

# Adeleh Alba



Adeleh Alba was born in Iran. She has been living in the United States since 1983 with her husband and moved to southern California since 2004. They have two children who also live in California.

She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from the State University in New York. She started volunteering for the Education Committee of the California Zoroastrian Center (CZC) in Orange County in various teams since 2006.

She has been teaching "History and Culture of Iran" at the teen grade level and actively involved in the design and production of various forms of performing arts involving youth for CZC cultural and fundraising events.

She also served as a CZC BOD member during May 2021-23 term.



## Shiraz Antia

Shiraz with her husband Zarir and their twins Shirin and Dinyar originally from Roslyn Heights, NY and now lives in Norwalk, CT. Shiraz has been volunteering to teach our kids for the past 30 years.

# Sousan Bakhtari



As an immigrant who moved to this country on my own at a young age in a time of great uncertainty, I had to train myself to have a strong work ethic and to optimize how to achieve my goals. My passion was to study Electrical Engineering, and so I pursued several degrees in the field. Working in the corporate world and volunteering at non-profit organizations made me realize the importance of good leadership. For this reason, I moved my career toward management, and I am currently getting a degree in organizational leadership.

I love to learn more about the teachings of Zoroaster and tell others about it. For this reason, when my children were growing up, I volunteered as a teacher at our Zoroastrian center to relay the message of Zoroaster to the next generation. Currently besides working and going to school, I am a volunteer at UCLA and assist with their admission and cultural events, bringing in a diverse viewpoint on how to be more inclusive and engaging.

I strive to create the environment my children wished they had access to, while completing their undergraduate degrees and also to engage with the international students and help them feel less homesick, since I was once in their shoes.

# Mitra Behmardian



Mitra Behmardian was born in Tehran/ Iran and migrated to USA after high school. She got her B.S degree from Georgia State University and Doctorate Degree from Mercer University in Pharmacy.

She moved to California in 1987 and has worked in clinical and retail pharmacy settings. Mitra is a proud Zoroastrian and has volunteered as a Gathas teacher for the youth for over 20 years at CZC. Spreading Zarathushtra's message to anyone that's interested is her lifetime dream that's being realized everyday as a PR member at CZC.

# Armita Dalal



An accountant by trade, Armita Dalal, was born in a priestly Zoroastrian family in Tehran, Iran. She migrated with her parents to the USA in 1984, and ever since she has been volunteering her time for the Zoroastrian community.

She has been a board member of several Zoroastrian organizations and an avid member of the education group in Los Angeles, California, teaching the Young. She co-founded the Core-Education Committee, a CZC–LA subcommittee (California Zoroastrian Center) in Los Angeles County, CA, for the purpose of establishing standards and curriculum for religious classes

In 2021 she co-founded a spiritual non-profit organization rooted in the Zarathushtrian philosophy called “Doorway to Joy.” ([www.doorwaytojoy.org](http://www.doorwaytojoy.org))

She is a certified wedding officiator and, in March of 2022, was granted the Mobedyār title by the “Kankāsh-e Mobedān” in Iran.

# Bakhtavar Desai



Bakhtavar Desai is a Zoroastrian, and lives in Fairfield, OH, with her family. She worked for several years as a public accountant in the public sector. Since several years she has been devoting her time as a volunteer in her community.

To advance the work of Beloved Communities, and peace and understanding among the people everywhere, Bakhtavar volunteers as:

- Co-Chair of Interfaith Activities Committee of FEZANA (Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America).
- President of ZAKOI (Zoroastrian Association of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana).
- A member of the Executive Council of Religions for Peace, USA;
- A member of the Steering Committee of Cincinnati's Annual Festival of Faiths since its inception;
- Co-Chair of the Sacred Connections Program, EquaSion, Cincinnati
- Advisory Board Member of Kids 4 Peace, Cincinnati.

Inspired to **Care for Creation**, Bakhtavar practices and advocates a greener lifestyle, and volunteers with **the Education/Lifestyles Working Group (of which she is the founding member) of Faith Communities Go Green** (fcgg.org) in Cincinnati, OH.

