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She Inspire

Magazine

Special Edition

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN

LEADERS AWARD 2025

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Honoring the Women Who Lead, Inspire, and Transform

Celebrating Excellence
AND LEADERSHIP



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SHEINSPIRE MAGAZINE
ASPIRES TO BE THE

WORLD'S LARGEST WOMEN'S MAGAZINE
WITH THE AIM TO POSITIVELY IMPACT
EACH AND EVERY **WOMAN'S LIFE!**

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FROM EDITOR'S NOTE



It gives us immense pride and joy to present to you this special edition of She Inspire Magazine, dedicated to the **Influential Women Leadership Award 2025**. This is not just another edition — it is a heartfelt tribute to the women who are breaking barriers, redefining leadership, and creating ripples of positive change across industries, communities, and nations.

This year's awardees represent diverse fields — from business and education to sustainability, healthcare, technology, and the arts. Their journeys are as unique as they are inspiring, each marked by moments of courage, perseverance, and relentless pursuit of excellence. These women have dared to choose paths less traveled, faced challenges head-on, and turned obstacles into opportunities.

They remind us that leadership is not simply about power or position — it is about purpose, compassion, and the ability to transform lives.

What makes this edition even more special is the deeply personal insight each leader shares. In these pages, you will read about their defining moments, the struggles that tested their spirit, and the victories that shaped their vision. You will find stories of entrepreneurs turning ideas into impactful ventures, professionals leading with empathy and innovation, and changemakers building platforms for others to grow. Each narrative is a reminder that real influence is measured not just by what we accomplish, but by how we empower others along the way.

The Influential Women Leadership Award 2025 is more than a recognition — it is a movement. A movement to celebrate women who are creating ecosystems where dreams are nurtured, diversity is valued, and every voice has a chance to be heard. It is also a call to action for the next generation of women leaders to rise with confidence, to take space without hesitation, and to craft futures that are bold, inclusive, and visionary.

As you turn these pages, we invite you to pause, reflect, and absorb the powerful stories within. Let them inspire you to push beyond limits, to keep learning and evolving, and to lead — no matter the size of the stage or the audience. We hope that each profile encourages you to celebrate your own journey, no matter where you are on the path, and reminds you that every step forward matters.

Here's to honoring influence, celebrating leadership, and igniting possibilities for generations to come.

With admiration and gratitude,

Saurabh Gautam

saurabh@sheinspiremagazine.com

#sheinspire October 2025

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INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Gunjan Multani Asanani

Health and Genomic Lifestyle Coach/ Senior
Software Engineer, Austin USA

GUNJAN MULTANI ASANANI: REDEFINING WELLNESS THROUGH SCIENCE, SPIRIT, AND SELF-BELIEF

06

Gunjan Multani Asanani wears many hats—and wears them with purpose. Based in Austin, Texas, she is a Health and Genomic Wellness Coach, Dietician, Yoga Coach, Master Neuro-Linguistic Practitioner, Dynamic HypnoPatterning Coach, and Senior Software Engineer. Over 13 years, she has guided more than a thousand women to reverse lifestyle diseases, blending ancient wisdom with modern science. Her philosophy? *“Never give up – your breakthrough might be just one step beyond the struggle.”*

From Coding to Coaching: The Unexpected Start

Gunjan's journey into wellness began in an unlikely setting—a corporate office in Boston, where she was working grueling 16–18-hour days as a Senior Software Engineer. One day, her supervisor asked, “How are you still so energetic?” That question sparked introspection.

While thriving in a high-pressure career, Gunjan had been practicing yoga, experimenting with nutrition, and studying techniques like Neuro-Linguistic Programming purely out of curiosity. When she began hosting informal wellness sessions at work, her passion transformed into purpose.

“I realized real healing goes beyond treating symptoms. Whether it's a nutrient deficiency, a limiting belief, or an unresolved emotion—everything is connected,” she recalls. This understanding pushed her to integrate mind, body, and energy sciences into her life and later into her career.



Gunjan Multani Asanani

Young Entrepreneur of the Year
(Health and Wellness)

Role Models Who Shaped Her Path

Raised by parents who embodied service and compassion, Gunjan found her first mentors at home. Her mother, Dr. Pushpa Multani, inspired her with her healing touch as a medical doctor, while her father, Purushottam Multani, modeled selfless dedication to community work.

She also works with her mother, Dr. Pushpa P. Multani, who has received top honors including the Health Entrepreneur of the Year (April 2024), She Inspire Award (September 2024) and Life Time Achievement Award by Ahmedabad Medical Association (2025). Together, they are advancing genomic wellness programs in India and abroad.

After excelling academically—earning a Magna Cum Laude degree in Computer Science from the University of Texas at Dallas—Gunjan built a strong career in technology before launching her wellness platform WowDietFit. She designed signature programs like the 30-Day Health Mastery Challenge and workshops on gut-brain healing, sleep, and neuroplasticity.

Turning Challenges Into Strength

Gunjan's success story wasn't without hurdles. Moving to the U.S. as a young student meant adjusting to a new country, culture, and academic pressure. "I overcame the fear by treating it as a challenge," she says.

Her philosophy deepened as she witnessed clients reverse thyroid issues, PCOD, and even type 2 diabetes markers through genetic programs she co-developed with her mother. Today, she collaborates with doctors to research how stress, telomeres, and genetic expression can be influenced by nutrition, yoga, and NLP techniques.

Building a Science-Backed Wellness Revolution

Gunjan's work integrates multiple disciplines. She has:

- Conducted over **50 wellness workshops** worldwide.
- Helped clients reverse lifestyle diseases by addressing root causes rather than masking symptoms.
- Created courses like *Blueprint for Living Longer, Younger, and Richer* and *Comprehensive Neurolinguistic Programs* blending neuroscience, quantum healing, and frontal lobe activation.
- Collaborated with gastroenterologist Dr. Yogesh Harwani on natural probiotics research at Noble Hospital, Ahmedabad.

She also works with her mother, **Dr. Pushpa P. Multani**, who has received top honors including the *Health Entrepreneur of the Year* (April 2024) and *She Inspire Award* (September 2024). Together, they are advancing genomic wellness programs in India and abroad.



THE STAIRS
OF HARD
EFFORTS NEVER
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CLIMBING,
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WHEN THE
LIFT
BREAKS
DOWN.





The Values That Keep Her Grounded

Gunjan lives by balance—between logic and intuition, career and family, work and rest. Her approach is rooted in the belief that *healing begins within*. She follows SMART goals to stay focused while carving out intentional time for yoga, breathwork, and family.

“What keeps me going,” she says, “is seeing clients light up when they finally feel healthy, energetic, and free of medications. That transformation isn’t just personal—it ripples into families, workplaces, and communities.”

Vision for the Future

Gunjan is now building a neuroscience-backed wellness model to help people rewire neural patterns, heal the gut-brain connection, and reverse disease at a genetic level. Her ultimate goal is to create a global network of wellness leaders and coaches who integrate science and ancient practices to inspire healthier living worldwide.

“My mission is to shift modern healthcare from reactive to preventive, from fragmented to holistic, and from fear-driven to purpose-driven,” she explains.

