


# Iranian American Women Foundation

Annual Report 2021-2022

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# Founder's Message

As Iranian American women, we come together with unique strength and compassion. In these two years, we experienced the impacts of COVID-19 and the impacts of the Women's Rights Movement in Iran. Despite these historic events, we were still able to support our community members by providing a platform to come together and be heard by one another. The future remains unpredictable, but we are hopeful for change to come. As an organization, we continue to grow our strength as we unite as sisters across the diaspora. This unmatched connection and bond are why I founded IAWF back in 2012. I could not be prouder of the women around the world who are joining together despite adversity in their communities. I am especially in awe of the women in Iran risking their lives in the movement for women's rights and freedom.

IAWF is dedicated to creating a platform for empowerment and networking among Iranian American women and to providing 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 furthering the mission and vision of IAWF together.



**Mariam Khosravani**
**Founder, IAWF**

# About IAWF

Since its inception in 2012 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, San Diego, 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 than 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 achievement, and celebrate their culture.

# Orange County Conference

March 6, 2022

IAW Foundation returned to Orange County for our first in-person event in more than two years. We hosted our signature Women's Leadership Conference in Newport Beach, CA. We had over 400 people join us from around the country to celebrate International Women's Day, and the 10th anniversary since our founding. The day was full of fascinating panel discussions, exhilarating musical performances, and moments of inspiration. We also had a variety of vendors and exhibitors who shared their products and services with our members, as well as a unique fashion show. These events would not be possible without the participation of our incredible speakers, gracious volunteers, and dedicated committee members. There couldn't have been a better way to mark a decade of inspiring, empowering, and connecting our community.






# San Francisco Conference

## October 16, 2022

IAWF came together at the Women’s Leadership Conference held at the Westin San Francisco Airport for an informative event during a historic moment for women’s rights. Nearly 350 attendees joined us from around the country to not only participate, but unite in solidarity with the women in Iran fighting for their basic human rights. The day was full of motivational speakers and insightful discussions surrounding women's rights in Iran.

It was truly inspiring to see so many incredible Iranian women in one room as we celebrated each other’s achievements and recognized the impact that we have made on our society. The togetherness throughout the event was beyond expectations thanks to the teamwork of so many incredible women.





# 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**

# LA Chapter Happy Hour

## October 12, 2021

Nearly a year and a half after COVID began, IAWF's Los Angeles Chapter finally gathered together for an evening of connection and cocktails. We were so happy to see our committee members and discuss plans for some exciting upcoming events! Thank you to our gracious host, Josiane Cohanim, for opening her beautiful home for this gathering, and to everyone who joined us for a fantastic night.





# Mentee Meet Up in New York

## October 24, 2021

IAWF mentors and mentees came together for their first meeting since 2019! One of our dear mentee alumna, Niyoosha Ahmadikhoo, organized and hosted a gathering for our New York area mentees. We were grateful to have been joined by our NY Mentorship Program Chair, Laya Khadjavi, and our great supporter and mentor, Sue Bayat, for this evening of connection and sharing.



# NorCal Women's Day Celebration

## April 29, 2022

IAWF celebrated April 29th by showcasing "In Recognition of Iranian Women" (in Farsi) on the tallest building on the West Coast: the Salesforce Tower. We thank Shaghayegh Cyrous and members of IAWF's leadership team in NorCal for this amazing opportunity.





# LA Rising Leaders Q&A Reception

## May 6, 2022

IAWF's LA Rising Leaders Chapter hosted its first event of the year on May 5th at the Skylight Gardens. Attendees gathered for a Q&A session with Leila Nazarian, founder of Eclectic Decks, a contemporary art and lifestyle brand that fuses traditional art-forms from around the world with a modern-day platform. Thank you to our in-kind donors: Fleurtina Flower Arrangements, Cheezemeez, Lavashak Lovers, Vibrational Remedies, House of Persia, Golchin, Sadaf, and Peak Performance Recovery.





