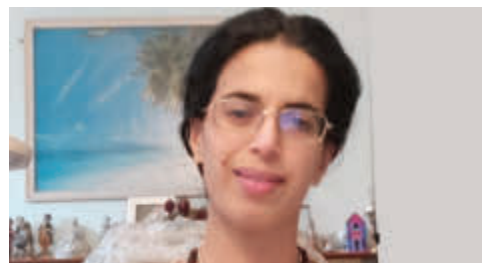
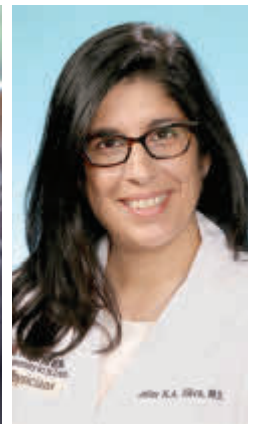
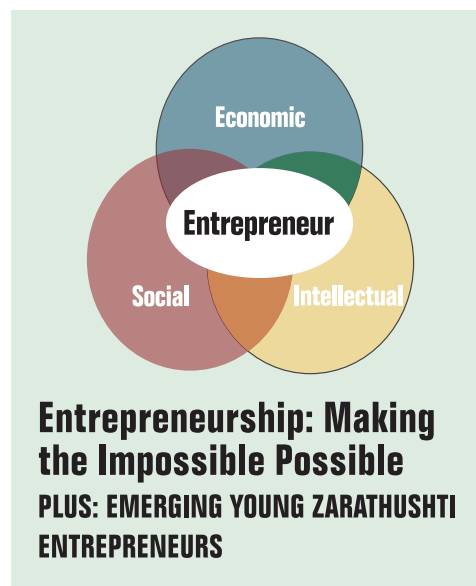
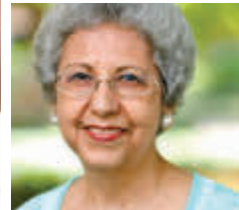


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Fravadin – Ardibehesht – Khordad 1391 AY (Fasli) • Avan – Adar – Dae 1391 AY (Shenshai) • Adar – Dae – Behman 1391 AY (Kadimi)

NOROOZ PIROOZ BAD 🍷 NOROOZ MUBARAK





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Editor in Chief:

Dolly Dastoor
editor(@)fezana.org

Assistant Editor:

Farishta Dinshaw

Graphic & Layout:

Shahrokh Khanizadeh
www.khanizadeh.info

Cover Design:

Feroza Fitch
ffitch(@)lexicongraphics.com

Technical Assistant:

Coomie Gazdar

Consultant Editor:

Lylah M. Alphonse
lmalphonse(@)gmail.com

Language Editor:

Douglas Lange
Deenaz Coachbuilder

Publications Chair:

Behram Pastakia
bpastakia(@)aol.com

Marketing Manager:

Nawaz Merchant
nawaz@fezana.org

Copy Editors:

Yasmin Pavri
Vahishta Canteenwalla
Nazneen Khumbatta

Subscription Managers:

Arnavaz Sethna
Kershaw Khumbatta

Asst Subscription

Manager
Farzana Sidhwa

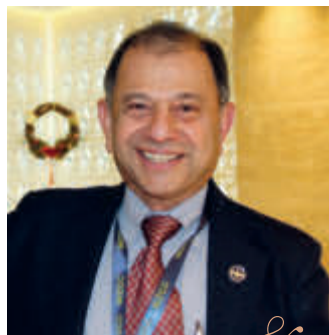
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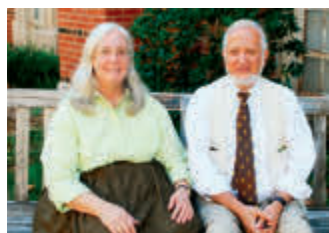
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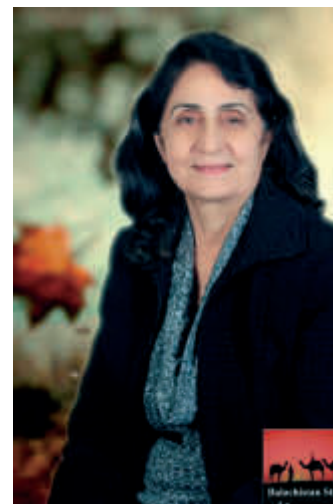
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SPRING 2022 1

Spring is finally trying to push it way through. The sun rises earlier, the birds are occasionally chirping, the squirrels are jumping in my back yard from tree to tree. The earth is coming back to life renewing itself, and so should we, with our promise to bring about freshokerati for the world. We cannot help but think and pray for our fellow human beings young and old caught in different areas of conflict around the world on whom endless suffering is imposed for no justifiable reason. We also pray and beseech Ahura Mazda to awaken the conscience of these heartless leaders and place some compassion and love in their hearts. We continue to pray for all who are suffering in the world from the ravages of war.

Now for some good news to lighten your spirits. COVID though not completely gone is slowly retreating and lessening its deadly force, so we can breathe more freely, meet and hug our friends celebrate Nowruz together. This issue of the FEZANA Journal ably edited by Edul Daver the immediate Past President of WZCC is very uplifting, reading of the struggles turning into success stories of Zarthushti entrepreneurs across the world. It reinforces our thinking that entrepreneurship is the way to create wealth which is the vehicle to uplift society by spreading your good fortune around. Read the stories of the 26 intrepid entrepreneurs portrayed in this issue as well as the personal profile of the new WZCC president Percy Master.



This issue also profiles the amazing young awardees of FEZANA scholarships in Academic, Performing and Culinary Arts and Sports. We congratulate all as well as the winners of the Chothia Foundation scholarships.


Interesting events are taking place around the world and at home. The 12th World Zoroastrian Congress is going full steam with nearly a 1000 guests registered. Have you? The 8th WZYC is making considerable progress and is waiting to welcome all youth across the world in 2023 to London. And to complete the trilogy of congresses the 18th North American Zoroastrian Congress 2024 will be in Houston.

The Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia, Singapore (PZAS) inaugurated the first Parsi permanent Zoroastrian Museum at Zoroastrian House called Joyous Flame, a joint effort of PZAS and Dr. Shernaz Cama of the ParZor Foundation, India. The German Ambassador to Iran visited the Tehran's fire temple. After washing his hands and with covered head he and his team were allowed to be at the inside entrance of the fire temple, but not inside the main room where the fire is kept by mobeds. He was impressed. Nazneen Engineer the project co-ordinator of Gen Z and Beyond Survey has completed a very successful visit to India to get responses to the surveys.

The Winter issue of the Journal, on the AVA project edited by Afreed Mistry was a great success and generated donations for all our efforts.

I end by wishing each and everyone of you a very joyous and happy celebration for Nowruz as we begin a New year 1392 AY 3760 AZ we reflect on the past year and invigorate our relationships and pray for peace for the world.

**WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY NOW RUZ
NOW RUZ KHOJASTE BAAD**


Dolly Dastoor Ph.d
Editor in chief

Message FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is finally here in North America, and from the looks of it, COVID may have moved to the rearview mirror. And that can only mean good things. In a few weeks ZAGNY and FEZANA will welcome over a 1000 attendees from all over the world to the 12th World Zoroastrian Congress. Preparations are in full swing, and from the Program updates it will be a Congress for the ages! If you have not yet registered, there is still time to do so.

The last few months have been busy at FEZANA and its member associations. Nearly all of our Dar-E-Mehrs and centers saw Navroz functions in-person after a two year gap. And more activities have started to happen which is always a good thing.

The 35th FEZANA Annual General Meeting had to be held online, because of the omicron scare at the start of the year which prevented people from making travel plans. However the virtual turnout was great and many associations presented their annual activities. Committees could showcase the amazing work that they have done the year through. The FEZANA family also saw a change of guard at the Executive, with Rooky Fitter stepping down after her two terms as the FEZANA Treasurer. Rooky joined the FEZANA Executive Committee 4 years ago and brought tremendous knowledge, acumen and streamlined processes over the years. Her presence will be missed and we wish her well as she continues to lead ZAC LA as its President. The Executive also welcomed Xerxes Commissariat as the new FEZANA Treasurer. Xerxes was the Assistant Secretary for the past 4 years and hence brings institutional knowledge to

his new role. He has big shoes to fill, but we are all sure that he will rise up to the challenge and more.

On April 20th, the Zoroastrian community was represented by FEZANA to visit the Washington D.C. Temple of the Church of Latter Day Saints. The third largest Mormon temple in the world has just finished a multi-year renovation, and therefore offers the very rare opportunity for those outside of their faith to visit the temple, before it is re-dedicated. Kersi Shroff, the FEZANA Research and Preservation Committee Chair and myself got to tour the beautiful and opulent building that towers over the Beltway. The 52 acre site with fantastic landscaping and the towering architectural building was a testament to how the Mormon faith is practiced. It was also interesting to see how they practice their rituals and traditions in daily life.

Dressed in daglis, (see photo) we got many opportunities to speak about our own faith. Many were thrilled to see Zoroastrians, and a few expressed that we were the first Zoroastrians they had met. This highlights the need for us as a community and a faith to make our presence felt in the Interfaith arena more and more. The FEZANA Interfaith Committee has put out a call for a full time intern to help with the various activities they do, and if you know of suitable candidates please let Homi Gandhi and Bakhtavar Desai know.

The Glossary Project was launched earlier this year. This is a first of its kind initiative under the FEZANA Religious Education Committee and was ably led by Armaity Homavazir of Toronto Canada,



ably supported by Ervad Zerkxis Bhandara – Irvine, California, Artemis Javanshir, Dr. Ali Makki and Tashan Mistree with editorial support from Vahishta Canteenwalla and Yasmin Pavri. This project will grow and evolve in the months and years to come. My sincere request to all is to use the Glossary in everyday writing and discussing of our religion and faith so we can teach our young kids the right spelling and pronunciations of the religious terms within the constraints of the English alphabet.

I hope to see you all at the 12th World Zoroastrian Congress this summer. Be well, stay healthy and may the coming months bring good things to all of our communities here in North America and worldwide.

Arzan Sam Wadia
president@fezana.org
+1 212 380 7629



NOWRUZ CELEBRATION AT ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, (OI) CHICAGO



**Nowruz
celebration**

**Saturday, March 12
1–3 P.M.**

**In-person at the
OI Museum**

Celebrate the delight of the coming Persian New Year—Nowruz! Visit a Haft Seen table, explore the galleries, hear from OI scholars, enjoy a scavenger hunt, and take activities home to continue the celebration.

Free for members and children
\$5 suggested donation for adults

All ages. Registration recommended:
<https://bit.ly/34H3RO2>

Street parking is available. Please check
Eventbrite for more information.

 oi100.uchicago.edu/fjs   Sponsored by the Federation of Zoroastrian Association of North America and the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago.

The Nowruz celebration at the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago, sponsored by ZAC-Chicago and FEZANA (Interfaith Committee), was a great success. About 200 visitors came and enjoyed the ‘Haft-Seen’ table, gallery talks by OI scholars, scavenger hunt through the museum galleries, browsing through a display of FEZANA publications, and learning about Nowruz traditions and the history of Persia.

Grateful thanks to Farida Sharyari and Rohinton and Roshan Rivetna for organizing this popular annual event at OI. As OI Museum Curator Kiersten Neumann commented: “I’m so glad we were able to celebrate Nowruz together again at OI this year. Thanks very much to ZAC and FEZANA for sponsoring this event – everyone had a great time and learnt about Persian history and culture.” (For more information, visit www.oi.uchicago.edu).





BA HUMATA: RAISING THE COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

*The BaHumata initiative, a monthly webinar series curated to raise the consciousness of our global Zoroastrian community in line with Asho Zarathushtra's teachings, has received a lot of positive feedback since its launch in January 2021. **The Welfare Committee** talks to Dr. Karishma Koka, and Mr. Meher Amalsad who spearheaded the BaHumata series to find out how it came to be.*



It was the struggle that Zoroastrian priests go through despite the dedication and hard work they put in their entire lives that made UK-based Dr. Karishma Koka brainstorm with her mother Mrs. Jerou Panthaki RamMohan on how they could change the equation. They visualized an online programme in the wake of covid when everyone was stuck at home. The uplifting discussions could provide a platform for the priests to share their knowledge, and in turn, bring the Zarathushti community together to learn from the priests and scholars of Avesta.

The intergenerational discussion could be the glue to bring various Zoroastrian organizations all over the world together as well as give Zarathushtis an opportunity to be well informed of the various aspects of the Zarathushti Daena – including the Avesta, Gathas and other texts and various rites and rituals practiced by the priests.



Mother-daughter team: Mrs. Jerou Panthaki RamMohan, and Dr. Karishma Koka



Mr. Meher Amalsad, Mentor and Speaker Coordinator of the BaHumata webinar series

Karishma who has co-founded The Ultimate Achievements Academy with her mother and supported by her father Commander Koka RamMohan (Retd. Indian Navy) says, “The purpose of the BaHumata series is to raise the consciousness of Zarathushtis in line with Asho Zarathustra’s teachings and raise their self-awareness and spirituality to unite with Ahura Mazda: the Supreme energy and wisdom.”

To make BaHumata a reality, Karishma contacted Mr. Meher Amalsad to mentor and facilitate the global BaHumata prayer, leadership and entrepreneurship monthly webinar series.

“Karishma contacted me with an idea to create a Global Webinar Program that focuses on spreading the vision of Zarathustra by having an intergenerational discussion session among the Mobeds and Behdins across the Globe,” says Meher Amalsad who works many hours to coordinate the speakers over 12 countries. The founding chair of the North American Youth Congresses, a professional speaker, educator and author of ‘Bread for The Head’ says that they contacted Ravanshad Ervad Dr. Soli Dastur who helped to fine-tune the name – BaHumata, meaning

‘with good thoughts’.

“We also contacted our respected Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary in Iran for his guidance, Yazdi Tantra in India for his help as the BaHumata Administrator, and the FEZANA President Arzan Wadia for this help to promote this event via FEZANA and Parsi Khabar,” says Meher.

A core team was put in place with the guidance of prominent priests, presidents and leaders from global Zarathushti Associations .

“Over the next three to four months over 50-60 Zarathushtis across the globe were contacted to set-up a Speaker Slate for 2021”. says Meher Amalsad.

The highlight of the BaHumata series has been global participation on a single portal and the spirit of oneness with the consciousness of righteousness.

Expressing her gratitude Karishma says, “We are very grateful for the kind and strong support from Meher Amalsad to make BaHumata a reality, he has spent hours in arranging speakers and working on themes with them and achieving a network of Zarthushti organizations around the world” She is grateful for the important role he played in involving Mr. Yazdi Tantra to support BaHumata with technical expertise

“The project has been encouraged by Mr. Noshir Dadrawala, and by respected priests Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary and Late Ervad Soli P. Dastur. and by Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia by sharing knowledge and meanings of prayers. Today Ervad Zarrir Bhandara, Ervad Brigadier Behram Panthaki and Ervad Kobad Zarolia (NAMC) are our strong advisors”.

Selfless service rendered by so many individuals has made this program a success says Karishma, *Service before Self* unconditionally is a Zarathushti motto which has been coined as ‘*Parsi thy name is charity*’. “This to me is the essence of the Yatha Ahu Vairyo prayer and the concept of FrashoKereti (progressing in righteousness through just-action).

“January 1, is now established as the ***Day of Collective Consciousness in honour of Asho Zarathushtra.***” as suggested by Mrs Jerou Panthaki Ram Mohan

The FEZANA Unity and Welfare Committee:
Houtoxi Contractor (huty.contractor@gmail.com)
Hosi Mehta (hosimehta@aol.com)
Sanaya Master (sanaya.master@xtra.co.nz)



What is the Word?

The Zoroastrian Global Glossary Project

On December 22, 2021, FEZANA launched the first-ever Zoroastrian Global Glossary, a legacy project that provides uniformity for spellings and definitions of Zoroastrian terms in English.

The Global Glossary project arose from the need to unify the spelling of Zoroastrian terms being used in North America. As the FEZANA Religious Education committee began compiling lesson plans for its member communities, it soon became evident that everyone had their own way of spelling terms – validating and providing a rationale for the need to offer uniformity and regularity for future authors, teachers and publications.

“The intention of this glossary is to leave a legacy for future generations,” said the Glossary’s project lead, Armaity Homavazir. “Given our dispersed populations, cultures and languages, we as a collective group were compelled to simplify our body of commonly used terms.” Other team members included: Ervad Zerkxis Bhandara, Artemiz Javanshir, Dr. Ali Makki, and Tashan Mistree. Vahishta Canteenwala and Yasmin Pavri edited the glossary.



Jenny Rose, PhD., an adjunct professor and historian of religions in the Zoroastrian Studies program at Claremont Graduate University, who also holds a doctorate in Ancient Iranian Studies from Columbia University, generously donated her glossaries to help kickstart the project. The FEZANA Journal also contributed its glossary compiled by its past editor Roshan Rivetna and present editor-in-chief, Dolly Dastoor

The Glossary is an online resource so it can be accessed by scholars, religious educators, authors and students around the world. The glossary also indicates the language of origin including Avestan, Pahlavi, Farsi, and Gujarati. The first word in the Glossary is *ab zohr* meaning “offering to the waters. The last part of the Yasna ceremony, when

the water and haoma juice are returned to the well” and the last word is *Zartosht-no-diso* referring to Zarathushtra’s death anniversary (Dae mah, Khorshed roz). In some cases, it offers more than one spelling depending on the word’s historic and cultural context. For example, Nowruz is a spelling suggested by the United Nations in its effort to standardize the spelling across the countries and communities that celebrate it. The Parsi iteration, Navroz, and the Iranian spelling, Norooz, have also been included.

On February 12, 2022, FEZANA’s Religious Education Committee held a webinar to introduce the new tool for teachers and students. Armaity Homavazir and Tashan Mistree shared ideas for glossary lessons to use with students, other online resources/activities such as Kahoot, as well as ways to engage students in upcoming festivals.

The glossary will remain a working document and feedback and suggestions from the community is welcome and will be reviewed periodically by a panel to vet suggestions.

The glossary can be found at: fezana.org/glossary

Please send all comments/questions to: glossary@fezana.org [Report Farishta Dinshaw](#)



CELEBRATING ZOROASTRIAN AUTHORS

Meheryar N. Rivetna

The weekend of January 14-15, 2022 was a weekend to remember for the Houston Zoroastrian community. The Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH) in conjunction with FIRES (FEZANA Information Research Education System) celebrated the accomplishments of seasoned and new Zoroastrian authors.



FIRES library ZAH

Friday, January 14 was dedicated to honor and recognize the literary accomplishments and talents of Bapsi Sidhwa. Aban Rustomji, chairperson of the ZAH library committee, welcomed the attendees at the ZAH center to this special occasion. In her opening remarks she expressed admiration for Bapsi's literary works making the small, yet vibrant,



Zoroastrian community of Houston proud of her literary skills. To honor Bapsi's monumental talents the ZAH/FIRES on this occasion launched an international award for excellence in literature for new Zoroastrian authors in Bapsi Sidhwa's name. It is a biennial award which carries a trophy and a \$2000.00 cash prize.

Bapsi Sidhwa has authored seven books with many of them translated into other languages and some made into movies. A great fiction writer's works demonstrate openness, inner convictions and a vivid imagination. Those attributes are very much present in Bapsi's books. Aban reminded the audience that Bapsi was the recipient of numerous awards. Among many notable awards Bapsi Sidhwa received the Sitara-e-Imtiaz Pakistan's highest national award in arts, a Bunting Fellowship at Harvard/Radcliffe and the Reader's Digest Writer's Award.

The Consul General of Pakistan graced the event championing Bapsi's pluralism in his address: how she created opportunities for those who are marginalized and do not have a voice. This noble characteristic manifests itself in her life and in her works, the Consul General said.

It was an honor to have Arzan Wadia, President of Fezana, at the evening's festivities. He came straight from India via New York City to attend the event. He praised the ZAH for establishing the Bapsi Sidhwa literary prize. Nozer Dungor, President of the ZAH, spoke of how proud the Houston Zoroastrians are to have Bapsi as one of their own community members.

Four of Bapsi's long time friends spoke to Bapsi's talents and accomplishments, virtually. Rich Levy, executive director of Inprint, an organization in Houston dedicated to conducting workshops on creative writing, gave a recorded message of tribute to Bapsi speaking of her teaching talent. He recognized her services to Houston and in particular to Inprint where she served on its board. Mr. Levy also attested to Bapsi's legendary hospitality and generosity of spirit.

Amand Focke, head of the Woodson Archives and the Oral History Project at Rice University, informed the audience that Bapsi Sidhwa's numerous papers, essays, reviews, lecture notes, personal writings, interviews, materials



on family life are entrusted to the university. She expressed gratitude for Bapsi's trust in the university and her. They are all available online for interested researchers.

Sadia Uqaili, an artist and educator who is the founder of 'Explore Their Stories' (a non-profit organization with a mission to discover, document, preserve and share via compelling films, the extraordinary in our everyday lives) has directed a documentary: Bapsi: The Silences of My Life. Calling Bapsi a trailblazer, Ms. Uqaili showed a clip of that film. She is honored to have Bapsi as a friend adding that with Bapsi's trust and generosity, her name is written "all across the future".

Teresa Russo of the University of Toronto has known Bapsi Sidhwa for over 20 years and is a close friend. Ms. Russo spoke of Bapsi's penchant for humor, irony and humanity all very much evident in her writings. For well over 40 years Bapsi has been an inspiration to writers, Ms. Russo said.

Finally, Bapsi's brother Feroze Bhandara spoke about Bapsi's childhood and their family life. He said that every one of Bapsi's books has one of her family members masked as a character in her writings. Feroze spoke of Bapsi's affliction with polio as a child and how she was home-schooled unable to attend regular school. This isolation fine tuned her imagination which allowed her to "paint pictures with words", making Bapsi a great story-teller. Feroze, himself, a vibrant Zoroastrian community member in Houston, has generously donated to the building of the Houston Atash-Kadeh the first of its kind in North America. He also gave a check for \$5000.00 to the ZAH library.

The evening culminated with a splendid buffet dinner hosted by ZAH.

Saturday, January 15 started with Jangoo Mistry welcoming another talented Zoroastrian writer—Boman Desai from Florida. Boman read two excerpts from his book *A Googly in the Compound*. Boman is a skilled and passionate story-teller and he expertly set the scene for each excerpt that he read from his book. The audience was spell-bound by his story-telling anecdotes. Another passion of his is music and he entertained the audience to the second movement of a symphony he composed.

After a lunch break, the afternoon recognized the literary works of Houston's three new self-published Zoroastrian authors: Tenaz Sunavala (far right) who wrote *The Path To Self-Empowerment: My Meditations With Grandma*, Kamalrukh Gandhi (a.k.a Alex James) (middle) who has two romance novels to her credit *Boss Lady* and *You're Mine* which is the first book in a trilogy, and Meheryar Rivetna who wrote *Zarathustra: The Man And The Message* (on the screen).

Sweta Sethna (far left) was excellent as the moderator inquiring into these authors' motivations to write, the obstacles faced in self-publishing, their reading interests, their mentors, any future literary projects, interest in writing other genres and such.



Kamalrukh talked about her writing being an outlet, an escape. She had qualms about publishing her first book. It was her sister's encouragement that gave her the confidence to publish it. Tenaz's book documents her journey to self-discovery, how she overcame the obstacles she faced, realizing that "you are the author of your own fulfillment". Meheryar's motivation in writing his book was to dispel the myths and misconceptions pervasive in the Zoroastrian faith. The book provides an understanding of the basic religious principles as propounded by eminent Zoroastrian and western scholars who through extensive research and in-depth study have brought to light Zarathustra's teachings, unsullied.



When the three authors were asked what surprised them during and after the writing process, Kamalrukh said she discovered things within herself she never knew she had. Tenaz said she wanted to reach a wide audience and she achieved that. Meheryar was surprised at how well the book has been received amongst a wide range of people.

Sweta asked the writers what their readers should take away from their works. Tenaz wants her readers to be the best version of themselves. Kamalrukh emphasized the importance of reading as an escape to a place of joy. Meheryar was emphatic about his readers going back to Zarathustra's one set of basic teachings of inclusivity and unity.

The day's finale was an excellent presentation on the genesis and establishment of the Zoroastrian Association of Houston by Rustom Engineer. Jehangir Shroff of Houston spearheaded an undertaking to memorialize the founding of the Association. He approached the ZAH library committee to take on the task of compiling the history of the Association. Arnavaz Sethna, Jehangir Shroff and Rustom Engineer took on the challenge to gather scattered, handwritten documents by the Zoroastrian pioneers of the Association and create a unified record of its founding. Rustom eloquently spoke of the growing pains, trials and tribulations to the establishment of a center from just about 24 members to several hundred members today. The painstaking efforts, generosity, and diligence of the early arrivals has made the ZAH a paragon of the Zoroastrian Associations in North America.

This weekend in Houston was memorable in many ways and is certainly one for the history books.

Meheryar N. Rivetna studies and writes on issues relevant to the Zoroastrian religion. Meheryar's articles have appeared in the Fezana Journal and Chehreh Nama. He also contributes articles related to events at the Zoroastrian Association of Houston (ZAH). He has authored a book titled Zarathustra: The Man And The Message. Meheryar started studying the Zoroastrian religion in-depth after his retirement from Merck & Co., Inc. He is an active member of the library committee of the ZAH and FIRES (Fezana Information, Research and Education System). He lives with his wife Zubeen M. Mehta in Houston, Texas.



Celebration in Denver, Colorado

A small gathering of Zoroastrians from Denver celebrating the Nowrooz function at the residence of Amarias on Sunday March 20.



MAHRUKH MOTAFARAM JOINS THE BOARD OF THE COUNCIL OF PARLIAMENT OF WORLD RELIGIONS AS ZOROASTRIAN TRUSTEE.

Mahrukh Motafram is a first generation immigrant from India who arrived in the US to pursue higher education. She graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1984 with a Master's degree in Bio-Organic Chemistry. Further education included an Associate degree in Business and Marketing from the Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee, WI in 2002. She is currently pursuing a certification in Nonprofit Leadership at Seattle University, WA.

Over the past three decades she has been actively engaged with the North American Zoroastrian community, with most of her contributions being with the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA). She has served on the executive board, Co-Chair for Strategic Planning, and is currently the Co-Chair for North American Zoroastrian Congress committee. She is currently a member, trustee and a past Board member of the Zoroastrian Society of Washington State.

Mahrukh as a Board member served as Vice President for Strategic Planning, and as a President for the Assistance League of the Eastside (2016-20), a nonprofit organization in Redmond, WA that serves local families affected by poverty, homelessness, assault, and domestic violence.

She is a member of the advisory council for the Center for Ecumenical and Interreligious Engagement at Seattle University, WA. She serves on the board of F.I.R.E.S – Fostering Interfaith Relations on the Eastside, (Seattle), WA representing her Zoroastrian faith and engages in interfaith community dialogues.

In her spare time, Mahrukh enjoys travel and the



culinary arts with Feroze, her husband of 38 years. She has two children, Freya and Jamsheed who have both built successful careers in the banking and financial services industries.



*CONGRATULATIONS MAHRUKH AND MUCH SUCCESS IN
YOUR NEW CHALLENGE, EDITOR DOLLY DASTOOR*



Bringing Holiday Cheer to Calgary!



Something was cooking on a cold Sunday in Calgary Alberta, Canada on December 19, 2021, just like it has been for thousands of years.

Alberta's history began when settlers arrived from far away lands. Between 1600 and 1850, several thousand European and Canadian fur traders arrived, followed by several hundred British immigrants. They created dozens of small outposts and a settlement, where the Métis became the largest part of the population. In the early 1900s many more immigrants settled in tribes and clans and brought with them a pioneering and frontier spirit.

Today this spirit is embodied in Albertans and the Zoroastrian community that calls Alberta home.

Going back to the cold Sunday, ZFTC (Zoroastrian Fire Temple of Calgary) and ZAA (Zoroastrian Association of Alberta) organized a group of young adults to come together to do something special for our Zoroastrian seniors.

Persis Cooper, Renaz Atashband and Robina Kapadia with fourteen kids/young adults ranging in ages from nine to seventeen fried bhakras (Parsi donuts), mixed chivda (Indian savoury snack) and rolled Toot (Persian marzipan candy) for twenty-three senior Zoroastrian families.



FEZANA UPDATE



The group worked together in the kitchen of Persis and Zubin Cooper. The air smelled delicious with the aroma of sizzling curry leaves lightly frying in oil, ready to be mixed in with the other ingredients for chivda. Trays piled high with bhakras filled up the counter space and Toot was perfectly shaped like a Christmas tree, symbolizing the holiday season.

The house was filled with laughter, loud cheerful voices, and excitement, no different than what it might have been when the pioneers gathered to cook community meals. After all the cooking and packaging was completed, the youngsters created handmade Christmas cards to accompany the goodies. The evening was spent surprising our seniors with the goody-bags.

Calgary seniors wrote their thanks several-fold including "What a lovely idea of sending the goodies to all the seniors", "What a wonderful and thoughtful initiative! Looked like a lot of fun!" and "Thank you very much ZAA, ZFTC for your thoughtfulness, touched me to know that our young generation thought of us and worked hard to make the goodies for us. Tasty, yummy filled with lots of love – thank you children and all the parents who were involved in the activity." What a fabulous way to wrap up the 2021 year!

SAHIN SORABJI on behalf of Zoroastrian Association of Alberta (ZAA) and Zoroastrian Fire temple of Calgary (ZFTC)





THE ENTERTAINMENT TEAM--- 8th WZYC

The role of the Entertainment sub-committee of 8WZYC is to strategize and create convivial social activities for the upcoming 8th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress (8WZYC) in London, 2023. Our team is extremely passionate and excited to entertain the congress attendees, from across the globe, and create activities to encourage networking, fun and overall enjoyment. Meet the team behind the curtains who are working hard to make this happen...



Faranaz Dalal -I was born and bred in Mumbai and have a great deal of adulation for my city but my romance with the City of London is undying. After studying Psychology and Fashion designing, I pursued a professional background in fashion buying in India and the UK. I also have a great love for designing and anything creative. Designing is my true passion which has led me to launch my own online project “**Sweet Nothings x Fara**”. As a thank you to my team member for the dedication so far I have designed the portrait of our entertainment team in this article. I am also a keen advocate for mental health awareness, cooking, dance choreography and being involved in community events.

The Young Zoroastrians (YZs) of the U.K. have organized numerous activities, which I enjoyed participating in which culminated into beautifully built, meaningful friendships. Being a firm believer of the concept, “Giving back what you receive,” has led me to participate and join the 8WZYC organizing committee where I am the entertainment team lead.

By virtue of our Zoroastrian roots and to an extent, an unprejudiced community, I take immense pride in being a Zoroastrian and have developed an open mindset. It is also exceptionally important for representation of women on the congress committee, and I am proud that we have such a strong representation, as equal rights of women are of great importance to me, especially within our community. However equal rights of women is a great contention point today and I believe within the community’s establishment we need to counterbalance this, be more tolerant and have a redirection for our community. It brings me great joy to be a part of the 8WZYC and know that I am contributing to improving collaboration between our global Zoroastrian youth and keeping the religious flame alive.

Dilshad Solan-Daver - At present, I am Internal Auditor at Viva Wallet, a FinTech Bank. However, I am also a



trained pianist, an avid reader and if I do say so, can cook a mean dhansak! I was born and brought up in Karachi where I organized many fundraising/ team building activities for the Zoroastrian youth. I moved to the U.K. to complete my masters, am newly married and now awaiting a move to the USA to join my husband.

I love actively participating in the community, which has stemmed from seeing the importance of Zoroastrian unity and helping each other through obstacles whilst growing up. This unity, combined with the importance of integration, has encouraged me to volunteer for my community to introduce new fun ways young Zoroastrians can continue to bond further with our culture and traditions. I believe Zoroastrianism has survived thousands of years because we stand for unity, charity and being one of the most liberal religions and I am extremely proud to be part of this beautiful community.

Roxanna Mistry - I have a background in business, economics & finance, along with a keen interest in music, arts, history and a natural flair for mentoring and teaching. I am also learning Avesta from the renowned Sir Jamshedjee Jeejeeboy Zarthosty & Mulla Feroze Madressas who have given me this great opportunity as I hope to someday be able to read and understand the Avestan scriptures. As a proud Zoroastrian, I believe in preserving our rich heritage, customs, traditions and genetic identity and during the pandemic, a year ago, I began online Gujarati lessons for Zoroastrian children globally, becoming a role model for others to emulate.

My passion for volunteering and helping others has been instilled from a formative age. I have previously volunteered with the Zoroastrian Youth Association as a Secretary and committee member and organized various large scale community functions, fundraising and religious talk shows. I am now volunteering as part of the finance team and entertainment team to make meaningful contributions and help make the 8WZYC a successful event. The global covid situation has made it more challenging but the volunteers of ZTFE are putting in a lot of time and effort to help embark on a journey to raise funds for 8WZYC and organize a memorable event.

The youth are the future of our generation and it is important we preserve our heritage, customs and traditions with as much zest as possible. Our Zarthushti values should also be upheld and not diluted with time.

For the Zoroastrian youth, attending the congress, it is a golden opportunity to network with other like minded individuals, sightsee in one of the greatest cities in the world, get involved in our glorious community and understand more about our beliefs and teachings from scholars. You might even be lucky to find yourself a partner for life as well!

Vista Khosravi - Born and raised in London, I recently completed my postgraduate studies in Environmental Science and Geography. My faith and studies have encouraged me to enter into a career in the renewable energy and water sector; helping develop sustainable innovative ways to balance the needs of humans and the global environment- which is something Zarathushtra also preached! I love travelling across the world, discovering new cultures and surroundings, but nothing beats exploring the motherland of Iran; discovering ancient Zoroastrian heritage sites and putting on a pound or two because of all the mouth watering Persian foods and sweets! Being an active member of our youth community in London, I was overjoyed when London was awarded the 8WZYC and was extremely enthusiastic and motivated to continue this community work and be part of this legacy event, after having attended the last two congresses myself.

I am looking forward to bringing more Persian/Iranian themed events and topics to this congress, which I feel is of great importance to ensure we have this representation. I hope this congress will encourage our youth to be proud of their Persian Zoroastrian heritage, as well as teach each other about our different culture and customs which are being lost through the generations. For some of the youth, there is a lack of understanding about our religion, our ethnicity and our roots. I hope that this congress can provide the opportunity for individuals to reconnect with their roots and identity and understand our scriptures and teachings.

Meherzeen Engineer- Born in Mumbai and raised in California, I'm now pursuing my passion in earning my



doctorate in physiotherapy in London, after obtaining my degree in sports and exercise science with emphasis in biomechanics. I'm an active member of the Zoroastrian community back home which has been a considerable part of my life and I genuinely enjoy volunteering/ organizing events.

As a proud Zoroastrian, I believe giving back to our community has helped shape me to be who I am today. The 8WZYC is an incredible platform for the Zoroastrian youth to come together to celebrate their heritage and build friendships lasting a lifetime. I wanted to join the committee to help facilitate a safe and fun environment for everyone to enjoy. Our religion is extremely charitable, kind-hearted, and accepting and I take the utmost pride in being a Zoroastrian. While growing up, our religion and community's inspirational history and how to preserve it, have consistently been a source of gratification. I hope to continually vouch for a safe and accepting environment within the community as time progresses and encourage others to get more involved in our beautiful religion.

Vahiste Sinor-I am currently studying Creative Writing and Journalism. I was very eager to join the 8WZYC committee, having been involved in planning and executing youth meets along with other Zoroastrian functions for a considerable time, inspired by my priest father. As a youth myself, I feel it is extremely important to use our voice and organize a congress that the youth would want and appreciate. There are so many different ways this congress can be hosted. However what is at the centre of it and the most important factor to consider is making the 8WZYC a great experience for those attending whether that be their first or third time attending a youth congress.

On the entertainment team, we plan to create lots of fun-filled activities . We want to ensure a variety of activities that would not only be sociable for all, but get us on our feet getting physical in some sporting activities, partying it up and getting involved in nights and days out. Throughout the congress we wish to provide a platform for the youth, aiming to involve every attendee from different countries to discuss and converse contemporary matters and interesting religious topics, ask questions so that individuals feel represented and heard, and learn about our religion and community. Our team has outlined events for the 8WZYC in line with the needs and wants of our youth, to unite together to enjoy the events, alongside

with kindling long lasting friendships and creating opportunities for professional networking as well as allowing our talented youth to showcase their skills in various disciplines.

The objective of each event arranged by our entertainment team seeks to further universal bond the global youth, gain perspective and be permissive of individual opinions to bring about awareness of our religion and its teachings. We hope to ignite the love and passion for Zoroastrianism in each attendee in order to continue to thrive as a religion and ensure we cherish our lineage.

This congress will be an incredible opportunity for individuals to get together. After all, we are the future of our religion so let's take part and be more proactive whilst continuously spreading and understanding the words of Zarathustra and following the path of Asha; while making unforgettable memories with new friends and long-lost cousins! Keep updated with our progress at www.8wzyc.com or on Instagram @8wzyc_2023

Retirees, see what the 3 established 55+ Communities in the Tampa Bay area of Florida offer by visiting the link below.

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Guest Editorial
Edul Daver

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & EMERGING ENTREPRENEURS

A few months ago, Dolly Dastoor, FEZANA Journal Editor in Chief said, “Edul, I have one more assignment for you. Will you guest edit the Spring 2022 issue whose focus will be Entrepreneurship?” Though I knew I would be very busy between WZCC responsibilities and WZC2022 assignments there was no way I could say no to Dolly. I asked Dolly many questions and then laid out a framework for the assignment.

Very early on I decided that it should be presented in a logical way to tell a story, starting with a historical background and probing what the Zoroastrian ‘Gathas’ tell us about Entrepreneurship. Of course we did not expect direct references in the Gathas about entrepreneurship but we could relate very profoundly that the basic principles expressed in the Gathas are the very same principles we espouse for excellence in entrepreneurship. Dr. Karishma Koka, has researched the subject thoroughly and discussed it with her colleagues before writing her paper specifically for the Journal. From here I have taken the liberty to explain the evolution of the subject from when it was formally documented in 1911 by Joseph Schumpeter as “Unternehmer” and it’s relatively slow evolution to the 1980’s when Professor Howard Stevenson of Harvard Business School (HBS) formally defined it as, “the pursuit of opportunity beyond the resources currently controlled”. I will discuss this definition in detail and the profound impact it is having to solve today’s impossible problems. Finally, a little about how the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) views it today.

We will now move on to numerous concepts related in some form or fashion to entrepreneurship such as Differences between Leadership and Entrepreneurship, Partnership & Collaborations, Mavericks, Career Vs Nokri, (salaried job), Incubation, Government Funding Sources and finally the Nexus of Creating Economic, Social and Intellectual value.

From here we will hear specific entrepreneurs from around the globe in diverse fields talking about their inspirational experiences, highlighting problems, overcomes and successes. We have not included the well established Zoroastrian legends such as the Tata’s, Godrej’s, Shapoorji Pallonji Group etc as their stories are well documented and today’s world is quite different. We start with children who have been exposed to learning about entrepreneurship and what their understanding and aspirations are. We then wanted to document up and coming entrepreneurs and their journeys in varied locations and fields. We travel from Australia to India, Iran, Kenya, UK and North America. We cover industries from Tomato Farming to Artificial Intelligence. Our objective is to motivate and encourage others to recognize and chase entrepreneurial opportunities which may not result in a huge conglomerate like the Iconic Zoroastrian companies but make very satisfying and happy careers resulting in much more wealth generation, than by working for someone, with an assurance of a very comfortable future and a desire to give back to the needy and community.

So come along on our journey, learn from the entrepreneurs, get inspired by them and believe that:

“IF YOU CAN DREAM IT YOU CAN DO IT “.



LESSONS LEARNED ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP FROM THE GATHAS

KARISHMA KOKA Ph.D.

Entrepreneurship, Integrity and Industry related to the Gathas and the 'Ahunavar':

In Spitaman Asho Zarathushtra's Gathas, there are messages for converting challenges to opportunities including the principles of sustainable development, entrepreneurship and Just-action (*shyaotheranaam*) to manage resources effectively. At the core is Spiritual guidance that also impacts the material world – towards creating and sharing true happiness individually and together for the greater good of all.

The word Entrepreneur means Caregiver – which reflects the essence of the word *Vastarem* in the *Ahunavar* – which guides us to build and increase the strength (*khshatrem*) of Ahura Mazda (Great Wisdom of Creation) and share with those who need (*drigubyo*). Thus – to **excel therein and give back**.