Recognition and Awards

Gunjan’s efforts have earned her:

- Young Entrepreneur of the Year in Health and Wellness – Influential Women Leadership Award, Hypedge Media Group, June 2025
- City Excellence Awards by Bharat Good Times, June 2025
- Women Excellence Awards by Bharat Good Times, August 2025
- Most Inspiring Women in Healthcare – SheInspire Magazine, September 2024
- Multiple academic honors, including a Magna Cum Laude Gold Medal in Computer Science from the University of Texas at Dallas, May 2003

Words to Women Everywhere

Gunjan’s message to young women is clear and empowering:

“Dare to dream boldly and embrace your individuality. Success isn’t defined by others; it’s defined by how aligned you are with your own values. Build your confidence and resilience—they will carry you through life’s toughest storms. Take risks, make mistakes, learn, and keep moving forward. And most importantly—be patient with yourself. Your journey is uniquely yours.”

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Anne Williams Dias

Founder & CEO
WithAWill HR Consultancy Services LLP

ANNE WILLIAMS DIAS: BUILDING LEGACIES THROUGH COURAGE, CLARITY, AND HUMAN CONNECTION

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From a Single Conversation to a Lifetime Calling

For Anne Williams Dias, Founder & CEO of **WithAWill HR Consultancy Services LLP**, a career in human resources wasn't planned—it was sparked by chance. Over three decades ago, a senior HR manager couldn't attend an interview and asked her to step in. Anne had no experience on the other side of the table, only a willingness to say yes. The candidate was remarkably talkative, the conversation flowed, and by the end someone remarked, "You're a natural HR professional." That single moment planted a seed that would grow into 25 years of shaping people, leaders, and organizations.

"HR isn't just about hiring or engagement," Anne explains. "It's about shaping careers—helping people see a path forward, not just a paycheck." That philosophy now anchors her firm, WithAWill, which she built to help individuals and institutions unlock their true potential.

Lessons from Family and Finding Courage Early

Anne's earliest role model was her mother—a woman of quiet strength who taught her that courage can be both humble and firm. "She showed me the importance of asking for help without shame and apologizing with sincerity," Anne recalls. Those lessons gave her the confidence to step into spaces where women were seldom visible, let alone heard.

Starting her career straight out of school, Anne moved from a small town to Delhi—timid at first, hesitant even to board a bus alone. Soon, she was navigating hostel life, commuting on red buses, working full-time, and sending money home. "That journey—from fear to fortitude—was my foundation," she says.



Anne Williams Dias

Outstanding Women Leadership
Award

Achievements that Tell a Deeper Story

Anne's professional record is marked by transformative roles in HR operations, governance, compensation, digital transformation, and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). Among her notable milestones:

- **Scaling with impact:** At a housing finance company, she helped scale the workforce by 1.5x in a year, reduced attrition rates across levels, and improved engagement scores—earning the firm recognition as a *“Company with Great Managers.”*
- **Cross-functional leadership:** Stepping outside HR to lead branch process excellence in a rural business vertical gave her a deep respect for frontline realities and sharpened her operational insight.
- **Empowering women leaders:** She designed and launched her organization's first Women Mentorship Program, strengthening leadership pipelines for women.

These achievements became the foundation for **WithAWill**, where Anne's AP³ Framework—Augment People, Amplify Processes, Accelerate Profitability—guides organizations and individuals through structured, people-focused transformation.

Challenges that Reshaped Leadership

Anne is candid about the fact that none of these milestones came easily. One of her toughest periods came while leading an HR digital transformation without any technical background. “I didn't even know the terminology at first,” she admits. “I was mocked in meetings. Attrition hit my team hard. I became overly aggressive and, frankly, a leader I didn't want to be.”

The turning point was self-reflection. Anne realized she needed to relearn empathy, rebuild trust, and create a psychologically safe environment. “I had to become a different kind of leader—not by controlling outcomes but by empowering people.” That personal shift not only saved the project but also reshaped her approach to leadership permanently.

Her push for women-centric initiatives also met resistance, sometimes in the form of outright bias. When she proposed an all-women cricket team for a corporate tournament, she was met with questions like, “Who will take care of them if they get injured?” She refused to back down—and today, every corporate sports event in that organization mandates the inclusion of a women's team.

Guiding Values that Define her Work

The seven values behind Anne's CORE GCTTM philosophy—Candor, Ownership, Respect, Empowerment through Courage, Growth through learning, Credibility, and Trust through connection—are the foundation of WithAWill. These are not abstract ideals, but practical anchors:

- **Candor** enables honest conversations in tough situations.
- **Ownership** drives accountability for impact.
- **Respect** recognizes every voice, regardless of hierarchy.



LEGACY
ISN'T WHAT YOU
LEAVE
BEHIND—IT'S
WHAT LIVES
ON THROUGH THE
PEOPLE
YOU BELIEVED
IN.





- **Courage** fuels bold action and personal evolution.
- **Growth** keeps individuals and organizations future-ready.
- **Credibility** ensures solutions are rooted in knowledge.
- **Trust** builds relationships that sustain change.

“These principles are my compass,” Anne says. “They’ve shaped every decision and every engagement—and they’re at the heart of our culture at WithAWill.”

Vision for the Future: Empowering Women, Creating Legacies

Anne’s aspirations are as focused as they are ambitious. Over the next five years, she aims to **empower 1,000 women professionals** through structured coaching, mentorship, and transformative leadership journeys.

To further this mission, she launched **ElevatHER**, a Lean In Circle designed as a peer community for women to share challenges, exchange wisdom, and co-create opportunities. “I want women to design this space with us,” she says. “Leadership is not just about breaking barriers—it’s about building bridges for others to cross.”

In parallel, Anne is expanding WithAWill’s consulting reach across geographies, helping organizations become resilient, inclusive, and strategically aligned. Programs like **120 Days to Empowering Leadership** and **90 Days to Empowered Workforce** are designed to help businesses redesign structures, build leadership pipelines, and embed values that last.

Balancing Work, Life, and Purpose

For Anne, balance isn’t about equal halves—it’s about rhythm and intention. Long walks, quiet moments, and family time keep her grounded. “There was a time I equated productivity with worth,” she admits. “Now I see balance as alignment—where personal energy fuels professional clarity, and purpose is the true profit.”

Recognition Along the Way

Anne’s leadership has earned numerous honors, including the **Influential Women Leaders Award 2025 by Shelnspire Magazine**, the **Global Exceptional Women Award 2024**, and the **Leadership & Innovation Award 2017**. She also received her company’s **CEO Award for three consecutive years**.

“These awards are meaningful,” Anne reflects, “but they’re not the destination. They’re reminders of every lesson, every setback, every person who believed in me and every team I believed in.”

A Message for Young Women

“Ask for help. Build your support system. Don’t be afraid to fail—nothing is ever wasted. Speak up, even if your voice shakes. Trust your path and refine your purpose, but most importantly, lift others as you rise.”