# LA Rising Leaders Hike and Unwind

## July 17, 2022

IAWF's LA Rising Leaders Chapter went on an adventurous summer group hike at Los Liones. The hike was followed by a wind down at a local spot, Edo Bites at the Pacific Palisades Village. Hikers were able to catch up and rest with delicious food and great conversations.




# NY Rising Leaders Guided Imagery Journey

## August 7, 2022

IAWF's New York Rising Leaders Chapter participated in a blissful summer event! Members and guests enjoyed the beautiful scenery along a private beach setting. During their time they were able to speak about their goals, create meaningful connections, and gain inspiration for future events.



# LA Rising Leaders Guided Imagery Journey

## September 18, 2022

LA Rising Leaders Board hosted a Guided Imagery Journey followed by a Sound Bath at WRK Fitness Studio in Sherman Oaks. Event was led by Holistic Healer & Transformational Coach, Mina Khanaman. During this session, the group meditated and prayed for Mahsa Amini's soul, as the news was coming out about her tragic death on September 16th.



# LA Rising Leaders Honoring International Day of the Girl by Amplifying Iranian Voices

## October 11, 2022

IAWF's LA Rising Leaders Board Members Ariana Romero and Roxanna Ameri (alumna class of '13) collaborated with Marlborough School by hosting Iranian American speakers to shed light on the ongoing fight for women's rights happening in Iran.



# 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 cities and elected officials that recognized Iranian American Women's Day below. We look forward to more proclamations in the future!




**Cities:**

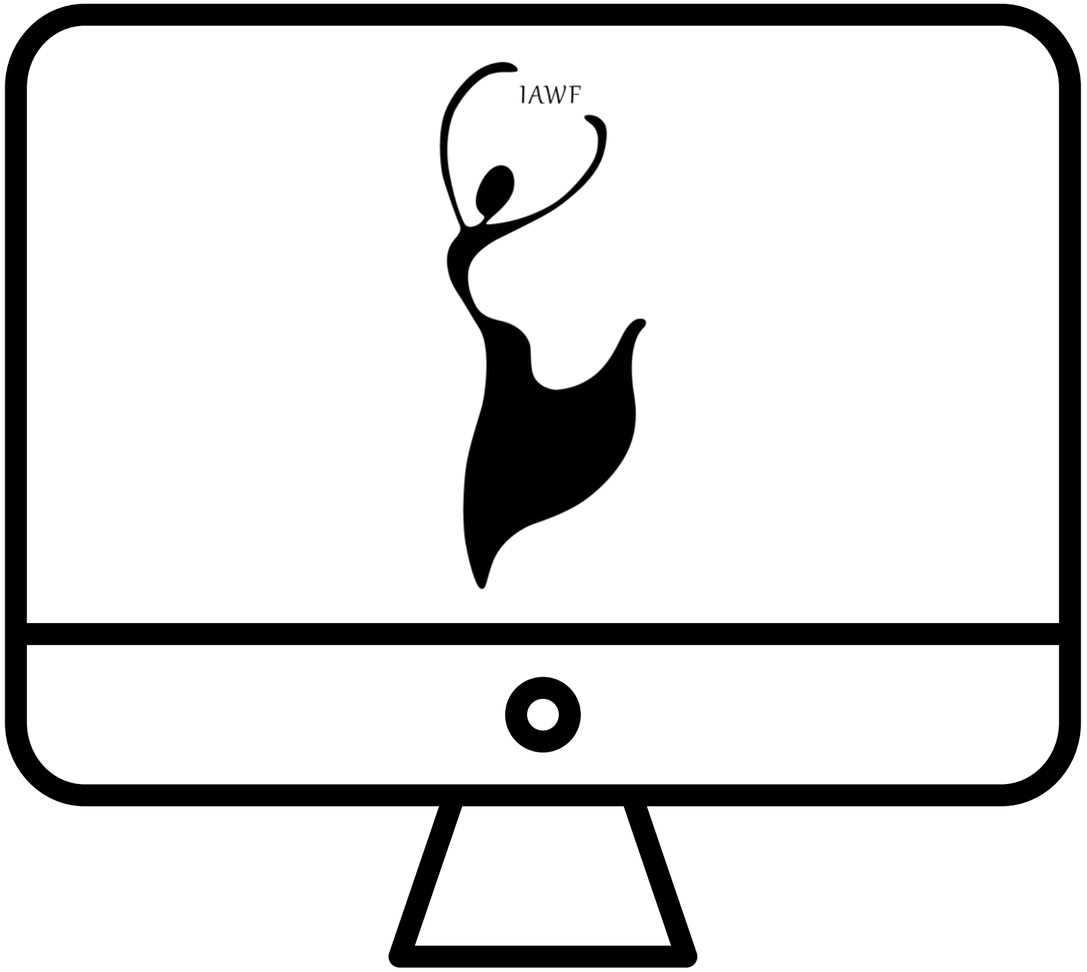
- Los Angeles
- San Francisco
- West Hollywood
- San Jose
- Long Beach
- Irvine
- Tustin
- Fullerton
- Saratoga
- Rancho Cordova
- Lake Forest
- Laguna Niguel
- Beverly Hills