Bakhtavar is an active Board Member of:

- **Shared Harvest**, a Food Bank, working to end hunger in five Counties in Ohio (<https://www.sharedharvest.org/>); and
- **Restore Hope**, a US non-profit which provides relief and empowerment to the most vulnerable rural communities in Liberia, West Africa, through programs for health, education, and economic opportunities (<https://www.restorehopeliberia.org/>).
- **The Interfaith Center at Miami University**

# Persis Driver



Persis Driver is a professor of Developmental Psychology at Dominican University, Chicago with a Masters in Teaching, and PhD in Educational Psychology. Her research is in the scholarship of teaching and learning, focusing on how individuals learn, sustain motivation, and interact in teams. She also runs an after-school creative and academic writing program. She is a religious education teacher, curriculum developer, and co-chair of the Children & Youth Religious Education committee at the Zoroastrian Association of Metropolitan Chicago (ZAMC) and a recipient of their Community Service Award. She coordinates experiential learning in the Chicagoland area and neighboring states, designing developmentally appropriate curricula, lessons, and activities. She contributes to the FEZANA education group, providing professional development workshops for educators and evaluating age-appropriate lesson plans. She has compiled two guides on developmentally sound teaching practices for students at diverse ages and for sustaining youth engagement, interest, and advocacy in religious education.

# Nooshin Jahangiri



Dr. Nooshin Jahangiri, a devoted family medicine doctor, was born and raised in Iran, where her profound interest in Ashuzartosht's teachings ignited a lifelong pursuit of knowledge in Zoroastrian philosophy, literature, history, and traditions.

Motivated by her dedication to comprehending the faith, Dr. Jahangiri achieved certification in Moobadyari and religious studies from the Moobadan Council of Tehran. As a respected member of the California Zoroastrian community, she actively engages in conducting religious ceremonies, organizing and teaching religious classes, and coordinating cultural activities for individuals of all ages. Through her active participation,

Dr. Nooshin Jahangiri endeavors to contribute to the creation of a dynamic and enriching community experience for Zoroastrians in California.



# Artemis Javanshir



Artemis Javanshir holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), and a second bachelor's degree in dental hygiene from the University of Southern California (USC). She is studying to receive her master's degree in education from the American College of Education, expected in the spring of 2025. Artemis is the co-chair of the FEZANA Religion Education Committee since 2018, where she has led projects such as age-appropriate lesson plans, informational sheets about the Zoroastrian religion, Zoom talks, and the Oral History Project, in collaboration with her co-chairs, other religion teachers and accredited teachers.

Artemis is an active member of the Core Education Committee at the California Zoroastrian Center in Los Angeles, where she teaches Persian history, religion, and language classes. In 2021, she joined the California Zoroastrian Center's Public Relations Committee, providing information about the Zoroastrian religion to interested individuals. Her greatest joy is working with the youth. She has organized essay, short story, and drawing contests to help younger community members become more familiar with the teachings of Zarathushtra. Artemis has been the recipient of the California Zoroastrian Center, 2020 Zoroastrian of the year Soshiant Award.

She lives in Southern California with her husband, two daughters, and two dogs.

# Vehishta Kaikobad



Vehishta Kaikobad holds a diploma in Montessori education (St. Nicholas College, London, England), with over 30 years of experience in the field of early childhood, Middle School and High School education.

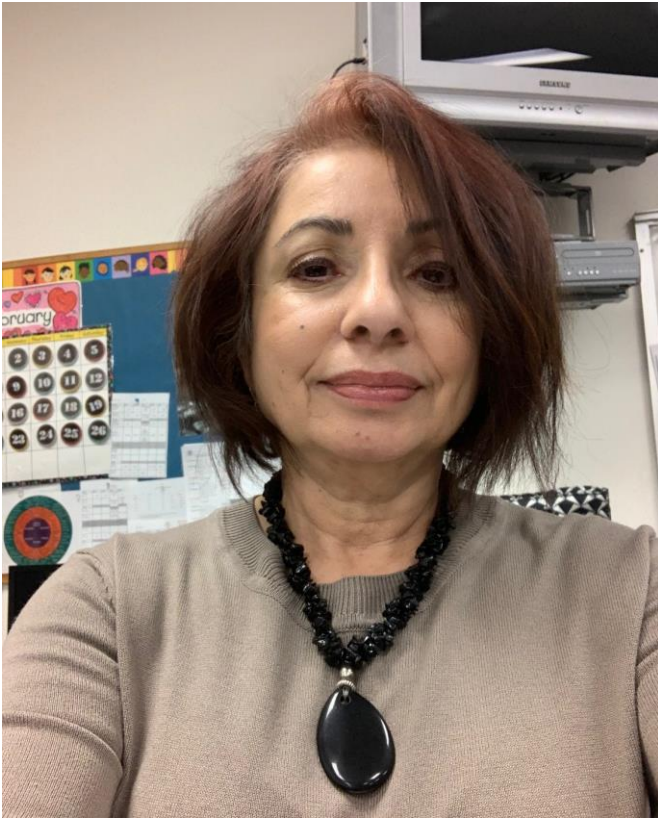
She was recognized by the Houston Children's Museum for the "Spirros Martell Teacher of the Year" award in 2000; and in 2008 awarded the prestigious "Mary Benedict Docent of the Year" award by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH).