Types of Entrepreneurship:

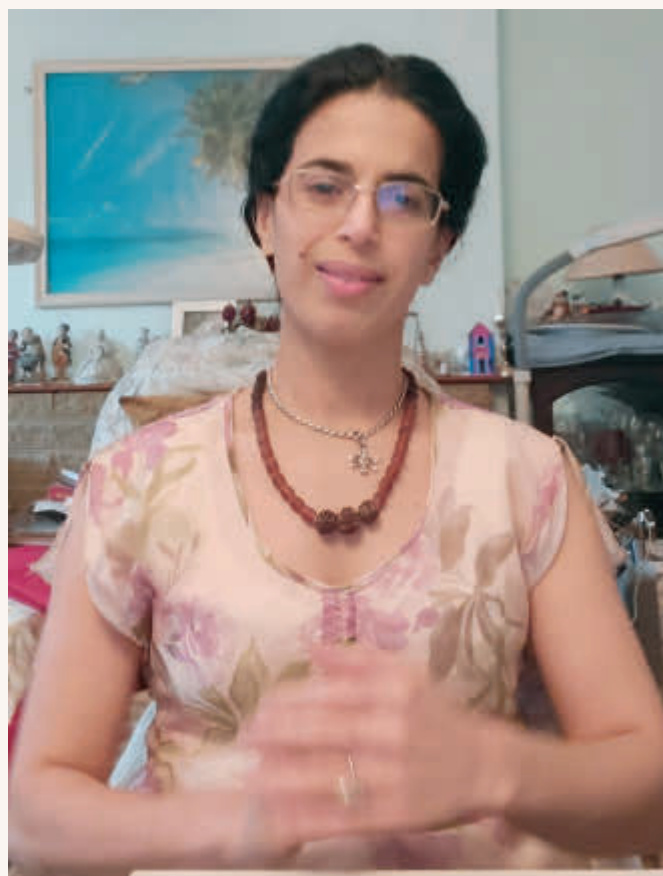
In the Gathas, holistic guidance is based on Wisdom developed by utilising knowledge of four types – intellectual, economic, social and ecological – driving entrepreneurship that works together with the essence of the WZCC: **Integrity and Industry**.

Entrepreneurship, Ashem Vohu and Sustainable Development

Entrepreneurship is thus a journey from *ASHA* (the true ideal righteous plan created with a positive mentality) to *USHTA* (happiness, harmony and progress for all). This involves creating a plan, a path and a progressive environment with a good mind (*vohu manah*) in which to grow and thrive together by converting valuable thought into fair action. It works at all levels – as the Zoroastrian Faculty Network has demonstrated – from Scholastic Education to Entrepreneurship. Working with Asha to bring about Ushta. It allows Integrity with smart work to lead to happiness and harmony and eventually Sustainable Development.

Yasna Ha 30.2, 30.3, *Frashokereti* and Entrepreneurship:

The Yasna Ha 30.2 guides us to listen, reflect/evaluate with our intellect in **each context** so that we can turn



thoughts to good action. This works at all levels – the individual, the family, entrepreneurial ventures, social development.... all the way to *Frashokereti*.

The meaning of *Frashokereti*: progressing the world forward through ASHA- *Fra* = go forward in fraternity, *Asha* = Righteousness and Purity and Order, *Kereti* = deeds.

Yasna Ha 30.2 guides us to Listen and reflect before each great event and be wakeful to learning that protects. Context-dependent application of information gives stakeholders/employees a choice and a voice leading to equity and empowerment through Entrepreneurship.

Yasna Ha 30.3 provides the overarching reason for having the ability to choose with responsibility for the good of all: to discriminate between right and wrong.

***Āoschâ hudânghô eresh vîshyâtâ* : People with good understanding for right path of discretion.**

This is vital to good entrepreneurship As decisions need to be taken with limited information in the moment, but need the essence of good preparation, adequate facts and the overall aim of choosing that which is the best for the Collective and the individuals, both in the present and the future, so that the outcome is progress that sustains.

Asho Zarathushtra's teachings are in the five Gathas (Songs of Revelation). Through these and *Humata*, *Hukhta* and *Hvarsha* (Good Thought, Word & Deed) we can add value for the progress of the World. In the **Gathas** we learn that Ahura Mazda is wealth keeping and progressive and that the Amesha Spentas are the guiding attributes which we revere and seek to imbibe.

The Gathas say : the good thoughts, good words and good deeds of Asho Zarathushtra bring prosperity. **Entrepreneurship** brings innovation and new combination of resources – products, services, marketing methods and organisation to meet customer needs (a progressive process).

Innovation with Entrepreneurship drives economic change. The creative destruction / reconstruction and competition are the key factors driving business growth to bring about prosperity.

Neuroscience, Entrepreneurial Leadership and the Gathas.

Neuroscience based Goal-directed executive -function towards restructuring is used today in management, executive neuro-leadership and education. It involves having cognitive flexibility, having inhibitory control together with working memory to take decisions. The decision-making process can be driven by analytics – the process of thinking, evaluating followed by execution. This is similar to Yasna 30.2 and 30.3

Entrepreneurship involves learning/growing the mind with self regulation, resilience and adaptability. This is Leadership (*Vohu Khashatra*): helpful in overcoming 'innovators dilemma' / disruptive innovation towards creating a better product.

Entrepreneurship and the Amesha Spentas (the bounteous immortal attributes of Ahura Mazda)

The Gathas give us a plan (Yasna Ha 47.1). Hormazd (Ahura Mazda and the attribute Spenta Mainyu – Wisdom + Progressive Mentality) with Vohu Mana (the Good Mind) and Asha Vahista lead to Khshatrem (desirable strength/power with responsible authority and self-regulation).

When these work with Good Thought, Good Word and Good Action, and Spenta Armaity (benevolence/ devotion) it leads to Haurvataat (complete holistic welfare/perfection) with Ushta (Harmony/happiness) that lasts through time (Ameerataat or immortality) since its foundation is truth and integrity. This is true for the advancement of the group through Entrepreneurship (intellectual/social/economic/ecological) and the individual leading to Sustainable Development of the Organisation and Society, while advancing the individual. Thus, empowering and enabling each one to empower others, building positivity and emotional resilience.

Asho Zarathushtra, is a great thought leader who gifts us neurocognitive principles helping us adapt to change. This is timeless, time-tested and applies to all domains: Entrepreneurship, Medicine, Ecology, Governance, Science/Engineering, Management and Business so that the mind (the neural correlate of the brain) and good action can result in building happiness through righteousness.

How the Aatash Niayesh is related to Leadership and Parenting.

The concepts in entrepreneurship have parallels in the Gathas. They add value promoting growth/sustainable development for the good of all. Entrepreneurship can be imbibed from parents by children. Asho Zarathushtra teaches us about families in the Vahishtoist Gatha. Families are Entrepreneurial enterprises. Let us encourage the **fire** in the belly in each child towards Education/business/knowledge. We ask Ahura Mazda to shine light on our path and purify us (*ush moi uzarshewa Ahura*) in the Yasna Ha 33.12 and Aatash Niyayesh. Indeed the Fire is called Aatash – translated as 'The Transformer'- and we venerate Ahura Mazda through the Aatash.

Entrepreneurship requires the transformation of Energy and resources into valuable assets.

The four characteristics of Entrepreneurship and the Gathas.

Four main characteristics of entrepreneurship explained by Edul Daver are : Opportunity driven, Clear joint vision, Action oriented with evaluated risk, Value driven.

In the Ahunavaiti Gatha in Yasna Ha 28.1 we are taught to use the good wisdom of the mind towards action with Righteousness. To be prepared helps one seize the opportunity. Clear belief and being well prepared enable competencies to overcome doubt through evaluation. This helps one make the best of each opportunity adding value.

Value is centred around the product and people as I have appreciated in the work of my Mother Mrs. Jerou Panthaki RamMohan. It also involves the concept of Lessons Learned that my Father Commander RamMohan devoted his work to in the Navy as well as in Rolls Royce (Aeronautical Division). It helps us be **independent thinkers while developing into systems** thinkers – allowing resolutions to emerge while empowering others to add value.

Decision making and Entrepreneurship.

Decision-making requires being well prepared (good industry). Yasna Ha 29.1: ‘teach me good Industry to become the saviour and ruler/manager’. (As linguistics of the Avestan language progresses, translations change. The context in which this is applied, the mindset of the translator and of the individual reader leads to interpretation). Yasna Ha 29.3: a person whose decisions are respected by co-workers is strongest. An entrepreneur/soldier like my Uncle Major Minoo Panthaki who commanded his battalion to fire at his own position and who was struck almost dead by bullets, allowed his team to succeed. He later started businesses demonstrating that success involves good leadership and team support. Respecting one’s co-workers develops a network-model with leadership and teamwork. In Yasna Ha 33.3 we are guided by Asho Zarathushtra: one who is righteous to his relatives/ business persons/co-workers and who treats cattle with skill – is best - a ‘vidas’ (giver-of-care). The word Entrepreneur means ‘caretaker’. Such a person, says Asho Zarathushtra, who has this method based in truth

is also good of thought.

In Yasna Ha 33.4 - looking after ones ‘produce’ is highlighted with guidance to remove carelessness to cattle/pastures while removing arrogance/deceit towards co-workers. Entrepreneurial business involves product-development, resource-management and treating stakeholders with integrity to develop a value-system. This allows ‘leveraging the ecosystem of the organisation’.

Innovation and Integrity

Innovation / re-structuring at a micro-economic / macroeconomic level leads to progress. Creative-disruption with integrity can overcome the ‘innovators dilemma’ – resulting in good decision and progress. Data-evaluation by people and artificial intelligence which is programmed with integrity allows decisions to emerge, while catalysing thinking processes and creative solutions by the team. Asho Zarathushtra’s guidance based on Hormuzd and Vohu Manah with belief in the Asha of what we do – brings Ushta through good action based on lessons-learned, good data-analytics and the humility to listen.

The Vohu-khshatra Gatha (Yasna Ha 51.5) guides us to question all matters righteously: A diligent person with good deeds, righteousness and humility renders the world prosperous when one works in accordance with the law of the land, with guided righteous knowledgeable leader. The outcome is action- oriented people with ethics and integrity implementing due-diligence, responsibility and accountability. The *Yenghe Haataam* prayer guides us to venerate/resonate with people who take good action.

Power to Empower others.

Yasna Ha 51.23: the role of Vohu-khshathrem is highlighted - good strength that is worthy and helpful can render the people of the world prosperous through Asha and righteous just deeds accomplished in the present moment (*nuchit* – NOW). Entrepreneurs needs to be well prepared with knowledge, clear thinking and a structure that enables one to manage risk and take the right decision while maximising resources and opportunities.

The true path of profit can be attained for both the corporeal and spiritual world in which Ahura Mazda dwells (Yasna Ha 44.3). Spenta Mainyu with khshatra

vairya, vohu manah and good deeds, bring prosperity (Yasna Ha 34.6). The teachings of Asho Zarathushtra in the Gathas and words used by Leading business Schools / Entrepreneurship programs, have similarity.

Giving, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and GSR (Green Social Responsibility)

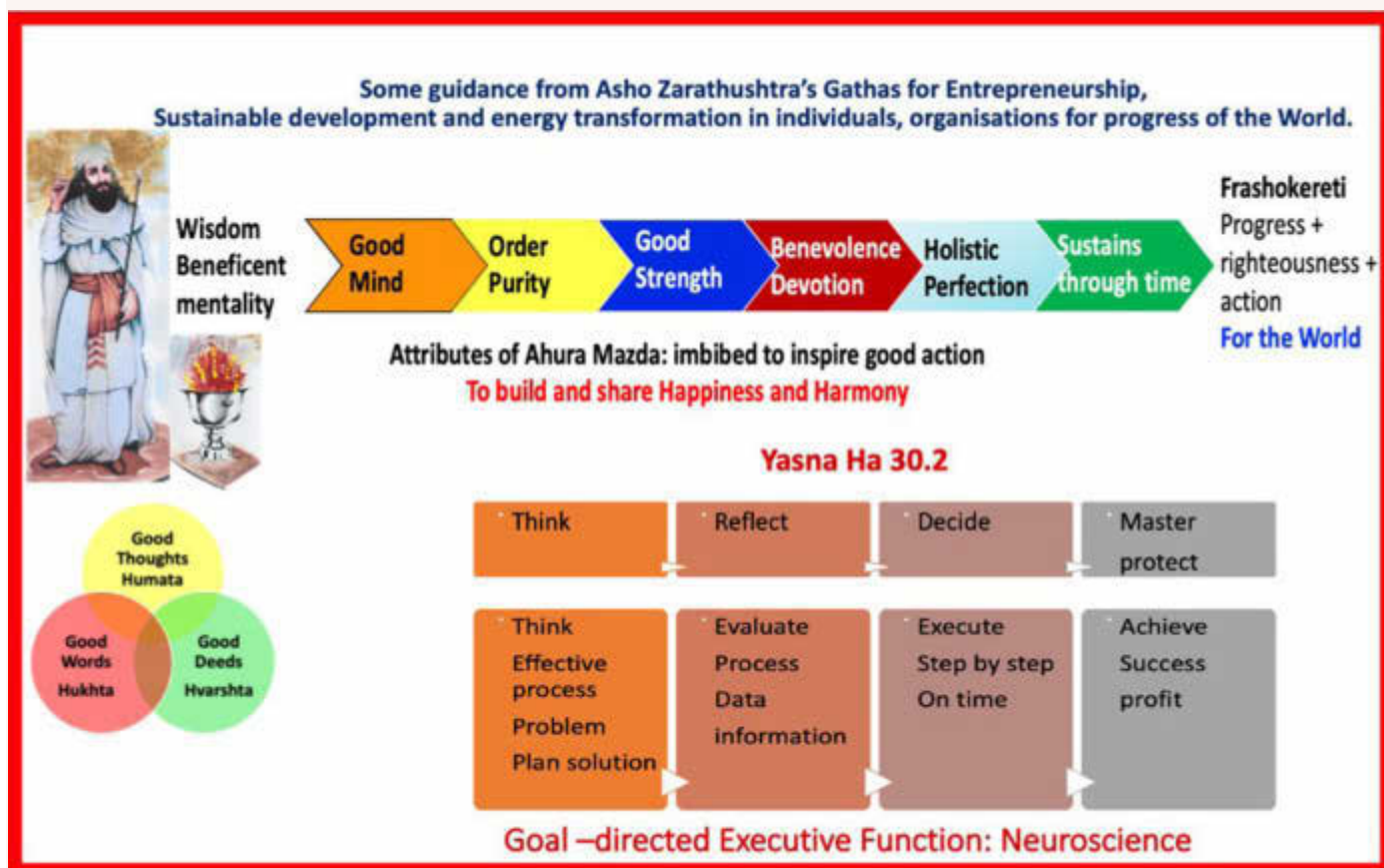
The concept of **giving** is highlighted in Yasna Ha 43.1: prosperity/happiness /harmony comes to those through whom happiness reaches others. These values are applicable to entrepreneurship and business for the greater good of all that sustains through time. These concepts are also reflected in CSR and the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals .

The Gathas have so much more in addition to the essence of GSR and CSR together with the essence of the spiritual advancement of the collective and the Individual – a formula given to us millennia ago, which leads to holistic advancement for the greater good of all.

Gratitude: to Ervad K. E. Kanga, Sir J.J. Modi, Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary, Ervad Dr. Ramiyar Karanjia. e

to the ZFN mentored by Prof. Farrokh Mistree, Edul Daver, Yazdi Tantra and Behram Pastakia. This article is based on the talk given at WZCC on February 7, 2021 by invitation of Edul Daver.

Karishma obtained her BSc Chemistry, Environmental-science, Biology in 1995 . MSc (research) Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (Neuroscience), Bangalore in 1998; ,PhD Neuroscience (University of Cambridge) Recipient of scholarships from Cambridge Commonwealth, British Government Chevening Foreign Commonwealth). Post-Doc & Independent Investigator Medical Research Council, Co-founder: The Ultimate Achievements Academy and BaHumata with her Mother Mrs. Jerou Panthaki Ram Mohan, . Co-founder with Yazdi Tantra - The Good Mind – Nurturing, Nature – A Zoroastrian Perspective on Sustainable Development. Founder The Zoroastrian Legacy – ZTFE led series in collaboration with Zoroastrians.net and Progressing Sustainable Together – ZTFE Inter-Faith Series,



THE HISTORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

FROM JOSEPH SCHUMPETER TO HOWARD STEVENSON TO WZCC

EDUL DAVER

Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1883 – 1950), an Austrian who taught at Harvard for twenty years was “one of the greatest economists who ever lived, and an electrifying personality besides, writes Howard Business School (HBS) professor emeritus Thomas K. McCraw. In 1911 Schumpeter authored, *Theory of Economic Development*, in German. In the book he used the German word *Unternehmer*, whose literal meaning is “undertaker”. He explained the concept that start-ups and small companies did a better job of taking good care of their businesses with innovation and continual infusion of energy and remained vital source of economic creativity. By the 1920’s Schumpeter made it clear that this could also occur within pockets of medium and large sized companies, despite bureaucratic obstacles. Schumpeter, as a brilliant young professor, saw Vienna reduced from a glittering imperial capital to a beleaguered city. At age 36 he became Austria’s minister of finance but saw his recovery plan ruined by post World War I inflation and adverse treaties. As a banker and investor, he made a personal fortune and then lost it all. Grief stricken after losing his beloved Annie he left Europe to become a professor at Harvard. In 1934 a new edition of his book, *Theory of Economic Development*, was published in English and the word *Unternehmer* was replaced by “Entrepreneur”.

Professor Joseph Schumpeter



As a teacher he became a campus character. He never went to a football game, he never drove and traveled by taxi or with friends. He loved company and conversation. He never told jokes but made his classes interesting by taking his students into the world of living economics and economies. Paul Samuelson was his student and John Kenneth Galbraith a fellow economist. Stunned by Hitler and fascism, Schumpeter foresaw the rise

of Soviet Union post-WW 2. He never felt at home in America but it was here where he wrote his best works. Nothing much happened with his concept in Post War America because of 30 years of expanding markets; abundance of growth opportunities, and easy business success. Then by the 1970’s the markets became mature; government regulations mushroomed and overseas competition intensified.

As a result, technological developments took off; product life cycles became shorter; changes were rapid and beyond easy control. Academics, consultants and businesses started to relate this and explain it as Entrepreneurship and conventional wisdom defined an Entrepreneur as an Inventor, Founder, Risk Taker, Wheeler Dealer. By the 1980’s Entrepreneurship became part of the Business vocabulary and it was being used to describe and explain successful start-ups and small companies who beat out large corporations; to explain explosive capital commitments and growth; to explain the change within pockets of large corporations who tried and succeeded in copying the smaller companies and finally to explain the competitiveness of US companies and American Society at large.

Many definitions were being offered and in 1983 Professor Howard Stevenson (photo below) the guru of entrepreneurship studies at Harvard Business School offered a simple but profound definition: *entrepreneurship as the pursuit of opportunity beyond resources controlled*.

OPPORTUNITY implies that the entrepreneur is recognizing something as being novel and often when others may not recognize it similarly. It could be a new product, a better and/or less expensive version of an existing product, recognizing a new set of customers or a new business model. In short recognizing that the

product or service is “*First, Different and/or Best*”.

PURSUIT implies laser focus on the opportunity with an action orientation to make it happen in a short window of time. They need to show progress to attract resources and reach market before the Opportunity is lost. As such entrepreneurs display a sense of urgency that is seldom seen in large corporations.

BEYOND RESOURCES CONTROLLED implies that sufficient resources to get the job done are absent. As such the entrepreneur has to be creative and innovative to find ways to bridge this gap effectively and speedily. This involves risks which could be related to the Product, Technology, People, Execution and/or Financing. Therefore, the entrepreneur is forced to take and manage calculated risk successfully. To make these risks, ‘calculated manageable risks,’ the entrepreneur frequently resorts to incremental experimentation to confirm viability; staged investing; partnering and collaboration; networking and storytelling to motivate employees and financing.

Summarizing, the entrepreneur needs to recognize an opportunity; pursue it with laser focus with time as a major constraint; be inventive, creative, innovative, novel; and simultaneously manage calculated risks. In other words Entrepreneurs display Purpose, Passion, Persistence and a dose of Providence always helps.

Portrait of START-UP ENTREPRENEUR whose focus is to add economic value. It is a simplified fun caricature to view with a pinch of salt.

ENTREPRENEURS VOCABULARY:

- Make opportunities and earn your wings every day
- Vision is having an acute sense of the possible
- Be First, Different, Best
- Nothing beats fire in the belly
- Passion persuades
- Just Do It
- No GutsNo Glory
- It's not how far we fall... but how high we bounce
- The harder we work the luckier we get
- We can't tell the difference between work & play
- We will take the best of each of us..to make the best world for all of us
- Persistence is what makes the impossible, possible the possible, likelyand the likely, definite.
- Fears divide. Dreams Unite
- It is all in the state of mind.

Based on Schumpeter's observations and Stevenson's definition it is crystal clear that Entrepreneurship is most evident in start-ups and small companies but also seen in pockets of large corporations and practiced by non-



Portrait of an Entrepreneur

MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

Top 10 characteristics that define entrepreneurs



Richard Hagberg, CA Consultant. 1997

- All 10 Traits: Start-Up could not be in better shape
- < 5 Traits: Stay with a corporation
- Once company grows, above traits a possible liability

profits, academia, professionals and even government. World Zarathushti chamber of commerce has gone even further and as shown below, believes that every entity creates *Economic, Social and Intellectual* value and the entrepreneur's objective is to maximize the nexus or overlap of these values.



In conclusion I would like to argue that Entrepreneurship makes the impossible, possible and we cannot attain today's sustainable objectives without Entrepreneurship.



IF YOU CAN DREAM IT...

YOU CAN DO IT!

**NILOUFER & EDUL
DAVER**



Zarir is a certified Leadership Coach-(PCC) and Mentor. He is a distinguished member of the International Coaching Federation-(ICF) and the European Mentoring and Coaching Council-(EMCC). He was recently invited to be a member of the Leadership Coach Group, selected by 'Manage HR Magazine' as a top 10 leadership and organisational development company in the USA. Currently an entrepreneur, based in London, he is also a Mentor with London and Partner's Business Growth Programme and EMCC.

Zarir has coached, mentored, and trained over ten thousand people across India, UK, USA, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore and the GCC. Having a global perspective, he has visited over sixty countries giving him unique observations, insights, and appreciation of the diverse cultures. He positively impacts people and uses his extensive first-hand knowledge and shares his unique experiences to coach Leaders as their Confidential Thinking Partner.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADER

Zarir Shroff

Does a successful entrepreneur make for a great leader? And would a great leader make for a successful entrepreneur?" This is a principal question that has emerged consistently across my decades-long coaching, training and mentoring experience. To be able to understand the question better, we begin by understanding the differences and similarities between the following

- A manager
- A leader
- An entrepreneur

All three have some common areas of overlap and some clear differences in their respective roles.

To maintain uniformity, we shall take the definitions of all three from the Oxford dictionary –

- **Manager** - a person who is in charge of running a business, or a similar organization or part of one.
- **Leader** - a person who leads a group of people, especially the head of a country, an organisation, etc.
- **Entrepreneur** - a person who makes money by starting or running businesses, especially when this involves taking financial risks.

These are the basic definitions of all three roles and there could be various extensions and interpretations for each one of them. This article is not to debate if one is better than the other. In fact, we aim to understand how each one plays its role in society and specifically the business environment.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

The noun *Manager* comes from the verb "to manage" which made its way to the United Kingdom around 1560. Its genesis can be located from the Italian word *maneggiare* which meant "to handle or to control a horse" and which can be further traced back to the Latin *manus* which means hand. Therefore, in the modern world, the literal meaning of manage is to handle people, systems, and processes.

Managing and Leading are two complementary qualities. A leader creates and sets his eye on the bigger picture while the manager

puts the pieces of the puzzle together. Leaders innovate while managers maintain the status quo. Leaders coach while managers direct. Leaders manage people and relationships while managers manage systems and processes. However, the primary focus of a leader and a manager is to improve the organisation. Both Leaders and Managers work on improving the performance of their teams. Both could be role models in their own ways to their respective teams. Leaders do not have to be necessarily in a management position to exhibit their leadership qualities. Great leaders are not necessarily the ones who do the greatest things but can motivate people to do the greatest things. Some great examples are Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela who inspired entire nations to win their freedom. Managers are people who do things right while leaders are people who do the right things. In a nutshell, while all leaders could be good managers, all managers may not be good leaders.

LEADERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs are normally understood as people who create new businesses, bearing most of the risks and enjoying the rewards. They are commonly looked upon as innovators, people with good ideas, goods, services, businesses or products. The next couple of decades or more, are being looked upon as the golden age of entrepreneurship. The younger generation of today dream of stepping into the business world as entrepreneurs rather than working for anyone or any organisation. The opportunities to be an entrepreneur today are probably the greatest in the history of mankind.

For most people, entrepreneurship and leadership are synonymous i.e., they mean the same. However, both the terms have different meanings. Entrepreneurship constitutes a set of attributes that an entrepreneur possesses and practises in starting, running, and scaling their enterprise. Leadership on the other hand is the process of influencing people and providing an environment for them to achieve various organisational objectives.

Entrepreneurship constitutes the following pillars – *vision, passion, innovation, and persistence*. One of the innate qualities of an entrepreneur is the capacity to take calculated risks. Leadership is one of the primary skills of a successful entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship focuses on a set of skills and abilities to be as self-sufficient as possible when it comes to business. Meaning that entrepreneurship focuses on risk-taking, recognizing opportunities, and the ability to be a self-starter. Whereas leadership is about effectively managing the people and resources around you. Entrepreneurship can be included in leadership, but not leadership in entrepreneurship. Not all entrepreneurs are oriented towards nor possess the skill set, to assume business leadership. The savvy ones know this and are able to see their own deficiencies. The successful ones either learn to make the transition or go out and hire the right people to take on those leadership roles. In simple words, *all good leaders may become good entrepreneurs, but all good entrepreneurs may not be good leaders*.

However, the examination of the similarities and differences between entrepreneurship and leadership gives birth to a new definition – *The Entrepreneurial Leader*. There can be a symbiotic relationship between the creation of a successful new venture and the role of an inspirational leader. The Entrepreneurial Leader meets the Leader and the Entrepreneur halfway.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADER

The entrepreneurial leader has the vision and the ability to communicate and engage teams to identify, develop and take advantage of opportunities to gain competitive advantage. They will have an innate understanding of risks, uncertainties and ambiguities that trouble all entrepreneurial organisations. In fact, more organisations would benefit from this style of leadership in an increasingly risky, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world.

An Entrepreneurial Leader has communication skills *par excellence* and builds trust to create an engaged team. They are consistent and continuous learners who actively engage in decision making and take responsibility for actions. They also have a deep understanding of the fast-evolving and complex markets and are disposed to taking calculated risks. They are adaptive to dynamic changes and innovate as needed. They set ambitious goals and motivate their teams successfully in uncertain environments.

Having pondered over a variety of thoughts and opinions, I leave you now with a powerful yet poignant message from ancient Indian wisdom.

“A person can achieve anything by being humble and simple – Rig Veda”

THE MAVERICK SPIRIT WITHIN

Jules Goddard; David Lewis &
Tamryn Batcheller-Adams

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.”

— Edmund Burke

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

— Robert F. Kennedy

History is shaped disproportionately by very few people, and each of them possessed what we will call the maverick spirit, the unshakeable belief that things do not have to be the way they are and that improvements to life can be made.

Mavericks are inspired by a problem in need of a solution, a change that needs to be made, an opportunity to right a wrong. “All life is problem-solving”, as Karl Popper rightly said.

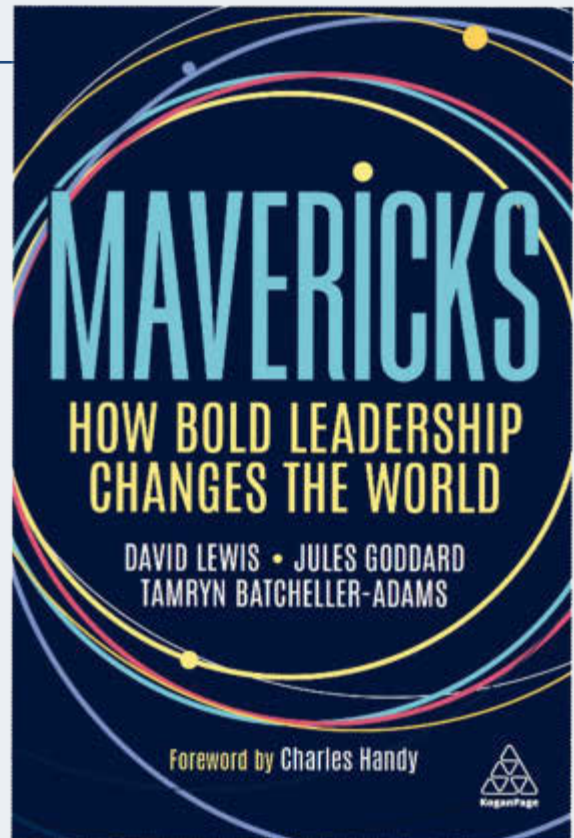
Mavericks are animated by everyday issues in need of a solution. They are motivated by the possibility to improve things.

Mavericks are frustrated optimists. They’re not cynics. They see the upside. They act as though every problem has a solution. “This CAN be solved ... this

WILL be solved.” They see the good in humankind. They accept that things are getting better, and that progress is all around us. They’re not doom merchants. But they are certainly impatient for more.

Mavericks are problem-solvers of a particular variety. They personalise the problem. It belongs to them as well as to the world. They identify with the issue. It gives meaning to their life.

What frustrates them is the complacency of others and that, whatever the problem, it seems to be less of an issue to society. This gives their work a particular edge. It shows up in their impatience. Tyler Cowan, in “The Complacent Class”, has provided worrying evidence of a growing weariness in the rich countries



of the world. Robert Putnam, in “Bowling Alone”, talks about a diminution of the community spirit.

More broadly, there are institutional blockers and a pervasive sense of “stuckness”. For all the hyperbole about uncertainty and the speed of change, there is a kind of paralysis in our organisations and institutions. Fear has replaced ambition. The precautionary principle exerts a huge hold on our politicians and thought leaders.

Then there is the commentariat looking to find fault in anyone who sticks their head above the parapet. “Who do they think they are?” There is a general sense of cynicism, defeatism, and helplessness. In earlier, braver times, we had Bretton Woods and the foundation of the UN, the World Bank, and the IMF.

During our research for this book, we interviewed over 30 maverick leaders. What became clear from our interviewees, drawn from around the world, was that despite their very different personalities and situations these Maverick leaders shared a common set of characteristics. We identified five core attributes.

1. A passionate belief that things should be better
2. Resourcefulness to connect people and ideas to create momentum towards a better outcome
3. Preparedness to challenge the status quo and act in unorthodox and nonconformist ways to get things done
4. The ability to learn and make progress through trial and error, through experimentation
5. The ability to remain undeterred in the face of ridicule, resistance and sometimes outright hostility

Maverick leaders are one of the foundations of civilisation. They are the entrepreneurial agents of change in both the culture and the economy of a society. Their invaluable role is to see - and seize - possibilities. They make active use of the liberties extended by an open society, but they do not depend on them. They find encouragement in a society that knows that things could be better. They thrive on an unsettled state of affairs in which new possibilities open up. They promote movements of enthusiasm rather than hierarchies of obedience.

Mavericks are the brave souls that are prepared to fail personally in order to succeed collectively. As movers and shakers, they can’t, and won’t, sit still. They are the irritants in a society that has turned complacent. They place effective deeds ahead of worthy thoughts. They’re suspicious of hierarchy and sceptical of bureaucracy.

In today’s parlance they embody the growth mindset and abjure the fixed mindset.

They are adaptive but never defeatist. They judge by outcomes rather than just intent.

Their optimism is often irrational. What they fear is not failure but fatalism. What sets them apart is not their talent so much as their state of mind. For example, they are recognisable less by their personality than their character.

Mavericks prefer to cast themselves as leaders of ideas and initiatives more than of people and plans. Mavericks are leaders who seek out fellow adventurers rather than followers. They would be embarrassed by a fan base. They would prefer to learn from others than to be admired by others. They form movements, not institutions. It is the cause they serve - and the manner in which they serve it - that attract interest and affiliation.

They don’t want their relationship with others to be hierarchical. The apparatus of management is antithetical to their way of working. Concepts of boss and subordinate, master and apprentice, leader and follower are unhelpful and unattractive to them. Far more congenial is the notion of a gang of fellow

reprobates, adventurers, volunteers, change agents, catalysts, and pioneers, all united by a cause.

In our book, we make little reference to the well-recognised ground-breaking Mavericks. We don't tell the story of Steve Jobs, or Oprah Winfrey, or Jack Ma, or Jacinda Ardern, or Elon Musk, or David Hockney, admirable though they all are. We have chosen to feature a humbler, less well-known variety of maverick: in other words, people like you and us. Those to whom we have spoken and whose stories we tell are "normal people" in normal surroundings in normal circumstances, but determined, however self-effacingly, to do abnormal things in abnormal ways with abnormal results.

In a polarising world, we need connectors - people capable of seeing the world through the eyes of others. In a standardising world, we need creative opinions and dissenting voices - if only to remind ourselves of the virtue of originality. In a culture-cancelling world, with a neurotic fear of "micro-aggressions", we need more pluralism, and an enriched enjoyment of diversity and debate. In an increasingly egocentric and arrogant world, we need greater acknowledgement of human fallibility, and more experimental approaches to the future. In a short-term world, we need to cultivate more visionary policies. This is where Mavericks play a key role.

The mavericks whose stories we tell remind each of us of the maverick spirit that lurks within us all. They challenge us to be true to ourselves, and to act upon our own direct experience of the world. They nourish the pioneering spirit.

David Lewis
Jules Goddard
Tamryn Batcheller-Adams

David Lewis has 35 years of experience in business, consulting and academia. He is a consultant, researcher, sought-after speaker and author working with business leaders across Europe, the US, the Middle East, Africa, China and India. In 2019, David was cited on Thinkers 50 Radar of top global management thinkers. David is a guest lecturer and programme director at the London Business School.



Jules Goddard is a Fellow of the Centre for Management Development at London Business School, where he has taught competitive strategy and creative marketing for 30 years. He was previously Gresham Professor of Commerce and Mercers Memorial Professor at City University. He has written widely on strategic and managerial innovation and has consulted with many organizations around the world.



Tamryn Batcheller-Adams is a psychologist, leadership presenter, consultant and coach working internationally with TomorrowToday Global. As a practicing psychologist with two Masters' degrees in psychology, Tamryn focuses on leadership, team and individual development.



INCUBATE THAT BABY !: STARTUP CONCEPTION, SEEDING, AND GROWTH

The legendary Venture Capitalist Dick Kramlich was happy seeing WZCC's efforts at business creation when we last interacted for WZCC in 2004. Even earlier, we noted the process of Gathic-inspired business creation. Dedicated people use Vohuman, their Good Mind, and their initiative to make strides towards Frashokerati, bettering creation.

WZCC has seen one success after another through inspired undertakings of Zoroastrian founders. Consider our magnificent WZCC awardees. For example, Professor Jennifer Avari Silva and John Silva began their 3-D imaging cardiology company, SentiAR, during their studies. She received university seed support for commercializing intellectual effort, and later, venture financing. Our communities are replete with an exciting unfolding of business creation, are they not?

Entrepreneurs can be assisted through business incubation. Does an entrepreneur need a business incubator? Not every time, but it sure can help. What is an incubator and how can it help?

INCUBATORS DEFINED

Briefly, a business incubator is a company that helps start-ups grow in exchange for equity. It is, "An organization designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services that could include physical space, capital, coaching, common services, and networking connections". (*Entrepreneur Magazine*).

What is Not a Business Incubator?

Research and technology parks, and for example, NASA's and NIH's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, DARPA, ARPA, Argonne, Fermi, the State of Illinois Treasurer's Venture Initiative, and U.S.A. Small Business Administration Small Business Development Centers are not incubators,

Incubators are mostly private entities with highly selective criteria for the entrepreneurs they help.

What Are Some Types of Incubators?

Academic institutions, non-profit development entities, property development companies, venture capital firms, and combinations of these offer incubation.

Exciting incubators for Zoroastrian Youth are at their academic institutions. Even at elite institutions, such as The University of Chicago, the "Life of the Mind" makes room for more. The University sponsors a new era of intellectual mining for commercialization, for example with its new Center for Molecular Engineering. Universities

NATALIE R. GANDHI, PH.D.



Natalie R. Gandhi, Ph.D., is a philosopher, entrepreneur, and investor. She is the first Zarathushti to be born in Springfield, Illinois, the Land of Lincoln. She taught in nearly ten universities and was awarded a Charlotte W. Newcombe fellowship along with awards from the Zoroastrian community.

Natalie is a founding member; Chair; and Director Emeritus of WZCC, The World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce. She is in the Founding Circle of SPIRE, Stanford Professionals in Real Estate. Natalie is the Founder at Arshiya Ventures and AvestaQuest LP.

Natalie believes the world offers infinite avenues for wonder, exploration, and growth. Also, as Mario Andretti says, "if things are not a bit out of control ... you're not going fast enough yet".



COVER STORY

have dedicated “Technology Transfer Offices” for licensing and commercialization of faculty research.

Even when not part of a university’s graduate business school, undergraduates today can throw themselves into business plan competitions to launch start-up ideas. Our own Eric Engineer took Houston Youth to Rice University’s Business Plan Competition several times. I learned as a guest in Chicago’s New Venture Challenge and see new entrepreneurship facilities at The Illinois Institute of Technology.

Many educational institutions connect their students within Silicon Valley’s venture world as interns at VC firms or start-up executives. The Valley’s long-standing Mayfield Fellows Program, with Stanford’s Technology and Ventures Program, brings Masters students to the Stanford Campus for two-weeks in January for business planning and introduction to venture firms.

A project I helped lead during the dot-com era brought about twenty-five globally dispersed business school start-up teams to Stanford for a week of business seminars and pitching to top venture funds. We organized through BASES, the Business Association of Stanford Engineering Students, for this first of its kind global competition. Nowadays, the humanities also have vibrant startups.

While Silicon Valley has been a focal point for new business creation, insights have spread throughout the world. There are centers of innovation globally and national location is not as limiting as earlier.

Zoroastrian Youth today operate in high-level Silicon Valley venues, but can also explore other incubation institutions. For example, the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City provides educational support at the Ph.D. dissertation level as well as start-up support.

Is There a Catch To Using a Business Incubator?

Should an entrepreneur exchange equity for incubation? Is there any such thing as a “free lunch”? Let us not say no or yes right now, but paying the cost for top-notch start-up incubation can be dearly desirable. Getting accepted is fiercely competitive. Applications guidelines may be offered at incubation websites.

Sharing some equity with good parties lends an entrepreneur credibility and confidence hard to gain otherwise. Being connected to endorsed service providers is valuable. Being guided, having fine mentors, and being in an environment with other start-up founders and teams is something one cannot easily reproduce outside of an incubator.

Entering an incubator program utilizes one of the most important skills for finding funding: One negotiates the exchange of equity for incubation assistance. What

is the difference between surrendering five percent of equity, eight percent, or twelve percent? Research it. But more important, take a few negotiation workshops before your first application to an incubator. Be canny and don’t give away equity until satisfied with what an incubator offers.

Being in an incubator program does not ensure the success of one’s enterprise. But re-tooling after a failed attempt may have advantages for incubation supported initiative versus bootstrapping, friends and family funding, or crowdfunding. If one successfully employs a little charm, sharp wits, and graciousness, people are often keen to help the next entrepreneurial attempt.

Are There Incubators Just To Die For?

Oh YES! At Draper University, you can find a gem of incubation-focused support and vibrant explanations of business incubation.

What Is the Future for Business Incubation?

We will soon tap the Metaverse for new incubation. My latest enthusiasm is inspired by a business group helping people to launch new investment funds. Can I create a fund of funds for a Metaverse City with many lively start-ups?

Jamshedji Tata helped make an entire city and many businesses. Perhaps in a hundred years what we do today will carry forward such an enterprising, buoyant spirit.

Incubation’s Spiritual Meaning

Some believe that commerce is not spiritual. Yet taking nascent ideas to fruition in commercialized effort witnesses new productive birth.

Long after we depart, virtuous cycles of business institutions built now will help structure the order of creation and provide for people.

We lend ourselves towards Truth, Justice, Beauty, and Transcendence, by creating new value.

Remaining Questions

We are in a time of such extraordinary, even disconcerting, change that human existence and the shape of Nature itself are in play.

Existence and Nature are hugely startling when Silicon Valley thinkers devise “artificial wombs” outside the human (female) body and accelerate transhumanism!

As Zoroastrians we are the stewards of Nature even as Nature is up for grabs. Let us do the best for a flourishing world, incubate, and give birth to our highest values. Let us lift any despair from the world with the hope a Zoroastrian vision provides.

FUNDING YOUR START-UP: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS

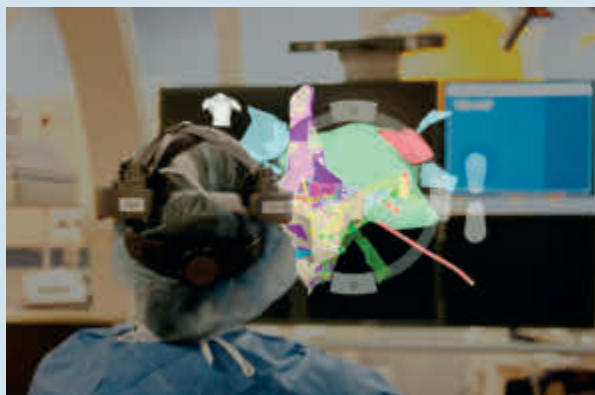


Figure 1. Stylized image of the CommandEP™ System. The user, facing away from the camera, is wearing a Mixed Reality headset, and viewing a 3-dimensional hologram of certain chambers of the patient's heart, with catheters noted. In this image, the ring around the hologram allows the user a hands-free method to move the hologram to maximize their understanding. The buttons to the right of the ring allow the user to zoom in or out on the hologram.