**Elected Officials:**

- Vice President 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
- Mayor of San Francisco - London N. Breed
- Mayor of Tustin - Dr. Allan Bernstein
- Mayor of Fullerton - Mayor Jennifer Fitzgerald
- Long Beach City Council

# Virtual Events

2021 continued to be an unexpected challenge for everyone. Throughout the year, IAWF planned events and programs virtually to protect the health and safety of its members. 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 Vision 2021 to the Iranian Women's Film Festival, IAWF worked to be a source of support for our beloved community.



# Vision 2021: Value-Based Goal Setting

## February 7, 2021

Webinar led by Dr. B. Sarah Haynes shared how to achieve greater balance and success across the pillars of health/wellness, career/finance, community/philanthropy, relationships, personal evolution and much more.




# Iranian American Authors on the Rise

## February 27, 2021

Azita Alavi moderated a fun virtual panel conversation with rising star authors Alexandra Monir, Sara Farizan & Sara Saedi as they discussed their acclaimed young adult novels, and writing Iranian girls into popular culture. Learn more about these talented authors in our community and the importance of representation in their novels!



# Iranian Women's Film Festival

## March 2021

In honor of Women’s History Month, IAWF partnered with Venera Films to host our first ever Iranian Women's Film Festival, where we offered an online platform to highlight films made by Iranian women.

Films were featured between March 8-31 where viewers watched a variety of movies made by iconic filmmakers and up-and-coming creators. Every week, we presented a series of films at viewers' convenience. Viewers also enjoyed exclusive Q&As with the filmmakers which followed some of the films.



# Allied in Pride

## June 3, 2021

IAWF hosted "Allied in Pride," a panel discussion in celebration of Pride Month. Dr. Foojan Zeine moderated this important conversation with Councilmember Sepi Shyne, author Sara Farizan, and IAWF Trustee Shahrzad Bakhtiari where they touched on topics including embracing one's identity and being a better ally.




# From Harassment to Healing: A Historic View

## July 25, 2022

This 90-minute talk discussed the sexual harassment footprint among the Iranian diaspora, its roots, and its social, legal, and cultural connotations. The session also included a detailed discussion of what healing as individuals and society entails. Kimia Moeini moderated this important conversation featuring Mahsa Hakimi and Azizeh Rezaiyan.



# Mentorship to Internship Programs

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.

# Mentorship Success Stories



**Ariana Sheikhai**

IAWF Mentee, Ariana Sheikhai, first partnered with IAWF Mentor Judge Iravani-Sani in 2019. At the time, Ariana was an undergraduate at UC Berkeley. Judge Iravani-Sani has guided Ariana's legal career since then by giving great advice and introducing her to other legal professionals. For the summer of 2022, Ariana worked as a judicial intern for Judge Iravani-Sani. Ariana conducted legal research and observed each stage of a trial from beginning to end. Now, Ariana is a law student at UC Davis. She graduated from UC Berkeley in 2021 with a B.A. in Rhetoric.