Currently a Teaching Artist at the Glassell Junior School, MFAH, Vehishta conducts innovative workshops and offers Outreach Programs to citywide schools.

Vehishta conducts Sunday School at Zoroastrian Association of Houston, since 1980's, holding religious workshops at national and international level.

Vehishta remains dedicated to promoting education through art at a global level.

# Nina Kalianivala



Nina Kalianivala lives in Fort Worth, Texas. She and her husband have been in Texas twenty-three years. They have one daughter, Anahita, who is married and working at the VA in Reno, Texas.

Nina has been a middle school English teacher for thirty-two years of which twenty-three have been in Texas. Ever since arriving in Texas, she has been involved with religious classes, first with the little ones and then with the teen class.

She loves spending time with her students, reading, and cooking.



## Nilufar Kamdar

My professional journey, which began in 2002, is diverse and multifaceted. As a seasoned educator, I've taught students ranging from 1st to 8th grade in public schools, with a special focus on science.

In addition to my work in public education, I've also made significant strides in the private sector. Here, my role has been to educate company employees, helping them understand the workings of their own products. My Bachelor's degree in Rhetoric and Communications, coupled with a teaching credential, have been key to my success in these varied environments.

Whether it's simplifying complex scientific concepts for middle school students or elucidating product functionalities for adults, my mission remains consistent: fostering an environment of curiosity, encouraging critical thinking, and equipping learners with the knowledge they need for success.

Tanaz Karai



## Hilda Kasravi

Hilda Kasravi is from Southern California and has attended CZC Persian and religious classes while growing up.

She received her Bachelor's and Master's degree from University of California, Irvine.

Hilda is an elementary school teacher in Orange County.

# Farzaneh Kavooosi

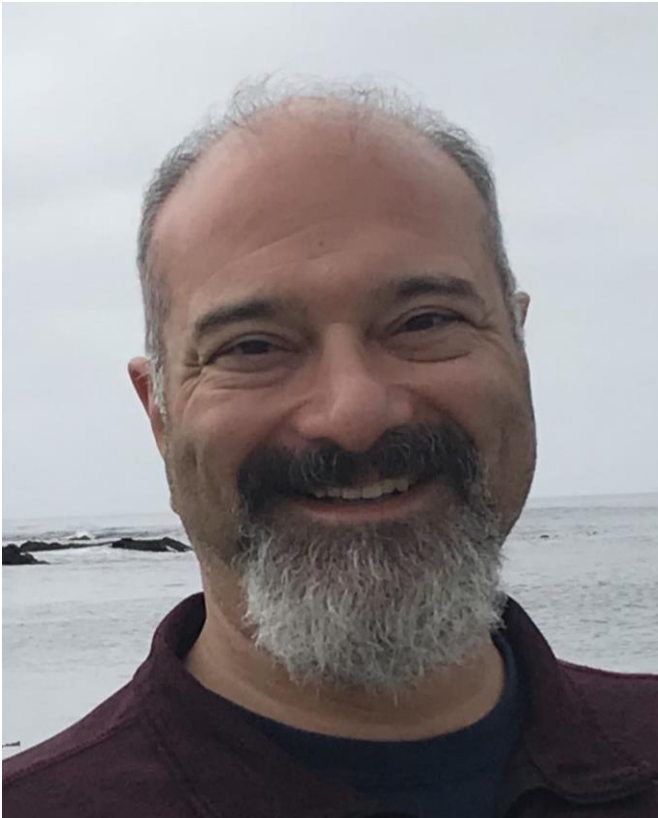


I was born in Tehran and grew up in a fairly religious family since my dad, Rostam Sales, is a mobedyar. I left Iran after the Revolution in 1979. I lived in England and France before moving to the USA in 1997, where I married Jamshed Kavooosi. My twins were born in 1998. As a parent, I wanted them to grow up as part of the Zoroastrian community, so I took them to religious classes at the California Zoroastrian Center (CZC).