When my co-founder (Jonathan Silva, PhD) and I founded Sentiar, Inc in 2016, our goal was to revolutionize the way physicians practice minimally invasive procedures, specifically starting with cardiac electrophysiology procedures during which catheters are threaded through the vessels into the heart to ablate, or destroy, electrically abnormal tissue. Our product, CommandEP™, uses a mixed reality headset to display a patient specific heart hologram with real time catheter locations to guide these ablation procedures, providing the physician with a true sense of 3-dimensionality of the anatomy and a hands-free way to control the data which helps perform these procedures. We had a bold, audacious vision that was not only a technical challenge but would fundamentally change the way physicians visualize and control data.

We also knew that funding the company was critical to early success, particularly for a company that had a significant research and development focus. After exclusively licensing our intellectual property from Washington University in St. Louis, funding the company became a high priority.

Traditionally, founders focus on angel investors and venture capitalists for funding their company. But there are other, less often discussed routes to financing that became integral to our financing strategy. Perhaps the single most important source of non-dilutive funding for Sentiar was the Small Business Innovation Research Program from the National Institute of Health (NIH). Many federal agencies offer SBIR/STTR funding,

including the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense (DOD), Education, Energy, Health and Human Services (HHS), Homeland Security, Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and National Science Foundation (NSF) offering a funding alternative for a broad scope of innovations. Traditionally, these programs are divided into 2 programs, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs, also known as the R41-44 awards at the NIH. Each of these programs are then subdivided into Phase 1 (generally \$50-250K over 6-12 months), Phase 2 (generally \$750K for 2 years), Fast Track (a combined application containing both a phase 1 and 2 application), and Direct to Phase 2 (applicant has completed the work of a phase 1 application and is using that data to apply for a phase 2) awards. (There is also a Phase 2b program for a select number of companies.) The objective of the Phase 1 application is to establish the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential whereas a Phase 2 application is to continue the research and development of phase 1 moving the technology towards commercialization.

Unlike other grants from the NIH, the awardee for this proposal is a small business, rather than an investigator employed by a college or university. Certainly, there are regulations around the types of small businesses qualifying for these awards, including being a US-based, for-profit company. Various agencies have different rules around ownership of the company and



Figure 2. Three phases of the SBIR/STTR applications.

how that may impact applicant eligibility. Applications are solicited approximately 3x/year, providing applicants with multiple attempts to access this type of funding. Once submitted, applications undergo peer review from a diverse study section which includes researchers, clinicians, and industry experts who score the application on 5 components: significance, innovation, approach, investigative team, and environment. For Phase 2 proposals, there is also the inclusion of a 12-page commercialization plan.

The application and review processes are



Jennifer Silva is Director of Pediatric Electrophysiology and a Professor of Pediatrics and Biomedical Engineering at Washington University School of Medicine/St. Louis Children's Hospital, and serves as the Faculty Fellow in Entrepreneurship for Washington University SOM. She serves on committees within the Heart Rhythm Society and Pediatric and Congenital Electrophysiology Society (Vice President of Finance) and serves on the NIH-SBIR study section for Cardiovascular Innovation. She is a Senior Member of the National Academy of Inventors and also serves on the Editorial Board of Circulation: Arrhythmia and Electrophysiology, Heart Rhythm O2, and Cardiovascular Digital Health journals. She has worked with several medical device companies including AliveCor, St Jude Medical/Abbott, Medtronic and Biosense Webster regarding development and implementation of novel technologies targeted to unmet clinical needs and development of regulatory pathways. Jennifer was the World Zarathusti Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneur of 2019.

rigorous and like academic grants, often operate on a different timeline than necessary for the usual, fast-paced start-up company. At Sentiar, our financing plans have always been a hybrid approach, including dilutive funding (from angels and VCs) and non-dilutive funding (SBIR grants as well as regional and national awards). Yet, there are important reasons for funding teams to consider applying for SBIR/STTR grants.

Reasons to Consider SBIR or STTR funding

1. It is non-dilutive funding. With successive funding rounds, dilution is inevitable, and ultimately company founders are the people who feel this dilution most acutely. This dilution can be countered through funding brought in from SBIR/STTR mechanisms. For Sentiar, we had an awarded Fast Track SBIR application to totaled \$2.2M in nondilutive funding for the company at an early stage. That funding allowed us to build significant value in the company, allowing for more fairly priced dilutive rounds in future Series A and B financing.

2. Opportunities available through the NIH for portfolio companies. This is one of the intangible benefits of successfully applying for SBIR/STTR funds. The NIH does consider these companies as "portfolio companies" and will make introductions to investors, industry experts, medical societies, etc. who can help move your company forward. Additionally, there are add on programs that only successful applicant organizations can access, such as I-Corps and CAP (Commercialization Accelerator Program) that provide additional access to market research, regulatory experts, and reimbursement consultants.

3. Participating in the peer-review process. While most people agree that the peer-review process is imperfect, it remains the gold standard for scientific review. Rigorous peer review from the NIH is often used as part of the diligence from investors to validate the scientific methods and approach the company takes for research and development.

As a portfolio company for the NIH, Sentiar continues to benefit even now as a post-award company, being asked to present our technology at national Innovation Showcases and continuing to help develop our story and a physician base. Our new company, Excera has developed MantUS, an augmented reality-ultrasound tool with integrated tool tracking starting with the vascular access market, is currently applying for SBIR funding. Given the lessons we have learned from financing Sentiar, we are hopeful to include SBIR funding for Excera as well.



Figure 3. Prototype of the MantUS system. In the left panel, the user holds an ultrasound probe and needle/syringe to access a vessel. The ultrasound image is visible at the tip of the ultrasound probe. In the right panel, the user is also able to look up and see a larger, "billboard" view of the ultrasound image. Both images display the projected trajectory of the needle, allowing for easier vascular access.

To Nausheer & Dinci Avari:

*Dear Mom and Dad,
We are so grateful for your love and
support.*

Love, Jen & Jon Silva



*Dear Asha and Marcus,
Keep dreaming and achieving! You
make us so proud!*

Love, Mom & Dad

TOWARDS CAREER SUSTAINING COMPETENCIES FOR ZARATHUSHTI ENTREPRENEURS

Farrokh Mistree and Janet K. Allen

The focus of the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) is to promote entrepreneurship in the Zarathushti community. The WZCC envisions empowering Zarathushtis to learn how to create economic, social and intellectual value and how to maximize the nexus between the three. In this communication we offer, for your consideration, the needed non-technical, career sustaining competencies for entrepreneurs and suggest that it may be appropriate for the WZCC to particularize these competencies so that they become career sustaining competencies for Zoroastrian entrepreneurs.

A job¹ (*Nokri*, Gujarati.) is a regular remunerative position. Typically, an Individual does what is required by the employer, is not expected to take any initiative to improve, is possibly afraid to make mistakes and is generally comfortable working for the company. A career² is a profession for which one studies and then trains, and which is undertaken as a permanent, lifelong calling. It can be remunerative or involve self-employment but in both cases it could be entrepreneurial if an individual has the proverbial fire in the belly to do more than the minimum and is committed to learning and striving for continuous improvement. Young children are often asked by well-meaning grownups: *What job (Nokri) do you want when you grow up?* Initially, the answer is a fireman, a policeman and later a doctor, an engineer, a lawyer, an artist, a businessperson, a pop star, and the like – all well-paying jobs. In our opinion, this question is outdated. Instead we suggest that grownups ask their children: *How do you want to contribute to the world?* An answer to this question makes it possible for a child to introspect and, together with their parents, identify what to study to be able to pursue a career that entails making a difference in the world. Now the question: *What is core to making a difference in the world?*

In the Zarathushti religion we are enjoined, throughout our lives, through our actions to enhance Ahura Mazda's kingdom and gain wisdom. We suggest that we gain wisdom through learning by reflecting on our actions and recognizing that no problem is solved until learning takes place. We hypothesize that an effective way to learn is by reflecting on our actions in creating value and maximizing the



*Janet K. Allen holds the John and Mary Moore Chair in the School of Industrial and Systems Engineering and Farrokh Mistree holds the L. A. Comp Chair in the School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma. Both have been recognized as being in the top 100,000 most impactful researchers (all fields) in the world in a study by faculty at Stanford University¹. Both are Fellows of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. They co-direct the Systems Realization Laboratory @ OU which is a multicultural, multidisciplinary academic family focused on educating the **next generation of professors**. They encourage every member to learn how to dream, rise to his/her full potential and contribute to the **scholarship** associated with the realization of complex engineered systems. Both were involved in starting Zoroastrian Sunday Schools in Sydney (Australia), Houston and Atlanta. Farrokh was recognized as the Outstanding Zarathushti Professional for 2021.*

nexus between economic value, social value and intellectual values. For an enterprise to be successful value creation has to be sustained over time by entrepreneurs. Hence, the question: ***What are the non-technical, career-sustaining competencies for Zarathushti entrepreneurs to be successful?***

A statement attributed to Darwin rings true today for entrepreneurs and their enterprises as it does for evolution: "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent but ones most responsive to change." We hypothesize that the ability to learn, unlearn and relearn is foundational to being able to adapt to a changing environment. Peter Senge suggests that learning is central to being human and it is through *generative learning*³ that humans are able to adapt and recreate themselves⁴. Both individuals and enterprises can and must learn; and re-learn to remain competitive. For all

enterprises survival learning is necessary. This is often called adaptive learning and essential for survival. We suggest that a learning enterprise is one in which its members learn (and grow) by consciously reflecting on doing. A key aspect of *doing* includes the ability to quickly sense, take action, and get organized under uncertain conditions; remember there is nothing certain about entrepreneurship. The entrepreneur must develop the ability to persevere, accept and learn from success and failure, and get comfortable with a certain level of discomfort! To continue to create value this enterprise must embrace both adaptive learning and generative learning⁵. Hence, the question: ***What are the competencies that constitute generative learning?***

In the context of generative learning we suggest five competencies that are necessary for an entrepreneur to succeed, to continue learning and thereby continue to create value and maximize the nexus between economic, social and / or intellectual values.

- I. Competency to observe, reflect and identify unfilled opportunities to create value (Yasna Ha. 30.2).
- II. Competency to examine the opportunities critically. This is foundational to developing a sound value proposition to move forward and to maximize the nexus between the three elements of sustainable development, namely, people, planet and prosperity. Examples of tools include SWOT analysis⁶. Business Model Canvas⁷, etc. Caveat: An entrepreneur must guard against getting bogged down by analysis.
- III. Competency to ask questions, actively listen, reflect, and identify gaps in knowledge upon which a value proposition is based. This is key for risk mitigation and risk management.
- IV. Competency to take a calculated risk. Contrary to popular belief, entrepreneurs are not extreme risk-takers; they are calculated risk takers. They assess what they are willing to lose, and practice the cycle of act-learn-build.
- V. Competency to plan, monitor and adapt to changing circumstances thereby staying the course and continuing to create value.

Edul Daver in the editorial states:

“Of course we did not expect direct references in the Gathas about entrepreneurship but we could relate very profoundly that the basic

principles expressed in the Gathas are the very same principles we espouse for excellence in entrepreneurship.”

In this communication, we offer for your consideration some non-technical, career sustaining competencies yet to be anchored in Zoroastrian doctrine. *Mazdā* specifically means Wisdom. Wisdom in all applied forms is knowledge which is to be nurtured, consciously, by every Zarathushti through the understanding and practice of the theology in all that one seeks to do. In the Zarathushti model one has to maximize and achieve good deeds embedded in Wisdom, for the salvation of the world and for oneself “Wisdom is manifest in work, character in rule, and a friend in hardship”⁸. In keeping with our desire to foster dialog with a purpose we offer the following questions to anchor the proffered competencies in Zarathushti doctrine:

1. In the context of Zarathushti doctrine how should the proffered non-technical, career-sustaining competencies to foster generative learning in Zarathushti entrepreneurs be modified to maximize the nexus between economic, social and intellectual value?
2. How can the WZCC empower Zarathushti entrepreneurs to create generative-learning enterprises that integrate sustainability⁹ and social justice with technical and cost efficiencies?

Let the dialog with a purpose begin.

Acknowledgments

We are most grateful to Dolly Dastoor, Khojeste P. Mistree, Behram Pastakia and Zubin Sethna for their substantive editorial comments. We thank Edul Daver for helping us fill in the gaps in our knowledge of entrepreneurship with his experience. We thank Karishma Koka for her thought provoking commentaries.

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Emails

janet.allen@ou.edu and farrokh.mistree@ou.edu

URL https://www.ou.edu/coe/ise/people/janet_k_allen

URL <http://www.ou.edu/content/coe/ame/people/amefaculty/mistree.html>

¹ <https://ouccoe100.blogspot.com/2022/02/noted-database-places-ou-engineering.html>



Astad Pastakia, based in Ahmedabad, India, has been a free-lance consultant and academic in the field of rural development for over three decades. His areas of interest include, sustainable rural livelihoods, collective enterprise, social entrepreneurship and pro-poor value chains. He has published four books and several research articles/case studies in these areas.

Email: astadp@gmail.com

innovations that bring socio-economic change. After the industrial revolution, business went through cycles characterized by booms and slumps. Joseph Schumpeter (1939), sought to explain the phenomenon by distinguishing “innovative entrepreneurs” from “me-too entrepreneurs”. The latter copied the former to reap rich harvests, neutralizing the advantage of the innovator very quickly. Too many such entrepreneurs competing amongst themselves, resulted in a slump. The solution was to revive innovation and innovative entrepreneurship. In other words, industry needed a continuous supply of new products, processes and technology to continue growing. Hence governments and industry were obliged to keep investing in research and higher education. In modern times, the understanding of entrepreneurship has been considerably widened and is extended to the social and intellectual/academic spheres of life. Anyone coming out with an innovative way of doing things

Nexus between Commercial, Social and Intellectual Entrepreneurship:

Framework for sustainable development of societies

ASTAD PASTAKIA

WZCC has a vision of promoting inclusive, sustainable entrepreneurship, based largely on Zoroastrian values of protecting the natural environment and standing up for truth and righteousness. It finds itself on the crossroads between entrepreneurship of three kinds – commercial, social and intellectual. While it recognizes the importance of all three, the challenge is one breaking the silos and building partnerships that enable new solutions, in line with its vision.

The field of entrepreneurship has undergone significant changes. New challenges have given rise to new breeds of entrepreneurs, operating from the grassroots to multi-national levels. Interactions between academia, governments and entrepreneurs result in new solutions that are constantly tested and scaled up. This article presents a framework that maps this increasingly complex landscape (Figure), enabling an organization to decide how to position itself and make choices relevant to its mission.

COMMERCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurs contribute to development through their innovations that bring socio-economic change. After the industrial revolution, business went through cycles characterized by booms and slumps. Joseph Schumpeter (1939), sought to explain the phenomenon by distinguishing “innovative entrepreneurs” from “me-too entrepreneurs”. The latter copied the former to reap rich harvests, neutralizing the advantage of the innovator very quickly. Too many such entrepreneurs competing amongst themselves, resulted in a slump. The solution was to revive innovation and innovative entrepreneurship. In other words, industry needed a continuous supply of new products, processes and technology to continue growing. Hence governments and industry were obliged to keep investing in research and higher education.

In modern times, the understanding of entrepreneurship has been considerably widened and is extended to the social and intellectual/academic spheres of life. Anyone coming out with an innovative way of doing things

provides the much-needed leadership to bring about socio-economic change.

SOCIAL BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

One of the reasons for emergence of “social entrepreneurs” has been the generation of negative externalities of the conventional business model both on society and the natural environment - to levels that are no longer sustainable. The social goods and services produced by commercial business were priced such, that increasingly larger number of people at the bottom of the pyramid were excluded. Over time, the capital so necessary for starting an enterprise, got concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people, while the masses of impoverished and marginalized continued to soar to unbelievable proportions. The cumulative harm done to the natural environment leading to climate change, poisoning of water, depletion of bio-diversity and disruption of eco-systems were just a few of the unacceptable changes that sounded the warning bells.

Some industry leaders, quick to recognize these externalities took proactive measures to minimize them. Soon, many chose to carry out “responsible business” by adding two more bottom lines to profits. The vast majority had to be restricted through government laws and regulations. The problem however, remained unabated and in spite of intellectual leadership of researchers who provided empirical evidence, governments were slow to implement stringent laws and progressive policies. In developing countries like India, the phenomenon of mass poverty, lack of food and nutrition security, lack of affordable housing, health and education facilities, became a reality that divided society into haves and have-nots.

Innovative solutions demonstrated by individuals and non-government organizations (social entrepreneurs) failed largely when governments took responsibility for scaling these up. Bureaucratic organizations, lacked the capacity and commitment to implement such projects. *A new breed of social entrepreneurs was born, which has been addressing these social and environmental issues through the business route.* For them, profits are subsidiary to the larger social goals before them. A recent compilation of social business entrepreneurs in the agriculture sector in India, shows how innovative start-ups are trying to address the needs of marginal farmers in helping them reduce costs, increase productivity, reduce risks, improve price realization and help adapt to climate change (Shambu and Kanitkar, 2019)

ACADEMIC/INTELLECTUAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The entrepreneurial landscape can broadly be divided into the worlds of academia and action. Academics provide leadership by studying phenomena in the world of action, as these develop. They provide evidence of the success rates, failings and possible gaps. They also come up with alternative solutions.

Governments interact with captains of industry on one hand and social change leaders on the other. They also engage experts and academics to discuss specific issues before formulating policies. Policies for incubating and supporting start-ups with high social/environmental goals are most important. More often than not, political and capital interests over-shadow social and environmental interests, making the policies sub-optimal, often implemented only on paper. This is where the role of academic leaders and even the media, becomes very important in influencing policy and ensuring proper implementation.

Entrepreneurship, whether of the commercial or social type, need trained personnel, which are produced by the universities. Academic entrepreneurship therefore involves creating the right kind of training centers that produce the right kind of people, needed by the world of action. It also includes carrying out the right kind of research, both technical as well as non-technical, that open up new possibilities for entrepreneurs.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Thought leadership is not the sole propriety of academia. Industry leaders, social and political leaders also bring up issues and demonstrate ways to handle them, thereby becoming thought leaders in their own right. C K Prahalad (2004) an academic, was the first to show to the corporate world that the people at the “bottom of the pyramid” represented a fortune that they had long neglected. He provided evidence of entrepreneurs who had broken the barrier by looking at this large market segment with fresh lenses. Their ability to innovate in every department of the enterprise made it possible to bring down the price of goods/ services to unprecedented levels, making them

affordable to the poor. The celebrated “Jaipur Foot” case showed how the cost of an imported prosthetic foot could be brought down from about \$3000/- to a mere \$30, without compromising on key performance parameters!

Nobel Prize winner, Muhammad Yunus, demonstrated thought leadership by promoting Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, which became the financial hub of large number of rural women’s self-help groups (SHGs). The impoverished women saved small portions of their meager earnings for inter-lending and mobilizing funds from outside. Over time, this added up to levels that empowered them to meet their consumption and production needs in ways they had never imagined possible. Similar efforts were made in India by Ila Bhatt through SEVA, a women’s trade union and by Vijay Mahan through BASIX, a private company. The SHG movement in India has grown to a level where many of the federations have ventured into collective enterprise and marketing of value-added products.

An academic-turned-social entrepreneur from IIM Ahmedabad, Prof. Anil Gupta brought home the realization that the poor and marginalized represent an untapped potential of grassroots innovators and entrepreneurs. “HoneyBee networks” initiated in different states and countries by SRISTI, documented and published frugal innovations by farmers and other producers over the past three decades. Outstanding innovators were honored at the national level. The late President of India, Dr Abdul Kalam established the precedence of having their innovations displayed annually at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Meanwhile, commercial entrepreneurs have demonstrated thought leadership by tapping into path breaking technologies, especially in the areas of information technology, alternative energy, robotics, artificial intelligence among others. The long-term impacts of these technologies on society and the environment are yet to be fully assessed.

CONVERGENCE SOLUTIONS

Most of the “wicked problems” being addressed by these new generation entrepreneurs, *call for partnerships between different players across the entrepreneurial landscape*. For instance, “pro-poor value chains” built through such partnerships, offer solutions that make major social impacts. Here, like-minded players collaborate, to increase the share of the marginal producer in the terminal price significantly, while ensuring better value for money, to the consumer. The Amul pattern of milk cooperatives in India has been highly acclaimed for its social impacts on the farming community. However, replicating similar value chains in other sectors, has remained elusive – with a few exceptions.

Tasar, a long-neglected variety of silk produced in India, was traditionally, woven by pit-loom weavers of Bhagalpur, Bihar, from yarn produced by their wives using bare hands and thighs. The cocoons from which they prepared the yarn, was supplied by traders who got these produced in the forest by tribals of Jharkhand. The latter got paid a pittance for their labour of three months in the forest, where they ‘cultivated’ the cocoons on host trees. It took PRADAN, an NGO promoting sustainable livelihoods of the poor, more than two decades to create a modern tasar silk value chain, that brought together various institutional players (Government departments, specialized technology and training institutions, social entrepreneur for designing and marketing of fashion garments) with primary producers (farmer’s collectives, women’s producer groups and micro-entrepreneurs, trained for specific functions). By 2015, about 8000 primary producers had benefited. Their share in the terminal price of a tasar saree in the domestic market, was estimated at 45 %. The project was being scaled up in eight more states with government support (Pastakia et. al. 2015)

POSITIONING WZCC

Given WZCC’s goal of promoting sustainable, inclusive entrepreneurship, the following may be worth considering:

- Leveraging talents of members and their networks, to promote thought leadership that address long-standing social and environmental problems
- Investing in research and policy advocacy for the above
- Recognizing and promoting promising start-ups and social business incubators
- Supporting change agents in building suitable partnerships and pro-poor value chains.

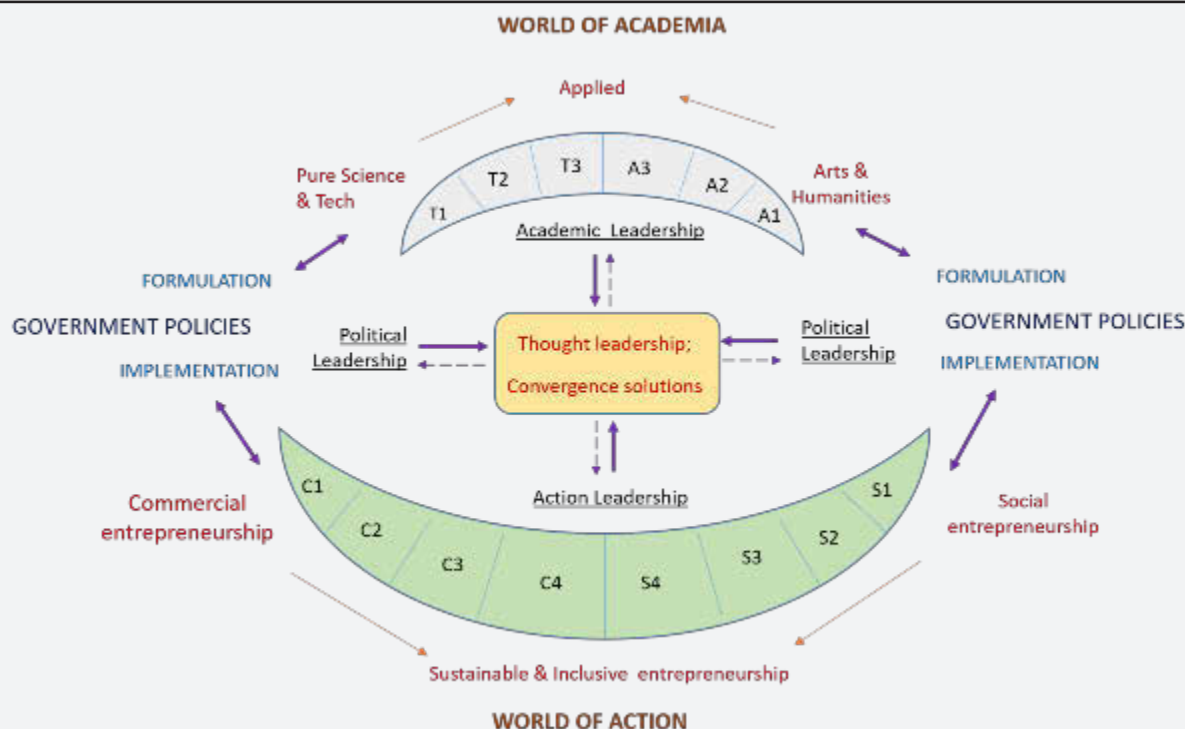


Figure: The Entrepreneurial Landscape

Key to the diagram:

The players are in a continuum with pure science on the extreme ends and applied/action-oriented sciences in the middle

World of Academia

- T1 – Pure science
- T2 – Applied science
- T3 – Technological innovation
- A1 – Pure Arts & Humanities
- A2 – Applied arts & Humanities
- A3 – Social innovation

Like-wise the entrepreneurs fall into a continuum with pure breeds on the two extremes and social and collective business in the middle.

World of Action

- C1 – Commercial enterprise
- C2 – Commercial entrepreneurship, following mandated "corporate social responsibility" (CSR)
- C3 – Triple bottom line business, often with voluntary CSR investments
- C4 – Sustainable business entrepreneurship (social business entrepreneurship)
- S1 – Individual social activism
- S2 – Organised social action (Non-government organisations)
- S3 – Organised social action (Community based organisations of marginalized)
- S4 – Collective/group enterprise of the poor/marginalised

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VISIONARY ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP:

A case study

BEHRAM PASTAKIA. [BEHRAM@FEZANA.ORG].

Synopsis: How an individual with a vision, passion and a dream can address the “wicked problems” of the world at the nexus of Intellectual, social and economic entrepreneurship.

This is the story of **Daniel Mollura**, MD who founded **RAD-AID International**, starting with just a handful of Radiology residents, and faculty members at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in Baltimore, MD, during his training. The non-profit organization, has now grown to over 14000 volunteers from 146 countries.

RAD-AID works in 85 hospitals in 38 countries, has chapters in scores of highly regarded AC-GME academic medical Centers & universities in the USA and Canada, impacting millions of patients in poor environments globally.



How did this exponential growth take place? What lessons can be learned by individuals who dream about making a difference with their lives in dealing with the “wicked problems” facing humanity?

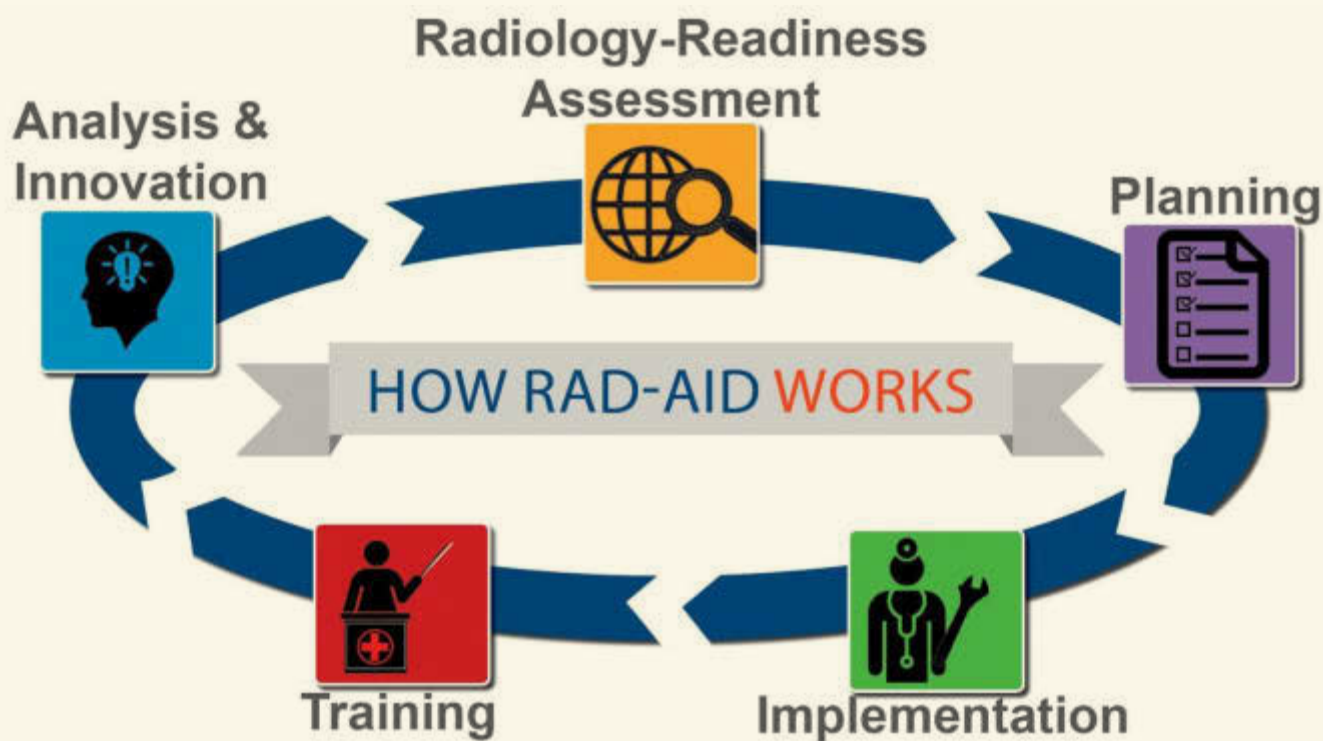
With 3 to 4 billion people globally without access to imaging services that can save lives, the space in which RAD AID operates, certainly qualifies as a “wicked problem.”

To learn from this success story, we need to delve into the motivation & skill sets of the prime mover. Well ensconced in Wall Street in the financial service sector, in New York, where he was doing very well, thank you, Daniel had an epiphany as to what he wished to do with his life and chose to pivot into a new career. He was admitted to the prestigious Johns Hopkins Medical School in Baltimore, Maryland, where he went on to finish Radiology residency and joined

the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, as faculty, with a research focus on infectious diseases. (c.f., **Fezana Bulletin** - *Leading by Serving the Underserved* <https://fezana.org/leading-by-serving-the-underserved/>).

The exponential growth of the 501 (c) 3 Non-Government Organization he founded, is a testament to what a resilient spirit can accomplish by bringing individuals together to work together with purpose, passion, patience and perseverance. Of the “five p’s” we mull over during our monthly *Zoroastrian Faculty Network* sessions, one is missing; more on that later.

At the annual meetings of RAD AID (held on the first weekend of November), the leadership *listens* to presentations from country team managers, *reflects* on what worked, where gaps remain in view of new technologies in the rapidly changing field, and how innovative approaches can be applied before *making a decision* to take the enterprise forward. **That** is the strength which empowers RAD - AID international, now impacting 189 million patients in low resource hospitals per year. The approach reminds me of the seminal message of the Zarathushtra's Gathas, in Yasna 30:2.



To illustrate with an example: RAD-AID, has a unique model in deciding which hospitals to partner with, called the **readiness assessment tool**.

Based on this method, volunteers had identified PGIMER (Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh, India) to launch a mobile van, donated by the Philips company in the Netherlands to address issues of women's Health (mammograms, bone densitometry). Asha Jyoti: Women's Healthcare Mobile Outreach Program - RAD-AID International - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zx02U8LzdHY>

At the annual RAD-AID meeting, the question was asked, "It is all well and good, to serve in resource poor countries, but what about patients in the neglected wards 7 and 8 of Washington DC, the nation's capital in our own backyard, where women cannot access health care?"