Photo shows Ariana Sheikhai (L) with her mentor, Judge Iravani-Sani (R)



**Nikta Shahbaz**

IAWF mentee, Nikta Shahbaz, was accepted into Yale Law School, Stanford Law School, and Harvard Law School this past year. She is attending Stanford Law as of fall 2022. Nikta graduated Valedictorian from the University of San Diego in 2020 and received the university's highest honors for scholarship and student involvement. She then worked for a Harvard Law Professor as a Research Assistant and for a Judge on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Nikta has participated in the year-long IAWF mentorship program with mentor Elahe Tabesh. She is excited to start her legal studies, and she is thankful to all of her mentors for their guidance and inspiration along the way.

# Scholarship Funds

In April 2021, IAWF established two new scholarship funds: the Pari Abasalti Scholarship Fund and the Youth Law Center Scholarship Fund.

In 2022, IAWF was able to fully disperse funding from the following 2022 scholarship funds: Amin Arasteh Foundation Scholarship Fund, Googoosh Excellence in Arts Fund, Pari Abasalti Fund, Youth Law Center Fund, Shiva Kord Fund, and Empowering Iranian Academics Fund. With these six funds, IAWF was able to help 35 students and provide a total of over $125,000 in scholarship aid in 2022 alone.

A "Thank You" video (https://youtu.be/Nn5UG86TMgk) was provided by 2022 scholarship recipient, Ms. Maryam Soufisiavash. Maryam is a doctoral student at the University of Alberta studying Musical Arts in Piano Performance.

# Scholarship Testimonials

"Thank you for the opportunity to continue my education and achieve my dream of becoming a doctor. Because of you, students like me have a chance to get the education they were dreaming of. Doubtless to say that by having a role model like yourself I am inspired to become a donor myself to help students in need."

Saodat Italmazova, Amin Arasteh Scholarship Recipient

"I would like to express a truly heartfelt thank you to the donors of the Pari Abasalti Fund. As an immigrant, first-generation student, and woman the road to higher education has at times been tumultuous. My scholarship from the Pari Abasalti Fund greatly assists me in my long-time aspiration of becoming a lawyer. I will be attending Harvard Law School this fall and the scholarship will go towards the cost of my tuition. Once again, thank you so much for your support."

Nilofar Vakili, Pari Abasalti Scholarship Recipient

"Thank you again for your generosity and support. I promise you I will do my best and eventually give something back to others, both as an architect and possibly a scholarship to future students like myself. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Ms. Shakibaei for her kind guidance and support. I couldn't have pulled this off without her consideration."

Zeinab Maghdouri, Shiva Kord Scholarship Fund

# Visibility Initiative

IAWF started the visibility initiative to raise awareness regarding Mahsa Amini, the 22-year-old woman who died in police custody in Iran, and the countless brave Iranian women risking their lives in the movement for women's rights and freedom.

IAWF has pursued public visibility projects such as putting together vigils, purchasing advertisements and/or billboards, speaking at schools, and so on. The visibility initiative holds true to IAWF's core values to Inspire, Empower, and Connect Iranian women around the world. Through public visibility, IAWF aims to uplift the voices of Iranian women in order to bring national and international attention to their efforts in fighting for freedom.



# Candlelight Vigil

## September 29, 2022

The Vigil was held at West Hollywood Park at 5:30 pm in honor of Mahsa Amini and the brave women of Iran. The vigil was held both in-person and virtually. View it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFOsRE20GkI.
The Mayor Pro Tempore of West Hollywood, Sepi Shyne, was in attendance, along with Councilwoman Sharona Nazarian, and other community leaders.



