, and to offer insight on how each of us can stand by and act on the mantra that Black Lives Matter. Thank you to everyone who joined us with open minds and hearts, and you can watch the full discussion here.

Hear Me Out

August 23, 2020

Dr. Parmis Khatibi moderated a discussion featuring documentary filmmaker, Marjan Safinia, Florida Representative Anna Eskamani, Phoenix City Council candidate Yassamin Ansari, and West Hollywood City Council candidate Sepi Shyne. They spoke about the importance of representation in public office and how their identity has shaped their careers.



The Future of Work is Here Now: Are You Ready?

September 20, 2020

Our NorCal Chapter organized this webinar on how jobs and the nature of work as we know them are changing rapidly with the advancement in artificial intelligence, machine learning and data science. Azita Alavi moderated this discussion featuring Yassi Moghaddam and Mojgan Momeni.



The #MeToo Movement & the Iranian American Community

October 31, 2020

New York Times journalist, Farnaz Fassihi, made headlines with her article about sexual misconduct allegations against famed Iranian artist, Aydin Aghdashloo. IAWF organized this panel to better understand the #MeToo movement and its impact in the Iranian American community. We were honored to be joined by Farnaz Fassihi, Sara Omatali, and Neda Moridpour as they discussed the importance of this movement throughout the world. You can read Farnaz's New York Times article here to have a greater understanding of the movement in Iran.

Volunteer Appreciation Celebration

December 5, 2020

To mark IAWF's 10th anniversary, we invited our volunteers and planning committee members from around the world to celebrate their effort and commitment to our mission. It was a beautiful virtual gathering featuring music, memories, & sharing, and you can go down memory lane with this video.



Mentorship to Internship Program

IAWF is proud to offer our Mentorship to Internship program to students and young professionals between 17 to 32 years of age. Our program encompasses four areas - mentorship, scholarship, Life Academy workshops, and internship.



Mentorship

We match applicants with mentors who can provide professional and personal guidance through their careers.

Scholarship

We provide financial assistance to our mentees who have a demonstrated commitment to academic excellence, cross-cultural bridge-building, and community service.

Life Academy

Life Academy is a series of informative workshops aimed at gearing mentees with the tools necessary to excel in their classrooms and workspaces.

Internship

IAWF offers internship opportunities to active mentees, as well as access to our wide network of professionals throughout the country.

Testimonials



Maliheh Bitaraf
New York Chapter

[My mentor] is an incredible role model, a nurturing mentor, and a true friend. In addition to counsel, she has made a point to provide me with hands-on experiences like visiting NJ Congresswoman, Bonnie Watson Coleman's office to teach me about legislative meetings, and encouraged me to accompany her to an Iranian American conference in DC where I had the opportunity to volunteer, network and create opportunities for a successful transition to the DC area. Her insights to the workings of the capital were invaluable.



Sahra Kaboli
NorCal Chapter

As I began my search for a job in the Bay Area, I was unsure about how to network and make contacts with the tech community virtually and didn't know how I could set myself apart from the highly competitive workforce in the area. [My mentor] Sherry stepped in and helped me tremendously with interview prep, helping me update my LinkedIn, reviewing my resume, helping me craft cover letters, and giving me important advice on salary negotiation. Through her help, I received multiple offers from amazing companies and have now been working at Culture Amp for almost a year. I am grateful to IAWF and Sherry for creating a program that provides strong, female, Iranian mentors.