The response has been typical of the RAD -AID philosophy. Now, a mobile van has been introduced in the USA to address the need:

~~~~~



**Daniel Mollura**, RAD -AID, (left) with Breast Care of Washington- announce launch of mobile van to provide 3D mammography in collaboration with *Hologic*, to care for the indigent in Washington DC and the Mid-Atlantic Region of the USA.

The mobile program is set to expand in 2022 to several additional states in the USA with leadership provided by John R. Scheel, MD, PhD, MPH, of the University of Washington chapter in Seattle.

#### **NURSING:**

An example of quickly introducing new structures in its governance (*agile management!*) is the creation of the Nursing Arm of RAD AID. Initially, there were no nurses under the RAD AID umbrella. The idea to include nurses proposed during one of the annual meetings was enthusiastically embraced.





Under the leadership of **Patricia A. DuCharme** from New York, Radiology Nursing has become a major force within the organization. [Two Parsi nurses from US Armed forces have participated at the UN Headquarters, for World Nurses Day].

#### **PARTNERS:**

One strength of RAD - AID has been its willingness to partner with like minded businesses, and NGO's . The RAD-AID straightline Medical Airship in collaboration with Lockheed Martin, the first medical hybrid airship in the world, is an example.

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HYBRID AIR SHIP

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#### **BUSINESSES:**

Businesses include several well known names, a sampling: Ambra, Bayer, Google Cloud, Hologic, Inteleos, Merge (an IBM Company), Siemens Healthiness.

#### **CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS:**

Clinton Global Initiative, Canadian Hub for Applied Social Research, Nurses with Global Impact, SBI, Society of Breast Imaging, Project Hope, Sonography Canada, World Federation of Pediatric Imaging, Society of Interventional Radiology, ACR, American College of Radiology, Black Women's Health Initiative, Society of Informatics in Medicine, Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging.

#### **TECHNOLOGISTS:**

The radiology technology associations, in the USA,(ASRT) Canada and the UK (College of Radiographers) have made arrangements to support technologists willing to donate their time to teach, with travel grants.

We shared the story the Pediatric Ultrasound Technologist from Salt Lake City, Utah, **Emily Lenzen** who went to Nepal to help the local staff understand the value of ultrasound for children being treated at the HRDC, Hospital for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Children at the 68th United Nations DGC - Department of Global Communications Conference.



### FEZANA BOOTH FROM SALT LAKE CITY

At the FEZANA Booth (above) in Salt Lake City, Utah, at the 68th United Nations Department of Global Communications Conference, 25 to 28 August 2019.

*A North-South- South model of Sustainable Development* Left to Right : **Behram Pastakia**, Co-Chair, FEZANA UN NGO Committee, **Carlin Ridpath** MD, RAD-AID country manager for Nepal, **Emily Lenzen**, MS,RDMS,RVT, RMSKS, Pediatric Ultrasound program manager for RAD-AID

[(see Fezana Journal - Rapporteur's Report by Sanaya Master, (Winter / December 2019 issue of FEZANA Journal, Vol.33., No. 4, pages 35 -52)



LECTURE HALL FROM TANZANIA

## EDUCATION:

The core competency for RAD AID has been to empower individuals at the grass roots through education. Program Manager of RAD-AID Tanzania, *Arlene Richardson*, teaching at the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center.

A text book, “Radiology in Global Health- Strategies, Implementation and Applications”, edited by Daniel Mollura, Melissa Culp, and Mathew Lungren (ISBN-10: 3319984845) is available for obtaining certificates of competency for individuals interested in global health.

Trained and highly skilled technologists are the backbone of the imaging enterprise; scores of technologists volunteer their time to teach their colleagues in low income countries, in how to use and maintain the expensive donated equipment. The story of the establishment of a Radiology Residency Program in Guyana, where none existed before, a landmark achievement, serves as a model for other chapters of RAD - AID to emulate. The Minister from the Government of Guyana was at the RAD AID annual meeting in 2021 and pledged to provide full support to bring Radiology to the rest of his country, including the rural hinterlands.

## INNOVATION:

A core mantra of this NGO is continuous innovation to solve problems. To illustrate by example, it was realized very quickly that deployment of the hybrid airship would have to be carefully monitored to make maximum use of its capabilities.

This led to the creation of use of Geographic Information systems [GIS] which could overlay maps of geographic terrain, over maps of the highest medical needs of the population being surveyed. The idea is being tested in South Africa and Alaska and additional uses of the technology are being explored in Bhutan and Bangladesh.(2)

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

Since 2008, when RAD-AID was founded, our **Radiology-Readiness** assessments in the Global South have shown the near-complete absence of digital health technologies that are commonplace in high-income countries, such as Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS), Electronic Health Records (EHR), Radiology Information Systems (RIS), Hospital Information Systems, and other vital health technologies for storing, retrieving, and interpreting patient data. Digital health information technologies save lives and cut costs. RAD-AID launched the International Imaging Informatics Initiative in collaboration with Merge Healthcare in 2015, and in 2016, won the IBM Health Corps award to work with engineers and consultants on cloud-based archiving. PACS and IT collaborations with Ambra Health led to outreach in Nepal, Nicaragua, Guyana, Laos, and Nigeria. Partnering with MedWeb led to PACS development in Ethiopia in 2018. AI training for low-resource hospitals was launched, in 2019, with support from multiple AI developers: Koios, Densitas, CureMetrix, and MD.ai. (1).

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS:

Individuals with skills in finance, outreach, journalism, technologists, engineers, nurses, doctors, sonographers, computer mavens, social media experts, physicists, medical students, undergraduates, business administrators, humans with a good heart willing to give of themselves are invited to contact Behram Pastakia: [behram@fezana.org](mailto:behram@fezana.org).

## *Purpose, Passion, Patience, Persistence and Providence.*

Before concluding let me share the story of the fifth “p” which we discuss during our ZFN monthly meetings. It was sheer Providence that I stepped into a room of Residents and Fellows, at the Annual Meeting of the American College of Radiology, where Professor of Radiology and Philosophy from Indiana University, Richard B. Gunderman, MD, PhD, was giving a lecture. What drew me into the room, while passing down the corridor was a painting on the screen by one of the renowned painters from Europe. I was intrigued to see art being showcased at a Radiology meeting. The very next panel after Dr Gunderman’s philosophic lecture, was from the young fledgling RAD -AID team at the time. Twenty minutes of their presentation was all it took for me to get hooked. It has been pleasant sailing since then!





## COVER STORY

### TAKE AWAYS:

The five p's (purpose, passion, patience, persistence and providence) while useful to think through as we formulate for ourselves our place on earth, are not enough to realize our full potential. This story tells us that it takes more: Leadership, the willingness to dare to be different, to take on challenges as we see them head on, to remain open minded and flexible, to listen, to reflect and then take action, as we row our boats gently down the stream of life.

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**J. Am Coll Radiol** 2022; 19: 76-83.

***Behram Pastakia**, Fellow of the American College of Radiology, Chair of FEZANA's Zarathushti Youth Without Borders Initiative, and a founding member of the Zoroastrian Faculty Network. Past President of the District of Columbia Medical Radiological Society, he serves on the Executive Committee of the local Chapter of the American College of Radiology as Alternate Counselor.*

*Thanks to the guiding hand of providence, he has been involved with RAD - AID international since it's very early days and endorses participation in its humanitarian mission whole heartedly.*





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## TEACH OUR YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS AND GIVE THEM WINGS TO FLY

The global pandemic threw us a curve ball that took the whole world by surprise and has taught us a very important lesson.... That our lives can change dramatically at any time, and that we need to be equipped with the tools necessary to be able to not only adapt to the change, but even welcome change that is inevitable, and learn to handle it...so that we come out stronger and better.

Teaching kids entrepreneurship skills, is just one way in helping prepare them for an uncertain future as the world's problems can be pretty overwhelming, especially for young minds.

Not only would these skills teach kids about business, but also life-skills that will take them forward throughout their lives... These are all 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills sets ...being confident, empowered and intrinsically motivated for success. Learning how to communicate effectively, collaborating, engaging and interacting and YET standing out amongst peers, managing time effectively and efficiently, creatively solving complex problems, learning to de-stress and relax in emotionally or adrenaline charged times, and being productive verses just busy.

In school we all learned how to read and write, do math but never learned to prepare ourselves for a rapidly changing world.

Schools do not teach 'How to make an impact/ How to find your passion / How to manage time better or goal setting/ How to start a business / How to get venture capital/ How to budget and invest your money / How to face failure and turn it around, how to de-stress & relax, etc.

Parents, please work together with your kids to develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills-sets for a healthier, wealthier and successful future.

Entrepreneurship should be discussed at the dining table by the whole family, just as other topics are! Bounce ideas, think outside the box, quiz each other...

What a fun way to learn, get educated and ideate, all while having family dinner.

As co-founder of global Youngpreneurs, I have been conducting numerous workshops for 7 to 10 and 10 to 16 year olds, across the globe together with expert coaches and trainers.

We conduct one hour workshops of a series of 3, 6, or 8, sessions in USA, Canada, UK, Dubai, etc via Zoom, over week-ends or during the school holidays and I am so happy that the participants keep coming back for more advanced workshops or on different subjects.

This issue focusses on Entrepreneurship and our community youth and what better way than to ask some of our very talented teens on what their thoughts are on entrepreneurship.



Dilnavaz Shroff

Launched India's first corporate magazine for women in 1987.

Entrepreneur with multiple businesses in different industries in the 90's. Ex-Professor at Xavier's Institute of Communication and the Bombay College of Journalism. Chosen by FICCI as one of 50 outstanding women achievers in India, in 1997 and honored in their coffee table edition, 'A Business Of Her Own.'

Dilnavaz is a certified holistic and wellness coach, as well as a professional mental health counselor.

Co-founded "Global Youngpreneurs", in 2021, to help kids and teens learn key life skill-sets and to realize their dreams of starting their own business.

Globalyoungpreneurs@gmail.com

## Thoughts and ideas by our Global Youngpreneurs teens from around the world

### MAHATAB DASTUR: 15 years, TEXAS, USA



Mahatab's business idol is Oprah Winfrey because, "Oprah reminds us that no matter where you come from, you CAN make a difference in the world".

Mahatab and her brother started 'Books2Smiles', a non-profit organization that sends books around the world to those who do not have access to

reading. Both are avid readers and when Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, they lost all their books and realized that without the aid of books it was not easy disappearing into a different reality to de-stress. That started their mission to try and give every child around the world a chance to experience the magic that only comes through reading a book.

They have so far completed two successful missions, sending books to Vietnam and the Bahamas. The next country to benefit was India, but unfortunately due to the pandemic they were unable to send books there. They believe that with passion, dedication, and hard work, 'Books2Smiles' can add a dash of magic to the lives of millions of children worldwide.

### ANISSA IRANI: Age 15, DUBAI



According to Anissa, becoming an entrepreneur changes your mind-set, makes you stronger, and improves your decision making and leadership skills.

Her business idol is Dr. Viloo Morawala-Patell for taking science (biogenetics) into a strong business avenue, and Dr. Keki Turel/Dr. Farokh Udwardia for developing their professional brand

identity, synonymous to the healthcare industry. Her business, 'Bawazone', recycles and reuses, muslin

cloth, (Sadras) into eco-friendly grocery bags, Potpourri potlis, and multi-layered masks, etc.

She started by finding out what problems shoppers faced, then ideated the prototype of reusable bags/potlis, using different stitching techniques, patterns, and structures. She created the prototype and distributed it as samples, to a few friends and family to fix any bugs. Finally she designed the company logo and will now start marketing it to stores.

### AVA GINWALLA: Age 11 years, Ontario, CANADA



Ava's business idol is her dad because according to her, he started a company 14 years ago doing something that he loved while still having time for his family.

Ava wants to learn some soft skills like, how to sell and market to her customers, how to deal with difficult situations and how to motivate and manage her team.

She is consistently being mentored by her parents

who share their knowledge and experiences of running their own businesses.

According to Ava the steps she needs to be an entrepreneur are:

1: Work on products/services to sell. Step 2: Getting financing / Work on budget and costing and pricing the product right. Step 3: Marketing her products/services.

### MALCOLM BUHARIWALLA: Age 11 years, DUBAI



Malcolm's business idol is Elon Musk and Malcolm would love to be mentored by Bill Gates. His concept for a company has come about from his anger, frustration and helplessness whilst watching the destruction and ravages of pollution and realizing that if things are to change, then he needs to do something about it himself.

His vision is to build a business called 'DrozoClean' which will send drones



out into the worst polluted air worldwide, and then recycle it into clean and breathable (oxygen). Some of the soft skills he feels he needs to learn are: Leadership, and communication. He wants to research further, build a prototype, then enter a small business competition, pitch his idea, try and get venture capital and start a small company with likeminded individuals.

**DELNA SURVEYOR: Age 11 years...Tomball, Texas, USA**



**Delna's** business idol is S. Truett Cathy, the founder of Chick-Fil-A, because he believed in hard work and making money... but also kept the restaurant closed on Sundays, so that his employees can spend time with their families. Her brother also works together to make her business a success.

They both sell cross-stitch, crocheted knick-knacks, wooden carved pieces, etc at various community gatherings and give the proceeds to charity. To start her own business, Delna would like to initially invest her own funds to get supplies. 2) Create different products. 3) Send out flyers, emails and WhatsApp messages to family and friends to generate interest and sales.

**KAUS SETHNA: Age 15years, London, ENGLAND**



Kaus believes that entrepreneurship is the pursuit of opportunity without resources currently controlled. Kaus's business idol is Henry Ford because he used marketing techniques to make himself popular and targeted his audience, spot-on, during a period of great depression and poverty. By mass

producing cars, he not only made the process cheaper, but also created jobs for millions across America. Consequently, his popularity and business grew and

that is why Kaus considers him his business idol. Kaus had created his own masala chai business and called it, "Masala Shots". Although this is not something he wants to pursue, it helped him to understand how to market and sell. Having experienced running his own tiny business, he has learnt skill-sets, that will help him to choose his career path for the future.

**KHAIZ GHEEWALA: 14 years, DUBAI**



Khaiz's business idol is Elon Musk because according to him, Elon is passionate about his business and is totally committed to it. Khaiz would like to be mentored by an entrepreneur who has contributed in the field of astronomy. Khaiz's vision is to start space tourism right here on earth.

He wants to make people feel the 'zero gravity effect' on earth, instead of going to space. To do this, the steps, he would need to take are:

Research extensively on how to execute this concept, then improve on optimizing cost and marketing it as a lifetime-experience and finally, pitch it to an investor who is enthusiastic/interested in the concept.

**RAYAAN IRANI: Age 13 years, DUBAI**



Rayaan's business idols are Peter Brune and Johan Pihl. He is impressed by them because through their company, 'Humanium Metal', they have shown how a simple solution (melting down illegal weapons and selling

them to fund anti-gun violence campaigns) can help the world be a better place, and that is precisely what Rayaan aims to accomplish in his future startups. Rayaan wants to boost his confidence, become a marketing wiz to be able to convey this vision, whilst

focusing on achieving his goals, working effectively and efficiently.

He would like to be mentored by Bill Gates because he believes that Gates has been a huge success for over three decades which is phenomenal and also because Gates is extremely charitable and does a lot of good work.

**RUSHAD AUSTIN: Age 15 years, CANADA**



Rushad believes in working hard, and following his passion to start his own business. His business idol is Navroze Austin, (His uncle) because he earned multiple degrees and used his education to start his own consulting firm. Rushad would like to be mentored by Mark Cuban because he is a participative and

charismatic leader and Rushad would love to be on his team.

Rushad is extremely passionate about sports.

Mountain biking being one of them, and knowing that this sport is rising in popularity but is expensive, his business idea is to sell affordable gear. He thinks this would work very well in today's competitive times.

He is working on writing his business plan, choosing his company name, logo and researching ways to raise seed capital for it.

**FARZAD TARAPORE: Age 10 years, Mumbai, INDIA**



Farzad's idea of entrepreneurship is to start a Car Dealership. His business idol is Mr. Eric Anklesaria, (His uncle) who is hard-working and never gives up. Farzad finds that very motivational and encouraging.

He plans on learning all about automobiles by will watching YouTube videos and researching business's online.

He would like to take a loan for renting a garage and working out a business plan to be loan-free within a few years.

**VAZISHTA DEBOO: 14 years, DUBAI**



Vazishta believes that entrepreneurship is developing and managing a profitable business venture with minimal risks.

Her idol is Lebron James and she would like to be mentored by him.

Vazishta wants to develop her communication and time management skills.

Vazishta first wants to figure out her niche, then research her target market and educate herself on the industry, check out the competition and work smarter and harder than them, to get ahead and be the best.

**Come, let's work together and "Give Wings to Young Dreams and make their ideas a reality" one step at a time!**





**Dr. Rustom Kanga** in early 1980s led the team that built the world's first commercial Artificial Intelligence based system at Digital Equipment Corporation. Twenty years later he co-founded iOmniscient to commercialize new AI technologies. Dr Kanga has had over 45 years of experience in various aspects of the computing and telecommunications industries as Vice President of DEC and then Compaq where he developed a reputation for starting up and growing several new businesses each of which had phenomenal success.

In 2001 he co-founded iOmniscient in Sydney which pioneered AI based multi-sensory analytics technologies long before the term AI became fashionable. The company has done projects in 70 countries and was Intel's Alliance Partner of the Year in 2021. The safety systems for the Sydney Metro driverless train and the China Fast train have been provided by iOmniscient. The company has provided autonomous solutions for a number of industries from smart cities, through to airports, traffic management, healthcare and retail.

In 2020, Dr Kanga was named WZCC's Entrepreneur of the Year.

# RUSTOM KANGA, CEO OF iOMNISCIENT IN CONVERSATION WITH EDUL DAVER

## 1. What was the motivation that led you to start your own company?

I had worked for a computer company, DEC, for 20 years. The company went through some upheaval - it was initially bought by Compaq which was then bought out by HP. In that process I was retrenched. I was 50 then and felt that it was time to do something different. Along with some friends we set up this company.

## 2. Can you explain the sequence of funding stages you had to go thru from initial start-up to the present?

We are in the Artificial Intelligence business. In 2001 this was still an emerging field. Investors did not see it as a viable technology and were unwilling to provide the funding we needed. As such we had to bootstrap the company ourselves by building some initial products and selling them to generate the cash flow we required. I am very grateful to my wife for supporting me right through this period. It took us many years to breakeven – much longer than we had anticipated. Today we are cash flow positive so we don't have to beg for investment.

While initially we felt rejected as we had been unable to raise external investment, in retrospect it was a boon. In the last 20 years we have been through 3 recessions. Our competitors who invariably had raised external investment were all wiped out because, as we have learnt, such investors tend to have little appetite for risk and they pulled out their money at the very time that those companies needed it most. As we were not dependent on outsiders we were able to just tighten our belts and keep going.

## 3. You said you had worked for a corporation before starting your own company. Can you highlight the most significant differences between working for a corporation and running your own company?

There are several differences. The first being freedom. In the Corporate





## COVER STORY

world, even though I had risen to being a Vice President of the company, I still had to report to someone higher up and spend hours convincing him of my ideas. In my own company I had the flexibility to implement my ideas at my discretion.

On the negative side, in a large Corporation, one's salary is relatively guaranteed in good times and in bad. When you run your own company, you have the responsibility to pay the salaries of all your employees and in difficult times this can get stressful.

**4. Can you talk about the importance of Networking and how you may have benefited from chance encounters?**

Networking and building relationships is extremely important as customers buy from you if they trust you. Having said that I don't believe in "chance encounters".

We attend trade shows to meet people and actively work on cementing our relationships. Our focus is on helping them to achieve their own objectives. When our customers realize that meeting our own goals is not a key objective but rather a side benefit of helping them to meet their goals, the relationship flourishes.

**5. I am sure you were faced with "risk" of many kinds. How did you handle it?**

Running a business is about managing risk. Sometimes you win but very often you lose. The first key is to be able to assess risk objectively and not be carried away by other peoples' hype. And the second one is to realize that things don't always turn out as you want them to. One has to develop the resilience to cope with the many times one fails. Perseverance in the face of multiple failures is the secret of success in business.

**6. How do you keep your employees motivated so that they do not see it as just a 9 to 5 job?**

We treat our employees as equals. If I want them to travel by economy, then I would always travel by economy too. Employees have to be able to share the founder's vision and they must feel that they can contribute to that vision.

Of course not all employees do that. Some are only there to pass the time. In a small company, their



colleagues recognize this lack of commitment to the overall goal and such employees don't last long. Peer pressure pushes them out.

**7. iOmniscient certainly creates economic value, do you also consciously create Intellectual Value and Social Value?**

We currently have a patent portfolio of over 70 international patents and we add to this almost every quarter. This has been key to us maintaining

our leading position in the market. Major companies like Intel, Microsoft, CISCO and many others work with us because they know that they cannot get the same technology from anyone else. We have certainly increased the pool of knowledge in this field.

With respect to Social Value, we don't have a goal for this. Rather we rely on the company having a culture of integrity and compassion for our fellowmen. As an example we had developed a system for finding lost children. We found that the countries that needed it most - where the risk of children being abducted was very high – were the very countries that could not afford to buy the system.

So we made that technology available free to anyone who wanted it. It was not a conscious decision to meet some social value KPI but rather it was the right thing to do. After all what price can one put on even a single child being lost or stolen.

## 8. **Has your Intellectual Property ever been stolen?**

On two occasions there have been attempts to steal our IP. We had anticipated that our technology could be under threat from countries that are renowned for IP piracy and we had put in significant effort to build barriers to such threats. Interestingly in both cases, I am sad to say, the theft was attempted by colleagues who we had considered to be friends.

Fortunately, the protection we had built withstood the attacks but I was personally saddened to be betrayed by people I had trusted.

## 9. **Most business owners spend long hours at work. Please advise budding entrepreneurs the importance of balancing work & family and how you accomplished this.**

One should have no delusions about having to work hard. If you want a comfortable job and good work life balance perhaps one has to go and work for the government. Starting up your own business can be extremely stressful on yourself and on your family. One has to work long hours and there is always uncertainty about the many hurdles that appear unexpectedly. I cannot say that I was successful at achieving the right balance. Rather I have been fortunate in having a very tolerant family that supported me through the difficult periods.

## 10. **Finally can you explain the relationship, if any, between Success & Happiness.**

If you look on your business as a job you are invariably going to be unhappy. It has to be something that you love doing. I often talk about my company not as my work but rather as my hobby. I enjoy developing new technologies and capabilities that no one has thought of before. I enjoy communicating new ideas to anyone who will listen.

One also has to be able to take failures in your stride. For every successful sale, one has to cope with half a dozen losses. For every product that does wonders there are others that just did not work as you would have liked them to. As Kipling said in his poem "If" – one has to be able to face success and disaster and treat both imposters just the same.

I see happiness as the objective – not success. One does not become happy because one is successful. You are unlikely to be happier when you have made \$10 million than when you made \$9 million. If you enjoy what you do, then you will be happy. Success is not about the growth rate of the company or how much profit you make. If you are happy doing what you are doing, then you have succeeded.

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# PURPOSE IS THE REASON YOU JOURNEY — PASSION IS THE FIRE THAT LIGHTS THE WAY

**Yazdi Tantra**

**M**any fine youngsters approach me with questions on how to become an entrepreneur. I ask them, “Why do you want to become an entrepreneur?”

They say, “I want to do something that makes me a lot of money”.

I ask, “All business has its highs and lows, money comes, and money goes. What is making you want to venture out on your own? When the money is low what will keep you going? What can be so important that you are willing to take this risk?” “It’s passion for what you believe in, that is going to keep you going.

So, what are you passionate about? Do you have the skills to support that passion? Do you have the grit and determination to live and breathe that passion? Can you persevere and also be flexible? Will you be able to take the highs and the lows? Will you withstand it all for something you love to do?”

Usually at this point my passion for entrepreneurship itself overshadows my mentees questions and I simply say, “If you love what you do, success will follow.”

As an entrepreneur in today’s world, you can solve problems, provide services, address social needs - but the secret to making it sustainable in the long run is to *enjoy* what you do. It is as simple as that! Passion, joy and happiness will emotionally keep you running and charged up, this is all you need to start and run your engine.

Let me share my own journey of becoming an entrepreneur, and why I always start with passion being the fire that leads the way and other important lessons I learned.

I was inclined towards technology in my youth. I loved learning about technology and had a deep passion for the subject, I knew I wanted to study it further



*Yazdi Tantra is a Chartered Accountant by training, Computer Consultant by Profession, Entrepreneur Developer by hobby and Trainer in his leisure time. He has been active in promoting several Zoroastrian Websites in the firm belief that this modern medium, will help unite our far-flung community across the globe. Yazdi writes regular columns for Parsi Times, MoneyLife, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Bombay Chartered Accountants' Society (BCAS) on Android apps for efficiency at the workplace.*

*He is currently the Chairman of the Zoroastrian Co-operative Bank Ltd. He is the immediate past Global Vice President and Technical Chair of World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce. He runs a medium-sized Computer Company ON-LYNE for the last 30 years, developing websites, portals, payment gateways, sales and service of computer hardware.*



## COVER STORY

and work with it in the future. When I was in college owing to various reasons, my family could not support an engineering degree. That's the way it was and that's the path that was highlighted for me. I took it. I worked hard at it. I secured a rank at the all India level in Chartered Accountancy. I was good at my job, and in a matter of years, I had a senior position at a big company with a high paying job.

Then in the late 80's the first PCs came to India. I saw an opportunity to pursue my childhood dream of working with technology and the passion inside me reignited. But I had no formal education in computers or software, and it seemed unsafe to switch paths mid-career. I always believed in 'Knowing is not Doing – Doing is Doing' – so unless I did it, I would never know whether I would be able to make it. I took the plunge and was temporarily reassured by the knowledge and skills I already had under my belt to begin.

Passion revved up my engine, but this was a new path, a new knowledge base and this fiery passion of mine also needed something else. Proficiency. You will always need the intellectual quotient of expertise and aptitude to turn your passion in a successful entrepreneurial venture. Support this passion of yours. Strive to enhance it. Breathe it, eat it and dream it. Make it all you think of.

I was learning on the job. I immersed myself into gaining relevant knowledge, but this wasn't easy. I had a new family in one arm and a new business in another, these were tough times and passion was the only thing keeping me afloat, but I worked hard at gaining the expertise too. I took a step back many times to assess if this would continue to work for me. Passion must be combined with dedication to take it through.

Perseverance is another quality worth mentioning here. In an entrepreneurial venture, there could be many ups and downs, successes, and failures. What distinguishes a successful entrepreneur is the amount of perseverance and resilience. During my ride I have faced many successes and many downturns. The downturn could be a large project going bad, loss of a key person, or general economic slowdown. In the computer business, there could be change in technology which may make a lot of our investments in talent and hardware redundant. There have been times when I went down to my last dollar. Persistence and perseverance in such times saw me through. I always believe - "Survival is Success!"

Another quality ideal for the budding entrepreneur is being nimble and flexible. Our tech start-up started with training, then moved on to hardware and then to development of software. As the Internet took over, we realized we had to be flexible. We started supporting web designing and hosting as well as delivering complex online software. Any entrepreneur should be ready to adapt and evolve to meet the changing environment and the customers. It not only helps you grow financially, it also helps you grow intellectually.

I cannot wrap this up without the mention of family and friends. A supportive network can strengthen your resolve and commitment. Personally, I am thankful to have my compassionate wife on this adventure who unquestioningly encouraged me from the beginning and stood by me through my ups and downs. It has been invaluable for sustaining and growing my venture.

Today, I mentor youth with all kinds of ideas and journeys, and I strongly believe that the need of the day is social entrepreneurship. Think about ideas that can benefit society at large. Social entrepreneurship is often misconstrued - it is not social work or charity. It stands for a venture which is profitable as well as serves a social purpose like Solar Energy production, Water conservation / Purification, etc.

If your social entrepreneurship passion aligns with your being a Zarathushti and taking care of the environment we live in, you are already on your way!

## CHANGING WITH CURRENT TIMES

When I started my business in 2016, StitchMyFit primarily catered to individual clients who were looking for a bespoke fashion experience at their doorstep. We had a niche – we would send our stylists to customers' houses to measure, recommend and eventually create customized designer wear catered specifically to their needs. The market had no such other brand providing these services and business was rosy.

Fast forward to 2020, the fear of COVID and strong government restrictions in place severely hurt our topline and business had come to a standstill. China had shut down as well and many US and European buyers were left stranded with a major need for resourcing. We jumped on the opportunity and opened a new vertical to supply fabrics as well as produce custom clothing for designers internationally. While most factories had high MOQs, we were able to provide exclusive garments and smaller batches that other factories did not provide. One door shut and another opened, and our business pivoted out of necessity and a little bit of luck.

This has probably been one of my biggest learnings over the years. The need to change and pivot quickly is not only crucial for success but also critical to survive. I strongly believe in lifting up the people around me who have been loyal since the very beginning of StitchMyFit. By empowering them with new skills in all areas of operations, purchase, customer service etc., our core team had a ready set of skills and were able to take on the new challenges. This is especially crucial for small start ups with a tightknit team. We now focus 100% of our bandwidth on exports to smaller designers who do not have the manufacturing knowhow and capability – guiding them on fabrics, pricing and sustainability.

After the birth of my daughter in early 2021, I realised entrepreneurship and motherhood are not for the faint hearted. When you blend both together, you better be prepared for one crazy roller coaster ride! Both are equally demanding



*Rashna Sanjana started her career working in India and the Middle East to consult with major global FMCG brands on sales and brand strategy. Armed with an MBA at INSEAD, she then went on to co-found StitchMyFit, a tailored solution for customized manufacturing. Her passion lies in giving back to society through her strengths. She has built a curriculum and conducted courses at the National Association for the Blind for over 2 years. She has convened and hosted the first "Tigers Den" at the 2019 7WZYC in L.A. and once again at the 2020 Global WZCC Conclave in India with over USD 400k invested into young startups. She is also one of the founding members of the WZCC Global Youth Committee and part of the WZCC Mumbai chapter.*





and having a good support system is the only way you can stay afloat. At work, having a strong team and a partner who is able to take over is imperative. At home, my family will always pitch in when work calls.

If I have any words of advice for young entrepreneurs, it would be that the world is now becoming a tumultuous place with a lot of uncertainties. These bring with them numerous new opportunities and needs, arising in this ever-changing market. Having flexible systems and an agile team gives you the right foundation to shift your sails as the wind blows.

Even though starting your own business is a daunting task, the most important part is to continue trying and never give up. There have been numerous obstacles and places where I have “failed” – but worse than failing is fearing the fall and not taking that leap forward at all.

You never want to look back at life and regret not working on your dream. For Zoroastrian entrepreneurs, there are many inspirational leaders in our community who would love to mentor and guide you through from start to financing. We are very lucky to have numerous such programs in our close knit community and should make the most of these opportunities.

Moving forward, I am keen on focusing on working on social projects such as the one I did for the National Association for the Blind – wherein I conducted a business foundation course to visually challenged students for their Perfumery College. I dedicated my time to teaching these exceptional individuals, over a 1 year program, in all aspects on how to excel in the corporate world. Although I’m not religious, I do believe in the Zoroastrian ethos, and hope that I am able to dedicate more time to making this world a better place through good thoughts, words and deeds. Taking on this initiative was difficult while running StitchMyFit but I dedicated just a structured 5 hours a week in preparing and conducting classes. Without blocking out scheduled time to give back, it gets difficult to manage with our lives in the forefront. I hence recommend everyone start small and just dedicate even an hour a week to think about how we can make a small difference in others’ lives!



## EUREKA MOMENT

ARMENE MODI

It was a shocking statistic of the abysmal level of women's literacy in India's 1991 census that started it all. As an educator, I felt a sense of responsibility to attempt to change that statistic, even if in a small way, and improve literacy levels for a few women in my country. I decided to follow this dream, giving up a fulfilling teaching career in Japan and taking a deep dive into social work, despite knowing hardly anything about the field. This was how Ashta No Kai, the non-profit I founded in 10 villages in India in 1998 came into being.

Fast forward to 2017, and a visit to the New York Daremeher where I ran into Edul Daver, who was keen to hear the story of how I had set up ANK. When I finished relating my almost then 20 year journey of ANK and describing the many challenges I had faced along the way, he pointed out how at every step, from its founding to its lifespan, I had employed the skills of an entrepreneur and that my journey with ANK could more aptly be described as that of a social entrepreneur's. It was certainly a Eureka moment! I had never thought of myself as an entrepreneur, imagining that such a title referred always to someone with an innovative business idea.

When I began this journey, I was a teacher in Japan. I started off campaigning there to make my dream a reality by circulating a one-page proposal I had written among friends and colleagues, promoting the idea of the many advantages literacy would bring to poor vulnerable women in India. After a year of campaigning and networking all over Japan, I was fortunate to receive a tremendous response, with one thousand Japanese forming five support branches from Tokyo to Kyushu pledging their wholehearted support for ten years. This, despite the non-profit still being just a seed in my mind.

Accordingly, I made several trips to India to look for the best way to promote the vision I had and learned that the literacy rate for women in rural areas was even worse than for their urban counterparts. By a fortunate happenstance, I met the renowned Dr. Coyaji, on one of my trips. She had set up KEMHRC (KEM Hospital Research Center), a non-profit for women in 30 villages near Pune to promote women's health. When I told her about my desire to promote literacy for rural women, she immediately offered her support, and suggested an MoU be signed with KEMHRC to provide consultancy to help run the project. Having lived away from India for many years, and having no knowledge of social work, I was overjoyed at her generous offer.

Ashta No Kai was thus launched on October 9, 1998, with the aim



**Armene Modi**, is an educator, social activist, and founder of Ashta No Kai, a non-profit organization to educate and empower rural women and girls in Pune District, India. She established the non-profit in 1998 after learning about India's abysmal female literacy rate in its 1991 census.

Armene holds an MA in International Relations from Tufts University, an MA in TESOL from Teacher's College, Columbia University, besides an honorary Doctorate in Education from J. F. Oberlin University in Tokyo. Armene was a 2017 Echidna Scholar, which was a Visiting Fellowship at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC to research the Ashta No Kai project.

Armene is the recipient of several awards for her work to promote gender justice at the grassroots level including the Albert Schweizer Medal from the World Literacy Foundation, the "Real Heroes" award from CNN-IBN, the Literacy Hero Award from Rotary, Pune's Pride award for Excellence in Social Work, and most recently, WZCC's Outstanding Social Entrepreneur of 2021.



of promoting literacy and empowerment for rural women. Ten drought prone villages near Dr. Coyaji's KEMHRC were selected as the target area, and the campaign to promote literacy for adult women was launched. However, despite two long years of struggle, the campaign did not meet with much success. Rural women's need to be able to read and write paled in comparison to the more urgent and immediate necessities of their daily life; their need for financial support was much greater than their need for literacy. I soon realized that my top-down approach of assuming that literacy was what rural women needed had not worked.

The failure of the literacy program was the catalyst for setting up women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs); savings and loan collectives from where they could access credit, since the lack of access to it was one of the main hindrances to their poverty. They were forced to rely on shark moneylenders for their credit needs who often charged 120% interest making it impossible for the women to repay their debts. SHGs not only provided access to credit on easy terms, but also gave women opportunities for leadership and decision making, since it was they who were the decision-makers. SHGs enabled rural women to gain some financial independence and greater self-confidence, while also becoming platforms for social change, leading women to campaign against social maladies like alcoholism, dowry, and early marriages. Another project I undertook to help with income generation was a women's dairy which took me three years to finally set up. Today, it brings in a minimum of 100 USD a month for each woman's family.

Needless to say, I was disappointed that my dream of promoting literacy for rural women, the original aim of founding ANK, did not materialise. A series of coincidences however, led me down another path to realising my vision. Noticing that many young girls who came to our village tailoring classes were already married although they didn't seem older than 14 or 15, made it amply clear that the custom of child marriages was rampant in the villages. Parents fearful for their daughters' safety and sceptical of the benefits of educating them did not encourage daughters to attend high school. Another major reason was a lack of high schools within easy distance of the villages. At that time there were only 2 high schools in the 10 villages we worked in.

I then decided to pivot from my dream of promoting literacy for adult women to promoting the education of rural girls in the belief that the educated girl of today would someday become the empowered woman of tomorrow. The first step was to provide access to high schools which were at distances of anywhere from four to seven kilometres from the village. This was addressed by launching a Bicycle Bank offering transport for all girls who wanted to attend secondary school, allaying any fears for their safety. Bicycles soon became wheels of change that helped to arrest the high drop-out rate of village girls from secondary school, and led to a positive transformation in their lives with other initiatives that were launched.

Besides bicycles, a weekly life skills training course was introduced to provide adolescent girls with critical inputs in life skills such as the importance of education, good health practices, laws relating to harmful customs like dowry and early marriages, awareness of gender inequality, etc. The weekly meetings also provided a platform for the girls to build their agency, enabling them to boost their self-confidence and independence. Observing that a lack of decent toilets in schools posed a great problem for adolescent girls in particular, several toilets were built to help reduce school dropout rates.