# New York Billboard

## Mid-October, 2022

IAWF raised enough funds to secure the first Jumbotron billboard at 1500 Broadway & West 43rd in the heart of Times Square, in front of one of the busiest subway entrances in the country.

Our display went live mid-October and ran until December 31, 2022 airing approximately every 15 minutes from 6 am to 2 am.



# Washington DC Billboard

## October 22, 2022

IAWF sponsored a mobile digital billboard in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, October 22. The digital billboard truck joined demonstrators and circled around the National Mall.  The intention for this effort was to bring maximum awareness to the community at large, a direct extension of IAWF's visibility initiatives.




Photo by NSGIran

# Kansas Billboard

## October 23, 2022

Through the generosity and leadership from Iranian American women in Kansas, IAWF was able to partner on this billboard in Kansas City, Kansas. Launched on Sunday, October 23, the billboard was seen off of interstate 35 North at the Lamar Avenue exit. The display lasted approximately four weeks.




Photo by AVoice79

# Los Angeles Billboard

## October 25, 2022

IAWF's billboard in Los Angeles launched on Monday, October 25, and was seen at the corner of Olympic and Sepulveda with the wording  Woman Life Freedom and hashtags #MahsaAmini and #EndViolence. The billboard was on display for approximately four weeks.




Photo by Shahab Ettekal

# NorCal Billboards

## November 2022

IAWF was also able to secure two additional billboards in Northern California. The top photo pictures a billboard in Berkeley launched October 31, 2022, seen westbound on interstate 80 and 580. Bottom photo pictures San Jose billboard launched November 8, 2022, seen on 101 southbound in Santa Clara, near the San Jose International Airport.