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Kajal Pareek

"Founder / Director - Mamatva Skill Training Institute Managing Trustee of Pareek Welfare Trust
Founder & President of Royal Palms Residents Welfare Club & Kids Club"

KAJAL PAREEK: BUILDING BRIDGES OF OPPORTUNITY THROUGH SKILL AND SELF-RELIANCE

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"Do good, and good will come to you." This simple belief guides **Mrs. Kajal Pareek**, Chief Trustee of **Pareek Welfare Trust** and Founder-Director of **Mamatva Skill Training Institute** in Milind Nagar, Powai, Mumbai. Since its launch in July 2016, Mamatva has grown into a platform where women learn essential skills, rediscover their confidence, and build livelihoods of their own. For Kajal, it is more than a training institute—it is a tribute to her parents' vision of service, compassion, and empowerment.

"Mamatva was born in memory of my parents, whose values shaped me," Kajal explains. "They taught me empathy and integrity. I wanted to honor them by helping other women stand on their own feet."

Her role models include women who turned challenges into strength—leaders like Sudha Murthy, whose humility and social commitment inspired her own path.

Inspired by Values, Driven by Purpose

Kajal Pareek's journey began with a question that kept her awake at night: *Why do so many talented women lack opportunities to shine?* Watching women with untapped potential but few resources moved her to create an institute where they could learn, grow, and become financially independent.



Kajal Pareek

Social Impact Award

Milestones That Changed Lives

The founding of Mamatva was a turning point not just for Kajal, but for hundreds of women who have since passed through its doors. The institute offers training in tailoring, fashion design, jewelry making, beauty and wellness, and more. Each skill opens a door to independence.

“One of my greatest achievements has been enabling our trainees to contribute significantly to their households’ incomes—often surpassing their spouses’ earnings—and thereby uplifting their families’ standard of living,” Kajal says. “Watching them take charge of their lives and become role models in their communities—that’s the real success of Mamatva.”

Recognition has followed naturally. From receiving the **Pareek Ratan Award** to being honored by the **IWLA**, Kajal treasures every acknowledgment—but none more than the gratitude of the women whose lives have transformed. “The smiles on their faces are my true award,” she says.

Early Struggles and Hard-Earned Trust

Building Mamatva wasn’t easy. In its early days, convincing people that high-quality training could be offered at minimal fees was a challenge. Kajal and her team even went door-to-door to find students.

“Until 2022, Mamatva ran entirely on self-funding,” she recalls. “It was tough, but persistence paid off. Word-of-mouth turned skepticism into belief. Women saw that we were sincere and that this was truly for them.”

The formal registration of the **Pareek Welfare Trust** under The Maharashtra Public Trusts Act, 1950, with **80G tax benefit eligibility**, was a key turning point. It enabled Mamatva to expand its reach, introduce new programs, and remain open to CSR partnerships for sustaining its mission.

Principles That Guide Her Work

Kajal’s core values—compassion, empathy, honesty, and empowerment through education—shape every initiative at Mamatva. She believes that when a woman becomes self-reliant, it uplifts her family and inspires future generations.

“All most women need is someone to believe in them,” Kajal says. “Helping them take that first step changes not only their lives but the lives of everyone around them. It’s a feeling beyond words—it’s divine.”

Balancing Roles with Grace

Alongside her work, Kajal has always prioritized her family. When she founded Mamatva, her children were still in school. “I worked during school hours and returned home before they did,” she recalls. “I never hired tutors—I taught them myself. My husband’s support has been invaluable. I’ve ensured that both my home and Mamatva receive the care and attention they deserve.”



This thoughtful balance has allowed her to remain present for her loved ones while staying fully committed to her mission.

Current Initiatives and Future Goals

Today, Mamatva is planning to expand into digital literacy and computer skills to meet modern needs. The institute is also forming **self-help groups (SHGs)**, enabling trainees to collaborate, support each other, and scale their businesses collectively.

As a registered organization, Mamatva now welcomes CSR partnerships and direct donations through www.mamatva.org, with contributions eligible for tax benefits under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

Kajal's vision for the future is ambitious. "I want to turn Mamatva into a full-fledged vocational training hub and set up a small factory where our women can fulfill bulk orders and earn steady incomes," she says. "Eventually, I want to take Mamatva beyond local boundaries, reaching more districts and states, helping more shakti become financially independent and respected contributors to society."

The Heart of Her Motivation

What keeps Kajal going after nine years of tireless work? The answer is simple: the women themselves.

"Their gratitude, their courage, and their journeys from helplessness to confidence—that's my fuel," she explains. "Mamatva is more than an institute; it's my extended family. The staff and trainees share a bond of love and respect, and that emotional connection inspires me every day."

A Message to Young Women

Kajal's advice to the next generation is as straightforward as it is powerful:

"Believe in your potential. Your background or current circumstances don't define your future. You are Shakti—if you set your mind to something, there's nothing you can't achieve. Keep learning, keep growing, and never stop believing in yourself."



Closing Thought

Kajal Pareek lives by a principle that reflects both humility and faith: **"Do good, and good will come to you."** And she proudly echoes the mission of Mamatva itself:

(Every woman deserves knowledge and respect—this is Mamatva's mission.)

With compassion as her compass and action as her language, Kajal Pareek continues to transform potential into power—one woman, one skill, one dream at a time.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Shweta Vakil

Founder Principal, SNBP International School

SHWETA VAKIL: BUILDING SCHOOLS OF COMPASSION, COURAGE, AND CONNECTION

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Early Dreams That Became a Calling

For some, leadership is a career. For Shweta Vakil, it was a dream that quietly took roots long before titles and accolades came her way. Today, as the **Founder Principal of SNBP International School, Wagholi, Pune**, she carries with her 18 years of experience and an unwavering belief that education must feel personal, compassionate, and deeply human.

Her journey into education wasn't marked by a dramatic turning point, but by small, profound encounters with children whose lives changed when someone noticed them. "When a student feels safe, seen, and supported, learning becomes something they embrace, not something they fear," she shares. Such moments planted the vision in her of building a school where joy, trust, and values mattered as much as academics and sports.

Inspired by Her Parents' Leadership at Home

While many professionals look to industry icons for inspiration, Shweta's greatest role models have always been her parents. Her mother, a homemaker who raised three daughters, cared for in-laws, and stood by her father through the demands of his work, exemplified leadership in its purest form. Her father, an industrialist, led with vision, determination, and a deep sense of responsibility toward his work and family. Together, they created a home shaped by strength, resilience, and unconditional love—qualities that became the foundation of Shweta's own leadership style.

"My mother didn't have a career outside the home, but she built a world inside it," Shweta recalls, "and my father showed me what it meant to lead with purpose and integrity." She learned from him that leadership is not just about making big decisions, but about listening patiently, setting clear values, inspiring others through action, and taking responsibility even when the path is uncertain. His quiet, steady example taught her that true leadership comes from service, humility, and consistency.



Shweta Vakil

Outstanding Women Leadership
Award - Education

Shweta's career began in the classroom, driven by curiosity and passion. Gradually, she took on greater responsibilities—shaping curriculum, mentoring fellow educators, and leading initiatives that redefined learning experiences. The defining milestone, however, came when she was given the opportunity to establish a school from the ground up—a chance to turn her childhood vision into reality.

Achievements That Go Beyond Awards

Awards have followed Shweta at every stage be it **Principal of the Year 2025** at the **22nd EduLeaders Summit**, **Excellence in Leadership Award by CV Raman Education Awards 2021**, **Atal Bihari Vajpayee National Education Service Ratna Award 2023**, **Influential Women Leaders Award 2025**, among many others. She has spoken at international conferences, contributed to panels on AI in education, and even entered the **Global Genius World Records** for a unique student engagement initiative.