Later, when the girls expressed a desire to pursue further education, scholarships were provided enabling more than 2000 village girls to complete their college education. With the support of financial aid, rural girls ventured into fields like medicine, dentistry, computer science, electronics, engineering, automobile engineering and pharmacy, besides the more traditional ones. Moreover, with increasing incidents of violence against women, I introduced karate classes for adolescent girls to help them combat increasing gender-based violence, and arm them with the skills they needed to stay healthy and live free from violence.

Had it not been for Edul, I may not have realised that all along, my journey with Ashta No Kai was one of social entrepreneurship. At the start, I was resourceful in networking and creating momentum in Japan to persuade others to support the cause of empowering rural women in India for 10 long years. Moreover, I pursued my goal of promoting literacy and education for rural women and girls persistently with passion and drive. I was motivated, determined, and committed, which helped push me forward. While I faced many challenges in implementing my



goals I had to be creative and flexible in coming up with innovative solutions to make them a reality. Neither was I averse to taking risks, starting with the decision to give up a teaching career of 25 years to launch into an unknown field.

Today Ashta No Kai is still alive and thriving 24 years after its launch, reaching many of its goals of empowering rural women and girls, and continuing to make a positive difference in the lives of many in India's rural communities. I am happy that my work has helped to empower vulnerable women gain some financial autonomy, and find their voice to fight injustice, while empowering rural girls to achieve their dreams and potential. I hope my work has helped to awaken some of India's rural women towards their own journey of empowerment and to encourage others who may be considering a path of social entrepreneurship to help others in their community.

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN IRAN : AGAINST ALL ODDS

**PARVIZ VARJAVAND**



*Parviz Varjavand was born in 1940 to practicing Zoroastrian parents from Yazd. He studied in Tehran-Iran, Beirut-Lebanon and Indiana and California USA. and has a degree in architecture from UC. Berkeley. At present he resides and works in Iran while his children, grandchildren all live in the US. His wife Susan who was a accomplished painter has passed away. He has been very loyal to the ideals and the cause of WZCC since its inception and is at present its member in the Iran Chapter.*

**My** name is Parviz Varjavand and I have been a member of WZCC from the time of its inception; I am a retired architect and reside in Iran full time now. I could write a lot about why I think Iran is a very special place for us Zoroastrians, but I am sure most of you know this more or less already. The bottom line is that we cannot afford to give up on Iran no matter how punishing living conditions become in this country compared to lands that Iranian Zoroastrians are emigrating to. The phenomenon of Zoroastrians leaving Iran has turned into a disaster for those who remained behind even if this has been a blessing for many of the ones who emigrated. Iranian Islamic Laws demand that we marry amongst ourselves if we wish to remain in our religion; should one of us fall in love and want to marry a Muslim, this is forbidden unless we convert to Islam. With our numbers diminished below twenty thousand in a nation of eighty million Muslims, this decree is resulting in Zoroastrians dwindling and disappearing from Iran even faster. Also those who left were usually the elite with the knowhow and the capital and those who remained behind found their community decapitated and abandoned in many ways. Those who suffer most from these conditions are the youth who cannot find good jobs or mates, the old left behind are usually resigned and surrender to their faith and wait for their end.

No matter where we go, we cannot recreate Persepolis and Pasargadae for ourselves by making false replicas of their statuary out of plaster and cement and feel at home among them; this while in Iran, every Iranian knows that these monuments have come to them from their Zoroastrian ancestry. At present, the sanctions against Iran has put its economy in a strangle hold and the pandemic has not helped also, but Iran is a vast and rich land full of patriotic and dedicated Iranians who honor their Persian heritage and are willing to sacrifice for its survival and future dignity and prosperity.

If we believe in the WZCC/Entrepreneurship cause, as I do, let us look at the half full glass and the positive side of the situation and examine how some Zoroastrians of Iran are surviving and even thriving while engaged in hard and creative works. Here I would like to tell our FEZANA readers a little about what some of our distinguished Iranian Zoroastrian entrepreneurs are doing. I specially appreciate many of these businesses when I see that they are not attached to old wealth or big names and are startups by the very fragile new crop of our youth. My work in introducing some of these ventures is going to have its shortcomings as I cannot cover all the deserving ventures and cannot vouch for their accuracy. In a short time, I picked some ventures that I feel are significant and with the help of the owners and Edul Daver, was able to create these company profiles:



1. Mr. Kambiz Mizanian, Namaline - Iran online exhibition Kambiz obtained his BS in Computer Engineering in 1993 from Iran University of Science & Technology (IUST). In 1996 he obtained his Master's degree in Computer Engineering followed with a second Masters' in Productivity and Systems in 2001 from Sharif University of Technology (SUT). He capped out his education in 2009 with a Ph.D. in Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications.



He has been active in the community and is a Board Member of Tehran Zoroastrian Anjuman (TZA) and head of the budget and planning committee since 2015. From 1992 to 2020, Kambiz worked with many national and international companies in R&D, IT, Consultant, CEO Advisor and gained varied and valuable experience.

In 2020 with the spread of COVID all in-person activities including trade exhibitions were cancelled and Kambiz saw an opportunity to utilize his IT experience, virtual world environment created by COVID to implement his novel idea for online exhibitions. He grabbed the opportunity and along with five other business partners, launched *Namaline*. The main business of *Namaline* online exhibitions which helps businesses and participants to have a more valuable experience by connecting visitors and exhibitor's smart devices to in-person exhibitions. This platform revolutionizes the participant's access to exhibitions, exhibition interaction and communications. The Company's tag line is, "Welcome to the next generation of exhibitions".

Kambiz says, "I knew that 90% of startups fail, but with 25 years of experience and confidence in my abilities, I preferred to have my own startup company. As an entrepreneur I am constantly gaining new experiences. I was also motivated by the idea of creating a successful brand to the point where it builds a personal legacy". In the past two years we have faced many challenges, such as funding, licenses, team building, technical problems and introducing a new product concept to traditional business people. Seed funding was provided by myself and two other investors. We are now negotiating for round A venture capital to expand our product for B2B infrastructure, by adding smart contracts, metaverse and digital currency. It was a joy as an entrepreneur to receive our first contract in February 2021 and even more joyous was the extension of the contract for 2022. We are also very

proud to be the winner of the INOTEX pitch. Our continuing vision is to be an inseparable part of International Exhibitions."

**2. Mobed Mehraban Pouladi**, is Founder/CEO of Anahid Civil Engineering company in Yazd. Anahid was founded in 2011 by a team of experts in the fields of Civil Engineering, Irrigation &

Drainage Engineering, Watershed Engineering, Natural Resources Engineering and Electronic Engineering. It provides consulting services as well as the study, design and supervision of projects in the fields of irrigation and drainage, deforestation, hydraulic structures and water treatment. Having completed many projects and gaining much experience, over a decade, it is now working to branch out into other countries around the world.

**3. Mr. Babak Salamati** is chief editor of a Zoroastrian newspaper called, "Amordad". The newspaper is sold on newsstands and also has an online edition. It works to recognize the culture and prolific civilization of Iran.

**4. Mr. Fereydoon Sepanta**, CEO of 'Behandishan Noavar Amordad' which is involved in high-tech industries like Internet of Things (IoT), AI Platforms for Smart Parking, Smart Irrigation and Smart Agriculture. The company has patents and received many awards & honors.

Fereydoon obtained his Bachelor in Industrial Engineering from Amir Kabir university and is only 23 years old. He would like to collaborate with other individuals and companies, especially Zoroastrian from around the world and is passionate about addressing contemporary business opportunities.

**5. Mr. Toos Dehanadi** is founder/CEO of 'Acemani Hava Afzar Toos Company (AHAT)' which utilizes his invention to produce cleaned natural agricultural products without using chemicals or preservatives. The process preserves products for a longer time and at the same time minimizes costs.

**6. Mr. Hooman Khosravi** is Founder/CEO of Borna Andish Paz which specializes in Automation of Irrigation for large plantations especially Pistachio orchards. Even though his company is only two years old, the services have been well received by farmers in Yazd and Kerman provinces who are facing water shortages.

**7. Mr. Ramtin Shohrat** is Founder/CEO of "Nartiti Ecolodge" in the Zoroastrian village of Taft near Yazd. He has converted his ancestral house into a tourist destination providing lodging & food for those wishing to absorb ordinary Zoroastrian culture and have a unique experience.

So young Zoroastrians entrepreneurs are making a mark in Iran against all odds and we are rooting for their success and happiness.





## FROM HARVARD TO A TOMATO FARM IN NIGERIA

Mira Mehta

When I moved from east coast America, where I had lived all my life, to Nigeria in 2008, I never imagined it would become my long-term home. But I have somehow lived here for 12 out of the past 14 years, the majority of which have been spent obsessively focused, often to the detriment of other aspects of my life, on building a company whose identity I struggle to untangle from my own. Tomato Jos is a social enterprise that believes in the power of local production for local consumption. Processed tomato is one of the key ingredients in Nigerian cuisine, but currently, over 90% of the tomato paste is imported. Our goal at Tomato Jos is to become a household name in Nigeria by building a top brand of processed tomato products, sourcing at least 50% of the tomatoes from smallholder farmers. We currently own Nigeria's third largest tomato processing facility, which we built from scratch during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we support over 2,000 smallholder farmers who successfully grow tomatoes for the company under contract. After eight long years, Tomato Jos is finally poised to launch our first retail product in the market.

The early years were marked by my boundless energy and unfailing optimism, as I researched the opportunity (a \$500 million market in Africa's largest and fastest growing country), thought through the best way to approach it (all the experts told me to start with farming



*Mira working from home November 2014 (living quarters in the background)*



and only invest in a factory once I had achieved globally competitive yields and cost of production), found a small plot of land to get started, raised initial capital, and learned how to farm. I had no relevant experience save for the fact that I knew how to operate in Nigeria and had a professional network there, but I soon found a consultant who quickly turned into my boyfriend and my cofounder, who had strong agricultural experience and a similar appetite for adventure. From September 2014 to May 2017, my partner and I lived in a forest 2km from our little farm, under what can only be described as extremely basic conditions: we slept in chicken coops that had been converted into little bedrooms, cooking our food in another, larger chicken coop that we used as a kitchen, dining and living room. We ran our generator for three hours a day, which made refrigeration largely impossible. We had running water, almost always cold, with which to bathe and wash our things, and we had satellite internet when we ran the generator.

Every dollar I raised went into our pilot farm, and although our early agricultural attempts were met with failures, we took each lesson learned in stride, and made enough progress to raise our first round of “real” financing and move to a permanent location.

I know I’m not at the end of my journey yet so I hesitate to use this phrase, but I would tentatively define the “early middle years” as starting in the middle of 2017 when we moved from our pilot location in Nasarawa State to our permanent location in Kaduna State. Armed with confidence from our most recent tomato season and money from institutional investors, the Tomato Jos team got to work: we met extensively with the community leaders who governed the land we had acquired, cleared land, built container offices, bought a tractor, contracted a company to install an irrigation system for us, and began to build out our team and our smallholder farmer network.

Each of these activities could be expanded into its own essay, and each was riddled with challenges,



disappointments, setbacks, and moments when I wanted to give up and quit. I’ll expand briefly on one of these moments. The contractor whom we hired to build a “bush road” from the main road to our farmland and install a solar system at our office in town ended up defrauding the company of more than \$10,000 before disappearing into the night. At the same time, the contractor whom we had hired to install the irrigation system for the farm, a project that they promised would take 45 days at most, took more than four months to finish the work. This severely delayed our planting, caused our yields to plummet, and raised doubts in our investors’ minds about our ability to operate “at scale.” There were many nights when I thought to myself “I can’t do this, how can I do this, how will we pull this off?” But optimism and yes, maybe a bit of faith, kept pushing me forward. We had enough funding to keep going despite the setback, and in the following two seasons we demonstrated strong growth and continuous improvement across all of our farming operations, including our very successful and popular smallholder program. This progress enabled Tomato Jos to undergo our second major capital raise in January 2020. *(photo left signing contract with a smallholder farmer, December 2017)*



*Mira, Art, and an investor in March 2020 the most significant year to date in terms of yield and crop (photo below)*



The funds we raised in 2020 were meant to enable Tomato Jos to build our own processing facility and triple the amount of irrigated land we were farming with our smallholder farmer partners. However, my failure to raise as much capital as we truly needed, combined with the COVID-19 pandemic and related global supply chain issues, caused delays in these major projects and a delay, once again, in transplanting, which led to a decline in yields, a delay in our retail product launch, and major, extremely vocal concerns from many of our investors. From my



Photo above Inaugural production run of Tomato Jos factory , March 2021 (construction still on going)





***Tomato Jos Farming and Processing Ltd launched its much anticipated TOMATO JOS paste variant into the Nigerian Market in Kaduna, March 17, 2022.***

perspective, this time period should be called the “turning the corner” phase of Tomato Jos’s life. We are now, finally, less than a month away from launching our flagship product, 65-gram sachets of tomato mix.

*Photo left Sachets coming off the line January 2022*

Despite the challenges we endured in 2020 and 2021, we have built a world-class processing facility, a strong operational team, and there’s a huge amount of pent up demand for our tomato mix. Will we finally be able to stand on our own two feet without needing outside funds? Will we allay our investors’ fears? Will the product sell, and will we achieve strong operational margins? Only time will tell! Stay tuned...

i Since people often take a dim view of Nigeria, I’d like to point out that both of these contractors were fellow Americans.

ii I could write a whole book on fundraising: how hard it is, how long it takes, how much educating and selling you need to do, how heartbreaking the rejections feel, how brutal the negotiations can be, the effect it has had on my mental health, etc. but I have found that investors generally frown upon these types of articles.

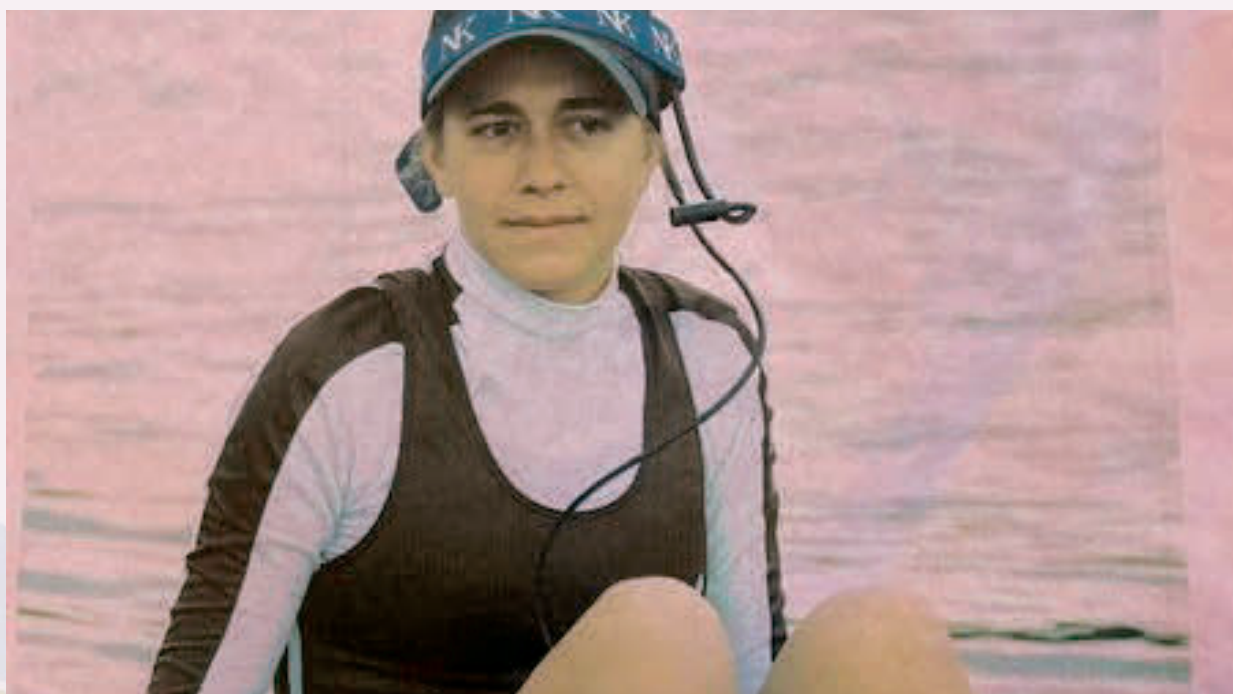
**Mira Mehta** is co-Founder and CEO of Tomato Jos – a fully integrated farming and processing agribusiness in Northern Nigeria that produces tomato paste and other agricultural products for the domestic market. Before founding Tomato Jos, Miss Mehta worked in the financial services and healthcare sectors in New York and Nigeria, respectively, where she gained valuable technical skills, developed an empathetic worldview, and built a strong network that would empower her to launch a business at the base of the pyramid. She is a graduate of Brown University and Harvard Business School and has lived in Nigeria since 2008.

## MIRA MEHTA

Whether as Captain of the  
Championship Boat at Brown  
or  
as CEO of the largest tomato  
processing factory in Nigeria,

You are, and always have been, a  
**TRAIL BLAZER**

Love, Mom and Dad



## THE ROCKY ROAD TO RECRUITMENT



Shernaz Engineer

**T**here is never a good time to start a business. I started my recruitment company in the height of a recession in 1993.

After working for a recruitment firm for a few years, I realised how much money I was making for the principals and realised it was time to jump ship. My company wanted to close my branch and bring everyone over to head office to save rent. So, the idea of starting my own business was very attractive. There was a recession, the banks weren't lending in general but were even more reticent to lending money to women and people from ethnic minorities. Through a friend, I was introduced to a man living abroad but with money in offshore tax havens. He lent me the money at 20% for three years. I wasn't phased because my inner faith told me I would be able to pay back. Verity Appointments was launched. I based myself in a small office in Central London and waited for the phone to ring. Most of my clients and my temporary workers knew I was starting my own business. Slowly the

orders came in for temporary staff. Within four months I had a healthy business.

To run a team of temporary office staff, you need a very healthy cashflow and plenty of it. The staff are paid the week after they have completed their assignment but the client, although, required to pay within a fortnight, some tardy souls paid after 30/40 days. All recruitment agencies require an overdraft to cover these eventualities. When my previous company realised that the clients, they thought would stay with them, had migrated to Verity, they decided to sue me for taking their clients. The case went to arbitration, and I was told by the judge that although the clients were free to choose, I should have told them to go back to my old firm with their business as I had signed a non-compete clause. His judgement said, I had to pay to my old company 30% of my gross profits for the first year. This was a massive blow. After I had paid my previous employers, the bank decided that they could no longer give me an overdraft. This was on a Wednesday, the temporary staff needed to be paid on the Friday. There was very little time to arrange other means of finance. I went home and thought, what do I have, which I could sell? Then, the idea dawned, I could pawn my inherited jewellery! I took the box of gold jewellery to the pawnbrokers and got enough to pay my temps and keep going for a couple of weeks until I could make other arrangements. Now we know why our grandmothers had this safety net!

After the initial hurdles, the Company now recruits for clients in the commercial and legal sector and also has a successful



education division which specialises in supplying teaching staff for special needs children.

The recruitment business is one of the few businesses where you sell twice. You sell the job to the applicant and the applicant to the company. Sometimes, after the interview, the client or the applicant may be unsure and then you must use your sales skills again. It's never an easy sell. What I have learnt about sales, is that people buy from the people they like. If you are a pushy salesperson, they may buy the first time, but they won't come back. It is never a good idea to oversell. Repeat business is the best business. I have found that, when I am honest and open about the applicants, clients will see them as they know what to expect.

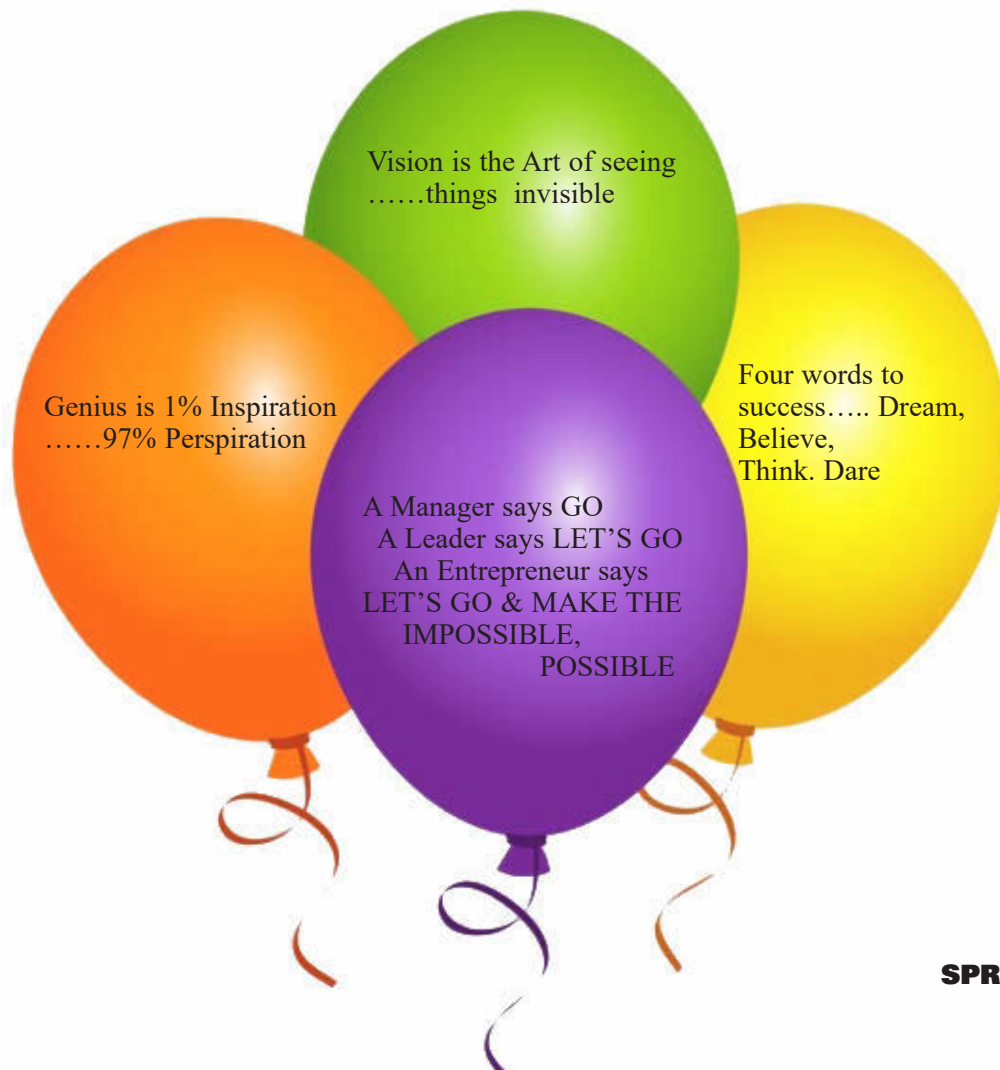
Managing client expectations is very important. At a client presentation,

when asked "what is your unique selling point", I always say "the ability to say no". I am always asked what that means. It means, that if we have no applicants that fit your job description, we will let you know and not send people who are not right for the job. The client soon realises that we will not be wasting their time and will always come back with something else. Some people feel uncomfortable to say they will not be able to help but it is better that way than upsetting your client.

In the recruitment business, we deal with human beings and as such, they sometimes don't come up to expectations or do a bad day's work. I have learnt that to apologise to the client immediately works wonders. Never let a client stew, it creates a bad impression. Apologising immediately and making amends, takes the sting out of the situation. When the customer knows you are sincere, they will forgive.

Lastly, persistence pays. I have managed to acquire new clients after five years of canvassing. If you use humour, they will remember you. Listening to your customer's needs is important, reading between the lines is also crucial.

Finally, the freedom of running your own business, far outweighs the ups and downs that you will encounter on your entrepreneurial journey.



## FOR THE LOVE OF COOKING AND SERVING PEOPLE

**O**ur trade is always fraught with whims and fancies, fashion and trends, political instability to financial ruffles, fear from pandemics, illnesses or diseases, manpower and skills shortages, rising wages and costs and everything in between. Not many venture into this profession for fear of not making money or becoming rich from your investments. That is very true but one gets into this industry for passion, for the buzz, for the people and for the very love of either cooking or serving people or both.

Many do see massive successes and many have a very different ethos when setting up a business within the realms of hospitality. For some like us, service is the key and everything that revolves around our ethos and that of our religion and its teachings. That may perhaps not be the right model in the modern world but that is who we are and that is what we do. Whilst we are fortunate to have survived major depressions and upheavals (like the last one as well), we cannot claim to be wealthy or having amassed wealth in any shape or form. However, the business has always given us a comfortable lifestyle and that which meets our needs.

### SO HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN?

I am totally of the opinion that all Zoroastrians are born to lead in business and that as a Parsi I think it runs deep within our veins and our makeup. The shift towards professionalism may have started in the sixties and seventies and now it is almost a must and most young people wind their way into high paying professions. Anyway, that is not what we have preached to our two sons both of whom are entrepreneurs in the making and heading towards their own destiny and we are proud of them.

The current business diversion came as it happens many a times by default. I was here in Britain on a work permit to come run someone else's restaurant. Political instability and a nineties recession took that business into an insolvent situation forcing me to think about running that business ourselves.

Upon asking Pervin if she would join me and we start to run that restaurant and with her consent, we entered into the unknown world of conducting our own business in a new land that we would one day call home.

Two young kids had to be brought up but at that time the most important role for Pervin was to do the busy lunch service and to handle the day to day accounts. I would do the rest.

This proved to be quite successful and we managed to turn the business around. We had seized the opportunity and saw success where others did not and this is frequently the first lesson for would-be entrepreneurs. *Get off the fence and Just Do It !*

Not to get into the difficulties and the mountain of issues I faced with the Home Office, we entered into partnership with some other people and that led to the opening of Café Spice Namasté in 1995.

With partners who were well seasoned into running restaurants in the UK we learnt a lot and that gave us the courage to buy them out eventually and run the business ourselves. Entrepreneurs are always learning, experimenting, failing, learning more and bouncing back.

**HISTORY.** Growing up in Bombay and entering the Hotel School I settled in quite easily and enjoyed the process. Our Head of department was keen for us to do a bit of business and he got my friend and I into making and producing cakes for weddings etc. This was out of college hours but we succeeded and the biz had set in.

Later I was not just making cakes and selling them but also my own candied peels and various jams made from the fruit trimmings etc which I produced. All that ended when I joined the Taj Palace Hotel and the career went from tiny entrepreneur to becoming a chef within a hotel group.

From there, I joined a friend to launch his new restaurant in Poona. Business was very successful, partnership not so. Eventually landing up in London.

### RUNNING THE BUSINESS IN THE UK

Coming from a corporate background of having worked with the Taj Group for over fifteen years, this was a complete shot in the head for us. Pervin had stopped working after Jamsheed our son was born in 1986 in Goa. But Pervin is brilliant in accounts and understanding the Nitty-Gritties of that part of the business as well as being an excellent host.

Once that was off my chest, my confidence boomed



Cyrus &amp; Pervin Todiwala

**Cyrus Todiwala** is a chef, restaurateur, educationist, author and entrepreneur. Genial and down-to-earth, his accessible persona masks an encyclopaedic knowledge of food history and cuisine.

Following a boarding school education, Cyrus completed four years of classical chef training in Bombay. From an hotel chef with the Taj Group, he rose to Executive Chef of the sprawling Taj Resorts in Goa. In the early 1990's, he immigrated to London with his young family. Almost immediately, his culinary gifts and boundless energy impressed the food cognoscenti and helped to reshape Britain's then limited expectations of Indian cuisine.

Café Spice Namaste at the edge of the City of London is a 25-year old institution, and the world's longest running Michelin BIB Gourmand restaurant ('good food, good value').

Cyrus has been awarded an MBE, and OBE and appointed Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London, on behalf of HM The Queen.

**Pervin Todiwala** is co-owner of Cafe Spice Namaste, with her husband, Cyrus. As Operations Director, Pervin was instrumental in the expansion of the Todiwala family business into a collection of four signature restaurants.

Graduating with honours from Bombay's prestigious Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition (IMHCT) Pervin worked as a Chef de Partie at the Taj Mahal Intercontinental Hotel. She became a full-time restaurateur when her family moved to London in 1991. Pervin is Founding Member of the Company of Entrepreneurs. In 2013, Pervin was made an Honorary Dame d'Escoffier of the Les Dames d'Escoffier, a society of women leaders in food and hospitality. She is the recipient of a 'World of Difference' Award from The International Alliance for Women and listed as 1000 Most Influential Women in the UK. And in 2020, she won the 'Influential Woman Award' at the British Curry Awards.





## COVER STORY

and, I was ready to take on any challenge. And though we had no job, no house, zero credit rating, two tiny kids and a family to feed and no money, we took the bold step of taking over the running of a very sick restaurant. With confidence, hard work and grit the tables turned and we managed to salvage the business and not allow it to crumble. These are traits for all entrepreneurs whatever their business may be. Our burden was also to settle the owner's debts and creditors and that was the greater challenge besides of course making the business work. Plus, the staff were owed a lot of money by the owners, which we also took care of. We learnt to do business in a new land. The good thing was we had friends who helped guide us with the accounts and what was needed to be fulfilled in the UK.

We struggled, but the quality of our food and the "Lunch Time" service that Pervin offered shone through all those difficulties and the restaurant became successful. It got a great mention in all the guides as well as the Michelin Guide and that set the pace. To this day we remain the longest awarded Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurant in the Guide. We tripped all the time with various legislative constraints but soon learnt how to go about things.

One day an American sounding gentleman called to speak to me at the restaurant and introduced himself as one Michael Gottlieb. He asked if I knew of him? Being relatively new to the country and having faced tons of difficulties from the start we only looked down and worked and had no idea of the famous names within the restaurant sector. Michael was very well known, and was the President of the Restaurateurs Association of Great Britain. Michael approached us and discussed his vision of opening a chain of Indian restaurants and if we would like to join.

That was the birth of Café Spice Namasté in 1995. We did attempt to open more but the fact that the restaurant became synonymous with my name it became extremely difficult to grow it as a brand and I would not substitute my quality to suit a roll out. MISTAKE perhaps but that was what it was.

In 2004 we finally bought out all the other share holders and since then Café Spice Namasté became solely ours. This year of course due to the heavy losses and the near collapsing of the business thanks to Covid and our previous landlord, we have taken on another share holder. *So as entrepreneurs we need to stay nimble, flexible and collaborate as needed to survive and/or grow.*

### *CAFÉ SPICE NAMASTÉ*

*Mr TODIWALA'S KITCHEN 1&2 (FRANCHISED WITH HILTON)*

*Mr TODIWALA'S PETISCOS (PORTUGUESE INSPIRED GOAN FOOD- A SMALL RESTAURANT IN ESSEX WITH OTHER PARTNERS)*

*Mr TODIWALA'S PRODUCTS ([www.mrtodiwalas.com](http://www.mrtodiwalas.com))*

*Mr TODIWALA'S ACADEMY*

The Business has grown in different directions organically and it now has under its wings

We have not become millionaires as a result but the name was spreading and we capitalized on these individual opportunities.

Through all of this we remain embedded in our culture and ethos and beliefs and we have been voted Britain's **Most Ethical** sourcing restaurant a couple of times and have won several awards for the work we do. Ethically running a business will mean investment into sustainability, caring for others, helping others and overall running an honest business.

During the course of this journey we have been fortunate to have been the recipient of both an MBE & an OBE as well as to become a Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London. The restaurant has also become one of the most awarded restaurants in Britain and stands proud of its achievements. Now after 26 years in one location we are looking forward to a new journey with confident but also with fears and apprehensions as any new business would have. So from 2022 we march forwards to the next phase of our journey.



## COVER STORY

## THE NEVER ENDING LOVE AFFAIR

**M**y love affair with threading began 17 long years ago. It started when I was a young 16 year old. When it first began, I had no idea this would be an ongoing, emotional, turbulent, but deeply meaningful relationship. You read that right, with threading. As in, eyebrow threading. Read along to understand my love/hate, long term, a bit dysfunctional, but all-around beautiful journey with threading and entrepreneurship.

While growing up I was not a child who dreamed of what they would do when they grew up. All I knew is that I loved making people happy and feel good. As I matured and grew I realized that I was someone who loved leading teams and at the same time I loved leading by serving others. Little did I know that this trait had a name: servant leadership - and it would lead me to be the entrepreneur I have grown to be over the last 17 years.

Contrary to what people think - the beauty and wellness industry is fierce, competitive, and not easy to make your mark in. Finding your niche and growing your client base to over 50,000 is no small feat. However, by luck or hard work or a little of both, we have done just that. **Beauty by Dolly** started 17 years ago in a small strip mall in San Diego, CA. Prior to 2005, eyebrow threading and sugar waxing in San Diego was non-existent. In fact, many people laughed at the idea of the “Indian method” of eyebrow shaping. They said it would be ridiculous to bring it to San Diego. No one would ever come. It would be laughed at. People would think it’s “weird”. However, Dolly (our namesake, my masi) had a dream that she needed to bring to life. Her passion started when she was 13 and she never let it go. Even today, at 72 years old, she is still as in love with sugaring and threading as she was

when Gaver Auntie taught her in 1963.

Fast forward to 2018: **Beauty by Dolly** had spent the last 12 years garnering accolades in national magazines such as InStyle, multiple blog mentions, news reports, and a growing client base. Many ask how we made our mark. As the years passed and my mom, masi, and I began learning the business and understanding our clients we became hyper focused on 2 things: the client experience and the team member experience. If my team members were not happy with me and **Beauty by Dolly**, how could they ever make a client happy? We believe the true secret to living is giving. Giving your time, your energy, your knowledge to help others grow. That is our true accomplishment: serving others. Do right by them. Even if they do not always do right by you and your company. **Beauty by Dolly** has built its foundation on these very beliefs. As a Zoroastrian, good deeds are instilled in every fiber of our being and there was no way for us to operate any differently in business than we do in everyday life.

Come 2020, the world turned upside down with covid. My long term love affair came to a swift halt. Being an entrepreneur since the pandemic hit has been lackluster. Too much stress, no reward. No staff. No clients. The last two years worth of stress have taken away so much joy from running a business, enjoying family, and enjoying life. But I still love doing this, why? I guess that’s what separates an entrepreneur from the rest - the drive to still continue even when it feels like you can’t go on any longer. I presume that is the same with anyone who truly loves their career. As I lay awake at 4 am writing this article because I can’t sleep thinking about work, I came across something that my good friend Rhea Wadia re-posted



Natashah Abrishamchian

*Natashah Abrishamchian, née Torki, is one of the owners of Beauty by Dolly, a family owned hair removal studio in San Diego, CA that specializes in threading & sugaring but also in hiring, training and helping refugees. Natashah holds her B.A. in Sociology and Master of Business Administration both from UCLA. She also is a Professional in Human Resources (PHR). Natashah lives in San Diego with her husband Hadi and son Ara.*

on Instagram. It was a tweet from someone who is knee deep in the tennis world. It read: “One day, I will stop caring so much about tennis. One day, I will realize it made me feel too many emotions, and mostly for nothing. One day, I will not lose sleep because of it and I will live happily and healthy. But today is not this day. See you at 3 am, suckers.” That is the love affair I speak of. The one you know is probably unhealthy but you can’t let go of, and yet still beautiful and profound in so many ways.

## AN AUTHOR IS AN ENTREPRENEUR TOO!!

**Nawaz Merchant** is the first Indian-born writer to win the Minotaur Books/Mystery Writers of America Award for Best First Crime Fiction. After a corporate career in commercialization of pharmaceutical products, Nawaz returned to her passion for writing fiction. She teaches at Rutgers-Osher Institute since 2020.

Nominated for six national awards, her historical mystery *Murder in Old Bombay* portrays themes of feminism and race in an action-adventure mystery. The sequel, *Peril at the Exposition* will be published in July 2022. Nawaz is a board member of Mystery Writers of America- NY Chapter, and member of Crime Writers of Color. As a board member of non-profit Shine and Inspire, she supports programs that keep homeless and indigent students in school.



**NAWAZ MERCHANT**

Between sets at the gym in 2019, I read an email on my phone which said, “I’m Kelley Ragland, Associate Publisher and Editorial Director of Minotaur Books, and we’ve just selected your novel, *THE RAJABAI TOWER MYSTERY*, as the winner of our annual competition! Congratulations. We love the premise of the book, the setting, your writing--all of the above. And we’d love to publish it on our list.”

### 2019 EDGAR BANQUET PHOTOS, continued from page 7



**ROBERT L. FISH  
AWARD WINNER:  
NANCY NOVICK**



**MINOTAUR CONTEST  
WINNER:  
NEVE MARCH**



**MARY HIGGINS CLARK  
WINNER:  
SUJATA MASSEY**



It was the message I'd been dreaming of since 2015, when I left a 25 year corporate career and started down a new career as a writer. Imagine my astonishment. Was this real? When had I submitted my novel (I'd sent it in to so many agents and contests) and ... what on earth was Minotaur Books?

I sent the message on to Jill, my agent, with one word : YIKES! She called right away, her voice bouncing and grinning. She said Minotaur was a part of Macmillan, the world's largest publisher of mystery books! My award came with a publishing contract and would be presented on Edgar night in Manhattan. "We're invited to the Edgar Awards," I told my bemused husband. "Charlaine Harris will be there! And Sujata Massey! And Walter Mosely!"

A few days later, wearing formals, we joined the luminaries at the Grand Hyatt Hotel ballroom. "This is like the Oscars," he said, looking around, realizing for the first time perhaps, what I'd done. This wasn't a hobby. This was what I wanted to do with my life. All those years of writing and editing. Those long months of pitching my book to agents. Those nights of working at my scenes, my sentences, moving pieces around, tweaking the language. Here it was, the opening of my new career.

I'd written poems and short stories as a teen. Two of them had been published in Target, a children's magazine before I migrated to the US. After completing a master's degree in economics I went on to work in analytics teams, first in a consulting outfit, and then for major pharmaceutical corporations in a variety of roles. I enjoyed the teamwork and built friendships that have persisted, twenty years later. Juggling home, kids and work, I won awards for productivity, created new analyses and new teams. I was chosen to present a project to the CEO of Johnson and Johnson. But something was missing.

So I began to write stories as a hobby. Over the next two decades, I completed four novels, but didn't have time to market them, or even learn the publishing market. Someday, I promised myself, someday. Then, when my team was laid off in 2015, I had an epiphany.

Why wait until I retire to try this new writing career? I'd give it a few years. If my enthusiasm petered out, I'd find another job. "Try it," said my hubby.

My enthusiasm skyrocketed when I found a local group of writers, who helped take my craft up a level. I read books on writing, and deconstructed books I enjoyed in order to understand the structure and pace. I joined webinars and attended an online conference. And I read. A lot.

Inspired by an article in Parsi Khabar about the 1891 unexplained deaths of the Godrej girls in Bombay, I started to craft a story where a detective investigates it, and finally uncovers the truth. Writing this novel was exhilarating. I'd see the scenes unfold in my mind and race to capture them. A good scene would have me walking on air for a week! Four months later the draft completed, I began to revise the book while creating marketing materials. I took trainings on how to pitch agents, and assembled my target list.



Each week I read a chapter aloud to my library critique group and listened to their feedback. This market research cum product-improvement process was done gratis. My critique partners were incredibly generous with their input, each time demanding to see another chapter next week. One of them is now my “developmental editor”—for life! In return, I edited his memoir.

Using marketing skills learned in my corporate job, I queried 120 agents, (and mostly was declined!) After six months, two agents asked to see my manuscript. One of them, Jill Grosjean, agreed to represent me. I kept honing my skill, revising my novel, reading books by great writers.

While searching for previous years’ Edgar Award winners (Edgars are a top award for Mystery writers), I stumbled upon a contest for unpublished writers, and sent in my manuscript. That was MWA’s contest for Best First crime novel. It is not awarded each year, and about 600 writers try their hand annually. That was the contest that launched my new career.

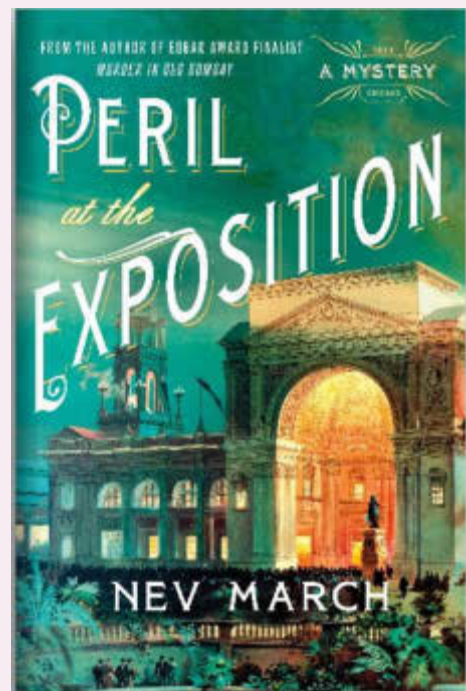
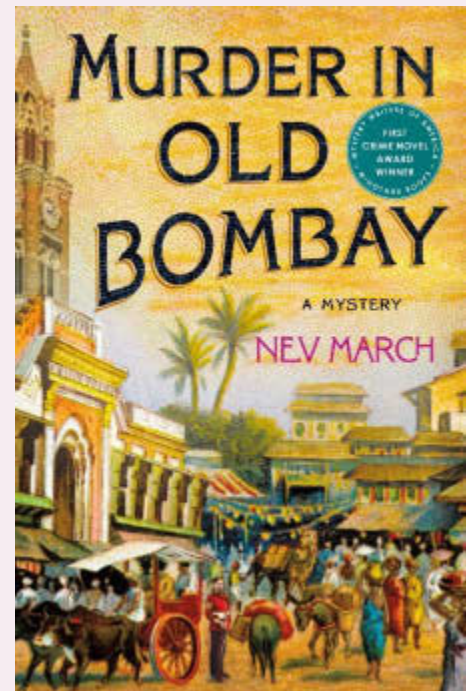
With the publication of *Murder in Old Bombay*, I needed to learn how to promote a book. Again, using my work skills, I created a publicity plan. A social media consultant (Lila Sidhwa, thank you!) taught me how to leverage social media. I pitched book talks to libraries, book clubs and podcasts. Now I conduct 2-3 promotional events a month, toggling them with writing and my engagement with MWA’s New York chapter, where I joined the board. I also teach writing at the Rutgers Osher Institute and am on the board of a wonderful local non-profit, Shine and Inspire which offer both the satisfaction of volunteering and social contact with interesting people.

Winning a publishing contract took me into a new world of writers and also deadlines! After *Murder in Old Bombay*’s success, Macmillan Publishers offered me a two-book deal. Now I had to be more efficient with my research time, build and adhere to my writing schedule, while keeping up my media presence. An author is an entrepreneur too!

On vacations, I’d research local history and find nuggets that could be the impetus for a future book. Attending talks by other writers inspires me. Connecting with readers is energizing. I learned how to build and maintain my website. Soon, I plan to create a quarterly newsletter for my readers. Since my own critique group was so instrumental in my growth, I offered to create a critique group program for the NY chapter of MWA. Delighted, they accepted. In this way, I try to give back to the writing community.

Dame Agatha Christie wrote 66 novels in her lifetime. Not all are great, but some are magnificent. Although I started late, I hope to have a long writing career, like her. Book 2 in my series, *Peril at the Exposition* will be published in July 2022 and the third is scheduled for 2023. I have ideas for a couple more books in the series. Then I may try my hand at contemporary mysteries or return to the four historical novels I didn’t publish. The path ahead isn’t charted, but that’s what makes it exciting!

Contact me through my site [www.Nevmarch.com](http://www.Nevmarch.com), or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/NevMarch>  
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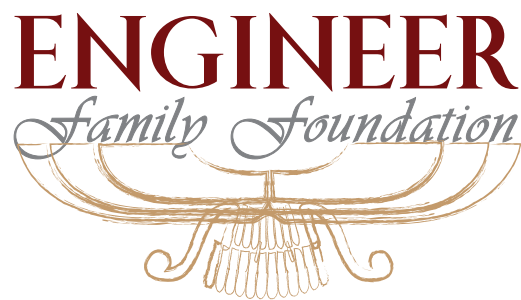
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## THE ACCIDENTAL ARTIST

### Curb Your Enthusiasm

Entrepreneurship wasn't exactly encouraged in my family. Stories of relatives who launched businesses and failed were told and retold with vivid imagery. Like Aesop's fables, each retelling was punctuated with the same moral: the folly of such adventures. The angst of entrepreneurial defeat was remembered long after any thrill of entrepreneurial victory faded. The desire to retain a foothold in the middle-class made entrepreneurial risk-taking a high-wire act...one preferably left to others. Entrepreneurship was a philosophy better-suited to the well-fed and economically comfortable.

Get a good education, a decent nine-to-five job, and try to work your way up the corporate ladder ...that was the sensible way to go. And that's the way life was unfolding; graduation from IIT Bombay, a doctorate from Case Western Reserve University, and a series of corporate jobs with increasing executive responsibilities.... culminating in a Senior Vice-Presidential position at one of the nation's largest, publicly traded healthcare companies.

### A Reappraisal of Risk

Then Congress passed the Balanced Budget Act. In the hours after the federal register published its final regulations, I decided to chart the rubegoldbergian movements the law would require in company operations. The next morning, I requested a meeting with the company CEO. The company's most profitable revenue would be slashed by a third. Massive layoffs, untold misery and mayhem were about to be unleashed; corporate bankruptcy was a possibility. Ironically, the entire industry was engulfed in the same storm; there was no place to seek shelter.

Suddenly, corporate employment came with a high-risk premium, and my the long-held truth about entrepreneurial risk became plural and contingent.



*Hues and Cries,  
Copyright CepiaWorks*

*Bomi Parakh*



*Bomi Parakh is a resident of Albuquerque, New Mexico. His interest in digital art has roots in his doctoral thesis which involved interactive digital displays of traffic flows in urban areas.*

*Bomi also has three decades of work experience in all parts of the healthcare continuum, including some of the nation's leading HMOs, hospital systems, multispecialty physician practices, and post-acute providers.*

*Bomi was instrumental in starting the New Mexico HMO Association and was a founding member of its Board. He has been involved in trade association activities for the HMO, long-term care, and assisted living industries.*