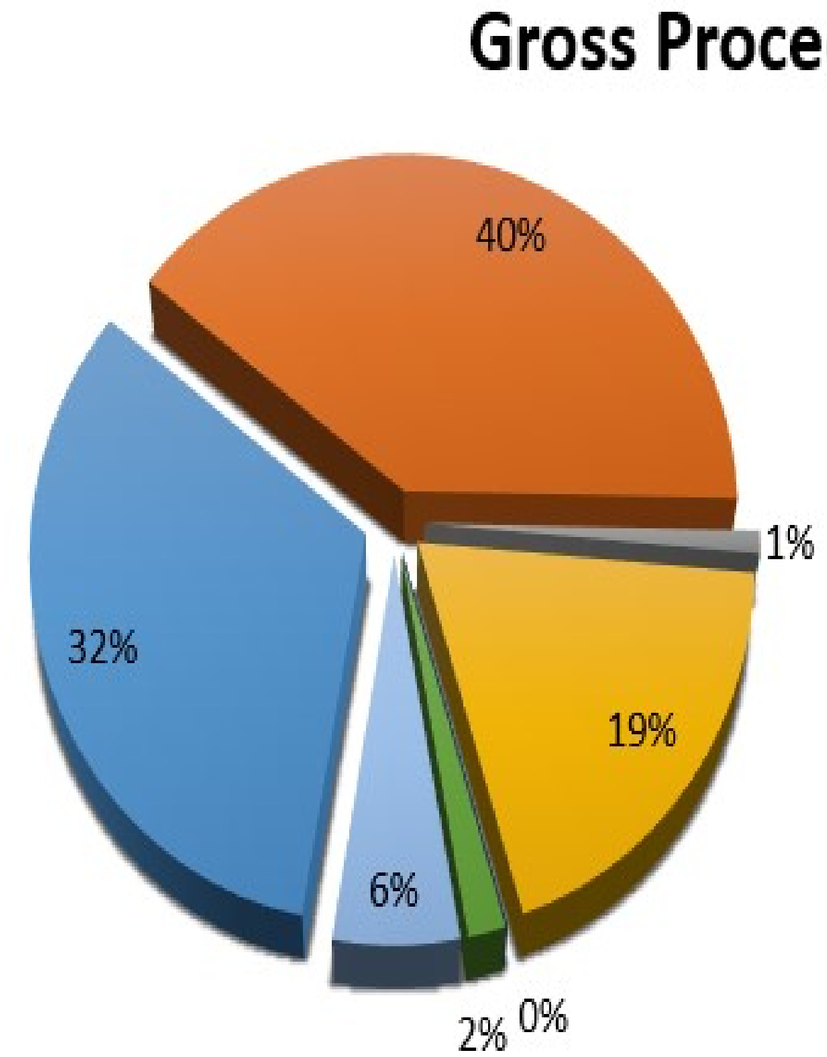


# Community Outreach

The Iranian American Women Foundation is proud to support and/or partner with the following organizations and individuals in 2021-2022! It is our social responsibility to help and support one another in the community.

Arasteh Foundation
City of Irvine
City of West Hollywood
Child Internations (C.H.I.L.D)
Farhang Foundation
Hoag Hospital
Iranian Bar Association
Iranian Student Union, UC Irvine
Keep Children In School (KCIS)
Moms Against Poverty
Mission Hospital
Network of Iranian American Professionals (NIPOC)
Northridge Hospital Medical Center
Nowruz Commission
Orange Wood Foundation
Pars Equality Center
Persian American Women
Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA)
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles

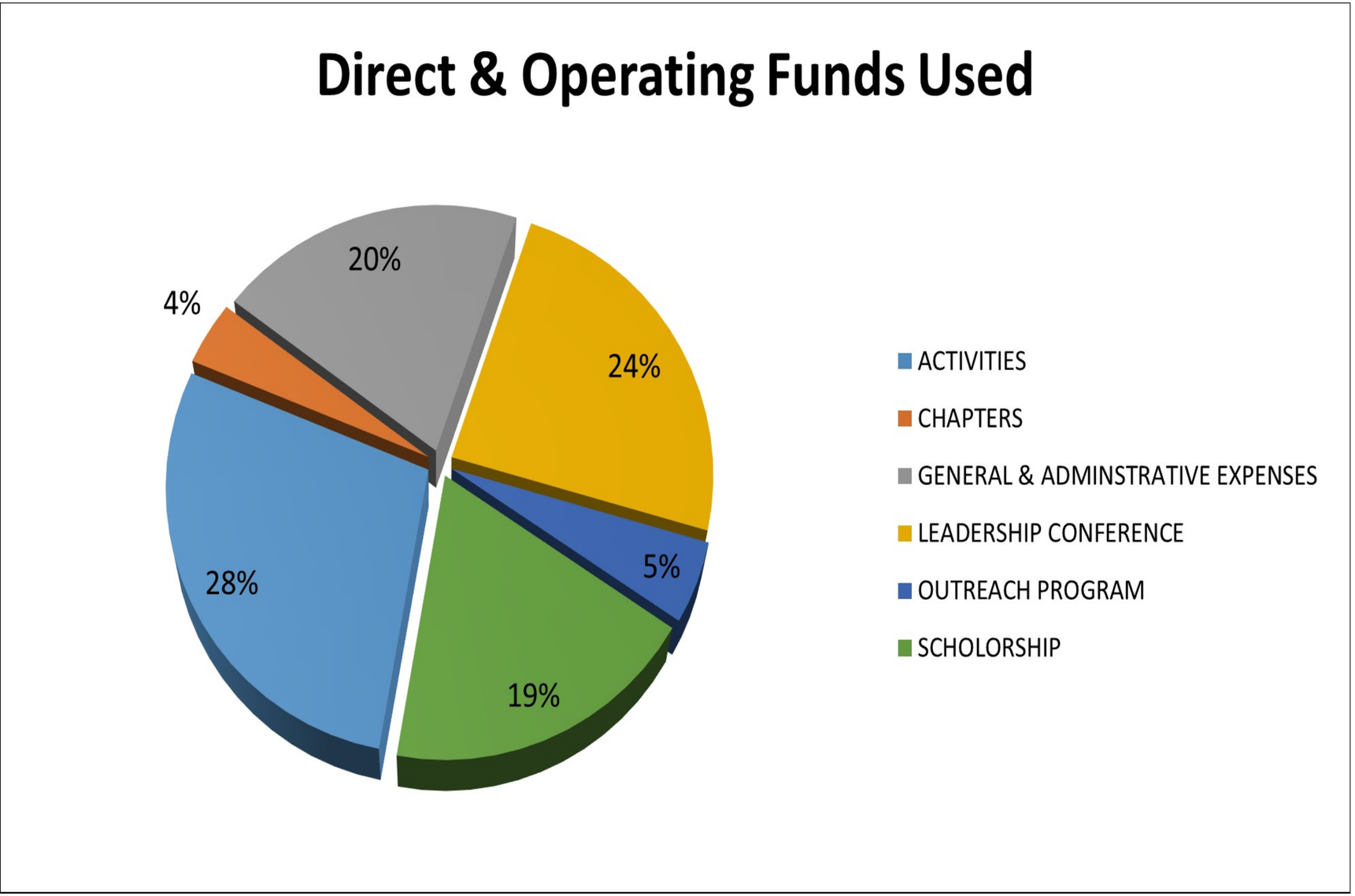
# FINANCIAL REPORT 2022




| | |
|---|---|
| **ACTIVITIES** | **$328,436** |
| **BOARD OF TRUSTEE, CIRCLE OF VISIONARY & 1000** | **$401,707** |
| **CHAPTERS** | **$10,182** |
| **LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE** | **$191,090** |
| **OTHER INCOME** | **$38** |
| **OUTREACH PROGRAM** | **$17,300** |
| **SCHOLORSHIP** | **$57,848** |
| **TOTAL GROSS PROCEEDS** | **$1,006,601** |

Financial reports prepared by Shahla Sohi

# FINANCIAL REPORT 2022




| | |
|---|---|
| **ACTIVITIES** | **$204,883** |
| **CHAPTERS** | **$28,987** |
| **GENERAL & ADMINSTRATIVE EXPENSES** | **$146,204** |
| **LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE** | **$174,478** |
| **OUTREACH PROGRAM** | **$35,590** |
| **SCHOLORSHIP** | **$133,465** |
| **TOTAL FUNDS USED** | **$723,606** |

Financial reports prepared by Shahla Sohi

# Board of Directors

PariSima Hassani
Tannaz Mazarei
Mojagan Momenan
Kimya Rezaei
Dr. Foojan Zeine

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**PERFORMING ARTS**

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Zaza Saleh

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Based on contributions received in 2021 - 2022

## $100,000+

Nina Ansary
Aryana Health Care Foundation

## $50,000+

Arasteh Foundation
Mehrzad Khajenoori
Mehraban & Taraneh Khajehnouri

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## $15,000+

Soheila Adelipour
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Neda Nobari Foundation
New York Women Foundation
Katy K Saei
US Bank
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Goli Ameri
Halé Behzadi
Haleh Gabbay
Hormoz & ZaZa Saleh

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California Community Foundation
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Fakhimi Family Foundation
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Nelly Farnoody

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## $1,000 - $9,999 continued

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Sepideh Zahedy
Maky Zanganeh
Maryam Zar
Foojan Zeine

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Based on contributions received in 2021 - 2022

## $500 - $999

Sonbol Aliabadi
Behnoosh Assadkhan
Sanam Baiani
Simin Banister
Nasim Bolandparvaz
Mitra Corral
Tiffany Cutting
Hassan Ebadat
Pattie Ehsaei
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Martha Kodis
Nina Kovack
Sussan Lari

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Mahsa Taskindoust
Hoda Tavalali
Haleh Tayebi
Atoosa Vakili
Arian Van de Carr
Shadi Vaziri-Tousi
Melodie Vernet
Matt Vieyra
Nicholas Zacherl
Maryam Zar
Magen Zare
Shirin Zarkesh
Shahrzad Zarkoob
Rayka Zehtabchi

# Acknowledgements

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