Yet, her truest achievements lie elsewhere. They are found in the notes from student's parents who say their child now looks forward to school, in the quiet conversations where a student walks in with heavy eyes and walks out a little lighter and in the trust of her teaching community. "Achievements are never loud," she reflects. "They're found in quiet thank-yous, in lives touched, and in knowing that in some small way, you made a difference."

Challenges That Tested and Strengthened Her

Shweta's journey has not been free of challenges. Stepping into leadership without a roadmap. Building a school from the ground up meant making decisions that impacted real people: children, teachers, families and that was both humbling and at times overwhelming, often without clear answers. There were moments of doubt and days when the weight of balancing leadership with family life felt overwhelming.

"The tug-of-war is real," she admits. "There were times I missed something important at home because school needed me, and other times I showed up at school carrying the weight of something personal."

But instead of breaking her, these experiences shaped her resilience. She learned to lead with empathy, to trust the process, and to keep showing up even when it was difficult. "Every challenge taught me that strength doesn't come from perfection, but from presence and persistence."

Guided by Integrity, Empathy, and Joy

Shweta describes her compass as a blend of five core values: **integrity, empathy, resilience, consistency, and joy**. These principles guide every decision—from curriculum design to the way she connects with students and teachers.



**SOME WOMEN
LEAD WITH A ROAR,
OTHERS
WITH A QUIET FIRE.
BOTH CHANGE
THE WORLD;
BUT IT IS
COURAGE, WISDOM,
AND THE HEART TO LIFT
OTHERS
THAT LEAVE A LASTING
LEGACY. WOMEN
WHO ACT WITH
CONVICTION
CARVE PATHS WHERE
NONE EXISTED
AND INVITE OTHERS
TO FOLLOW.**

She firmly believes that integrity builds trust, empathy deepens relationships, resilience fuels growth, and consistency sustains progress. Joy, she says, is what keeps the heart alive in the work.

Creating Meaningful Impact Today

Currently, Shweta is leading SNBP International School into a new phase of growth by introducing the IB curriculum alongside CBSE. This isn't just about adding a board but about reimagining education as inquiry-driven, reflective, and global in outlook.

Equally important to her is emotional intelligence; for both students and staff. "No matter how advanced the world gets, empathy and connection will always matter," she stresses.

Her vision also extends beyond the school. Through collaborations, panel discussions, and mentorship, she seeks to strengthen the larger education community, ensuring no educator feels left behind in this era of rapid change.

Looking Ahead: Education With Purpose

For Shweta, goals aren't checkboxes, they're compass points. She envisions schools that prioritize empathy as much as intellect, creating environments where every voice is heard and valued.

Her aspirations include expanding scholarships and community learning spaces so that children without privilege can access quality education. She also dreams of platforms that empower women not just with skills but with belief in themselves.

"I want to keep building schools that feel less like systems and more like spaces where everyone is truly seen and heard," she says.

A Quiet Fire That Keeps Burning

Shweta finds her greatest motivation in curiosity and her children. Her daughter and son are her daily reminders of resilience, growth, and love. They ground her, inspire her, and remind her why the effort matters.

She no longer chases the illusion of perfect balance. Instead, she seeks harmony in being present where she's needed most and forgiving herself when she falls short. "Balance isn't about equal time. It's about meaningful time," she reflects.

Words of Wisdom

When asked to share a message with readers, Shweta's words carry both strength and humility:

"Real power is not in leading the way, but in making sure no one is left behind."

Her advice to young women is equally profound:

"Believe in your inner voice even when it shakes. Don't wait for permission to lead. You are a quiet fire: strong enough to lead, gentle enough to understand, and wise enough to know that true success is never walked alone, but shared."



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Ruqaiyah Aurangabadwala (Ruplekha Roy)

Chief Business Office-BFSI - Qness Corp Ltd

RUQAIYAH AURANGABADWALA (RUPLEKHA ROY): LEADING WITH COURAGE, CLARITY, AND IMPACT

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Ruqaiyah Aurangabadwala, also known as **Ruplekha Roy**, has built a remarkable 25-year career shaping India's financial services landscape. Currently the **Chief Business Officer – BFSI at Qness Corp Ltd**, she leads a division dedicated to addressing the talent and staffing needs of the financial sector. With a deep specialization in **payments, real-time digital transactions, financial inclusion, product consulting, and insurance underwriting**, she has earned recognition as both an industry strategist and a people-focused leader.

Curiosity That Sparked a Career of Impact

Ruqaiyah describes herself as “the girl with two names,” but her career has had one consistent thread: curiosity. Early on, she was fascinated by how financial systems worked, how innovation could reach millions, and how businesses could be structured to make a real difference. This curiosity led her to immerse herself in the BFSI sector, where she could combine technical expertise with strategic thinking.

“I wanted to explore every angle—strategy, implementation, and human impact,” she says. “The financial sector gave me that opportunity.”

A Journey Defined by Strategy and Transformation

Over the last two decades, Ruqaiyah has led **market landscape assessments, business strategies, and operational frameworks** for global payment networks and banking institutions. She was instrumental in **scaling transformative initiatives such as Aadhaar based Payments Services and Real Time Payment projects**, expanding digital inclusion and redefining India's payments ecosystem.



**Ruqaiyah Aurangabadwala
(Ruplekha Roy)**

Influential Women Leader in
Human Resource

Her expertise lies in uniting **product innovation with service optimization**—fostering collaboration across diverse teams, improving productivity, and delivering results that last. One of her key strengths is building bridges between the BFSI and staffing sectors, ensuring that both talent and technology advance together.

These achievements reflect more than just technical acumen. “I’ve always been passionate about creating solutions that deliver tangible benefits,” Ruqaiyah notes. “That’s how real progress happens.”

Challenges That Shaped Her Leadership

The toughest part of her journey hasn’t been technology or strategy—it has been responsibility for people. “Leading outcomes is one thing; leading people is another,” she reflects. “Their growth, challenges, and trust became my responsibility, and that required me to grow as a person.”

Ruqaiyah met these challenges by being open to feedback, staying grounded, and pushing herself far beyond her comfort zone. “I learned to lead with empathy and clarity, rather than authority alone,” she says. “Resilience comes when you own your voice and refuse to shrink.”

Guided by Courage and Action, Not Perfection

For Ruqaiyah, leadership isn’t about being flawless. “It isn’t about perfection—it’s about courage, taking action, and standing by your decisions,” she emphasizes. These principles guide her work, her relationships, and her approach to mentoring others.

Her career has been punctuated with numerous awards and nominations, including a **Limca Book of Records entry for Financial Literacy**, but she measures success not in titles, but in meaningful impact.

Motivation Rooted in Curiosity and Challenge

“What drives me is not just progressing in life—it’s creating impact,” Ruqaiyah explains. “Opportunities that challenge me to think differently and do meaningful work—that’s what keeps me moving forward.”

Even with her demanding role, she has mastered the balance between career and personal life. “Women are natural multitaskers,” she says, “but the secret is prioritizing, setting boundaries, managing time, and knowing when to say no.” She credits her mother and mother-in-law for their unwavering support—proof that women empowering women can be transformational.