### An Opportunity in Crises

A multi-million-dollar, state-of-the-art, corporate audio-visual center was nearing completion at our headquarters even as bankruptcy loomed. Understandably, there was little interest now in any technology that was meant to reimagine and reinvent the corporate image. I had worked on graphical processors before, but this was no ordinary candy store. The audio-visual center became my after-hours home. My first artworks were created on those very new, very powerful and mostly untouched machines. Motion detectors at the center puzzled security officers about the presence of a late-night intruder but no loss of equipment.

Soon I was in a lawyer's office incorporating my healthcare business; a subsidiary of that consulting business specialized in digital art. Surprisingly, the consulting business started generating revenue. More surprising was the quiet calm that comes from being in control of one's destiny. I wondered if the stresses of the nine-to-five corporate world were underestimated by my family.



*Empyrean Blossom, Copyright CepiaWorks*

*Darwaza, Copyright CepiaWorks*

### Facing the Future

I had become the accidental entrepreneur. In hindsight, my consulting business had the advantage of skills that were finetuned in the corporate world; it was off to a good start. But the artworld marches to a different tune. It wasn't enough to be highly skilled in the technology of digital art. Artists need a style with a unique and enduring quality. The artworld was understandably slow to recognize a newcomer without any art credentials. And digital art was still in its formative years; like early photography, the artworld was still dubious about the artistic value of digital art. Art critics, they say, can be very open-minded about new things, as long as they're exactly like the old ones. This is where the sheer joy of working in an area you love, and the resilience that comes with it, pays dividends. Slowly...ever so slowly...my artwork began to draw attention. I became more technically proficient in the electronic arts. I developed specialized electronic paintbrushes to sketch, draw and color on a computer screen, much like an artist would on a piece of paper. More importantly, I was developing my own artistic style. I joked that when I first started, my work was both good and original.... but the part that was good was not original, and the part that was original was not good. Things were different now; I got my mojo working.



### Success Beckons

My goal was to expand the frontiers of fine art via high-tech mediums of artistic expression. I was slowly developing a style that deconstructed an image and enhanced its essence. They say that good artwork has two faces, one toward its own time and another toward eternity. My effort was rewarded by a slow but growing recognition within the art community. First, some prizes at the fine art pavilion of the State Fair; then a presence at some prominent art galleries in town, followed by awards from the Art in Public Places Program, then came offers to develop campaign posters for local politicians, a permanent exhibit at the African American Performing Arts Center, a presidential portrait that made its way to the West Wing of the White House, a display at the Albuquerque International Balloon Museum, and shows at various city-sponsored events. It was a welcome validation.

### A Full Circle

The consulting business was going full throttle with some Fortune 500 companies as clients. Some consulting assignments would end up in employment offers, especially when assignments were multi-year engagements. “We hold our consultants responsible for their advice”, a client once quipped, “and the best way to do that is to hire the consultant”. One job offer was hard to refuse and I reentered the corporate world. However, once you are in business for yourself, you develop an entrepreneurial work ethic that never leaves you, even in the corporate environment. And if the corporate environment were to degrade, you have the comfort of knowing you can effortlessly transition out of that environment. In that sense, entrepreneurship has some interesting and unanticipated fringe benefits.



*Showtime, Copyright CepiaWorks*

### The Future of Digital Art

The art business continues to evolve. Computer art was an offspring of atomic research and the Manhattan Project, and originally developed in the high deserts around Albuquerque, New Mexico. I continue to combine computer languages, red-green-blue wavelengths, gradients and algorithms to aesthetically fracture, simplify and reassemble a version of reality that transports the viewer to

the realm of the familiar. A ‘back-to-the-future’ aesthetic allows me to develop imagery that conveys the sensory experience of traditional fine art.

The pandemic hit the art industry particularly hard. But artists are a curiously resilient group. During the outbreak, digital artists found a way to democratize the authentication and sale of art via a completely novel electronic transaction called the Non-Fungible Token (NFT). Bitcoin and Ethereum block chain technologies facilitated such transactions in digital art.

Digital art, block chains and NFTs aside, a Jackson Pollock quote suggests that, at our core, we’re all artists because we build things.... some do it with a brush, some with a shovel, some with a pen.

For a portfolio of artwork for sale, please email [cepia.works@att.net](mailto:cepia.works@att.net)





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## MY ENTREPRENEURIAL JOURNEY —

*a villager from Sharifabad, Iran, to owner of various North American companies.*

Al Dabestani immigrated to Canada from Iran in 1972. He received an MBA from the University of British Columbia in 1974 and completed course work for a Ph.D. in Economics at Simon Fraser University.

Soon after became a Real Estate agent in Vancouver, B.C. and Seattle, and eventually moved to Seattle.

In 1990, co-founded A Theatre Near You, Inc., where he owned thirty-six theatres exhibiting over one hundred screens across the US and Canada. Al also partnered with Eros Entertainment to distribute Indian movies across North America.

After selling all his theatres, he remained focused on real estate and private investments. During this time, he acquired real estate ranging from office buildings, shopping plazas, multi-family residential and much more. In addition he worked in land development and property renovations. Al engaged in many private investment opportunities such as Biodiesels, Medical Clinics, and Commercial development projects to name a few.

Mr. Dabestani and his wife Gitty have two children, Ardeshir and Nousheen.



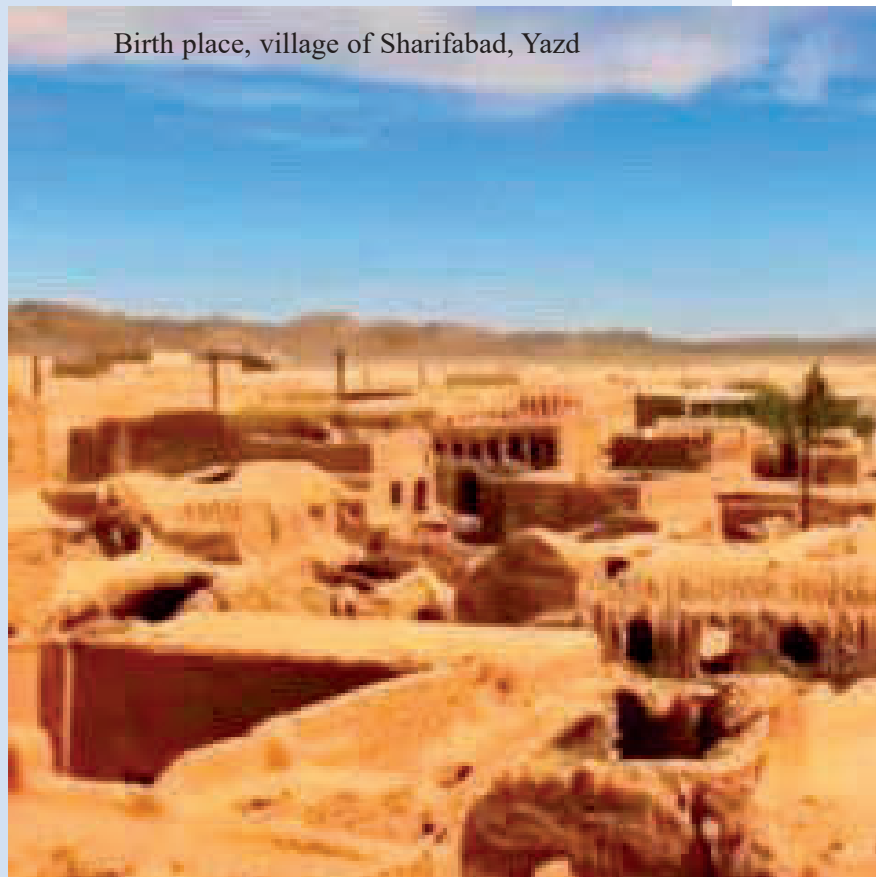
ALAYAR DABESTANI

My journey began with my birth in a small village called Sharifabad, in the Yazd province of Iran. As a young boy I knew that hard work and education was imperative for me to be successful in life. With dedication to my education, I could be anything I wanted to be in life, which is just what I did, I became a successful CEO of various corporations throughout Canada and the USA.

With my father being a teacher, our family valued schooling. There were many nights I would be up late after working long days in the fields, completing my schooling in the dark with a candle. At times I was so tired that I felt I could not do my schooling, but I found the strength within to carry on and obtain good grades. My family taught me that education would open doors of opportunity for me. Through good grades I was able to attend the University of Tehran and obtain a degree in Economics.

While in Iran I decided to further my education by moving to Canada to become a student at University of British Columbia.(UBC). Canada provided additional opportunities to me that I did not have before. While in

Birth place, village of Sharifabad, Yazd



Vancouver I was able to meet with many Persians, Parsis and Zoroastrians from my community. The experience to engage with them, to get to know them and to network was invaluable. While attending UBC for my MBA, I found in the local paper a job listing to become a realtor. While I did not know anything about realty at the time, I felt this would be a great way to continue to network with the community and gather valuable lessons for me to apply to my life and goals.

In the early 1980's the Persian community in BC was beginning to take root and grow. With my new real estate job, coupled with being Zarathushti, allowed me to be a sort of ambassador for realty within my community. Quickly I became one of the top producing realtors in the area. I was one of a small number of Persian realtors in the BC area and this provided me many great opportunities. While meeting my community members and providing them with real estate services, my entrepreneurial journey really began to take off. When I met with my community members, I was careful to learn about what they were doing and how they were becoming successful. I took what I learned from my MBA in college, as well as what I was learning from my community business leaders and applied the two to posture myself to grow my own business.

I soon realized that these business professionals were becoming successful through passive income. You can work hard and have a great paying job; however, this pays you only as long as you are working. You can work 40-hour weeks, or even 60-hour weeks, but you will always only be paid for how many hours you put in; with hours in a day being finite, you are thus limited to how much you can make. I learned quickly that the key is to have passive income, such as real estate, investments, or your own business; this will allow greater expansion and thus greater income. Rather than having a boss, be your own boss and the world has no limits.

Soon I purchased my first real estate rental property, it was not much, but it was a start, which is the key, just start. From my first property, I started to gain passive income and then was able to obtain additional lending power through the banks and then purchased my second property, then a third and so on. Over my 40 years of being a business professional, I have conservatively purchased and sold over two hundred properties. Over the years I diversified my portfolio to include all types of properties, such as rental homes, commercial properties, medical buildings, etc.; in

doing so this allowed me to not be heavily concentrated in one area so that I would be able to weather the ebbs and flows of economic trends. This was an important lesson I learned from the other business professionals because if you are heavily centralized in one area, such as apartments and there is an adverse law, or economic impediment, this can affect your entire portfolio and put you at great risk of default, through diversification you are better postured to remain solvent.

In the mid-eighties I then decided to further my business expansion by moving to Seattle with my family. This allowed me to further expand my business contacts by meeting more Zarathrusti and Persians. Any time I met a new business professional I was careful to learn about their business, what they found to be successful and to take any advice from them that I could. There are many things you can learn in school, but equally important are the life-lessons learned from business experiences, whether your own, or someone else's. One of my key take aways from my entrepreneurial journey is to always learn, keep learning from industry leaders to gain insightful lessons on how to succeed. Eventually, you will find yourself as a leading industry leader and people will then begin asking you questions and learn from you.





Through meeting industry leaders, I found a partner to open local cinemas. My partner and I formed *A Theater Near You*, starting with a few cinemas in Washington state. The cinema business was thriving and soon we began purchasing other cinemas in other states like California, New York and Texas. My partner and I then expanded business internationally and opened cinemas across Canada, spanning from the Pacific to the Atlantic. At our peak we had over thirty cinemas in North America. As we grew, so did the opportunities, we had large vendors like Coca-Cola, Pepsi, MGM, Paramount and the likes reach out to us to use their products. With growth comes not only more knowledge of business, but additional opportunities. I learned to never let an opportunity pass, nor think that an opportunity may not be fruitful. One of my greatest business stories came from an opportunity that at the time did not seem like much of anything, but it grew into one of my largest business transactions.

The Albion Theatre in Toronto, Canada was one of our theaters in which an opportunity presented itself, a man came to me asking for us to show Bollywood movies for his community. The Albion Cinema was one of our most successful theaters that had many sold out shows, so when a man came asking

to take a weekend spot to show some films, I was a bit reluctant as I would be losing revenue because he desired to show films during our most profitable days and times. Rather than dismiss his offer, I collaborated with him, and we agreed to let him show the films at later showings. When the first night came for showing a Bollywood film, I was surprised, the place was completely sold out. We then allowed him to have additional showings of films, each time sold out. From these showings, the film's producer, EROS International, contacted me directly to inquire about my cinemas. After some discussion, the CEO of ERO Entertainment learned that I was Zarathrusti and was immediately overcome with joy and trust in me and my business. I was then invited to meet



with him personally in London, UK, all expenses paid. I met with the CEO, and we then embarked on a business venture that became highly successful, to which EROs Entertainment is now a publicly traded stock with a market CAP of millions. From this unknown man entering one of my theatres to inquire to show a Bollywood film, to engaging in business with a multi-million-dollar international film producer, none of this would have happened if I did not seize the opportunity.

While expanding my business, I met many professionals in all industries, this led me to many of my expansion companies. For instance, I have been involved in, medical clinics, car washes, lube shops, espresso stands, strip-malls, apartments, plat development, commercial buildings, industrial buildings, and so on. I have also been fortunate to engage in business opportunities all over the world.

Through my career I have been blessed, but anyone has the opportunity, the ingredients are education, hard work and networking. I cannot stress enough the importance of education; this will teach you the fundamentals needed so when you go out to the world you are ready with the tools you will need to succeed. Second, the hard work, there will be times when you fail, we all do, it is part of the process, it weeds out those who are not meant for this business. Some of the world's largest business leaders, Bezos, Gates, Musk, all have fallen when faced with adversity, but what made them successful, is they got back up, learnt from the mistake and keep moving forward. Lastly, the networking, always network, meet people, learn from them and never let an opportunity pass. An opportunity that may not seem like much, may turn out to be your best.

## ALAYAR DABESTANI AND FAMILY CONGRATULATE 2021 WZCC AWARD WINNERS

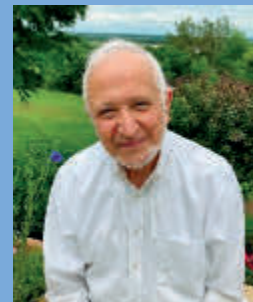


### Outstanding Zarathushti Professional DR FARROKH MISTREE, USA

Professor and Associate  
Chair of Mechanical  
Engineering at Georgia  
Institute of Technology;  
and currently L.A. Comp  
Chair & Professor,

Aerospace & Mechanical  
Engineering, Univ.of  
Oklahoma.(OU)  
He is coordinator for  
WZCC of Zoroastrian  
Faculty Network's  
monthly webinars

series to help the  
next generation of  
Zoroastrians learn how to  
create economic, social  
and intellectual value.  
Winner of several



### Outstanding Zarathushti Entrepreneur PIRUZ KHAMBATTA, INDIA

Chairman and MD of  
RASNA since 1998,  
chairman of Rasna  
Foundation and Trustee  
of Areez Khambatta  
Benevolent Trust Rasna.  
A legendary Indian  
success story, due to his

ingenious qualities of  
hands-on management  
and innovative marketing  
creating a niche by  
offering a low cost  
concentrate option  
with the excitement  
of constantly adding

new flavors plus  
vitamins. Today it has  
12 manufacturing plants  
in India, 2 overseas  
exporting to 53 countries



### Outstanding Young Zarathushti Entrepreneur/Professional URVAKHSHA TAVADIA, INDIA

Designer and developer  
of a 'Do It Yourself'  
modular solderless  
system to enable  
connection of Lithium-  
Ion batteries into battery  
packs. It is now shipped  
to 110 countries across

6 continents to clients  
like Airbus, Nasa and  
Isro. Using Kick-starter  
he raised \$ 58,000 and  
also received an interest  
free loan Rs. 25 lakhs  
from WZCC in 2019.  
He is now diversifying

into "Dental and  
Surgical Equipment",  
"Online Seafood and  
Meat Delivery", and  
"Hydroponics and  
Mushroom Cultivation".

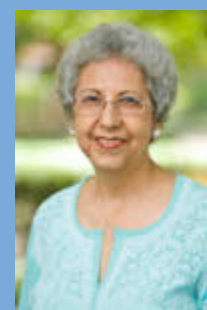


### Outstanding Zarathushti Social Entrepreneur ARMENE MODI, INDIA

Established Ashta no  
Kai in 1998 "For a better  
tomorrow" in Japanese  
to transform the lives  
of thousands of rural  
women and children  
in 10 villages in Shirur  
Taluka of Pune District

with innovative strategies  
viz Bicycle Bank,  
Life-Skills Education,  
Scholarships and karate  
classes. Armene has a  
Masters from Columbia  
University in TESOL,  
Masters in International

Relations from Tufts  
University in MA, and  
honorary Doctorate from  
J.F. Oberlin University,  
Tokyo, Japan, and an  
Albert Schweitzer Medal  
from World Literacy  
Council of Oxford.



## IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR

## DHUN & PHIL SHROFF at age of 90 are proving that it is NEVER TOO LATE TO BE AN ENTREPRENEUR



*Dhun & Phil Shroff grew up in Bombay, India. After marriage in 1960 and they came to the USA. Phil had graduated with Honors from VJTI with LTM and B. Text degrees in Textiles and was admitted at the Lowell Technological Institute for his MS degree in Textile Engineering. He completed his AMPC (Marketing) at New York University. Dhun graduated as a Couturier from the prestigious Flo Hyams School of Designing & Dress Making and then established and managed her own School of Designing & Dress Making with a roster of 50 students and had a studio where she designed Originals to suit customer needs. From 1962 to 1978, armed with their degrees, they were easily absorbed in manufacturing facilities as salaried employees and gained experience in every facet of textile distribution chain from fibers to fabrics. From 1978 to 1986 they were considered authorities in various links of the textile distribution chain and were published and photographed 555 times in Domestic and International trade papers and magazines. Then, at an average age of 54 years they decided to chase their dreams and become entrepreneurs and are still going strong at 90 years*

Entrepreneurship is neither a Science nor an Art. It is a Practice. —Peter Drucker.

**K**nowledge without action is meaningless. Ideas are a dime a dozen. You need someone to execute it.....Here enters the Entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurship has no age criteria or distinction of race or color. It is Borderless or Boundary-less. The individual has to either have or may have to develop certain innate qualities. We are living in a complex world where one factor is constant, and that is "Change". You experience it in every facet of our life; whether it be sociological, environmental, cultural, technological, emotional or behavioral. However, what is changing exponentially is the "Rate of Change". Therefore to be an entrepreneur one should have a finger on the pulse of the society and to constantly monitor its heartbeat. In this Virtual Society, you need Intelligence & Experience married to Intuitiveness, to be able to zoom in and out, and keep reinventing yourself constantly. It is an unprecedented Virtual World of cultural mix, sociological diversification, technological breakthroughs. environmental uncertainties and climatic





upheavals. These are all pointing to opportunities to be lassoed. The formula for success in this complexity is to embrace the uncertainties without the fear of failure. Successful Entrepreneurs have knowledge of product or service; tremendous self-confidence, hard work; and perseverance. So, go ahead: Don't just dream it; Become it!!!

Our entrepreneurship journey started in 1986, at an average age of 54 years: The question was? To be or not to be That was the "Dilemma".

Having spent 24 years as salaried employees we felt it was time to make a change with the celebrity status we had achieved in the industry (American Cyanamide and Monsanto). From making products, we decided to sell our services as consultants.

Unsured of our decision, we named our company "**Dilemma Inc**". It was a resounding success and lasted for 10 years. In 1996, at an average age of 65 years, when most people retire, we changed our hats again. We saw an opportunity. The demographics were changing and the lifestyles were changing. We moved from forecasting and consulting to manufacturing a product. We fused two disciplines.

We promoted **Dilemma Inc** as a meeting place for Art and Fashion . It was a hit. To stay in business you have to keep reinventing yourself to stay ahead of the curve. We kept changing our

product in terms of category, shape, sizes, fabric content, color, etc to meet the whims of the industry. We used technological innovations to change our product and distribution channels to fit our needs. You can see examples of our product in the pictures attached.

Change again in 2020, at an average age of 88 years. When we got engulfed in the pandemic, and stopped traveling, we visualized that the retail scene would be going thru a major change. The brick and mortar distribution channel was going to start sharing with on-line so we decided to launch our own websites; one for wholesale called [www.dilemmafashions.net](http://www.dilemmafashions.net) and one for retail called [www.artwearbydilemma.com](http://www.artwearbydilemma.com) at different price points. It was a different "modus operandi". Keeps us busy and involved so there is no time to think of aches or pains and no stress whether you have a job the next day or not. We can truly say, "We are the Masters of our ship, And the Captains of our Soul" One of the main advantages of being an Entrepreneur!!

Stats show that older 50+ year old entrepreneurs harness their decades of experience, with sizeable networks and stronger financial assets making their business more sustainable than that of younger entrepreneurs.



# Zoroastrian Museum

"The Joyous Flame" opens in Singapore, March 14, 2022

The Parsi Zoroastrian community has had a long and active history in Singapore. The first recorded Parsis arrived in Singapore in 1819 and since then, the community has had many generations of families that have made Singapore their home, with Zoroastrian children studying in local schools and colleges and young men fulfilling their National Service obligations. The community has been active in the inter-faith arena in Singapore and an active part of the Inter Religious Organization, Singapore for decades. Approximately 350-400 Parsi Zoroastrians call Singapore home and despite being such a miniscule community it boasts of a "Parsi Road" in the prime financial district.

Parsi Zoroastrians in Singapore have excelled in fields like medicine, airlines, shipping, banking, finance and technology. Set up in 1954, as the Parsi Association of Singapore (now called Parsi Zoroastrian Association of South East Asia, Singapore), the association has been managing the affairs of the community. In 2011, the Association (PZAS) set up a community center called **Zoroastrian House** which has since become the hub of cultural activity and social gatherings for members and visitors.

Over the last few years, there has been a great deal of curiosity and interest among our fellow Singaporeans about our religion, its history, culture, practices and food. The managing committee of PZAS, therefore, decided to create a permanent Zoroastrian Museum at Zoroastrian House. This is a vivid showcase of the history and traditions of Zoroastrianism, not just for our members but to be experienced by friends and well-wishers in Singapore.

The Museum exhibits of **Joyous Flame** are a joint effort of PZAS and Dr. Shernaz Cama of the ParZor Foundation India. We are very grateful to them in helping create the content of this museum which is a beautiful repository of Zoroastrian artifacts and historical records and contains 21 richly illustrated panels, displays of traditional objects and some precious donated articles. Artifacts include miniature replicas of the Cyrus Cylinder, a replica of the Dokhma and the Iranshah Fire Temple (created by Jamshid Bhiwandiwalla), amongst others. There is a small but growing collection of reference books related to Zoroastrianism and the Parsi community. The Museum covers

- our prophet Zarathustra,
- our religious and cultural symbols,
- our origins and political history in Persia
- our subsequent move to India
- the history of the Parsis in Singapore and the global diaspora
- our clothing, festivals and cuisine.

The Museum was inaugurated on March 14<sup>th</sup> (*Avan mah Hormuz roj*) by Mr. Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law, Singapore, in the presence of Interfaith Leaders of the Inter Religious Organization (IRO) and members of the Zoroastrian Community. The number of attendees had to be curtailed on account of safe distancing measures in-force due to Covid-19.

The minister was welcomed with a traditional "achu michu" before he inaugurated the Museum by cutting the ceremonial ribbon. He was greeted by Parsi women in their *Garas* and men in *Daglis* and taken around the museum by PZAS President Homiyar Vasania and Hormuz Avari (Past-President PZAS and Zoroastrian Representative on the IRO). An elaborately decorated Haft-Sin table delighted leaders of different faiths who were present at the inauguration.

The IRO leaders representing the different faiths in Singapore, were Buddhist, Taoist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Jain, Zoroastrian



(Photo above Monira Bhada, Natasha Karanjia; Hormuz Avari; Minister Edwin Tong cutting ribbon; Homiyar Vasania (PZAS president))





*Mr Tan Thiam Lye (Taoist); Mr Ameer Ali Abdali Muslim; Minister Edwin Tong; Rev Terry Kee (Christian); Venerable Seck Kwang Phing (Bhuddist) Behing Homiyar Vasanias (PZCA President); Mr Hormuz Avari (Zoroastrian) Mr Benjamin Tan (Taoist)*

and Bahai.(Photo above)

PZAS President Homiyar Vasanias in his speech, mentioned that the museum was a joint effort between PZAS and ParZor foundation India (an on-going initiative of UNESCO New Delhi, aimed at the holistic preservation and promotion of Parsi- Zoroastrian culture). He mentioned that the museum was an effort to give an insight into the minority community in Singapore as well as in the world. He highlighted the importance of the



Parsi Zoroastrians in Singapore as part of the country's intangible cultural heritage and hoped the community would continue to grow and flourish. (Photo left)

In his speech, Minister Edwin Tong recognized the contributions of the Parsi Zoroastrian community members to Singapore, in business and philanthropy. Singapore is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, and Minister Tong said, "Zoroastrianism is represented as one of the faiths in the Inter-Religious Organization, and the Parsi community has indeed been a key part of the inter-faith efforts in Singapore Our heritage, through initiatives like this museum, really plays an important role in anchoring

our identity and fostering a stronger 'sense of us' ... it also allows us to connect with different communities," said Minister Tong adding "It also reminds us of our historical and contemporary links to one another and instils a sense of belonging and despite the relatively small numbers, the Parsi community has always been an active participant in Singapore's rich social fabric. It is a community of both deep roots and of tall branches," said Minister Tong.(photo above)

The community has been receiving numerous congratulatory messages from the different faith groups on the inauguration of the Zoroastrian Museum with an increasing interest from Singaporeans to visit it.





# GEN Z and BEYOND SURVEY \_

Experiences in India

The Gen Z and Beyond Survey

## *Nazneen Takes To India*

launched on the auspicious occasion of Parsi New Year on 16 August 2021. Since then, we have been promoting and publicising the survey, starting in North America (NA), where we reached out to individual Associations and Corresponding Member Groups. Information about the Survey has spread gradually within the NA community but **there needs to be a far greater uptake in filling the survey** than is currently the case. According to the latest figures, NA has only half the number of completed surveys as India.

In December 2021, we turned our attention to India. In my role as project manager, I travelled there in January 2022. One of my pressing tasks was to make the survey known to community leaders in Zoroastrian population centres outside of Mumbai. Towards that end, and despite a slow start due to the resurgence of Covid-19 in January, I travelled to Surat, Pune, Secunderabad, Navsari, Vadodara, and Ahmedabad. I also made connections with Panchayats in Delhi, Kolkata and Bengaluru.

In each of the places I visited, I gave a 20–25-minute presentation on the Gen Z and Beyond Survey: what it is, why people should take it and its purpose and outcomes. I also provided basic statistics and extracted location-based data on a topic of interest, for example, engagement within the community to showcase the way the survey could be meaningful to Parsis in India.

It has been inspiring to meet so many kind and dedicated community leaders who are working for the benefit of the community. They welcomed me with open arms and made me feel a part of their local community. They also went to great lengths to organize my talks and stay in their cities.

I thank each and every one of them for their help and for supporting the Gen Z and Beyond Survey. I also sincerely thank all those who came to the presentations, asked questions, went home and did the survey and encouraged and helped others to do it.

Collage of Visits to Surat, Pune, Secunderabad, Navsari, Vadodra (Baroda), and Ahmedabad

*At the Surat Parsi Panchayat offices on Saturday, 5 February.*



(L-R): President of Nanpura Anjuman Rukhshad Master, Trustee of Rustompura Anjuman Freddie Mistry, Co-founder Trustees of Zoroastrian Women's Association of Surat (ZWAS) Pilloo Bhatena and Maharukh Chichgar, Surat Parsi Panchayat (SPP) President Jamshed Dotiwala, Nazneen Engineer, SPP Trustee and Padma Shri recipient Yazdi Karanjia, ZWAS members Daizy Patel and Afrin Ambapardiwala.

***At Pudumjee Hall, Komra ni Agiary, Pune on Saturday, 19 February.***

*(L-R): Behram Nagarwalla, President of Federation of Zoroastrian Youth Associations (FOZYA) Mabrin Nanavatti, Korma ni Agiary panthaky Er Ardaviraf Sinor, Rohington Udachia, Tehmasp Bharucha, Nazneen Engineer, Behnaz Nanavatti, Anahita Gheewalla, Jehan Marker and Bezan Nanavatti.*



***Under the Gazebo at the Secunderabad Parsi Dharamsala on Sunday, 27 February.***

*(L-R): Afshin Jadidi, Sohrab Eduljee, Mehernaz Eduljee, Farida Irani, Shiraz Behramsha, Homi Chenoy, Lt Col. Aspi Eduljee, Daisy Chenoy, Parinaaz Eduljee, Meherdad Dastoor, Armaity Bhatela, Nazneen Engineer, Management Committee Member of Secunderabad Zoroastrian Club Rohinton Behramsha, Shireen Baria, Afrin Karanjia, and Parsi Dharamsala and Hall Trustee Soli Chenoy.*



***At Navsari's beautifully renovated Jamshed Baug on Sunday, 6 March.***

*World Zoroastrian Organisation Trust Trustees Cyrus Vandriwala, Rohinton Contractor and Aspi Ambapardiwala with the many people who attended the meeting*





*At the Vadodara Parsi Dharamsala hall on Saturday, 12 March.*



*(L-R): Vadodara Parsi Panchayat President Phiroze Patel, Kamal Patel, Nazneen Engineer, Vadodara Parsi Panchayat Trustees Aspi Vajifdar and Maneck Modi.*

*At the Parsi Sanatorium Hall in Ahmedabad on Sunday, 13 March*



*(L-R): Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat President Brigadier Jahangir Anklesaria, Nazneen Engineer, Ahmedabad Parsi Panchayat Trustees Shirin Kanga and Temton Kadowala. Special guest - compound pup Guggi.*



## Oklahoma University Engineering Researchers Among Top 2% in Their Fields

A prestigious list published by Elsevier, an international information and analytics company, has recognized 19 engineering faculty at the University of Oklahoma who are using their research expertise to create solutions for the world's toughest challenges. Titled "*Standardized Citation Metrics Author Database*," the list is updated yearly and is thought to be the only large-scale database that systematically ranks 100,000 of the most-cited scientists in the world.

Among this list is our very own *Professors Farrokh Mistree and Janet K Allen*.

### School of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering

Farrokh Mistree

### School of Industrial and Systems Engineering

Janet K. Allen

<http://ouccoe100.blogspot.com/2022/02/noted-database-places-ou-engineering.html>

Congratulations to both of you. The community is so very proud of you, for not only your remarkable contribution to the academic field but to your continuous and consistent contribution to the development and betterment of the Zarthushti community in the education arena.

*Dolly Dastoor, Editor*

## GERMAN AMBASSADOR VISITS TEHRAN'S FIRE TEMPLE

Mehran Sepehri Ph.D

On Wednesday December 15, 2021 at 10 am , German Ambassador to Iran Mr. Hans-Udo Mutzel visited the Zoroastrian Fire Temple and Tehran Anjoman's complex with prior arrangements with Anjoman e Mobedan (Council of Iranian Mobeds) . In this two-hours visit, the guests visited various parts of the Zoroastrian complex and learned about Zoroastrianism. After wearing a head cover and washing his hands and face, he was allowed to be at the inside entrance of the fire temple, but not inside the main room where the fire is kept by mobeds.

Due to the pandemic, the attendance for the visit was limited to Mobed Mehraban Firouzgary (our high priest), Dr. Mobed Khorshidian (president of mobed council), Mobed Mehraban Pooladi (vice-president of mobed council), Dr. Afshin Namiranian (president of Tehran Anjoman), Dr. Mehran Sepehri (member of mobed council), interpreters and photographers.

Ambassador Mutzel spoke of Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, which has courses in Ancient Iran. He is familiar with the basics of Zoroastrianism, which he admired. Mobeds Firouzgary and Khorshidian explained the principles of Zoroastrian religion, the purpose of human in life

and his relationship with Ahura-mazda, the creator with infinite knowledge and wisdom.

The head of Tehran Zoroastrian Anjoman thanked the guests and hoped for close relations with Germany and other European countries. Such relations can help with research on Iran and Zoroastrian traditions and can also help obtaining Schengen visas for Zoroastrians students (which is a single visa for travel within EU). In the end there was an exchange of gifts, mostly books, between the two parties.



# HONOURABLE SENATOR ROSHAN BHARUCHA OF PAKISTAN



**On March 23, 2022, the Honorable Senator Roshan Bharucha** was awarded **The Sitara-i-Imtiaz** by the Government Of Pakistan for her selfless dedication, commitment and services in the field of Social Service. She was also awarded the **Balochistan Excellence Award and A Lifetime Achievement Award**. In 2021, she was awarded **The Sitara-i-Imtiaz (The Star of Excellence)** the third-highest honor and civilian award in the State of Pakistan, recognizing individuals who have made meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of Pakistan, world peace, cultural or other significant public endeavors. In 2018, Senator Roshan Bharucha was conferred with an award by the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce. She is the only Zarthushti Woman in Pakistan to hold federal ministries serving as the Federal Minister for Human Rights, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, States and Frontier Regions, Railways and Postal Services in a caretaker capacity. She has been elected as Pakistan's first ever minority leader. Her sole purpose of entering politics was to serve the needy and promote the youth. Born and brought up in Quetta to Meherwanjee Irani - a humble farmer, whose paternal grandparents had migrated from Yazd 1885 and her mother from

Gujarat. She holds a Masters Degree in English from the Baluchistan University, and a degree in Finance and Accounting for Non-Financial Executives from Pakistan Institute Of Management Karachi in 1993. Upon graduation at age 21, she fell in love and married her next-door neighbor – Captain Khursheed Minocher Bharucha - a 22-year-old Captain in the Pakistan Army. As a Montessori school teacher she taught at different schools across Pakistan wherever her husband was posted

After her husband's retirement in 1987 Senator Bharucha joined the International Labor Organization (ILO) – a United Nations agency – as an Administrative Secretary, was promoted to Administrative Officer of the ILO's Technical Training Center – dedicated to teaching English to Afghani Refugees, providing vocational training for women, and protecting human rights.

Two years later, she moved into an Administrator role at the GTZ—a German non-profit organization which worked to improve the living conditions of Balochistan's poor and within a year promoted to GTZ's Finance Officer. In her 12 years at the GTZ, she helped establish and run 12 training centers and a micro-lending program.

In 2005, Senator Bharucha founded **SOS Children's Village of Baluchistan** -- a permanent home for orphaned and abandoned boys and girls – the only one of its kind in the entire province. Currently, the village houses nearly 300 children. It is a private welfare organization where each child is enrolled in same schools as those attended by children of the city's political and military leaders. The first batch of children from this program are now enrolled in a university. In 2010, Senator Bharucha founded HUNAR – a vocational training center for disadvantaged women – which has since trained well over 4,500 disadvantaged women. Since 2015, Senator Bharucha has served as Chairperson of the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund and sits on the boards of several universities, NGOs, and corporations across the country.

In addition to her social work Senator Bharucha is the General Secretary Of Quetta Parsi Anjuman and Quetta Parsi Community as well as General Secretary of the Quetta/Sukkur Anjuman.

With a dwindling Parsi community in Quetta and with elderly individuals having no family Senator Bharucha houses, feeds, and cares for them – several in her own home helping them secure pension and medical benefits to ensure they get what is due to them.

She enjoys visiting her three children and 6 grandchildren living in Malaysia and USA. Her vision for Pakistan *"is that of a progressive, educated, dynamic, and peaceful society."*



# SCHOLARSHIPS

## FEZANA SCHOLARSHIPS (2022-23)

Applications are invited for:



### ENDOWED AND FEZANA ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI Endowed Scholarship for Academic Excellence  
(The FEZANA Scholar)

THE SHIRAZ AND DARIUS BAGLI FAMILY Endowed Scholarship.

FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP (6 AVAILABLE )

FEZANA 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY Endowed Scholarship

MORVARID GUV Endowed Scholarship

PURVEZ AND ABAN RUSTOMJI Endowed Scholarship

YASMIN AND SHAPUR PAVRI Endowed Scholarship

CAVASHA AND BIKHA GORWALA Endowed Scholarship

SOONU AND JAL BIRDY Endowed Scholarship

VILLY AND HOMI GANDHI Endowed Scholarship

DHUNMAI AND DOSABHAI NASSERWANJI GANDHI Endowed Scholarship

ROSTAM AND HOMAI KHERADI Endowed Scholarship

BANOUBAI AND MANECKSHAW KAPADIA Endowed Scholarship

DR MINOCHER RUSTOM AND DOWLAT MINOCHER VESUNA WZO Endowed Scholarships

SHEROO DARABSHA KOLSAVALA Endowed Scholarship

FEZANA ALUMNI Scholarship

### ENDOWED AND FEZANA SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

BAPSY IRANI Fine Arts Scholarship

BAPSY IRANI Culinary Arts Scholarship

FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP for the Performing & Creative Arts

KEKI AND GOOLCHER CAPTAIN Endowed Scholarship for the Performing and Creative Arts

### FEZANA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

THE NAMES OF SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL BE PUBLISHED ON FEZANA.ORG, IN THE FEZANA JOURNAL, AND WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR ONLINE ACCESS.

All academic scholarships are open to Zarathushti applicants who have obtained admission for attendance at institutions of higher learning (accredited degree-granting colleges or universities) in USA or Canada. Students from overseas must have studied in the US or Canada for at least two semesters before applying. Creative arts scholarships are available to any Zarathushti applicant who is pursuing a program in the creative arts (performing arts, fine arts, culinary arts, etc.). The sports award is available to any North American between the ages of 16- 30 years .

**SCHOLARSHIPS**—For the 2022-2023 academic year, scholarships will be awarded in September 2022.

**AWARD CRITERIA**—Graduate applicants will be rated on Scholastic Achievement, Extracurricular Activities, and Community Service., undergraduate applicants will be rated on Scholastic Achievement, Financial need, Extracurricular Activities, and Community Service.

**APPLICATION FORMS**—Application forms are available from the FEZANA website at [www.fezana.org/scholarships](http://www.fezana.org/scholarships). Completed applications should be submitted online by July 15, 2022 (11:59 EST).





## FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS - 2021

**Dolly Dastoor Ph.D.**

*Chair, FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program*

*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world*

**Nelson Mandela**

Education and training continue to fuel the engine of social mobility and contribute to social cohesion and integration in our ever more diverse societies and cultures. The benefits of education go beyond the economic returns—contributing also to better health, citizenship, and lower crime rates. In the words of JFK “The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth.”

Your continued financial support and your encouragement is of the utmost importance to maintain this program and sustain the hope of the next generation. This year we received new endowed scholarships from the Shiraz and Darius Bagli family for a graduate student scholarship of \$5000, and the Kheradi family increased their endowment to enable us to award a \$10,000 scholarship to a graduate student, the Gandhi family endowed a scholarship. This will enable us to award more scholarships in 2022. In 2021 we received 120 applicants and were able to award 30 scholarships.

Investment in our youth is an investment in the future of the Zarathushti community. The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason to hope. You have given hope to our youth by your donations. Your faith and trust in the FEZANA Academic Scholarship Program—as demonstrated by your support and endowments—are appreciated by your committee and the recipients. Thank you.

### **MEHRABAN AND MORVORID KHERADI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP THE FEZANA SCHOLAR (\$10,000)**

**SANAYA IRANI, University of Michigan Medical School, Second Year**



Sanaya Irani is a second-year medical student at the University of Michigan Medical School. She is currently beginning her clinical year and will rotate through different medical specialties and building her medical knowledge while learning to care for patients. She is passionate about social justice, clinical research, and supporting underrepresented communities. During her first year of medical school, she served as Director of Operations for Doctors of Tomorrow, a longitudinal medical pipeline program for high schoolers in Detroit, Michigan. Sanaya is honored to receive the Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowed scholarship as it is a sign of recognition and respect from her beloved Zoroastrian community and helps support her medical goals. She plans to support other Zoroastrian youth in reaching their graduate school dreams. Upon completion of her residency training, she hopes to use her medical skills to look after Zoroastrians locally and abroad.

## **JERRY AND CELESTE KHERADI 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$5,000)**

### **ERVAD RAYOMAND KATRAK, Texas A&M in Houston, Fourth Year Medical Student**

Ervad Rayomand Katrak is a fourth-year medical student at Texas A&M in Houston, Texas, currently applying to family medicine residency programs. He is the proud recipient of the 2021 FEZANA Jerry and Celeste 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Endowed Scholarship. Despite being in medical school, Rayomand remains active at the Zoroastrian Association of Houston. He has been a co-chair for the annual Z-Camp held in Houston and continues to participate during Muktdad and other jashans throughout the year. He could not have come this far without the emotional and financial support from the Zoroastrian community that has continued to encourage his academic career.

Winning this scholarship encourages him to continue working toward his dream of being a physician and giving back to society. He hopes that all eligible youth continue to apply for FEZANA scholarships and to be actively involved in their communities! Thank you to everyone who helped him get this far!



## **FEZANA 25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$3,000)**

### **YAZMIN RUSTOMJI, Rush Medical College, Chicago, Medical Student**



Yazmin Rustomji is a third-year medical student at Rush Medical College in Chicago, Illinois. She is currently interested in pursuing internal medicine, with subspecialty options in rheumatology, geriatrics, and primary care. Her interests include discussing the importance of holistic care, engaging with the local community, and eliminating health disparities as a healthcare provider.

Yazmin is extremely grateful to receive this scholarship, which alleviates her financial burden so that she can focus on her medical education and become an extraordinary and empathetic physician. She is excited to bring positive change to her patients' communities and her Zoroastrian community. Yazmin has been heavily involved in the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAMC) and plans on taking on more leadership roles to further engage community members, as well as create opportunities for educating non-members about the Zoroastrian faith to promote tolerance, inclusivity, and awareness.

## **WZO Canada–SAM MINOCHER VESUNA ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP, DR MINOCHER RUSTOM VESUNA, WZO/CANADA ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$3,000)**

### **ARTAN ZANDIAN, University of British Columbia, Master's in Data Science**

Artan Zandian is pursuing his master's degree in Data Science at the University of British Columbia. He is originally from Iran, where he got his architecture degree and devoted his time to volunteering at Zoroastrian Student Organization. His first master's degree is in environmental design from the University of Calgary. Working in asset management and healthcare planning for over 10 years, he has been dreaming of going back to school to bring himself up-to-speed with the latest technological advancements. The sustenance of this dream has only been possible through this scholarship.

He is hoping to compile a comprehensive database on Zoroastrian population and to work on identifying key indicators that would enable targeted resource planning for our community. He extends his support to any person/organization who can help him mine this data or who has access and will work with data to facilitate optimized decision making.