Testimonials



Niyoosha Ahmadikhoo
New York Chapter

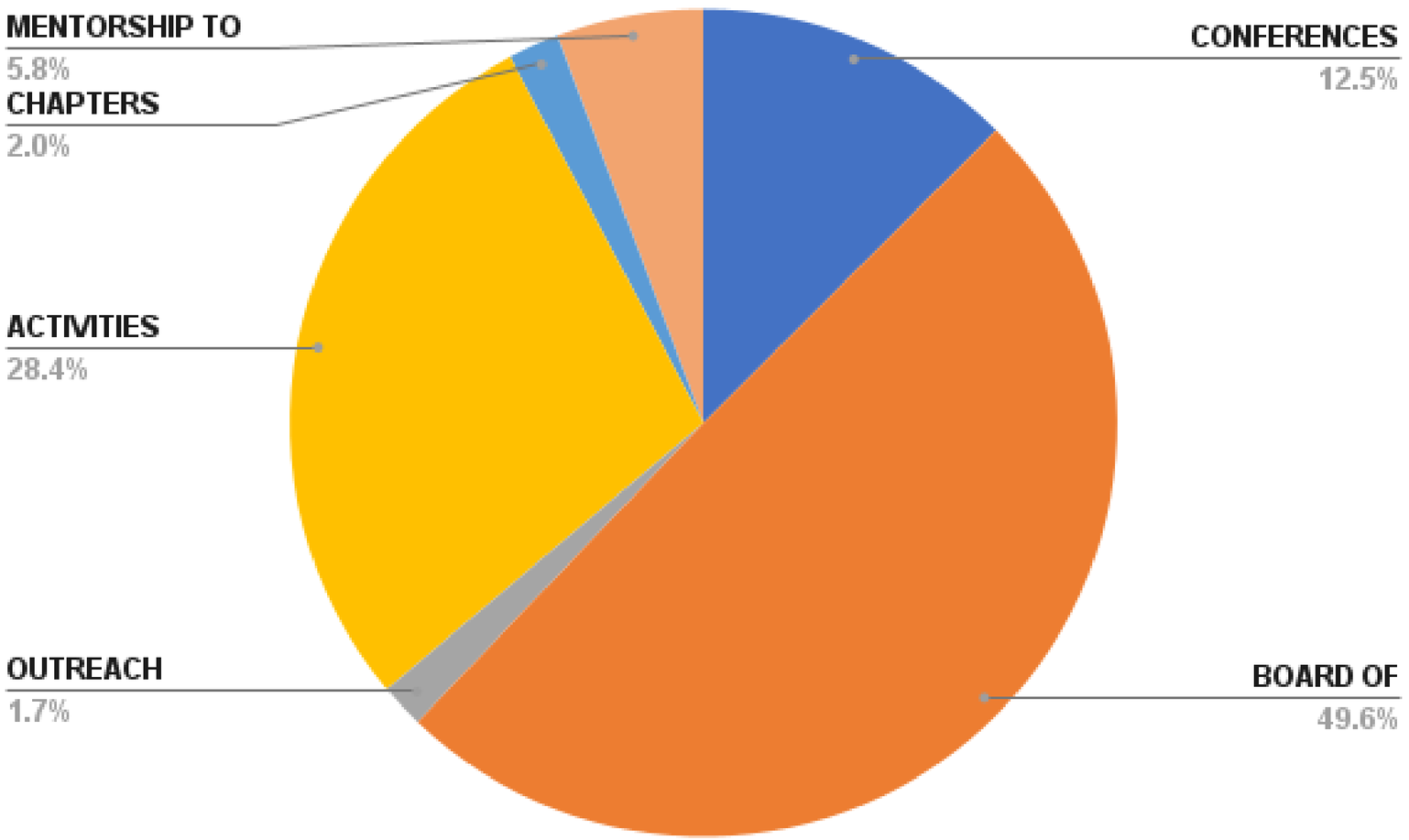
As someone who moved to the U.S. on a student visa on her own, the chances of meeting and knowing a generation of Iranian-Americans whose immigration journey was different from mine was very low before joining this program. The IAWF mentorship program is a safe, intimate, and fruitful platform to bridge the generational gap between those who immigrated earlier and those who (like me) started their path in the U.S. more recently and need guidance in figuring out the nuances of living and succeeding in diaspora as women, immigrants, and from the Iranian culture.



Nicole Motamed
Los Angeles Chapter

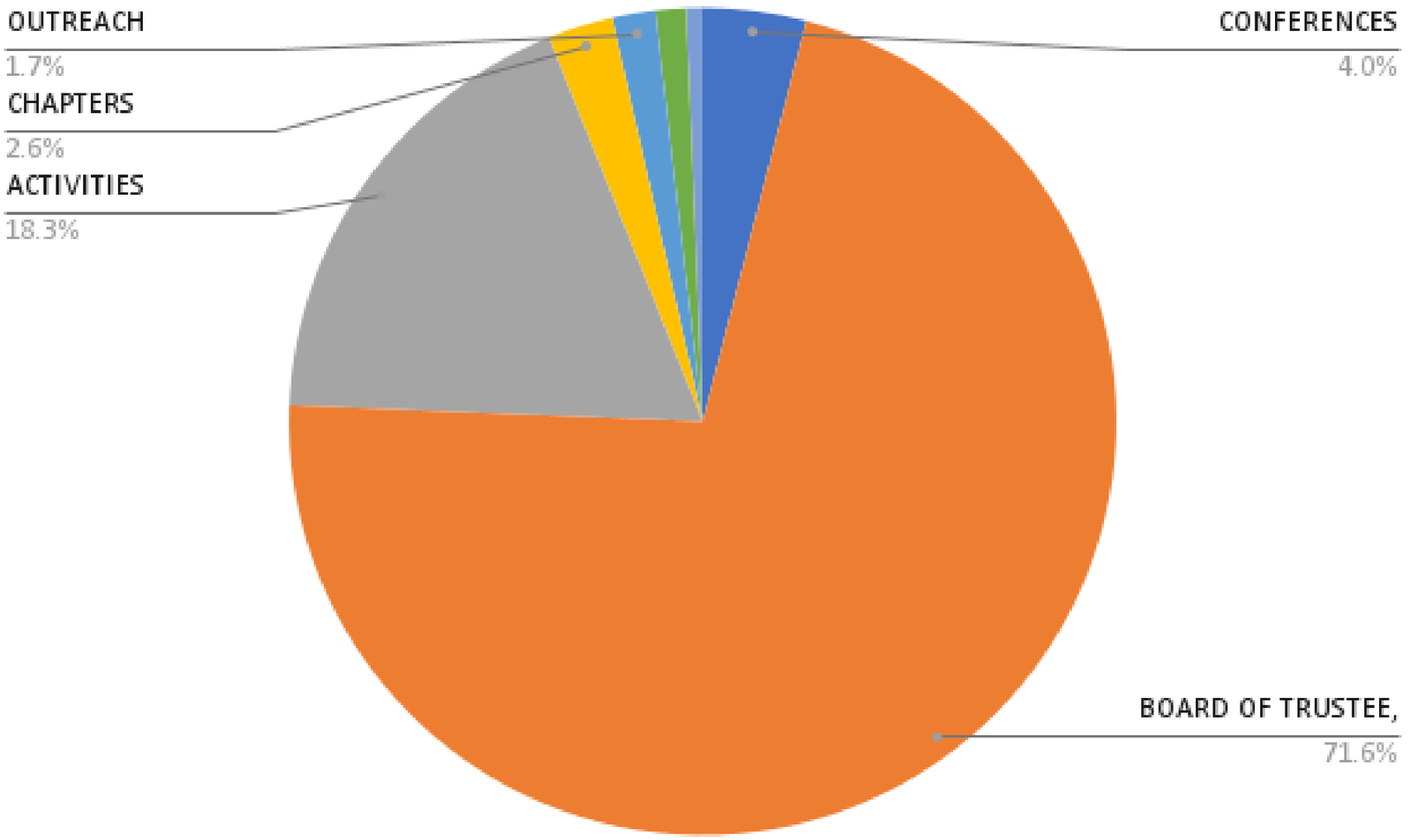
After meeting with my mentor Sara Alvarez, a phenomenal role model, I realized that this program is much more than just a mentorship opportunity. IAWF is a community that brings together motivated and successful Iranian women from all walks of life to support and empower one another. It allows Iranian women like myself to have a platform from which to voice our opinions, pursue our passions, and leave a lasting impression in our professional careers.