STEP UP
BEFORE YOU
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TO BEGIN,
SHOW UP,
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Vision for a More Inclusive Future

Ruqaiyah's goals now extend beyond personal success. She is committed to fostering **equitable opportunities and inclusive workplaces**, advocating for environments where women and underrepresented talent can thrive. She is also focused on **personal well-being, travel, and building deeper relationships** that enrich her both professionally and personally.

"My next chapter is about impact at scale—helping businesses and people step into their full potential, while building systems that are fair, future-ready, and human-centered."

Advice to Young Women: Claim Your Space

To young women entering competitive industries, Ruqaiyah offers straightforward advice:

"Don't wait for permission—claim your space. Speak your truth. Lead like you were born to."

She believes that every woman has the right—and the responsibility—to step up before she feels ready. "Bravery isn't the absence of fear; it's showing up anyway," she says.

A Legacy of Courage and Connection

Ruqaiyah's career story is not only about scaling digital transformation but also about redefining leadership itself. Her ability to combine **strategic vision with human insight** has made her a trusted advisor and an industry authority.

As she looks to the future, her focus is simple yet powerful: **use expertise to drive real change, lift others along the way, and never stop learning.**

"It's not about being perfect. It's about being courageous enough to begin, again and again—and helping others do the same."

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Shivani Tripathi

Managing Partner at Karizma Konnect,
Director at Adyan Foundation

EMPOWERING CHANGE THROUGH PURPOSE: THE JOURNEY OF A VISIONARY FOUNDER

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Introduction: Passion that Shaped Two Worlds

When you meet Shivani Tripathi, founder of Adyan Foundation and Karizma Konnect, one thing becomes clear—her work is not just about building organizations, it's about building lives. After spending years in HR roles with multinational corporations, she discovered her calling: creating change that was tangible, lasting, and deeply human. “Since my younger days, I was always drawn towards work that creates real change in people’s lives,” she shares. That passion, combined with her love for connecting people, laid the foundation for two very distinct yet complementary ventures—Adyan Foundation, which works for education, healthcare, and skill-building for underprivileged communities, and Karizma Konnect, a recruitment consultancy bridging the gap between talent and opportunity.

Inspiration and the Turning Point

Shivani’s journey has been guided by the strong women in her life who taught her resilience and compassion. Their lessons gave her the courage to think beyond convention and dream big. Starting Adyan Foundation became a turning point—transforming her passion into a platform for change. Witnessing the pressing need for meaningful job opportunities, she later founded Karizma Konnect, which has steadily grown into a trusted partner for businesses and job seekers alike. “The biggest realization for me was that entrepreneurship can be a way to bring both social impact and economic empowerment together,” Shivani reflects.



Shivani Tripathi

Young Founder of the Year

Achievements that Create Ripples

For Shivani, success is never just measured in numbers but in lives transformed. Through Adyan Foundation, she has helped young girls return to school and supported women to start small businesses, creating economic independence and renewed confidence. Professionally, building Karizma Konnect from scratch into a recruitment consultancy that has helped hundreds of people find jobs remains one of her proudest achievements. The recognition she has received—including the She Inspires Award – Young Founder of the Year, a place among the Top 10 Women Leaders from Ahmedabad (2022), and the COVID-19 Warrior Award—is deeply meaningful, but she insists the most rewarding moments are when people share that their lives changed because of her work.

Overcoming Challenges with Resilience

The road to success was not without its hurdles. “One of the early challenges was being taken seriously—especially as a young woman founder working in two different sectors,” Shivani admits. Limited resources, moments of self-doubt, and societal pressure could have derailed her path. Instead, these challenges became stepping stones. She surrounded herself with mentors, kept learning, and focused on making an impact rather than seeking external validation. Her ability to convert obstacles into lessons is a defining feature of her leadership journey.

Values that Define Her Work

Shivani’s philosophy is grounded in integrity, empathy, consistency, and purpose. “I believe that how you do something is just as important as what you do,” she says. Whether she is running a social initiative or a recruitment firm, honesty and authenticity guide her decisions. This values-based approach has helped her earn trust, build strong teams, and create initiatives that are not just successful but also meaningful.

What Fuels the Drive

The source of her motivation is deeply personal: the people she serves. Whether it’s a girl receiving her first scholarship or a job seeker finding the right role, every success story keeps her going. “One small step can start a chain reaction of positive change, and that thought keeps me moving forward,” Shivani says. It is this ability to find inspiration in others’ growth that gives her work its transformative edge.

Striking a Balance

Balancing a thriving professional life with personal well-being has been a conscious effort. “It’s a continuous process,” Shivani explains. Setting boundaries, taking time to recharge, and surrounding herself with a supportive circle are key. Over time, she has embraced the idea that self-care is not selfish but essential for sustaining energy and leading others with clarity.



**START SMALL,
STAY CONSISTENT,
AND
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KINDNESS.**

Current Initiatives and Future Vision

Her work today is focused on expansion and deeper impact. Through Adyan Foundation, Shivani is scaling women empowerment programs to offer digital literacy and entrepreneurship training for rural women. At Karizma Konnect, her team is developing a mentorship-driven hiring model designed not only to place candidates in jobs but to prepare them for long-term success.

Looking ahead, her vision is bold yet purposeful. She dreams of creating a self-sustainable ecosystem of women entrepreneurs across India through Adyan Foundation and growing Karizma Konnect into a nationwide platform for ethical and inclusive recruitment. On a personal front, Shivani aspires to mentor young women to step into leadership with confidence and purpose.

Words to Live By

Her message to readers is simple yet powerful:

“Start small, stay consistent, and never underestimate the ripple effect of kindness.”

To young women, Shivani's advice is practical and empowering: don't wait for the perfect time—start with what you have, believe in your own voice, and don't hesitate to ask for help. “Collaboration is powerful, and remember—your story matters more than you think,” she says with a warm smile.



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Sunu Mathew

CEO C World Holidays India Pvt

SUNU MATHEW: TURNING SETBACKS INTO PURPOSE AND LEADERSHIP

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At 52, **Sunu Mathew**, CEO of **C World Holidays** and **C World Weddings**, has spent three decades reshaping the travel and tourism industry while championing empowerment for women, senior citizens, and individuals with disabilities. Her journey is proof that when life rewrites the plan, you can still take control of the story.

Finding Direction After a Dream Was Grounded

As a young woman, Sunu dreamed of flying high—literally. She aspired to become a pilot, but a paragliding accident forced her to abandon that goal. “I had to face the reality that my dream was no longer possible,” she recalls. “But I also knew I wasn’t ready to give up.”

Determined to stay connected to aviation, she joined East West Airlines, India’s first private airline. That step unexpectedly introduced her to a new passion: tourism. “I discovered that travel isn’t just about planes or destinations—it’s about people, stories, and connections,” she says. This realization set her on the path that would define her career.

From Entrepreneur to Industry Leader

In 2003, Sunu founded **C World Holidays**, becoming one of the first women entrepreneurs from Kerala to enter a male-dominated industry. Later, she expanded into **C World Weddings**, crafting destination celebrations worldwide.