## **CAVASHA AND BHIKHA GORWALLA ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$3,000)**

Cavasha Gorwalla was born in 1888 to Zarathusti parents of very modest means. His high intelligence, modest demeanor and sincere dedication led him to become one of the top Indian officials in the British Raj. Throughout his life he fostered a love of education.

He was widowed in less than a year of his marriage, his wife dying in childbirth. His devoted younger sister, Bhikha, under 19 years, took charge of rearing the child. She gave great love and emotional support to the child and her progeny. The scholarship commemorates their contribution to love of learning.

### **TARA OSTAD, Drexel University, College of Medicine, First Year**

After graduating cum laude from UCLA at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, I got accepted into the Drexel University College of Medicine where I am currently in my first year. In my gap year, I wrote a research paper on surgical outcomes of melanoma that is currently awaiting publication, and I have joined several ongoing research projects at school while also volunteering at the community clinics. Medical school has not been all studying though, as I have even had time to join the volleyball club and play with my classmates.



I am so incredibly grateful to FEZANA for awarding me the Cavasha and Bhikha Gorwalla Endowed Scholarship for Academic Excellence. The basic Zoroastrian principles of good thoughts, good words, good deeds inspired me at a young age to want to pursue medicine as working in healthcare seemed like the ultimate application of these fundamentals. The Zoroastrian community has been a constant source of support for me throughout my entire life, and I am forever indebted to my parents, religion classes' teachers, peers, and everyone who has been an inspiration to me. I aspire to give back to the community as a physician and mentor the younger generations to provide the same continual assistance I received throughout my education.



## **SOONU AND JAL BIRDY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$2,500)**

### **AFRITI CHINOY, University of Michigan, School of Dentistry**

Afriti Chinoy, from Troy, Michigan, is a first-year dental student at the University of Michigan, School of Dentistry. She graduated summa cum laude in Spring 2021 from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, where she majored in Nutritional Biochemistry and Metabolism and minored in Chemistry. Afriti graduated receiving the John Schoff Millis Award for senior with the best academic performance in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Dr. Rula Quawas Award from the Women and Gender Studies department. While attending dental school, Afriti is engaged as a researcher in TMJ and orofacial pain, leadership positions in student dental associations, and volunteering in dental service projects. After dental school, Afriti plans to pursue a specialization in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. Afriti is actively involved and engaged in the Zoroastrian Association of Michigan and is the Michigan representative to the Zoroastrian Youth National Association and will continue to give back to her community. Just recently, through ZYNA, she has led the Navigating High School Series presentations to help students achieve success. She will use this scholarship to fund her future endeavors in academia.



## **MORVARID GUIV ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (\$1,000)**

### **MOJGAN DANYAL KHOSRAVI, Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health, Dental Medicine**



I was born and raised in Tehran, Iran. I moved to the United States in 2014, where I attended the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. I graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BS in Biology-Healthcare. Currently, I am studying to become a Doctor of Dental Medicine at the Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health. I am honored to win the FEZANA scholarship. Receiving this award allows me to pursue my dream, an advanced education in dentistry, with less financial obligation. I am grateful for the honor. My future goal is to work as a general dentist. I enjoy giving back to my community by increasing their awareness about the importance of oral health and providing free dental care for the underserved population. Besides dentistry, I enjoy hiking, painting, baking, and decorating cakes. My family and I celebrate birthdays, so I surprise them every year with a one-of-a-kind cake.

## **FEZANA 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)**

### **ANAHITA HORMOZDYARI, University of the Pacific, Doctor of Physical Therapy**

Anahita was born and raised in Iran. Currently, she lives in Sacramento, California. She has a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Kinesiology Exercise Science. She is enrolled in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. Receiving this scholarship means more than receiving the financial support for Anahita; it means the support of her community and it encourages her to be involved and help others as well. She comes from a family who have always been active in their community and believe in giving back. She is passionate about her religion and helping others, proud of her background, hardworking and determined to make a positive impact in this world.



## **DARIUS AND JEROO CAPTAIN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)**

### **FREDDY KERSI MISTRY, University of Toronto, Dental School, Dental Surgery**

Foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the FEZANA committee for awarding me Darius and Jeroo Captain Endowed Scholarship for academic excellence.

My academic journey towards my dental profession started around sixteen years ago and is still in the continuous process. Though now I have three dental degrees, I am far from my academic goals. I take pride in being born and raised in a humble Parsi family in Mumbai, India. We always gave education the highest priority in my family, of which I am very thankful to my parents.

With the benevolence act of Bombay Parsi Punchayet, I completed my early Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) and Masters in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (MDS) in Mangalore, India. I am also thankful to other Zoroastrians for their trust and for providing scholarships to me, which motivated and empowered me to continue my academic journey.

After completing my MDS, I was a consultant at various private dental offices in India and associated with a couple of hospitals in Mumbai. I also have various publications under my name in peer reviewed oral surgery journals.

Immigrating to North America was one of the most wonderful things happened to me so far in my lifetime. The only initial focus after moving to Canada was to achieve my professional license, as it was difficult for me to give up my profession, which I truly love. With my relentless effort and support from family and community, I was successful in securing a spot for myself at the University of Toronto, Canada, where currently I am in my final year of Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) program. Receiving a scholarship from FEZANA has once again empowered me to pursue my MSc in Oral Surgery in North America, of which I am in the application process.

My vision for the community is its long-lasting prosperity. Being one of the oldest communities on the face of the earth and prospered through various curves which mother nature has mapped is truly remarkable. Our community has always adapted fairly in every phase, and I am sure will continue to adapt well in the future too. I pledge to help my community towards achieving its prosperity. I also actively volunteer at various community events and organizations.

Apart from dentistry, I enjoy reading and watching documentaries on history. I love to go on long bike rides and to travel to new places.



## **FEZANA SCHOLAR (\$2,000)**

### **MAZIYAR KHADIVI, University of British Columbia, Master's in Forestry**

My name is Mazyar Khadivi. I am a master's student in Forestry at the University of British Columbia, Canada.



My current research is with economic analysis and optimization of bioenergy production to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate climate change. Recently, I have been admitted for Ph.D. studies in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Victoria, Canada, starting from 2022. My Ph.D. research will focus on leveraging machine learning techniques to bring intelligence and adaptability into manufacturing systems.

During my undergraduate studies in Iran, I was an active member of the Zoroastrian Students' Association, also known as Kanoon and was among the principal organizers of the Zoroastrian Scientific Conference and Sports Competition. My primary goals in life are to continue my higher education, contribute to the industry with my engineering knowledge, and serve our community. I am deeply grateful for being eligible to receive FEZANA scholarship. This scholarship will contribute to my university education and enable me to pursue my goals.

## FEZANA SCHOLAR (\$2,000)

### **KHUSHNUMA DAMKEVALA, University of Colorado, Master's in Marketing**



I am extremely grateful and honored to receive the FEZANA Scholarship for academic excellence. It is a great help in my pursuit of a Master of Science in Marketing degree with a specialization in big data analytics from the University of Colorado, Denver. I am originally from Bombay, where I completed my Bachelor of Mass Media degree from the University of Mumbai. There, I received the Sumitomo award for academic excellence and coordinated our college festival Detour. I worked in the industry for a couple of years before I moved to Denver, Colorado, where I live now and am pursuing my master's degree. For as long as I can remember, I have been passionate about marketing and its ability to change the world's perspective. Equipped with an MS in marketing, I hope to tell everyone's stories about how they see it.

## FEZANA SCHOLAR (\$2,000)

### **BEHNOOSH SETHNA, University of Texas at Dallas, Master's in Business Analytics**



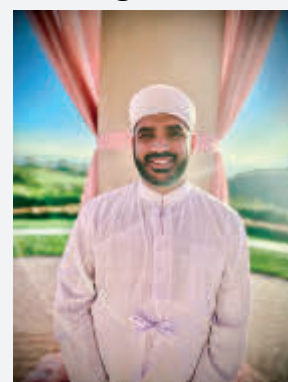
My name is Behnoosh Sethna and I am a graduate student at the University of Texas at Dallas pursuing my master's in business analytics with a goal of learning to make data-driven decisions in Economic and Financial forecasting. I completed my undergraduate studies from the State University of New York Plattsburgh and graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Economics and Finance. I worked as a trade analyst at an investment bank and as a research analyst at a corporate governance firm in Maryland before starting graduate school. During my time in Maryland, I was an active member for Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington DC ZAMWI as a participant at UN conferences, speaker at the youth congress, and involved with the interfaith council.

I am honored to have received the FEZANA Scholarship for encouraging and supporting me while I continue my academics. It is immensely tough to be an international student. I came to the US as an 18-year-old with very few resources and navigated my journey alone. I am grateful to my family back in my hometown Karachi, Pakistan, who support me at every step, my relatives in the US, and my religious community as a hope of strength and faith. My vision for the Zoroastrian community is to have youth members involved in religious discussion, mindful learning of the Zoroastrian historical significance, and traditional practices.

## ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)

### **ERVAD XERKXIS BHANDARA, California State University Long Beach, Master's in Religious Studies**

This scholarship and support from the community allows me to pursue my life's passions: education, and religion. In the years since completing my navar and martab at 12, I have been fortunate, by God's grace, to get a BA in religious studies and am currently working on a MA in the same. Funding such as this scholarship gives me financial support to follow my aspirations. I hope to return the North American Zoroastrian community's investment as a learned priest and a perpetually curious thinker. In future years, I plan on continuing my research through a doctoral program into the method of research in Zoroastrianism, focusing on different means of appreciating religion despite hegemonic influences. My gratitude to FEZANA for providing scholarships to youths and the generous donors for making such scholarships possible is beyond expression.





## UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

### PURVEZ AND ABAN RUSTOMJI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$5,000)

**BURZIN BALSARA, University of Austin, Texas, Mechanical and Computational Science**

Burzin is a senior studying mechanical engineering and computational science at UT Austin, and he is incredibly thankful for receiving this award from the FEZANA Scholarship Committee. With a desire to gain a deeper understanding of robotics, he plans on attending graduate school in the coming year. By continuing his education, Burzin hopes to have the skills necessary to use robotics to help many people around the world, from robotic assistants to intelligent prosthetics. He also wants to continue playing an active role in his local Zoroastrian community, ZANT. Zoom has allowed him to interact with his extended Zoroastrian family and take part in prayers even while he is away getting his degree. As the pandemic slowly clears up, Burzin is eager to return home and resume his priestly duties and conduct ceremonies alongside his father.



### TATA-PAVRI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$5,000)

**GHEIBI GOLSA, University of California, Berkeley, Chemistry, with Machine Learning**



I was born and raised in Kerman, Iran. I immigrated to the US six years ago and I have always tried to be involved with the Zoroastrian community by becoming a volunteer lecturer in the teenage class of CZC to discuss the Gatha's message and its application in real life. Around the same time, I took part in hosting children's camps at CZC and where children gather to learn more about the Zoroastrian religion and engage in fun activities. During my time at CZC, I was a member of the BOD election team and a volunteer in organizing the 7th World Zoroastrian Youth Congress. As I am passionate about poetry, I have been expressing my support for our culture and religion through writing poems and reciting them in celebrations such as Sadeh and Sepandarmazgan. After moving to Berkeley, I started translating articles for Chehrena and became involved in the weekly radio program broadcast of "A Few Words about a Great Culture." I am hoping to continue and extend my involvement with the Zoroastrian community to spread Gatha's message to other people and actively support our religion and culture.

My academic journey started at Irvine Valley College, where I developed a passion for chemistry and was awarded as the "OC ACS Outstanding Chemistry Student." After that, I transferred to the University of California, Berkeley, to continue my chemistry studies and joined a research lab to study applications of machine learning in chemistry. Being passionate about tutoring, I joined the tutoring center and was honored with the "Outstanding Chemistry Tutor" award at UC Berkeley last semester. I have been voluntarily tutoring children of under-served communities as well to assist them with their classes. So far, I have had the honor of being awarded scholarships of Science Scholarship, Sharer Scholar, Firestone, Edison, and Kiwanis for academic excellence. Now, I am honored to be the recipient of the FEZANA scholarship. This scholarship will provide generous financial support along my academic path, for which I am truly grateful. I am especially thankful for the generosity of donors of the Pavri-Tata Endowed Scholarship, whose support allows me to focus on my studies without worrying about financial issues. I will try my best to do well with this investment in me and give back to the community.

## **WZO-CANADA SAM MINOCHER VESUNA ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP- DOWLAT MINOCHER VESUNA SCHOLARSHIP (\$3,000)**

### **SHARON MARFATIA, University of British Columbia**

I am truly grateful to receive the World Zoroastrian Organization's Dowlet Minocher Vesuna Scholarship. Being a religious Zoroastrian, I have a strong connection with the Parsi community, which is why this scholarship means the world to me. To achieve my lifelong dream of studying computer science at UBC, I achieved a 4.0/4.0 GPA in high school and ranked among the top three on the worldwide leaderboard for a computer science program led by IIT alumni students. I founded the Girls Coding Club at my school to encourage women in STEM fields. I am also the CEO of a technology startup company that won first place at the UBC Ennovate competition. My goal is to mentor young Parsis in the growing fields of computer science and work with Parsi youth/IITs to launch technology ventures. There is nothing we cannot achieve when we work together while preserving our cultural values.



## **SOONU AND JAL BIRDY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$2,500)**

### **FREYHAN MEHTA, University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign, Undergraduate, Economics**



With the help of my father, professors, and the teachings of renowned economists; I built a firm foundation in economics. To expound upon my interest in the subject, I majored in economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. Now I am writing a research paper on antitrust law in the United States. The FEZANA scholarship is a huge boon and to know that I have the financial support from my community to achieve my dreams gives me the confidence to put in 100% with all my work. It was always clear to me that as Zoroastrians, we are important pillars of society and I envision we will continue to be so. I have large aspirations and goals, but it will make me the proudest to give back to my Parsi community and support them the way they have supported me.

## **KAPADIA ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND ACADEMIC STANDING (\$2,000)**

### **ZIANA SARKARI, University of California Davis, Major in Computer Science**

As a freshman at the University of California - Davis, I am majoring in Computer Science. I am tremendously thankful for the FEZANA 2021 "Kapadia Endowed Scholarship."

Through high school, I served in leadership positions on competitive robotics teams and became a science intern. I researched gene-editing for brain disorders and was honored with the STEAM Department Award. Currently, I am a part of the Women in Computer Science club and Hackathon groups that mentor students in software engineering.

I am confident that my love for human biology, coupled with my work in technology, will position me to make a substantial difference in the lives of people. I look forward to giving back to our vibrant Zoroastrian community for it to continue thriving. I am grateful to FEZANA for providing a myriad of networking opportunities and amazing resources, besides celebrating and encouraging education for our youth.



## **MORVARID GUIV ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)**

**RIANA IRANI, University of South Florida, Computer Science**



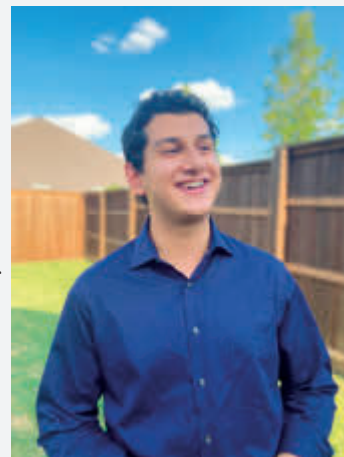
I am a student at the University of South Florida studying computer science. At USF, I volunteer around the community and engage in programming competitions. I have earned recognition for being an AP Scholar as well as participating in national debate competitions. Apart from my academics, I spend most of my spare time tutoring for kids in need and volunteering for STEM and research organizations. Receiving this scholarship will allow me to give back to those who have helped me to get where I am today and further my academic goals and studies. The Zoroastrian community has allowed me to discover my roots and make connections that will last a lifetime. My hopes for our future are to enable a stronger bond within our local communities and to become united against our toughest challenges.

## **ROSTAM AND HOMAI KHERADI**

### **30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1000)**

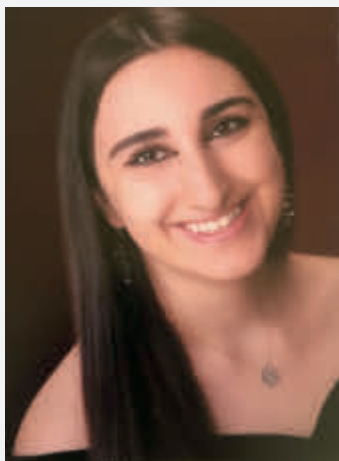
**PORUS KARWA, University of California, Los Angeles, Bachelor of Science, Psychobiology**

I am Porus Karwa, a 4th-year Psychobiology BS major at UCLA. Currently, at UCLA I volunteer in the Ronald Reagan Medical Center, do research in a neurovascular lab on campus, and volunteer as a mental health coach for COVID-19 relief. Recently, I have also joined another lab that studies motor development in children with autism. I assist professors in the organic chemistry department and help my peers learn about the intricacies of organic reactions and pharmaceuticals as well. After my undergraduate studies, my dream is to go to medical school and study to become a physician. Like other physicians in the Zoroastrian Association of California-Los Angeles (ZACLA), I plan to use my medical knowledge in the future to offer advice and help to all Zoroastrian members in our community. I am grateful to be awarded the Rostam and Homai Kheradi Endowed Scholarship as it will go a long way to help me and my family with my medical school applications. I plan to pay it all forward with Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. Thank you.



## **VILLY AND HOMI GANDHI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)**

**AZADEH HORMOZDIARI, University of Michigan, First Year**



My name is Azadeh Hormozdiari and I am currently a freshman at the University of Michigan. I am tentatively a statistics major, with a Middle Eastern studies minor. I intend to attend law school after undergraduate studies. Because of the costs of attending an out-of-state school and, potentially, graduate school, this scholarship makes my academic goals attainable. Through my studies in Middle Eastern culture, I hope to learn more about my community's history and to give back to it. Further, beyond my academic concentrations, I plan to dedicate my personal time to helping further the Zoroastrian community, a goal which this scholarship makes financially feasible.



## **SHEROO DARABSHA KOLSAWALLA ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)**

**ANDIA POURESFANDIARY CHAM, University of Washington, Biological Sciences**



Andia Poursfandiary Cham is a first-year student at the University of Washington. Her major is still undeclared but will be in biological science. Andia wants to conduct research on pain receptors in the nervous system and to work on understanding why pain is the way it is and how its effects can be lessened. Her main area of research is the nervous system. In her local Zoroastrian community, ZSWS (Zoroastrian Society of Washington State), Andia helps with setting up ghahambars. She used to help with the local Zoroastrian classes before the pandemic. In her free time, she enjoys swimming as a part of the local swim team, water coloring, reading newly released historical and contemporary novels, and spending time with her family. She is very grateful for the scholarship Fezana has given and hopes to make the best use of it in the future.

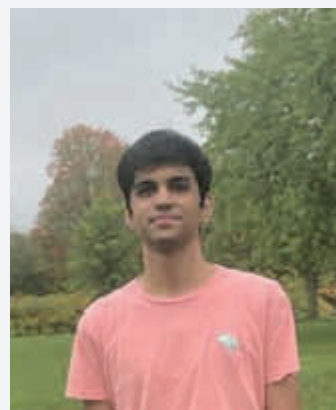
## **FEZANA UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARS (\$2,000)**

**HOSHNER TAVADIA, York University, Canada, Lassonde School of Engineering**

Hoshner Tavadia is an international student doing his undergrad work in Computer Science at the Lassonde School of Engineering at York University, Canada. His specialization is in software development and artificial intelligence (AI). Being an “A” student, he is a recipient of several awards including the York University International Scholarship of Merit, Lassonde School of Engineering Entrance Scholarship, BEST (Bergeron Entrepreneurs in Science & Technology) Undergraduate Scholarship, PTA Silver Medal for Academic Excellence, etc. In high school, Hoshner held leadership positions as elected Leader in the School Student Council, Light and Sound Director for inter-school dramatics competition, and is a recipient of awards in inter-school cultural festivals and sports tournaments.

Hoshner has been active with the Indian Zoroastrian community as the former President of the “XYZ” Foundation, a non-profit organization for Zoroastrian youth in Mumbai, and has participated in several first aid duties and medical camps through the Parsi Ambulance Division (SJAB). The FEZANA Scholarship, awarded in recognition of his achievements and contribution to society, motivates him to excel in academics and all walks of life.

Hoshner looks forward to using his leadership and technical skills and experience toward mentoring Zoroastrian youths in Canada to excel in every field.



## **FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP (\$2,000)**

**DEEBA KHOSRAVI, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, Computer Engineering**

I am honored to be selected as a recipient of a FEZANA scholarship. I am currently a freshman majoring in computer engineering at California Polytechnic State University: San Luis Obispo. After graduating and earning a master’s degree, I aspire to become either a website developer or software engineer. The financial assistance provided by this scholarship allows me to achieve my personal goals and enables me to give back to my community. By continuing to volunteer at Sunday School classes, participating in events such as Nowruz and Mehregan, and mentoring young Zoroastrians, I hope to be an integral part of the ever-growing Zarthoshti community. I wish to one day be able to sponsor other Zoroastrian students and inspire them to pursue careers in engineering and computer science fields.

Thank you again for the scholarship and this wonderful opportunity!



## FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP (\$2,000)

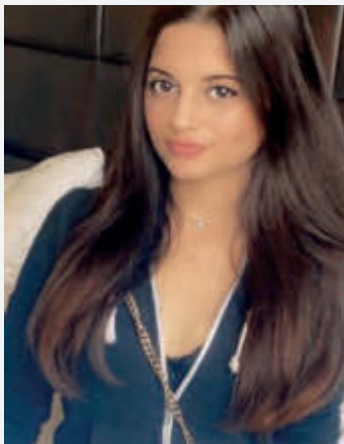
### **MITHRA SARKARI, Purdue University, Aeronautical and Astronomical Engineering, Minor in Economics**

To me, the FEZANA scholarship represents the support of the Zoroastrian community in my pursuit of a degree in aeronautical and astronomical engineering with a minor in economics from Purdue University. I have always enjoyed activities related to designing solutions to technical problems and my future degree will be the culmination of those efforts. I also enjoy competing in trivia competitions and am recognized at the national level. This scholarship will aid in my ability to work towards my degree, for which I am very grateful. I sincerely believe that one of the greatest strengths of our community is our dedication to pursuing higher education. By continuing to support those seeking to better themselves through similar scholarship programs, I hope that the Zoroastrian community can continue to flourish as it has for centuries.



## FEZANA SCHOLARSHIP (\$1,000)

### **NAVASZ HANSOTIA, University of Massachusetts, Boston, Political Science.**



My name is Navasz, I am a Political Science major at University of Massachusetts, Boston. UMass Boston has bestowed me with several opportunities and honors. I have had my opinion-based research article published in the magazine and have been featured on the Dean's list. My goals are to fight for rights and equality in politics- to advocate for the oppressed voices in our society. Being a recipient of the prestigious FEZANA scholarship is an honor I will eternally be grateful for. FEZANA's purpose aligns with mine- using our religion as a guiding pathway through multiple realms ranging from academia, careers, to extra-curricular activities- uniting to support and serve common good. My vision for the community echoes the actions of the generous donors and team at FEZANA. Supporting young Zoroastrians and inspiring them to chase their goals- through motivation, determination, and humility. I aspire to pass on the torch of generosity and support to my community in the future.

## **Dr Huban Gowadia inducted into the Alabama Hall of Fame**

The principal associate director for Global Security, Huban Gowadia was one of 10 engineers inducted into the Alabama Engineer Hall of Fame (EHF) at a ceremony last month attended by about 250 people among which were her parents Aspie and Dhun Gowadia and her brother Purazar with wife Jennifer.

She was nominated by the former dean of the University of Alabama's College of Engineering, Charles Karr, and retired U.S. Coast Guard vice-admiral and former head of the Transportation Security Administration, Peter Neffenger.

Huban Gowadia graduated in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering from The University of Alabama and a doctorate in mechanical engineering from Pennsylvania State University. She worked for 18 years as a civil servant in the US departments of Defense and Homeland Security and also as acting administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, leading a \$7.6 billion budget and a workforce of 60,000 charged with protecting U.S. transportation systems.

Since early 2020, at Global Securities, she leads more than 1,200 matrixed employees and manages an annual operating budget of about \$500 million.

She holds the 2005 Under Secretary's Award for Science and Technology, for exceptional leadership of the Countermeasures Test Bed program and in 2015, she was selected as a Distinguished Engineering Fellow by The University of Alabama College of Engineering.

Congratulations Dr Gowadia.



## PERFORMING AND CREATIVE ARTS

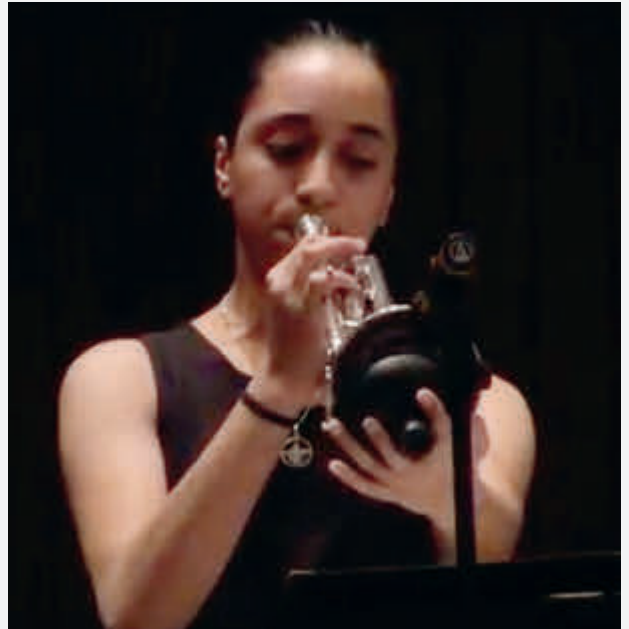
FEZANA offers scholarships in the fields of creative arts, which include the performing arts; theatre studies; dramatic arts; music; instrumental and vocal, including performance and musical theory; dance studies; drawing; painting; sculpture theory and practice; fine arts; and design and graphic arts.

### WINNERS OF THE 2021 COMPETITION

#### KEKI & GOOLCHER CAPTAIN PERFORMING & CREATIVE ARTS (\$1,500)

**HAVOVI DESAI, Master of Arts in Music Therapy at NYU**

I am so grateful to have received a scholarship from FEZANA this year for creative and performing arts. I am pursuing my Master of Arts in Music Therapy at NYU, and I am studying jazz in the city as well. This scholarship will help give me more free time to work on my skills as a music therapist and to explore the jazz scene in New York in greater depth. I am so proud to be part of the Zoroastrian community, both locally and globally. I love being able to help foster ZAKOI (Zoroastrian Association of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana) and build relationships with my community members while also meeting other Zoroastrians on a global level through social media and other platforms. I really hope that Zoroastrians around the world can continue to connect and come together in ways that will benefit our religion and our world. I would love to see Zoroastrians taking a strong stand against climate change and other issues affecting our earth and to advocate for the healthy, beautiful, sustainable planet that we all deserve to live on.



#### BAPSY IRANI CULINARY ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

**SHERVIN IRANIZADEH, Centennial College, Baking Skills (\$2000)**



First, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to FEZANA for awarding this scholarship to me. As a newcomer from Iran, the scholarship means a lot and will help pay my tuition fee, which will let me focus on my studies. Currently, I am studying baking skills at Centennial College; after I graduate, I hope to start a business featuring my special recipes. I would like to combine Persian and Canadian styles and add new texture to the Canadian baking industry.

I have always tried to be helpful to my community. While living in Yazd, Iran, I volunteered at Pashootanji Dosabhai Marker museum during summer holidays. Also, as an Iranian traditional singer, I have performed at several religious occasions, ceremonies, and festivals.

Here in Toronto, I have performed for the Zoroastrian Society of Ontario (ZSO); the latest was for the ZSO's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It has always been an honor to serve my community as an active member. My college major will provide me with a new skill that will help me contribute more to my society.

May Ahura Mazda shower his blessings on Zoroastrian communities around the world.

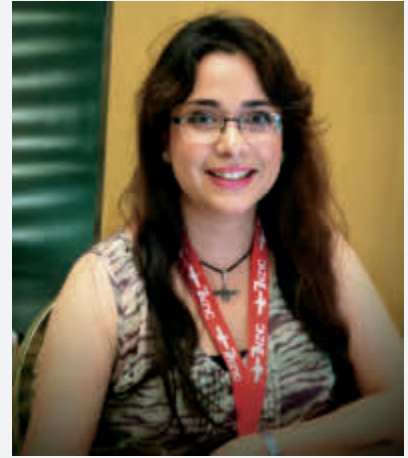


## BAPSY IRANI FINE ARTS SCHOLARSHIP

### PARANDA FOROGHI, University of California Berkeley, Film Studies (\$2000)

I am extremely grateful to be a recipient of the Bapsy Irani Fine Arts Scholarship. My passion for fine arts started when I was a kid. Growing up in Iran, I loved to take photos and record every moment with my camera. Being in the USA has allowed me to pursue my passion for photography and film. My major is film studies—my passion is editing. I like to get involved in the editing process producing a final cut film from the raw footage. I've already made some short films and documents, and I received some awards.

As an Iranian Zoroastrian immigrant who still tries to adapt to the new culture and keep connected with her roots, this scholarship is very meaningful for me. Besides the financial assistance, this scholarship is an example of how an enriched community can support their younger members who will stay in their community and pursue higher education. FEZANA's generosity has inspired me and many other young Zoroastrians to pursue their passion and give back to the community.



Growing up in Iran, I was an active member of the Zoroastrian community. I volunteered for several years at the Zoroastrian Student Association (Kanoon). My desire to keep my heritage alive motivates me to connect to my roots and culture by being active in the community. Since I immigrated to the United States in 2017, the Zoroastrian community has supported me emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. As a result, I believe I should give back to my Zoroastrian community and my education and career can be the most impactful ways I can do that. I love to use my major-related skills to talk about the Zoroastrian community through documentaries and interviews to keep my heritage alive for the next generation.

### ANAHEEZ KARBHARI, University of Toronto, Master of Information in User Experience Design (\$2000)

I am a designer and photographer from Toronto, Canada. I am currently pursuing my Master of Information in UX Design (User Experience Design) at the University of Toronto. I received my Bachelor of Arts from the University of Toronto in Art & CCIT (Communication Culture, Information & Technology), a joint program in collaboration with Sheridan College. The way I see it, *design is the intent behind an outcome*. UX Design combines aspects of design thinking with research, product development, and strategy to create seamless, accessible, and user-friendly products and services.



I am honoured and immensely grateful to receive this scholarship and appreciate the support for innovative fields of study. This scholarship has not only provided financial aid but also serves as a great sense of motivation and encouragement towards my academic and professional goals. While studying for my undergraduate degree, I founded and directed the first Zoroastrian Student Association in Canada and volunteered in fundraising and youth events at my local Zoroastrian association (OZCF). I am currently a representative of ZYNA and a member of the Outreach & Communications and Professional Development subcommittees. Being able to contribute to ZYNA dynamically through my graphic design and branding skillset and working alongside other youth has been a gratifying experience.

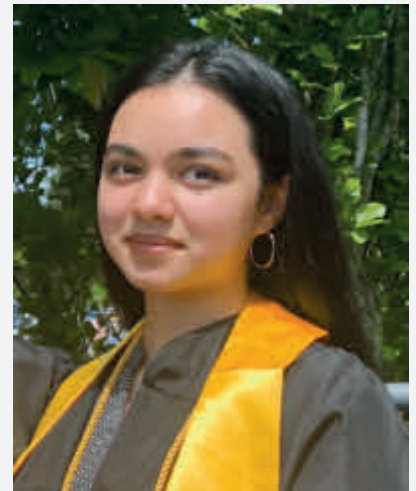
The affirmative recognition from FEZANA and my Zoroastrian community has played an integral role in my career as an artist, designer, and entrepreneur throughout the years. I look forward to continuing serving my community both locally at the Ontario Zoroastrian Community Foundation, and beyond that, through FEZANA and ZYNA. I hope to reconnect youth back to their roots and diaspora, be the voice for the Zoroastrian community and foster a sense of pride, joy and belonging amongst today's youth.

**RAHA BANO NAMDARI, Capilano University, Design and Illustration in Visual Communications (\$2000)**

I am a third-year undergraduate student at Capilano University studying design and illustration in visual communications. Receiving this scholarship has provided me with the financial support I need to focus on my studies and pursue my career goals. I'm grateful to the Zoroastrian community for supporting those in the creative arts.

This year, I received three design/illustration awards and honors. A portrait I painted made it in the Top 10 category for illustration in the CAPIC Rodeo Competition. An ad campaign I illustrated was awarded bronze in the Graphic Design category for the ADCC (Advertising & Design Club of Canada) Student Competition. Lastly, a book I designed received an honorable mention recognition in editorial design as part of the RGD (Registered Graphic Designers) 2021 Student Awards.

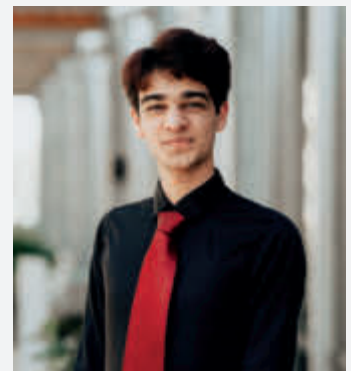
As a Zarathushti, I want to represent our community in the art and design scene to bring new perspectives and diversity. In the future, I hope to give back to the community by voluntarily serving as a mentor for young Zoroastrian artists and helping them work towards success in the creative industry.



**VARUN AVARI KAPOOR, University of California, Davis (\$2000)**

This fall, I'll be studying at UC Davis, majoring in both Art Studio and Math. Since 6th grade, I've been aspiring to be an animator, and have been planning to specialize in a form of CGI/3D animation. This scholarship is significant for the chance. I must follow my passion and dreams along with the feeling that my community stands behind and supports me.

As a Zoroastrian of mixed descent, I know there are people like me who may not have chances I've had the fortune to receive. But my vision for the Zoroastrian community is that of inclusivity and openness, as the community that surrounds me has always been accepting of my differences. I know that the fine arts is a medium that can reach many people, and hopefully my animations can inspire others like me.



**FEZANA PERFORMING & CREATIVE ARTS SCHOLARSHIP**

**PANTEA FOROOGHI, University of California, Berkeley, Film Studies Major (\$2,500)**

I am so glad to be selected for FEZANA Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship. I deeply appreciate your support. I'm an immigrant and I live alone in the United States. As a result, I don't have the support that other students receive from their families. I'm a film major student focusing on making documentary films. I want to become a filmmaker. My fascination with film began when I was a child. I started studying film and television at Los Angeles Pierce College after I immigrated to the United States. Now, I have been admitted to UC Berkeley as a film studies major. I received several awards from Los Angeles Pierce College's media art department for the best stop motion film, the best documentary film, the best audio editing, the best PSA film, and the first-place award for original documentary film at the LAPC film club festival.

This scholarship from our generous Zoroastrian community is meaningful for me. As a Zoroastrian, I always try my best to serve our community. When I was in Iran, I was an active member of the public relations



committee of Sazeman Zanan Zartoshty Tehran. I joined the CZC-LA since immigration to the United States to be in touch with other Zoroastrians and serve our community. I enjoy volunteering and collaborating with others. I could be an active member of the film club holding events and festivals for students in the college. I could develop time management, teamwork, and leadership skills through long-term programs like the AFT1521 internship and UCLA CCCP program.

This scholarship will go a long way in supporting my education. My goal is to utilize my skills to make a significant positive impact in the Zoroastrian community and make a bright future for the next generation. I believe all Zoroastrians are a big family, and I try to develop collaboration between Parsis and Iranian Zoroastrians. For many years, I have had a dream of making documentary series about our history and heritage to transfer this enriched culture to the next generation. I am sure with the support of our community and utilizing my skills, this dream will come true soon.

### **SHEYAAN BHESANIA, San Francisco State University, Creative writing Major (\$1000)**

It is a great honor to receive the FEZANA Performing and Creative Arts scholarship award from among the hundreds of applicants who applied. This scholarship will help allow me to receive professional help and assistance in progressing my writing craft and completing my college studies. I am glad to see that my efforts in becoming a writer stood out amongst the sea of applications enough to have received this and grateful that the FEZANA community will support my continuing education at San Francisco State University as a creative writing major. I see this community becoming more diverse and accepting in the future, not just in who they allow to incorporate and include in the community, but in what new thoughts and ideas the community will accept into our current belief system and worldview. Through this, I believe that the community will grow in number and improve upon itself, becoming a place people can come to be accepted.



### **XENIA BYRAMJI, Ryerson University School of Fashion, Toronto. (\$1,500)**



I am a fashion design student minoring in business essentials at Ryerson University School of Fashion in Toronto, Canada. This scholarship means that the community continues to support us creatives and artists. I am humbled and thankful to be one awardee of the Performing and Creative Arts Scholarship. This will aid me in my studies and career.

The hope for us Zarathustis is to lead a pious life by accomplishing good deeds out of our pure hearts. The goal for our community is to stay on the true path of Ahura Mazda and live a life of selflessness. My vision for the community is to create an accepting and positive environment, exploring new ideas with fresh opportunities for everyone.



## FEZANA EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS SCHOLARSHIP (EXISS) FUND FOR YOUNG ZARATHUSHTIS

The FEZANA Excellence in Sports Scholarship (EXISS) fund provides financial support to young Zarathushtis who have performed exceptionally well in a sport and have become so recognized. The Fund's purpose is to provide financial scholarships to enable the recipients to get world-class training and/or study with experts in their field; fine tuning and enhancing their talents and capabilities.

### JAMSHEED MISTRI, University of California, Berkeley, Computer Science

I am honored to receive the FEZANA Excellence in Sports Award for 2021. I have been training in Taekwondo for around 15 years now, and as a 4th degree black belt, I attend practice multiple times each week, teach classes to students of all ages, and referee at tournaments around the United States. This scholarship will allow me to pursue my goal of becoming a certified International Referee, and perhaps refereeing at the Olympic Games someday. I would like to thank the FEZANA Scholarship Committee for this rewarding opportunity. I hope that the Zoroastrian community will grow and prosper in the future, and opportunities like these help youth recognize the abundant support that they can receive from the Zoroastrian ecosystem. I hope to give back to the community in an equally impactful way in the future.



### PAURUSH PATEL, George Brown College, Toronto, Sports and Event Marketing



I am sincerely honoured to be selected as a recipient of the FEZANA Excellence Sports Award. Thank you for your generosity, which has allowed me to focus on my academic term rather than worrying about the financial hardships presently. I was born in Surat, India and I attended a Parsi boarding school, J.N.Petit in Pune. Competitive sports were an essence and fabric of our foundation of our school. Sport has always been a big part of my life and I was fortunate enough to represent school football team at multiple state government and national level tournaments back in India.

Whether that was playing sports from a young age or watching a Manchester United game, I always wanted to pursue a career in the sports industry. Fast forward to 2020, they admitted me to the sport and event marketing post-graduation program at George Brown College, Toronto, Canada. Simultaneously, I also secured an internship at Special Olympics Ontario as a marketing and sponsorship coordinator during the term. Apart from financial aid, the FEZANA scholarship has also provided encouragement, a sense of relief, and filled me with confidence to follow my passion for sports and make a career out of it. As I have always believed in, our community numbers are beneath contempt, but in contribution beyond compare, and I do the same when called up to serve the community.

Last, this scholarship has opened a door and the prospect of a brighter future and will play a key role in shaping me into a successful person in the future. I cannot express my gratitude enough, and I want you to know that your generous support will see me achieve my dreams.

## FALI CHOTHIA CHARITABLE TRUST SCHOLARSHIPS 2021

The Fali Chothia Charitable Trust was established in 1988 to help provide scholarships and interest-free loans to needy Zoroastrian students. Awards are based on financial need, educational achievement, and community service. The trust is established under the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Washington Inc. (ZAMWI), and has awarded scholarships to students from all parts of the U.S. and Canada.

To demonstrate solidarity and trust between organizations while serving community causes, the U.S. Chapter of the World Zoroastrian Organisation is once again joining the Fali Chothia Trust's Scholarship Program by adding up to fifty percent to every scholarship we give from our trust's resources. This partnership enables us to significantly increase the amount of our scholarships.

|                           |                                                                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Yazmin Rustomji</b>    | Doctor of Medicine at Rush Medical College, Chicago.                              |
| <b>Robin Asgari</b>       | Juris Doctor degree at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada.                     |
| <b>Noshirwaan Aibada</b>  | Masters in Supply Chain Management at the University of Texas at Dallas.          |
| <b>Sanaya Irani</b>       | Doctor of Medicine degree at the University of Michigan Medical School.           |
| <b>Binyaz Ilavia</b>      | Doctor of Pharmacy, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.        |
| <b>Benasz Hansotia</b>    | Juris Doctor degree at the University of Richmond, School of Law.                 |
| <b>Arzan Mehta</b>        | Master's of Science in Engineering Management at Northeastern University, Boston. |
| <b>Vispi Karkaria</b>     | Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering at Northwestern University, Chicago.              |
| <b>Anisa Ostad</b>        | Juris Doctor degree at George Washington University Law School, Washington, DC.   |
| <b>Natashaa Dalal</b>     | Master's in Psychology in Education at Columbia University, New York.             |
| <b>Rhea Engineer</b>      | Master's of Science in Accountancy and Finance at the University of Houston.      |
| <b>Behnooz Sethna</b>     | Master's in Business Analytics at the University Texas at Dallas.                 |
| <b>Shirin Rateshtari</b>  | Master's of Business Adm at George Washington University, Washington, DC.         |
| <b>Tanaz Asli</b>         | A Juris Doctorate at Golden Gate University School of Law, San Francisco.         |