Financial Report 2019



Conferences	$129,290
Trustees, Circle of Visionaries & 1000	$512,956
Outreach Program	$17,881
Activities	$293,270
Chapters	$20,419
Interest Income	$139
Mentorship Program	$59,475
Total Gross Proceeds	$1,033,431

Financial Report 2020



Conferences	$20,000
Trustees, Circle of Visionaries & 1000	$354,663
Outreach Program	$8,350
Activities	$90,695
Chapters	$12,650
Other Income	$3,169
Life Academy Program	$5,894
Total Gross Proceeds	$489,526

A Special Thanks to Our Donors

Based on contributions received in 2019 - 2020

$15,000+

Nina Ansary
Bita Daryabari
Neda Nobari
Foundation
Soheila Adelipour
Shirin Hedayat
Orna Delrahim
Parisima Hassani
Mike Dilmagani
Fariba Ameri
Katy K Saei
Shahpar Khaledi
Y & S Nazarian Family Foundation
Zohre Elahian
US Bank

$10,000 - $14,999

Sean Sohi
Morteza Vakili
Ali Saffari
Ali Shekarchian
Farhad Saadat
Laya Khadjavi
Nazi Eftekhari
Bicycle Hotel Casino
Union Bank
Violet Parvarandeh

A Special Thanks to Our Donors

Based on contributions received in 2019 - 2020

$1,000 - $9,999

Whittier Trust Company
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Vafa Rakhshani
Josiane S Cohanim
Avid Modjtabai
Confidence Foundation
Dariush Khaledi
Mandana Azad
Mehraban Khajehnouri
Parviz Vazin
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Kamran Elahian
Leila Hajalilou
M Rahmani
Mahvash Yazdi
Mandana Baradar
Mariam Ghavamian
Mariam Parineh
Maryam Zar
Michael Hakimi
Michael Schau
Mitra Forozesh Behnam

A Special Thanks to Our Donors

Based on contributions received in 2019 - 2020

$1,000 - $9,999 continued

Nasrin Sadeghi
Nazar kamangar
Nazfar Afshar
Nooshin Meshkaty
Pirooz Parvarandeh
Price Philanthropistes Foundation
Roshanak Mozafar
Sepi Hejazi Moghadam
Shahin Rohani
Shahla Sabet
Shahnaz Sohi
Sheri Amiri
Shiva Sarram
Vahid Shariat
Wahideh Khaleeli

$500 - $999

Arshia Sajedi
Donna Wills Colson
Haleh Khatami
Homa Taraji
Ladan Saleh
Leili Eghbal
Maryam Ansari
Parmis Khatibi
Razieh Oghabian
Sara Hojjat
The Univ Corporation SF State
Kathy Razavi
Sima Talai
Abdolkarim Aminian

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to our Chapter Leaders in Northern California, Orange County, Los Angeles, and New York for their commitment to IAWF's mission.

Thank you to our Mother's Day committee members. Our Mother's Day video couldn't have been done without you!

Thank you to our staff and volunteers who make every in-person and virtual event possible. Your time and dedication allow us to work towards our mission of inspiring, empowering, and connecting Iranian women during this unprecedented time.

Lastly, thank you to our members and supporters. None of this would be possible without your continued support for IAWF.