Sunu Mathew

Influential Woman Leader in
Tourism & Hospitality

The early years were far from easy. “Being taken seriously was a challenge,” she admits. “I had to work twice as hard to prove I could lead.” Balancing her professional ambitions with her responsibilities as a mother, wife, and daughter-in-law meant long days, personal sacrifice, and moments of doubt. But persistence paid off.

Today, C World Holidays and C World Weddings are recognized internationally for excellence and personalized service. Sunu’s leadership has earned accolades including **Luxury Travel Agency of the Year 2024 (Corporate LiveWire Global Awards)**, **Best Full-Service Luxury Travel Company 2024 (LUXlife Magazine)**, and **Global 100 Women in Leadership 2024 (EMG Publications)**.

Guided by Values, Grounded in Faith

Despite her success, Sunu’s compass has always pointed toward service and integrity. Inspired by Mother Teresa, she believes leadership is about giving, not just achieving. “Humility, compassion, and respect for elders are non-negotiable values for me,” she says.

Her faith in God gives her strength during setbacks and keeps her grounded in moments of triumph. “Everything happens for a reason,” she explains. “This belief helps me navigate both success and failure with perspective.”

Breaking Barriers and Building Others Up

Sunu’s impact extends beyond business. She serves as **Chairperson of Women’s Cricket at the Kerala Cricket Association**, creating opportunities for young female athletes, and as **Director of Ability Aid International**, supporting individuals with disabilities.

She is also deeply committed to mentoring her own team. “I encourage my employees to think like entrepreneurs,” she says. “Some of them have gone on to start their own ventures, and that makes me incredibly proud.”

This focus on empowerment has become a hallmark of her leadership style. “When you lift others, you rise higher yourself,” Sunu explains. “It’s about creating sustainable change, not just personal success.”

A Global Platform for Tourism and Peace

One of Sunu’s proudest moments was being invited to speak at the **14th World Leaders Summit at the University of Oxford**, where she shared insights on tourism as a bridge for peace and cultural understanding. “Travel connects people, dissolves barriers, and reminds us of our shared humanity,” she says.



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AND PURPOSE.

Looking ahead, she dreams of building a **global peace initiative through tourism**, using her platform to foster dialogue between communities and cultures. “Tourism can be more than an industry—it can be a movement for understanding and unity,” she says.

What Keeps Her Moving Forward

Sunu credits her strength to faith, purpose, and the people around her. “My family, friends, clients, and team members have been my anchor,” she says. “Their belief in me kept me going even when I doubted myself.”

Her motivation comes from seeing the impact of her work—whether it’s creating unforgettable travel experiences, mentoring young women, or improving lives through community initiatives. “Success feels real when it’s shared,” she explains.

Balancing Career and Family with Grace

Sunu refuses to see family and career as opposing forces. “Balance doesn’t mean giving equal time to everything every day—it means being fully present in each role when it matters most,” she says.

With strong organizational skills, unwavering priorities, and support from loved ones, she has managed to excel at work while nurturing her family life. “Being a mother, wife, and leader are all important roles,” she adds. “You don’t need to sacrifice one to succeed in the other.”

Advice to Young Women: Be Fearless, Stay Grounded

Sunu encourages young women to pursue their dreams with courage and persistence.

“Believe in yourself—even when others don’t. You don’t have to be perfect, just persistent. Take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them. That’s how leaders are born.”

She also urges them to lift others as they rise: “Surround yourself with people who uplift you, and when you succeed, make sure you do the same for someone else.”

A Legacy of Empowerment and Purpose

Sunu Mathew’s life has been a story of reinvention—turning personal setbacks into opportunities to serve, lead, and inspire. Whether she’s building a luxury travel empire, mentoring women in sports, or championing social causes, her focus remains the same: **to leave behind more than success—a legacy of compassion, courage, and transformation.**



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Rashmi Angadi

"MBBS, DNB (Nuclear Medicine) Radiation Safety Officer
Founder Director and Chief Nuclear Medicine Consultant- Neumod Pvt Ltd, Hubli"

DR. RASHMI ANGADI: COURAGE, CURIOSITY, AND THE POWER OF NUCLEAR MEDICINE

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As Founder Director and Chief Nuclear Medicine Consultant at NeuMoD Private Limited in Hubli, Dr. Rashmi Angadi has spent the past 15 years at the forefront of molecular imaging and theranostics. Her work combines cutting-edge technology with patient-centered care — helping doctors see not just what an organ looks like, but how it functions in real time.

Her fascination with science began young, shaped by a strong family influence and the pioneering work of Dr. Marie Curie. "My mother is my greatest role model. Her resilience and compassion have guided me throughout my journey. And in medicine, Dr. Curie showed me that intellect, dedication, and courage can open doors even in the toughest circumstances."

Where Science Meets Humanity

"Nuclear medicine is unique," Dr. Angadi explains. "It blends advanced technology with direct patient care. Functional imaging gives us insights that go beyond appearances — helping us detect disease earlier and plan better treatments."



Dr. Rashmi Angadi
Top 10 Influential Women Leaders
in Healthcare

Rising Above Hardship

The road to becoming a specialist in nuclear medicine was far from easy. “Completing my MBBS and DNB was a significant achievement because it came despite financial hardship and personal obstacles. It required discipline, resilience, and a lot of faith in myself,” she recalls.

Later, as she worked to establish nuclear medicine centers in north Karnataka, she faced professional and personal hurdles — including rare health issues, an ectopic rupture that led to a coma, and a fractured ankle that tested her ability to balance family and career. “Those experiences were difficult, but they made me stronger. I learned to see challenges as opportunities to grow rather than reasons to stop.”

Guided by Principles That Never Waver

For Dr. Angadi, three values form the foundation of her work and life:

- **Perseverance** to stay motivated through every setback.
- **Integrity** to remain honest and build trust.
- **Empathy** to understand and respect those around her.

“These principles remind me why I chose this path. They’re not just professional ideals — they make me a better colleague, friend, and human being.”

Her dedication has been widely recognized. Awarded five gold medals during MBBS and known as a school and college topper, she also earned recognition beyond medicine — becoming a finalist at Mrs. World International 2025. “That experience reflected the importance of being well-rounded — growing as a person, not just as a professional.”

Fuel for the Journey

What keeps her moving forward? “I’m motivated by personal growth and the desire to make a positive impact,” she says. Support from family, friends, and mentors reinforces her focus. “Knowing my efforts contribute to something bigger than myself gives me purpose and energy.”

Balancing career and personal life is equally important to her. “I set clear priorities, manage time effectively, and make sure I unplug after work to spend quality time with family. Exercise, hobbies, and breaks are essential. Listening to my body helps me avoid burnout and stay productive.”

Innovating for Better Patient Care

Today, Dr. Angadi is working on projects that could transform how cancer is diagnosed and treated. Through NeuMoD Digital PET CT, she is advancing technologies that provide high-quality imaging while minimizing radiation exposure. She is also engaged in research on novel radiopharmaceuticals to improve detection and treatment of specific cancers.



**SUCCESS
IS NOT FINAL,
FAILURE IS NOT
FATAL: IT IS
THE COURAGE
TO CONTINUE THAT
COUNTS.**

**Winston Churchill, a quote
Dr. Rashmi Angadi lives by every day.**

“These initiatives are about patient safety and precision,” she explains. “By combining innovation with compassion, we can make a real difference.”