I am a teacher by trade and teach Avesta classes on the weekend as well ever since my children started attending CZC classes. I have been teaching at CZC for 18 years. Nowadays I work with four levels, from kindergarten to third grade. I have put together three activity books for introduction, beginner, and intermediate levels. The books have Avesta lessons, puzzles, activities, and coloring pages which are fun for my students.

In my spare time, I love reading, gardening, cooking, baking and best of all storytelling. I have written 2 picture books in English, "Nowruz" and "Save the Earth", as well as 3 books in Farsi "Pir-e-Kharkan, Mehmani-yeh Alefbaa" and Taraaneyeh Din"for younger children.

# Xerxes Kotval



Xerxes has taught the History of the Zoroastrian Empires at the Zoroastrian Association of Greater New York (ZAGNY) for the last 12 years.

It is a multi-year program for middle school students covering the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanian empires and the subsequent fate of Zoroastrians afterward. He 'inherited' this labor of love from his mother, Daulat Kotval, who had taught the class for the ten years preceding.

Xerxes lives in New Jersey, where he has worked at Bell Labs for 25 years, studies yoga, and enjoys woodworking. He has two daughters, Tinaz and Mehr, who share his interest in Zoroastrian history.



# Tashan Mistree Byramji



Tashan Mistree Byramji was fortunate to have been taught classical Zoroastrianism from a young age. She has been teaching within the community since she was a teenager and is currently a member and teacher at the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey (ZAPANJ).

Tashan believes in teaching Zoroastrianism the 'fun way', through activities, songs, arts, crafts, and relatable content for both parents and children. She has been involved with the FEZANA Religious Education Committee in their efforts to create lesson plans for teachers as well as with the Global Glossary Project.

Tashan has participated and volunteered at previous World Congresses, including the 12th World Congress in New York where she created the Living Zoroastrianism Immersive Exhibition. She currently resides in Philadelphia with her husband and two children,.

# Fariba Pirghaibi



Fariba Pirghaibi was born and raised in Tehran, Iran and migrated to the U.S. as a young adult to further her education. She holds a B.S. in Clinical Laboratory Science and has been working at a Non-Profit hospital for over 30 years.

She is passionate about sharing Zarathushtra's message with the world and has been an active member of the Zoroastrian community in Southern California in different capacities over the years from education, membership and public relations committees to one term of board of directors at CZC (California Zoroastrian Center).

She continues to teach a Zoroastrian Ethics teen class at CZC and has been the English section Editor of CZC Journal known as Chehrenama for the last 13 years.

She lives in Orange County, California with her husband and has two adult daughters

# Mandana Pishdadi



Mandana Pishdadi was born in Tehran, Iran. She immigrated to the United States after the Iranian Revolution to continue her higher education. She holds two degrees in Computer Science and Mathematics.

Mrs. Pishdadi was one of the founders of the CZC education committee and has been involved with education of Zoroastrian youth in various capacities for over 25 years. She has served two terms in the CZC Board of Directors.

Mrs. Pishdadi worked for over 30 years in the field of Electronic Engineering. She is currently retired and lives in Southern California with her family.

# Arnavaz Sethna



I grew up in Karachi, Pakistan, in an 'Athornan" family - my father was an Ervad from Udvada and so were his two brothers who resided with us. A lot of times our dinnertime discussions were about the religion.

Besides this, I attended a Parsi Girls' school where every Friday morning Dasturji Dhalla would speak to us about the religion. While at home I learned the Zoroastrian prayers, Dasturji gave us the insight into the religion. Teaching Sunday School required me to research into topics of presentation and relied heavily on the books by Jivanji Mody, Dasturji Dhalla and T. R. Sethna.

# Kimiya Shahzadi



Kimiya Shahzadi is an assistant teacher to Artemis's Zoroastrian class in California who made a standardised lesson plan for a class. She is the Co-Chair of Zoroastrian Youth of North America (ZYNA), a committee of FEZANA, is the social media manager at the North American Mobed Council (NAMC) and is the Youth Chair of the Zoroastrian Association of Michigan (ZAOM).

She is currently training under the Zoroastrian Mobed Council of Iran to become a mobedyar and aspires to become a mobed.

Kimiya was born and raised in Melbourne, Australia, can speak Persian, and has a black belt in Shotokan Karate. She owns a real estate business and with her masters in clinical behavioral psychology specializing in relationships and publications has founded Love Story LLC with a mission to increase love in the world in a big way.