| <b>Navaz Shroff</b>       | Doctor of Medicine degree at St. George's University School of Medicine.          |
| <b>Taronish Chothia</b>   | Master's in Mechanical Engineering at Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada.        |
| <b>Mauvan Khorshidian</b> | Nursing at British Columbia Institute of Technology, Vancouver, Canada.           |
| <b>Farzad Rostamian</b>   | Master's in Computer Science at Concordia University, Ann Arbor, MI.              |
| <b>Anita Ostad</b>        | Master's in Early Childhood Special Ed at George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.   |
| <b>Diana Wadia</b>        | Master's of Management in Hospitality at Boston University.                       |
| <b>Sanober Dastoor</b>    | MBA in Healthcare Administration at McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada.      |



CONGRESS 2000 LEGACY

The 2021 Zoroastrian Association of Houston Legacy awards were distributed at the Navroz function in March 2022, by Vispi Sagar and Nozer Dungoor. The awardees were present to receive the awards. Donors Thrity & Rohinton Desai were thanked for their generous contribution to make this Legacy Program successful.



## ISABELLE IRANI

THE 2021 ZAH  
LEGACY AWARD,  
WINNER  
receiving the award and  
a check of \$3000 from  
Nozer Dungoor and  
Vispi Sagar reading the  
names



## SHANAYA VAKIL

winner of ZAH- CYRUS  
R. DESAI Award  
receiving the award and  
check for \$3000





# Personal Profile

## FEZANA congratulates CAPT. PERCY MASTER on his appointment as the Global President of WZCC (World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce )

*He was interviewed by ZARINE COMMISSARIAT,  
past Director on the Global Board of WZCC.*

### **Were you born and brought up in Mumbai?**

I was born in the Palace of the Diwan of Porbunder. My Grandfather, Framroze Master, was the Diwan of Porbunder and was awarded the title of “Khan Bahadur” by the British Empire. My family then shifted to Rajkot and then to Mumbai, then times were difficult and my family stayed in a one room Paying Guest accommodation in Khareghat Colony.

### **1. What prompted you to join the Merchant Navy?**

From Std. V in school, I had decided to have a career at sea. After my SSC exam, I joined the Training Ship DUFFERIN in 1963. Here I learnt caution, grit, determination and courage. I graduated from Dufferin in 1965 as a Senior Cadet-Captain, winning many medals, joined The Scindia Steam Navigation Co. and rose to the rank of Captain in 1974. In 1983 I established **Master Marine Services Pvt. Ltd.**

### **2. Today you are heading many other companies that you have set up. Please share some information with us on your successful ventures.**

I am proud to say that what started out as a one desk space in a relative's office, with my wife Arin as my Secretary and Accounts Manager, has grown today into the largest Marine Cargo Survey Firm in India, offering back-office operational services to over 150 shipping lines and having 50 offices across India with overall staff strength of 1500 people. In 1998 I established **Master Power** and constructed a Mini Hydro Power Plant in Mysore, Karnataka, which supplies power to the State of Karnataka through the Karnataka Electricity Board. We set up **Meher Container Terminals Pvt. Ltd.**, at Nhava Sheva, which specializes in Yard and CFS management and container repairs. In 1990 we procured the Agency in India of Conti-Lines, which is a leading Belgium based conventional ship operator, and thus we established **Prudential Shipping Agencies Pvt. Ltd.**, which acts as Liner and Husbanding Agent for shipping lines at Mumbai Port. This is now called **Master Logitech Pvt. Ltd.** and is a pioneer at handling Pure Car Carriers (PCC) in India.



**3. You have very successfully enlarged your business. To what would you attribute your success in this regard?**

I have always believed in honesty and integrity and service to clients.

**4. What has motivated you to do so much for humanity in general, and for our community in particular? Over the years you have maintained, funded and restored various Agiaries and have contributed in various ways for the upkeep and maintenance of Udvada. Through the Lions Club of Byculla, where you have served as a President and now hold an important post at the District level, you have conducted countless philanthropic activities for the blind and the needy.**

I am a very religious person. My family and I are committed to give back to society, which has given us so much! On January 11, 2004 we set up the Pinaz Xerxes Master Foundation, in memory of Pinaz who passed away under very tragic circumstances. Another Trust called Master Foundation was established in 2014. Both these Foundations are committed towards increasing awareness of Zoroastrian culture and tradition, and to help the less fortunate in various ways including medical aid, donations, scholarships, etc. Till date, the Foundation has made notable contributions to the restoration of the Hodiwalla



Funeral House at Doongerwadi, restoration of the stained glass at the Bhika Behram Well, complete paving and restoration of arterial road outside the Holy Iranshah Fire Temple in Udvada, renovation of the Dadysett Agiary, Thunti Agiary, Adenwalla Agiary at Lonavala, stained glass of Navsari Atash Behram, medical aid to cancer patients, etc. Master Foundation is currently in the process of developing a Senior Citizens' Home called "The Living Tree", at





Koparkhairane in Navi Mumbai, adjacent to Doongaji Dar-e-Meher. This facility is now completed and we are awaiting permission to start operations. The motto of the Master Group of Companies is : Humata, Hukhata, Hvarshtha (Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds).

**5. Please tell us something about your Family.**

I married Arin in 1974. Our son Xerxes was born in 1976. After graduation he went to Plymouth for M.Sc. in Shipping. He is Jt. M.D. of the Group and now shoulders a lot of responsibilities and that has lessened my burden. I now have more time for social work. Our daughter Zeenia was born in 1987. After graduation, she went to Switzerland to study Hospitality management. She then worked in London, Dubai, Kuwait and Mumbai in 5 Star hotels. She is now based in London, working for a branch of Master Marine Services, U.K. She is also a Director in Master Group of Companies. We have two grand-kids, Derezar and Zelina, both studying in school. (Picture on pg 117 shows Son Xerxes, Percy, wife Arin, daughter in law Kainaz, daughter Zeenia, grandchildren Derezar and Zelina).

**6. What prompted you to join WZCC?**

I am very grateful to Mr. Minoo Shroff, Past Global President, for introducing me to WZCC. Soon after joining I received the "Entrepreneur of the Year" Award. I was then appointed Director, Vice-President and President of WZCC India. Edul Daver has been an inspiration for me.

**7. As Global President of WZCC, what major steps do you intend to take?**

We will continue with all the initiatives of Immediate Past President Edul Daver. We have now formed various Committees for all the initiatives that WZCC wants to promote. These Committees will look after development of Youth, Start-Up Funding for young Zarathushtis, intellectual and social responsibilities, scholarships for higher education overseas, publishing of quarterly newsletters, use of social media to promote brand WZCC globally, establishing new Chapters and Regions globally to expand the horizon of WZCC. Many other initiatives are also being pursued. Our aim for the next 3 years is "**POWER OF YOUTH, DRIVING FUTURE GENERATIONS**".

**Zarine Commissariat's concluding remark :** I end by stating, with great confidence, that Capt. Percy Master will be an excellent Global President of WZCC and under his leadership, WZCC will be able to guide and assist all members.

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## Parichehr Namdar Freydooni and Her Innovated Technique

# CHERISM

Cavalier of Art, Doctrine in Art, Knight of Art, Professor and Researcher in Art, and Daughter of Mashyani

I remember, my siblings and I were fascinated by watching our mother's paintings when we were little. Being a kid, we were fascinated by the changes appearing on each painting. Just going from one side to another side of the canvas was fun, but now, we're proud of our mother who helped revolutionize the world. Understanding her vision of creating such a technique is an honor. Parichehr's motto is "Nature is in motion at all time and changes happen every second and it is not flat". Therefore, TIMES was an essential thoughtful key that created such a technique that viewers see changes appear on the painting as it appears in nature. In the world of oil painting, Parichehr is the first artist who in 1966 innovated 3D/4D technique. Her innovation and perspective have impacted, used, and changed the class of photography, billboards, movie industries plus Architecture and many other art fields around the world.

Through her 50 years of marriage, she was very active, focused, and dedicated to her life to her interior design program on TV, painting classes, a housewife, raising four kids and four grandkids with her motherhood love, patience, and gracious.

As Mahvash wrote in Woman Psych Magazine, in 2007; ..... "She Is a Sun That Never Sets".

Amazingly, she managed and planned her exhibitions, TV interviews, awards ceremonies for over 40 years. I'm going to share with you briefly some of the interviews I had with my mother to better understand her achievements and her life. We are all proud of her.



Q1: How did you get inspired and when did you know you wanted to paint?

A1: I started painting at the age of nine. My mother was my inspiration to achieve my goal and supported me for several years while she was alive. In May 2022, I will be celebrating the 56th anniversary of my innovative technique. Since my introduction in 1966, this technique has inspired and has been used in industries by many artists, architects, designers, movie producers,

and other related professionals around the world.

Q2: How do you describe your technique?

A2: The only way to experience and appreciate my technique is to see the paintings in person. The close range and upfront are the most suitable and effective ways to see all aspects of the technique and dimensions. The picture and taking film don't do justice, to actually understand the real effects. The 3D and 4D (Dimensions that is) don't appear correctly on the photo. Using my innovative technique, I've achieved the following: as you move around the canvas, like: Passing Time (Timelapse), Movements, Reflection, Compositions, Shape and Shade Changes, Passing and Reshaping Clouds, Rainy Day Progress, Appearance and Disappearance of Things...as you take steps from one side of the canvas to another side, walking -in half circle (180 degrees) from one end of the canvas to another end and while looking at the painting you'll see the elements of the technique as explained above.

Q3: Let's talk about your education, career, and achievements.

A3: I graduated from the University of Tehran/Iran, Fine Art College, in 1954 with an M.S. degree in Fine Art. And after that, I started working in Iran Cartography Organization in 1954. I designed the logo of this Organization and the logo is still being used and stands for the organization. Iran's relief map is also the work of mine that I designed on the ground of the organization's parking lot. Also, I drew and completed our Family Tree "Mavandad" that my Father had started. It took him 30 years, and 20 years of mine to collect with the help of my daughter, Itav & Bahram Dini. And I finally finished it in 1982 (photo above).

Q4: Could you please explain your innovative technique?

A4: Now, with my technique everything







is possible; Passing the Time, Movement, Reflection, Changes, Shades, Movements, Appears and Disappear, and more. For example, in the painting named World of Peace and War, 1993 (photo left) once you follow the steps as explained above, you'll notice two doves are kissing in the sky. As you continue walking to the front of the painting, changes happen and you will see the birds are in fighting motion and as you continue walking to the opposite side of the canvas, the birds turn into two crawls and it's a bloodshed fighting. Blood is dripping from their beaks and, at the bottom, some red columns appear which represents prison bars. That will give you a perspective of imagination, that changes happen within a second and it depends on which side you're on and you can always change it.

Q5: Talk to me about your unique technique Cherism, and how there are three pictures beside each other.

A5: My innovation was patented under the name Passing Time, Movement, and Reflection in 1982, but then we researched for a professional name like Realism or Cubism, or Naturalism, and we chose the name CHERISM and patented it in 2020. I have published two books, Cherism 1 and Cherism 2 which both talk about my technique. You'll find pictures of all my paintings, explanations, poems, and stories behind every one of my paintings. As I explained how you need to walk around my paintings and experience the changes, you will see changes in every single painting. Not everyone will be able to reach out to see my paintings in person. Therefore, we took a photograph from 3 different angles, right and left sides, plus upfront of the canvas, and put them beside each other in order to be able to show the Unique Technique.

Q6: Would you like to add anything else?

A6: Here, I would like to thank everyone who is reading this and supported me throughout the years and showed an interest and mostly you for all you have done for me. You have spent more than 20 years organizing and collecting my notes and paintings and published six books about my paintings, innovation, and poetry in two languages, Persian and English, which are the result of your hard work.

I, Itav would like to thank my mother for her time and thank FEZANA Journal as well. Mrs. Parichehr Namdar is a Cavalier of Art (Title received from an Italian academy), Ph.D. in Art (Educational Doctrine in Art received from Iran's Art and Cultural Organization/Bureau for her 60 years of education and researches in art), and the title of Daughter of Mashyani (Title recognition in 2000 World Zoroastrian Congress by FEZANA). You can search for her name and read more about her life in Facebook, LinkedIn, and her blogs. And you can search for her books in Amazon.

We would like to use this opportunity; \*If you are an art graduate and interested to help with my research; the beginning of the human's paintings through Mrs. Namdar's technique, please contact me. \*\*We are looking for a supporter to publish her books. \*\*\* As my mother's wish, she and we siblings would like to have all her paintings, awards, and her personal items under one roof as a museum, and if someone can help us or have a better idea, please contact me.

Sepas, Hitasp Freydooni and Itav Freydooni – [itav789@yahoo.com](mailto:itav789@yahoo.com)



### BIRTHS

**Arya**, a boy, to Shireen and Jimmy Daruwala, grandson to Nilufer and late Parvez Daruwala and Shahnaz and Farhad Cama, in Boston, MA on February 11, 2022.

### NAVJOTES

**Saloni Pargaonkar**, daughter of Afreen and Sudhir Pargaonkar, sister to Aayden Pargaonkar, had her 9th birthday & Navjote Ceremony in Cypress TX on February 6, 2022. Ervads Bomanshah Sanjana & Khushroo Vimadalal officiated the ceremony.

### WEDDINGS

**Natalya Haveliwala**, daughter of Yasmin and Sheroy Haveliwala to **Ervad Rayomand Katrak**, son of Jasmin and Percy Katrak in Houston, TX on February 12, 2022.

**Ashdin Medhora**, son of Yasmin & Late Noshir Medhora was married to **Rebecca Qian**, daughter of Sherry Jiang & Late Steven Qian on March 5, 2022 in Houston, TX.

### DEATHS

**Cawas Cooper**, husband of Ruby, father of Roshni, father-in-law of Vinith, grandfather of Vihaan and Vishali on October 23, 2021. (ZANC)

**Goolu Bharucha**, wife of late Farrokh Bharucha, mother-in-law of Kashmira, grandmother of Alexander, Ryan and Isabella on December 12, 2021. (ZSO)

**Gustad Irani**, husband of Karen Witt Irani, father of Zara (Sahil) Witt Irani (San Francisco, CA) in Hong Kong on December 16, 2021.

**Gooloo Wunderlicch** on December 21, 2021. (ZAMWI)

**Farokh Sheriair Jamshedien**, 75, husband of Zarine Jamshedien, father of Mehernaz (Mehran) Jamshedien, Nazneen (Farzad) Irani, Meherwan (Delnaz) Jamshedien, grandfather of Mehershah Jamshedien, Sanaya, Rayan, and Aria Irani, and Eva Jamshedien in India on January 8, 2022. (ZAPANJ)

**Thrity Kasad**, wife of Zubin Irani, mother of Yashna and Ava in Redmond, WA on January 10, 2022.

**Noshir Lakdawalla**, 85, husband of Rhoda Lakdawalla, father of Shernaz and Jayant Mohanty, Pervin Fernando, Darius and Emily Lakdawalla, grandfather

of Shayan, Ahneesh, Anahita, Zarine, Kamran and Sanaya in Los Angeles, CA on January 11, 2022.

**Ardeshtir Khosraviani**, 84, husband of late Mitra Sohrab, father of Anahita, Shahriar, and Arman in California on January 16, 2022.

**Dowlat Farvardin**, 97, mother of Mahnaz and Mehran Torki, grandmother of Nozar and Nikzad Kianian Fard, Rostam and Manijeh Torki in Toronto, ONT on January 17, 2022.

**Khorshid Bahramshahi**, wife of Goshtasb Kavousi, mother of Parvin, Parviz, Firoozeh, Farahnaz Kavousi in Toronto, ONT on January 21, 2022.

**Persi Colah**, 62, son of late Perin and Jamshed Colah, brother of late Aspi Colah, Eric, and Jessy, brother-in-law of Pushpa, Annamarie and Persis, uncle of Perin (Antonis), Freddy, Zenobia (Tyler), Ziba and Zubin in Baldwin, NY on January 30, 2022.

**Sheroo Vazir**, mother of Franah, mother-in-law of Gerry, grandmother of Saharah in Hollywood, FL on January 30, 2022.

**Zarbanoo Bozorg Chami (Contractor)**, wife of late Jamshid Beman, mother of Pouran, Manijeh, Abtin, Mandana, and Camillia, grandmother of Ramin, Mitra, Mantreh, Kaveh, Siyavah, Khashayar, Arsha, Neema, and Veesta on February 2, 2022. (ZSO)

**Hashem Razi** on February 7, 2022. (CZC)

**Paurusasp Rustomjee Khajautia**, husband of Homai Paurusasp Khajautia, father of Diana Cyrus Bharucha (Burke, VA), Jennifer Rustam Irani (Tampa, FL), father-in-law of Cyrus Viraf Bharucha, Rustam Gustad Irani, grandfather of Arzaan Cyrus Bharucha, Sanaya Cyrus Bharucha, Meher Rustam Irani, Hvovi Rustam Irani in FL on February 10, 2022.

**Ardeshtir Khosravi**, husband of Parvin, father of Kambiz, Parisa, Kourosh, grandfather of Payam in Atlanta, GA on February 15, 2022.

**Homi Gustadji Sarkary**, 86, son of late Tehmina and Gustadji Navroji Sarkary, husband of Gul, father of Xerxes and Zubin, father-in-law of Jerilyn and Chetna, grandfather of Darius, Cyrus, and Karina, brother of Farida (Sarosh) Khambatta and late Fardoon, Adi, Keki, and Ratan, in Poughkeepsie, NY on February 16, 2022.

**Maneck Framroze Sattha**, 84, father of Rayomand Sattha, Firuza (Sattha) Ayoup, father-in-law of Sandra and Robert, brother of Gulu Tamboli, late Jehangir Sattha, and late Rustom Sattha in Toronto, ONT on February 20, 2022.

**Tehmi Cavas Fatakia**, mother of Navaz Percy Driver, Zarin Hoshang Havewala, Hormaaz Cavas Fatakia,

and Bakhtavar Cyrus Press, mother-in-law of Percy Driver, Hoshang Havewala, Cyrus Press, Goolrukh Fatakia, grandmother of Tushad, Parinaz, Jamshed, Spenta, Pasheen, Farhaad, Natasha, great grandmother of Rayhan, Anahita, Olive, and Ava on February 23, 2022. (ZAMC)

**Nargis Saher (nee Sethna)**, 90, wife of late Rustom, sister of Noshir (Banu), Rumi (Hilda), sister-in-law of Shavak, Freny, Roshan, and brother-in-law Adil, aunt of Cyrus, Danny, Natasha, Khurshed, Pearl, Kermin, Sharon, Rashna and Marzban on March 2, 2022. (ZSO)

**Freny Sohrab Mehta (nee Engineer)**, 92, mother of Kali (Zarine) Mehta, Behnaz (Cyrus) Toorkey (Cherry Hill, NJ), Burjis (Anahita) Mehta, grandmother of Mehrzad (Taronish) Mehta, Sanea (Hormuzd) Balsara, Roshni Toorkey, Darayus Toorkey, Rushad Mehta, Spenta Mehta, Sohrab Mehta, great grandmother of Binaiza Mehta, Freyana Mehta in Mumbai, India on March 4, 2022.

**Mani Jehangir Clubwala**, wife of late Jehangir (Jangoo) Clubwala, mother of Astad (Behroze) Clubwala (New York) and Kaikhushru (Nilufer) Clubwala, grandmother of Tenaz, Neville (Raquel), Rashna (Andrew), Deena, great grandmother of Zarina, Asher, Lola, in Chennai, India on March 10, 2022.

**Seena Izadyar**, husband of Armita Noorain, father of Daryoush and Diba Izadyar. (CZC)

**Goola Dinshaw Mistry** wife of late Dinshaw Mistry mother of Mehroze and Behrooz Mistry and Parveen and Farhad Khursigara, grandmother of Narius and Cari Mistry, Sean and Lisa Khursigara, Zane and Mirjana Mistry, Sharmeen and Dareen Malcolm in Toronto, on March 15, 2022.

**Behram Pirozshaw Kavasji**, husband of late Armin Kavasji, father of Shiren (Faridoon) Daruwalla and Rustom, grandmother of Aresh Daruwalla, in Toronto, March 18, 2022



## Matrimonials

**Female 24**, 5'4". Master's in Financial Analysis, USA. Working as Financial Analyst in Texas. Enjoys Traveling, Hiking, and Music. Fun-loving, hardworking, ambitious, and Independent. Contact [matri.zoro.usa@gmail.com](mailto:matri.zoro.usa@gmail.com), WhatsApp +91 9820 5737 55. [F22.01]

**Female 25**, 5' 3", MBA from Leeds Beckett Business School, Leeds, UK. BA (Hons) in Business Management from Podar World College, Mumbai which is affiliated with University of Wolverhampton, U.K. Residing in Leeds, UK. Interests include but are not limited to - travelling, baking, exploring nature, reading and swimming. Contact [kareena.sethna@gmail.com](mailto:kareena.sethna@gmail.com) [F22.04]

**FEZANA Journal will coordinate initial contacts between interested parties. We do not assume any responsibility for verifying credentials. Contact Roshan Rivetna at [roshanrivetna@gmail.com](mailto:roshanrivetna@gmail.com).**

**PLEASE SEND ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR MILESTONES TO MAHRUKH MOTAFRAM TEL 425-961-0298 [MAHRUKHM83@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MAHRUKHM83@GMAIL.COM)**

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Regards,

Zoroastrian Singles Team

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY DOSUE DARUWALA

### CELEBRATING HER 101<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY ON DECEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> 2021

My mum, Dosue, is so very beautiful! Capricious, so full of mischief and fun, such a champion for academia, so transparent with her emotions, and so very bright! And a good cook.

*From left Daughter Quinee, great granddaughter Maya, granddaughter Kay Shanaya, and the birthday lady holding the cake. (photo right).*

Mum was born in Bombay. Her father was an Engineer and moved from city to city working on electrical installations for the city. They finally settled in Karachi. Dosue got her degree in nursing and then trained for midwifery a few years later. The family moved to Bombay in 1956. While in Bombay, she worked the night shift at a maternity hospital and was known for her ability to deliver babies with problems like placenta previa.

In 1969 my brother and I moved from Bombay to Montreal. In 1970 we sponsored our parents and our youngest brother. Since then, Dosue has lived in Montreal and Toronto. In 2010, at the age of 90, Mum joined my husband Zav and I in Victoria, BC. In 2015, while she was wintering in Palm Desert, CA with us, she broke her hips. Since then, she has been in a wonderful nursing home. The staff there love her for her bright spirited nature and her refreshing take on everything.

Dosue has a great sense of humour and loves people who do not take her seriously. My friends at school, college, work and beyond love her for her fresh and delightful take on everything. Often, my friends became her friends... and to this day they come to stay with us so they can visit her and revel in her naughtiness.

Dosue has an amazing mind, At 101, this year, she still recalls a lot, She is so quick to pick up everything and loves playing tile rummy when I visit, so she can keep those neurons ticking. (picture right with son Jehangir and daughter Quinee )

My mum has always loved technology and was so quick with learning how to email and send pictures to friends.

My mum has been a gift in my life. A true treasure! May Dadaji keep her happy and delighted always.

***Devoted and loving daughter Quinee Zav Patel , Victoria, BC, Canada***







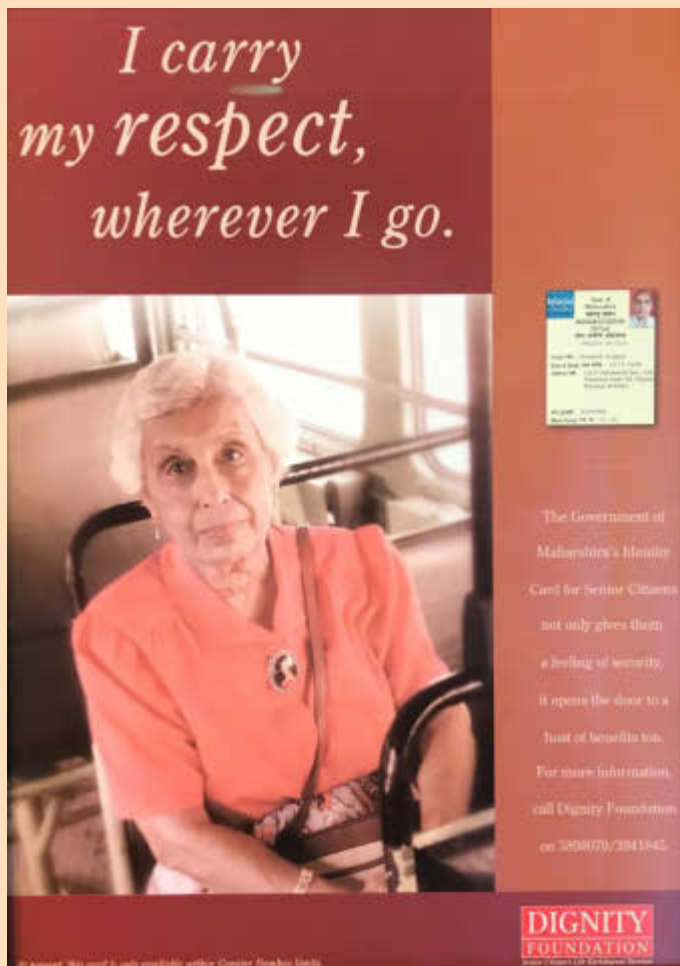
## Roda Pesi Turner (1931-2022)

### A COMMUNITY ACTIVIST, VOLUNTEER, AND A PHILANTHROPIST PASSED AWAY AT AGE 91 IN MUMBAI

With great sadness we announce the passing of Mrs. Roda Pesi Turner mother of Farieda Behram Irani, Malcolm Pesi Turner and Tenaz Farhad Sahiar, on February 26, 2022 in Mumbai, India. Farieda has shared a tribute to her mother.

Roda Pesi Turner (1931-2022), my mother, was the best person I had the good fortune of knowing. She was not only an incredible mother, wife, and daughter but also an amazing friend and benefactor who was loved by everyone who knew her. My mom grew up in an extended family amidst her parents, uncles and aunts all living in the same household. Over the years she was their chief advocate and eventually became their only caretaker. She nursed seven senior members of her family well into their late eighties and nineties, single handedly over a span of fifteen years. She saw it as a privilege and her duty and did it happily with love and compassion, providing personal attention and taking care of every one of them until they all passed. Being a caregiver and caretaker was completely natural to mom and entrenched in her being. She was the first and oldest volunteer for the "Make A Wish Foundation" in India when they opened their first chapter in Mumbai. She was responsible for training all volunteers and was in charge of all patients that came to JJ Hospital through the foundation. She was the liaison between the hospital and the foundation and she conferred with the staff in fulfilling the wishes of children under their care and catering to the emotional needs of the families.

Mom loved working with senior citizens. Her mantra was "ai aapra budhaone kon joshe". Her visits to the Parsi General and JJ Hospital infirmaries were the highlights of the week for sick, old and long term care patients in the hospitals who in most cases had no family or visitors and looked forward to her visits. She was a member of the Dignity Foundation which catered to the needs of the elderly. She was looked upon with such respect and admiration that mom was prominently featured in their ad campaigns and became the face of the Dignity Foundation in Mumbai. She was also an activist and a Good Samaritan. You would find my mom right in the middle of solving problems for families and advocating for people who had no means to fend for themselves. It would not be unusual for her to escort victims of spousal abuse to the local police station and seek help and



protection for the victims through available legal channels.

Mom was a very religious person of immense faith. She was a devout Zoroastrian and being charitable was another very major part of her being. Subsidizing education for under privileged children or supporting a widow who had no income were a given. Well-wishers entrusted her with donations for distribution to the needy as she saw fit. She always used to say that the charitable works we do on this earth will be the only things that would come in handy when we see our Maker. Mom will always be remembered for the incredible human being she was. We will all miss her so very much.

**SUBMITTED BY HER DEVOTED DAUGHTER FARIEDA BEHRAM IRANI, DALLAS.**

اشو زرتشت: «توانایی در انسان دانشی است که از نور الهی سرچشمه می‌گیرد.»

دکتر اردشیر خسرویانی فرزند جمشید و بانو خسرویانی، هشتاد و چهار سال پیش در روستای رحمت آباد یزد زاده شد. او از همان ابتدا با طبیعت خو گرفت و تا پایان عمر پربارش همچنان عاشق طبیعت و زادگاهش باقی ماند.

کودکی و جوانی را در زادگاهش گذراند و برای ادامه تحصیل به دانشگاه پزشکی مشهد و پس از آن دانشگاه تهران و مدتی را نیز برای فوق تخصص جراحی مغز و اعصاب خود در King's College لندن گذراند.

وی سال‌ها به عنوان استاد و همچنین رئیس جراح بخش جراحی مغز و اعصاب در بیمارستان جم تهران با منصوب شدن استاد راهنما دکتر ابراهیم سمعی مشغول به کار شد. وی در بیمارستان شهریار در تهران به عنوان پزشک پیشکسوت جراحی مغز و اعصاب به کار ادامه داد و سپس برای نیمه بازنشستگی در یزد در کلینیک اعصاب و روان بیمارستان بهمن که زمانی متعلق به همکیشان پارسی او بود مشغول به کار شد. او با شرکت در کنفرانس‌ها و کار به عنوان مشاور به هند، آمریکا و سراسر جهان سفر میکرد.

دکتر اردشیر خسرویانی در وطنش ایران و خارج از کشور پزشک و جراح مغز و اعصاب و ستون فقرات سرشناسی بود. بیماران خسته از درد و کسانی که امیدی به تندرستی دوباره نداشتند را با جراحی‌های خاص و پیچیده درمان میکرد. از اینرو شهرت پنجه طلا را داشت.

در طول مدت حضورش در بیمارستان جم، او و 5 جراح مغز و اعصاب دیگر توسط ملکه انگلیس برای کنفرانسی در کانادا انتخاب شدند، جایی که ملکه افتخار کار آنها را به عنوان جراح در کانادا داد، اما او در دل احساس می‌کرد خدمت به هموطنان ایرانی خود همان چیزی است که او می‌خواست.

شفادهنده، جراحی که انسانها را در حوادث و جنگها و آسیبهایی دیگر زنده میکرد.

پدر ما که از شاگردان سرشناس دکتر ابراهیم سمعی، دکتر خلعتبری و دکتر عاملی بود، همیشه قلب نرم و ذهنی روشن داشت، ترکیبی که یک پزشک یا جراح واقعی را می‌سازد. پدر ما که مصمم به نجات جان مردم بود، توانست درد مردم را احساس کند و تمام تلاش خود را برای نجات آنها انجام دهد و از آنها دست نکشد. او موارد بیمارانی را که دیگران از آن صرف نظر کرده بودند، بر عهده گرفت. همیشه در خدمت دیگران، برای شفا دادن، تغییر زندگی یک نفر و بازگرداندن شادی به زندگی آنها و بهتر کردن زندگی برای هرکسی که با او برخورد می‌کرد همان چیزی بود که برایش زندگی می‌کرد و یک نیروی پیشران در زندگی روشن او بود.

عشق به ایران و میهنش باعث شد تا هنگام جنگ ایران و عراق با افتخار به سربازان میهن یاری رساند و تا آخرین ماه‌های زندگی پر افتخارش به بیماران و نیازمندان کمک می‌کرد.

وی پزشکی دلسوز و همسری پرمهر برای روانشاد میترا سهراب و پدری فداکار برای فرزنداناش آناهیتا، شهریار و آرمان بود.

یادمان می‌آید که در ۷ سال اخیر که دائماً به یزد می‌رفتیم، آخر هفته‌ها (جمعه‌ها) ما را به خانه افرادی می‌برد که نمی‌توانستند به او برسند و با آن لبخند همیشه مغناطیسی و حضوری که همه تارکترین کوچه‌ها را روشن می‌کرد، وضعیت آنها را بررسی می‌کرد/اگر به نسخه‌ی/ویتامین‌هایی نیاز داشتند، عکس‌برداری رادیولوژی آنها را بررسی می‌کرد و فقط برای بررسی وضعیت سلامتی آنها بازدید می‌کرد، که در مجموع از حضور خود بگوید که: «من اهمیت می‌دهم، من اینجا برای شما هستم. من تو را فراموش نکرده‌ام و نخواهم کرد.» یک عاشق واقعی انسانیت، یک انسان انسان دوست که نه تنها می‌دانست که دوست بدارد بلکه بالاتر از حد وظیفه و نهایت خدمت را انجام دهد. همواره در قلب و همه وجودش عشق به خانواده و انسان‌ها را داشت.

لطفاً خاطرات خود را از او به اشتراک بگذارید تا هرگز فراموش نشود.

روانش شاد و خانه سرود جایگاهش

## Dr Ardeshir Khosraviani ( August 27, 1937- January 16, 2022)

*The healer, the surgeon who brought life to people in accidents, wars, and other traumas.*



“Dr. Ardeshir Khosraviani, son of Jamshid and Banoo Khosraviani, was born in the village of Rahmatabad Yazd,. and died in California.

He spent his childhood and youth in his hometown, then to study at Mashhad Medical University, and later at the University of Tehran, and at King’s College London, for his subspecialty of Neurosurgery. He was a professor, as well as the head Surgeon of the Neurosurgery ward for many years at Jam Hospital in Tehran, appointed by his mentor Dr. Ibrahim Samiei. He worked at Shahriar Hospital, in Tehran as a veteran Neurosurgical Physician, and then for his semi-retirement Dr. Khosraviani went to work in Yazd at the Neuropsychiatry clinic of the once hamkishaan Parsi-owned Bahman Hospital. He travelled to India, the United States, and the world attending conferences and working as a consultant.

Ability in a man is knowledge which emanates from divine light” Ashu Zartosht

Dr. Ardeshir Khosraviani, became a respected surgeon and a prominent physician, known as the renowned “Golden Fingers” as he performed specialized and complex surgeries relieving patients of their pain.

— During his time at Jam Hospital he and 5 other Neurosurgeons were selected by the Queen of England to attend a conference in Canada where she extended the honor of having them practice in Canada but in his heart he wanted to give service to his fellow Iranians.

A protégé of the renowned Dr Ibrahim Samiei, Dr Khalatbari, and Dr Ameli, our father always had a soft heart and a clear mind, a combination that makes a true healer of medicine. He took accepted patients’ cases others had given up on; always at service to others, to heal, to change someone’s life and bring happiness back into their live, To make lives better for those he came across was what he lived for and was the driving force of his life.

His love for Iran and his homeland propelled him to proudly help soldiers during the Iran-Iraq war and to help the sick and needy until the last months of his proud life.

A kind physician and human being, a loving husband for the late Mitra Sohrab, and a caring father for his children Anahita, Shahriar and Arman.

During the past 7 years, every time we went to Yazd we would visiting, those patients who could not come to see him on the weekends (Fridays). , he would drive us to their houses always with a magnetic and present smile that lighted up the darkest alley He would check how they were doing/if they needed any prescriptions/vitamins, would check their radiology images and just visit to check up on their well-being; his presence that “I care, I am here for you, I have not forgotten and will not forget you.” A true lover of humanity, a true human being that knew not just to love but to be of utmost service. To the end, he had two loves that motivated his compassionate heart; love for family and love for his fellow Iranians.

May Ahura Mazda keep him in his embrace and rest his gentle soul.

From your loving children Anahita, Shahriar, and Arman Khosraviani.



# Ardeshir Khosravi

(1931-2022) , a great Iranian Zoroastrian patriot

We celebrate the life of a trailblazer and a pioneer, Ardeshir Khosravi, who passed in Atlanta at home with his family around him on February 15, 2022 at age 91.

Ardeshir Khosravi was a proud Zoroastrian and even prouder Iranian. His heart beat for Iran and Iran's great history and glorious civilization.

Ardeshir Khosravi himself unquestionably made some history for Iran and all Zoroastrians. He was the first Zoroastrian and the first among all religious minorities in Iran in about 1400 years to become a governor and hold a number of other top level government positions despite the discriminatory laws prohibiting the rise of the religious minorities to the highest positions in Iran.

Ardeshir finished high school in the city of Yazd before moving to Tehran. He always talked fondly about his school days in Yazd and the fact that he received the best education while at the Markar high school. He was forever grateful to his Parsi brothers and sisters from India for that opportunity because his high school was founded by a Parsi.

He was a self-made man and came from humble beginnings with strong work ethics, discipline and unparalleled reputation for honesty and truthfulness. Ardeshir Khosravi first reached such heights of responsibility as a governor by his mid-thirties.

He continued to be a pioneer and cut new paths as he rose through the ranks to become the deputy governor general of one of Iran's largest provinces in the 1970s and then on the national level, he became the deputy Interior



Minister, which was the most important ministry just below the prime minister's office by his mid-forties. For his possible last position of responsibility, he had been contacted for consideration for the position of the Interior Minister, when the 1979 revolution interrupted history. This consideration was primarily based on his competence and also most importantly his reputation and prior work history as an incorruptible government official and public servant.

As he rose through the ranks, he never talked about himself or boasted about his accomplishments as personal achievements, but rather saw them as historical markers for all Zoroastrians and encouragement for other minorities to take their rightful place in the Iranian society once again in history.

Ardeshir retired following the 1979 Revolution and moved to the United States. However, he traveled to Iran on numerous occasions throughout the years. Immediately after the 1979 Revolution, he was

summoned to the Revolutionary Court, where all members of the public were given the opportunity to bring any complaints against him or accuse him of corruption. No one came forward to make any such accusations against him. He truly lived by the principles of Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds.

Ardeshir was also ahead of his time with his discipline for daily exercise and a healthy life style since his youth. He especially enjoyed daily walks and recommended that to everyone.

Ardeshir was born in Yazd to Bahram and Gohar. He was a husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend to many, father to Kourosh, Parisa and Kambiz and a proud grandfather to Payam!

For Ardeshir's 90th birthday gathering last year, his grandson Payam wrote about his grandfather:

We all now follow Payam's beautiful words and sentiment and honor the memory of Ardeshir Khosravi, a true Zoroastrian and Iranian.

*"I am honored to be here today as a descendant of this man*

*Good Thoughts. Good Words. Good Deeds.*

*I am hearing these words spoken in your voice.*

*Grandpa, the wise leader of Iran and our family.*

*You have a legacy long and proud. I am honored to be part of it.*

*Let's raise a glass in honor of this man." Payam.*

Pendar e Neek Goftar e Neek  
Kerdar e Neek Parisa Khosravi

## The Origin of the Vendidad and Younger Avesta

Meheryar N. Rivetna

**The** Vendidad is the Zoroastrian book of the laws of purity. It has come down in its entirety through the ages as part of what is termed the Younger Avesta. Religious texts compiled by numerous priests of yore with pre-Zarathustra beliefs, as well as beliefs not long after the Prophet's passing, diluted Zarathustra's tenets with beliefs in deities and practices which Zarathustra had rejected are collated in what is the Younger Avesta. The Vendidad is one such compilation in the Younger Avesta corpus.

Whether the Vendidad has any merit as essential Zoroastrian scripture is not the issue here. The Younger Avesta, as a whole, essential or not, can be considered as an extension of Gathic principles, but the corpus was not composed/compiled by Zarathustra. He was opposed to a multi-deity religion.

As to its origin, there are two schools of thought. Numerous scholars attribute the writing of the Vendidad texts to the Magi<sup>1,2,3</sup>. Another school disputes this assertion. The argument offered is that the Magi are not mentioned in the Vendidad or anywhere in the Younger Avesta. If it was their work they would not have neglected to take credit for it. The athravans are the only sacerdotal heads mentioned in the Avesta. Why is there no mention of the Magi? However, they do not provide an answer as to who, then, compiled the Vendidad and the Younger Avesta. There is general consensus among both schools of thought that the language in the Vendidad is dissimilar to the Avestan of the Gathas or that used during Zarathustra's time in Persia. Furthermore, the Vendidad is a heterogeneous work of multiple authors who assembled materials from diverse sources<sup>4</sup> composed sometime in the Parthian period and later in the Sassanian era.

The argument that the Magi,

not being mentioned in the Avestan corpus, could not have authored works such as the Vendidad is understandable. However, history provides a legitimate explanation for that omission.

The Indo-Iranians, before Zarathustra, practiced a polytheistic religious system rife with rituals and beliefs that Zarathustra disavowed. Around the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C.E., a part of the Indo-Iranian people moved to and settled along the Zagros mountains on the western part of Iran. Zarathustra was born in eastern Iran, long after this separation of the Iranians, and there founded his new religion.

Around the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., the people of western Iran formed the Median empire. They continued the pre-migratory religious practices they had shared with their Indo-Iranian brethren in the eastern part of Iran. The Medes comprised of six tribes, one of them being the Magi who were responsible for all sacerdotal functions. Cyrus the Great conquered Media around 550 B.C.E. establishing the Achaemenid Empire. The Indo-Iranian priests were known as athravans; their religious practices conformed, somewhat, to what Zarathustra had laid out. With Media now part of Achaemenid Persia, the Magi began to influence the religion of their conquerors.

In 522 B.C.E., King Cambyses II, son of Cyrus, died and an impostor claiming to be Cambyses' brother Bardiya sat on the Achaemenid throne. Gaumata, a Magus, killed Bardiya's impostor and took over the reign of Persia. Darius I, a relative of Cyrus, with a few other men killed Gaumata and declared himself Persia's monarch. This day of assault on Gaumata, called Magophonia, became a day of celebration in Darius' Persia and was a day to slaughter any Magi who showed himself in public.

Meheryar N. Rivetna studies and writes on issues relevant to the Zoroastrian religion. He has authored a book *Zarathustra: The Man And The Message*. Meheryar started studying the Zoroastrian religion in-depth after his retirement from Merck & Co



Some historians say it was a day not to kill, but to humiliate and berate the Magi. Darius' accession to the throne was ominous to the Magi.

The Magi practiced a doctrine that pre-dated Zarathustra. The Magi were conservative and were not inclined to accept the prevailing athraivan led Zoroastrian practices of the Achaemenid Empire<sup>5</sup>. However, with Darius' antipathy towards the Magi, they were in no position to totally disregard the one God Darius venerated<sup>5</sup>. They had little choice, but to officiate in the services of Ahura Mazda along with servicing the polytheistic communities whose priests they had been for centuries<sup>5</sup>.

Xerxes I followed Darius to the Persian throne. He was insufficiently versed in Zoroastrian doctrines<sup>5</sup> and his reign was the beginning of a decline in a comprehension of Zarathustra's original teachings. After Xerxes I's assassination, Artaxerxes I came to the throne in 465 B.C.E. and died in

424 B.C.E. to be followed by Xerxes II and then his illegitimate brother Sogdianus both of whom died within a year after Artaxerxes I. Sogdianus was killed by his half-brother Ochus who became the next Persian monarch taking the name Darius II.

The Magi, being eclectic, were “professional priests” with no allegiance to any one particular God, offering their services to the worship of any Iranian God the denizens of the empire desired.<sup>5</sup> During the reign of Artaxerxes I, the Magi were beginning to understand Zarathustra’s teachings without abrogating the cults they embraced. The Magi had ingratiated themselves to the royal house as priests who tended not just to spiritual matters, but also political affairs of the state. It was during the reign of Artaxerxes I and then Darius II that laxity to strict monotheism resulted in the beliefs becoming more polytheistic. Mithra and Anahita were becoming deities to venerate in addition to Ahura Mazda.<sup>5</sup> With the monarchs now leaning more and more towards Magian beliefs, the athravans gravitated to what the kings started to advocate; not doing so would cause their own extinction<sup>5</sup>. The seeds of a polytheistic Avestan canon resembling the Younger Avesta were sown, perverting Zarathustra’s teachings.

However, while the Prophet’s original teachings were on the decline, Zarathustra’s fame and prestige as the founder of a great religion was not waning.<sup>5</sup> The athravans took advantage of this attributing the new polytheistic Avestan canon to Zarathustra thus maintaining their bona fides as Zoroastrian priests.<sup>5</sup> The Magi, now a prominent presence in Eastern Iran, introduced and administered their own purification rules which the athravans thought it practical to formulate in the Avestan canon<sup>6</sup>. Given the religious climate of the land it was politically expedient for the athravans to add these novel beliefs to the existing teachings of Zarathustra giving them scriptural status. Hence, the athravans presented a scripture of a varied heritage which

the Magi had originated. The intent of this new scripture was not to persuade the laity of anything, but to conform to what everyone from the monarch down to the commoner was ready to accept. A narrow denominational religion turned into a pan-Iranian one<sup>5</sup>.

In the early Achaemenian times there was no religion that could be called Magian<sup>5</sup>. Now the repertory of the new pan-Iranian religion had all the frills of Magian beliefs. Why did the Magi, then, not demand their recognition in the composition of the new scripture? The answer is obvious. If they had challenged the new scripture not being Zarathustra’s, but their own ideology, they would have no standing as priests<sup>5</sup>. The only sensible recourse was satisfaction in the establishment of their beliefs in the revised Zoroastrian canon and accept Zarathustra as their prophet which they did in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. They used the Gathas as their guide to the new scripture. Furthermore, by the time the Magi established their status as “true Zoroastrians” the Avestan canon was already formed and could no longer be interfered with except in the arrangement or restoration of sections considered missing<sup>6</sup>. In their concocted advocacy that Zarathustra had approved of the religious mixture by which Zarathustra’s doctrines were being replaced, the authors of the Younger Avesta were careful not to make any reference in the new literature to the Achaemenian conditions of which Zarathustra would have had no knowledge.<sup>6</sup> Phrasing the beliefs and rules in the Vendidad and the Younger Avesta as a catechism between Ahura Mazda and Zarathustra gave the false impression that the rites were very Zarathustrian!

When the Sassanians came to power, the Magi were well established as the “true” followers of Zarathustra and the Sassanian writers (many of them of Magi lineage) declared Media as Zarathustra’s homeland and also assigned many Avestan geographical locations to Media. The reason for this misinformation was that the Magi wanted to claim they were the true

heirs and custodians of the Zoroastrian religion<sup>5</sup>.

Albeit, the religion as a whole suffered syncretization, the Magi must be credited with one thing: they did not tamper with the Gathas. Zarathustra’s core messages have survived undefiled, best as we know.

The purification rites and rules in the Vendidad such as exposure of the dead to scavenger birds; penalties for ill-treatment of dogs; violating contracts; cleaning of vessels contaminated by dead matter; burying hair and nail clippings; and many others are of Magian origin. How do these directives and retributions constitute prayer?

In the words of a very conservative priest Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana: “The Gathas plainly preserve Zoroastrianism in its purest and most original form, as the founder of this sublime religion had thought out and imparted it”<sup>7</sup>.

This Magian heterodoxy has had a lasting appeal as witnessed in the insistence of many Zoroastrians that these beliefs originated from the Prophet. It is this appeal, evident in our own times, that causes a segment of the community not to recognize that the Gathas are the only teachings of Zarathustra.

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Zoroastrian Contact in Austin Texas: Ketty & Aspi Wadia, Tel: 512-263-3131, [kettywadia@gmail.com](mailto:kettywadia@gmail.com)

Zoroastrian Association of Virginia: Chair: Romy Mehta, Tel: 804-245-0377, [rm804va@gmail.com](mailto:rm804va@gmail.com)

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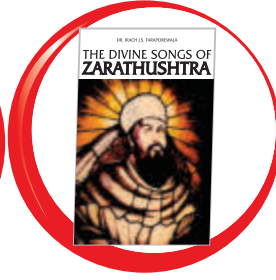
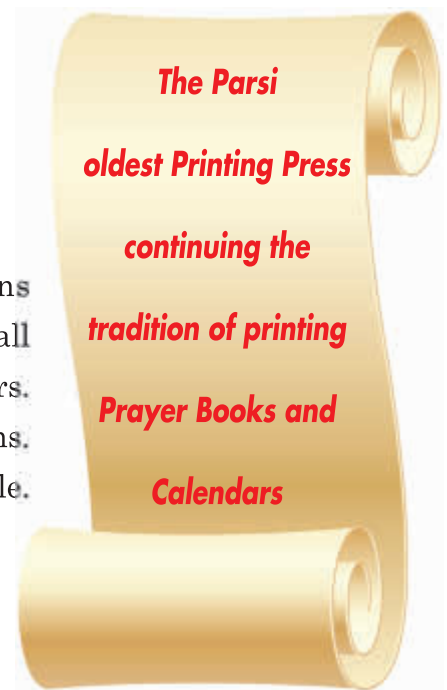


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