Her vision for the future is clear: deepen expertise, lead with purpose, and mentor others. “I want to contribute to groundbreaking research, expand access to healthcare, and inspire younger professionals to pursue excellence without losing sight of balance and empathy.”

Words for the Next Generation

Dr. Angadi's advice for young women reflects her own journey:

- **Stay authentic.** Be true to your voice and values.
- **Keep curiosity alive.** Explore, learn, and break barriers.
- **Build a strong foundation.** Balance ambition with self-awareness, networks, healthy boundaries, and wellbeing.
- **Bet on yourself.** Trust your abilities, even when circumstances seem impossible.

“Success isn't about never failing,” she says with quiet conviction. “It's about continuing — learning from each step and becoming stronger in the process.”

A Life Defined by Courage and Purpose

From her early struggles to her leadership in nuclear medicine, Dr. Rashmi Angadi's story is about more than professional success. It is about resilience, compassion, and the belief that science can serve humanity in profound ways.

“I see every challenge as an opportunity to grow and help others,” she reflects. “Progress is not a single moment — it's a journey. And the courage to continue is what makes that journey meaningful.”



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Upma Kashyap

Senior Researcher, Kalinga Institute of
Indo-Pacific Studies / Jawaharlal Nehru University.

FROM CLASSROOM TO GLOBAL DIPLOMACY: THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF UPMA KASHYAP

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Introduction: A Life Shaped by Curiosity and Commitment

Upma Kashyap, a Delhi-based Senior Researcher and award-winning author, has spent over a decade shaping conversations in International Relations, U.S. foreign policy, and Indo-Pacific studies. An Associate Fellow (Hon.) at the Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies, she combines academic brilliance with practical experience, using her expertise to examine global governance and security issues. With a Master's and MPhil in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University and a PhD thesis nearing completion on U.S. Nonproliferation Policy and the Role of Congress, Upma's career reflects both intellectual rigor and an unwavering commitment to making India's voice stronger in international forums.

"I had never planned my career; sometimes I feel my career chose me," she shares with a smile. What began as a love for humanities and political science has evolved into a mission to inspire, educate, and empower the next generation of women to take their place in global policy-making.

Discovering Her Purpose in a Global Classroom

Growing up in a family where success was the norm, Upma was encouraged to excel academically and professionally. Her curiosity for history, culture, and politics led her to pursue International Relations at JNU, a decision that opened doors to diplomatic discussions, academic conferences, and global exposure.

Her most transformative experience came during her time in Zurich, Switzerland, as a Doctoral Fellow. "Living alone in Zurich shaped my personality for good. I became a more confident, self-reliant person and widened my perspective." Meeting women from across the world, she discovered a shared struggle that transcended geography — women everywhere face challenges of freedom, equality, and representation. This realization fueled her passion to advocate for gender balance in foreign policy-making and to become a voice for women who cannot fight for themselves.



Upma Kashyap

Influential Women Leader in
Indian Education

Role Models and Mentors Who Lit the Path

Upma credits her journey to the guidance of key mentors who nurtured her intellectual growth. She speaks fondly of Professor Chintamani Mahapatra, Founder-Chairperson of the Kalinga Institute of Indo-Pacific Studies, who inspired her to look beyond academics and develop as a well-rounded global thinker.

Her time in Geneva under Dr. Cecilia Cannon further deepened her understanding of international organizations and the importance of policy communication. These mentors, along with global figures like Hillary Clinton, Sushma Swaraj, and Palki Sharma Upadhyay, shaped her belief that women belong not just in classrooms but in boardrooms and policy circles, where the world's most critical decisions are made.

Overcoming Challenges and Finding Strength

Upma's journey has been far from easy. As the eldest daughter in an accomplished family, she grew up with high expectations and the pressure to set an example. Choosing a non-traditional path came with sacrifices—living in isolation, delaying personal milestones, and working through self-doubt and missed opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought one of her toughest tests yet, forcing her to balance caretaker duties at home while navigating academic disruptions and uncertainty about the future. "Maintaining my mental health became a challenge. Career plans took a backseat, but I chose to heal and transform myself for good. I learned to turn pain into power."

Today, she advocates openly for mental well-being, self-acceptance, and creating boundaries — lessons that allowed her to emerge stronger and more grounded.

Achievements That Inspire

Upma's work has been widely recognized, with her contributions featured in books and journals worldwide. Her chapter "*The Revitalized European Union's Strategy on the Indo-Pacific*" was published by Palgrave Macmillan, and she regularly writes on global politics and education

In April 2025, she was honored with the **Ed Falcon Global Award for Emerging Researcher of the Year**, followed by the **Influential Women Leader in Indian Education Award** in June 2025. Most recently, she received *The Inspiration Award 2025* by HERstory Times, affirming her growing impact as a thought leader in international relations.



**FINANCIAL
INDEPENDENCE IS
A MUST, BUT
REMEMBER, MONEY
IS A TOOL,
NOT THE GOAL—
THE GOAL IS
FREEDOM**



A Vision for the Future

Beyond academia, Upma is working on her digital initiative, “**She Leads Globe,**” a platform aimed at inspiring and empowering youth, particularly women, to engage in global policy-making. Her goal is to expand it into a full-fledged think tank that analyzes women-centric issues and advocates for gender-balanced policies in India’s foreign affairs.

“My career has just begun; there is a lot I need to do to achieve excellence. There is no finish line yet—just an ongoing learning process. Miles to go before I sleep,” she says, quoting Robert Frost.

Balancing Life, Career, and Well-being

Despite her demanding schedule, Upma emphasizes the importance of taking strategic breaks and staying connected to her passions. Long walks, fitness routines, and exploring new cuisines recharge her creativity. “Work hard, achieve, pause, recharge, and dive back into the next challenge,” she says, describing her approach to avoiding burnout and staying motivated.

Words of Wisdom for the Next Generation

Upma’s advice for young women is deeply empowering:

“Love yourself and embrace the power of saying no when necessary. Nurture your unique talent and trust your journey. Financial independence is a must, but remember, money is a tool, not the goal—the goal is freedom.”

Her message is clear — success is not just about professional accolades but about building a life that excites you, friendships that hold you, and a space that feels like home.

Upma Kashyap’s journey from classrooms in Delhi to policy discussions in Geneva and Zurich is proof that resilience, passion, and purpose can transform a career into a calling. Her story reminds us that global change begins with individuals who dare to dream, work hard, and keep going — no matter how many miles lie ahead.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Kim Vaiphei

Professor in Pathology,
Punjab Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences

DR. KIM VAIPHEI: FOUR DECADES OF DEDICATION TO MEDICINE, LEARNING, AND LIFE

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With over 40 years of experience as a medical educationist, pathologist, and mentor, Dr. Kim Vaiphei's career reflects unwavering commitment to both patient care and academic excellence. An Emeritus Professor, former Head of the Department of Pathology, and Fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) as well as the International Union Against Cancer (Geneva), she has shaped not only her field but also the lives of countless students and colleagues.

A Calling Discovered Early

Dr. Vaiphei's journey into medicine began with a simple but powerful desire — to serve humanity by understanding its problems at the root. Choosing medicine at a young age, she saw beyond titles and accolades, viewing her work as a responsibility to society.

"I was fortunate to train at an institution of high standards for postgraduate and super-specialty medical education," she reflects. "Equally important was my role on the diagnostic front. These aren't just professional duties — they are social responsibilities that can uplift entire communities."

Shaping a Career with Quiet Determination

Ambition has been a driving force throughout her career — not in the form of competition, but as a personal standard of excellence. "I shaped an imaginary image of the professional I wanted to become," she says. "Challenges came and went in all forms, but each one had to be met with utmost care."



Dr. Kim Vaiphei

Top 10 Influential Women in
Healthcare 2025

Her achievements include advancing medical education, establishing high-level academic programs, and now contributing to the development of liver transplantation services at a state-level government institute. Recognition, though humbling, has never been her goal: “Being acknowledged as one of the dynamic women of the country is a pleasant surprise. But more than awards, it is my grounded approach to work that I hope will inspire the younger generation.”

Facing Challenges with Grace and Focus

Balancing personal life and a demanding medical career is a struggle familiar to many women, but Dr. Vaiphei sees it as an exercise in discipline rather than sacrifice. “Whether man or woman, the keys are planning, setting priorities, and understanding your own limits. You must organize yourself so there’s space to relax and do what you love. Good sleep, healthy food, and mindful living are basic, but they sustain everything else.”

As for her professional challenges, she never categorized them as big or small: “Every issue I faced daily needed attention. Handling them consistently is itself an achievement.”

A Philosophy of Work and Life

What motivates Dr. Vaiphei after decades of service? The answer is disarmingly simple: “By simply enjoying my professional duties and responsibilities. I complete each day’s work without carrying it into the next. That way, I begin every morning fresh and happy.”

This mindset has allowed her to embrace every phase of her career — from training young doctors to leading a department, from national research to developing new medical programs post-retirement. Her approach rejects the notion of rigid “high standards,” emphasizing instead humility, authenticity, and respect for others.

Building the Future of Medicine

Even after retiring from a premier national institute, Dr. Vaiphei has no plans to slow down. She is currently helping to establish liver transplantation facilities while building strong academic frameworks for medical education in her new institute.

“Human suffering has no end — and neither should our efforts to relieve it,” she says, underscoring her vision that service in medicine is an ever-expanding horizon, not a milestone to be completed.

“
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Alice Morse Earl,
a line that Dr. Kim Vaiphei lives by.

Guidance for the Next Generation

Though she hesitates to call it “advice,” Dr. Vaiphei offers thoughtful insights for young professionals:

- **Remain positive and alert.**
- **Adopt your own style** — one that makes you comfortable and earns respect.
- **Stay natural, humble, and honest** — people always recognize sincerity.
- **Lead a simple, healthy lifestyle** — it’s the foundation of longevity.
- **Reject the illusion of “high standards.”** Excellence is a mindset, not a label.

Her favorite reminder? *“Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day.”*

A Legacy of Commitment and Care

In her own words, “Commitment and dedication — combined with understanding every issue we face daily — shape our attitude and personality.” For Dr. Kim Vaiphei, this is not just a professional philosophy but a way of living.

From inspiring medical students to influencing national healthcare standards, her career is a testament to how consistency, humility, and inner drive can leave an enduring mark — not just on medicine, but on the people it serves.



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Hema Varma

International Certified Pro Makeup Artist HS
Angles Makeovers Hyderabad

HEMA VARMA: TURNING PASSION INTO PURPOSE THROUGH BEAUTY, EDUCATION, AND PERSEVERANCE

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“Dream big until you achieve your goal.” For Hema Varma, these are more than just words—they’re a way of life. As the Director of **HS Angels Makeovers Academy & Studio**, an internationally certified beauty, hair, and nail art artist, and a pro makeup educator, she has built a career defined by passion, resilience, and a commitment to empowering others.

“I never gave up,” she says firmly. “Even during difficult times, I knew I had to return to my field.” With unwavering support from her family—her parents, sisters, brother, husband, and young son—Hema rebuilt her career step by step. She credits her father as her greatest inspiration: “He’s my superhero. Today, I stand strong because of my parents’ guidance and belief in me.”

A Passion Born Early

Hema’s journey in the world of beauty began while she was still in school. “I started my career in my 10th standard through a government beautician course,” she recalls. What began as a simple curiosity quickly grew into a lifelong pursuit. After working as a cosmetic logic assistant and training students at government institutes, life took a turn—marriage, family pressures, and health struggles threatened to put her dreams on hold.



Hema Varma

Makeup Artist of the Year

Building a Career With Heart

Hema is a self-motivated professional whose love for beauty, hair, and makeup artistry goes beyond aesthetics. “I’m passionate about teaching,” she says. “Guiding and educating students gives me self-satisfaction and motivates me to move forward.”

Her dedication has earned her significant milestones, including recognition at **SimaExpo 2023** and the **Guruji South India Makeover Awards 2022**. She is currently nominated for **Gala 2024 Creative Makeup Educator** and the **Business Award for Director of HS Angels Makeovers, Shine Beauty Institute and Fashion Technology**.

But the road to success wasn’t smooth. “I faced many challenges, especially from family expectations and competitive pressures in the industry. I suffered a lot to build my career,” she shares. Yet through it all, her hardworking nature, enthusiasm to learn, and spiritual grounding kept her focused.

Recognition Through Relentless Effort

Awards and accolades are markers of her progress, but Hema sees them as reminders of responsibility rather than reasons to slow down. “Being nominated or recognized in this industry means I have to work harder, not just for myself but for the students I mentor,” she says.

Her role as a **jury member at FEMI 92025** and her work as an **organizer of major beauty events** highlight her influence in shaping industry standards. “I want to help raise the next generation of makeup and beauty professionals to levels higher than I ever reached,” she explains.

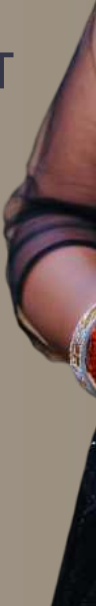
Values That Shape Her Work

When asked what principles guide her, Hema responds without hesitation: *hard work, focus, and an eagerness to learn something new every day*. “I don’t allow myself to be complacent,” she says. “Every project, every student is an opportunity to improve.”

Balancing career and personal life is another area where Hema has found strength. “I’m a multitasking woman,” she says with pride. “I’ve given equal importance to family and career. My spiritual nature helps me stay grounded, and I never let overthinking overwhelm me.”



DREAM BIG
UNTIL YOU ACHIEVE
YOUR GOAL.
DON'T LET FEAR
STOP YOU, AND DON'T
LET SUCCESS
CHANGE YOU.
STAY FOCUSED,
STAY GRATEFUL,
AND
KEEP WORKING.





Giving Back and Looking Ahead

As the Director of **HS Angels Makeovers Academy & Studio**, Hema has taken on more than just business leadership—she's building a platform to uplift others. She plans to expand her academy across India and eventually create a lasting institution that nurtures talent nationwide.

Her vision doesn't stop at business. "I want to help people in need," she says. "One of my dreams is to build an orphanage and an old age home. Success means nothing if you can't share it with those who need it most."

What Keeps Her Moving Forward

For Hema, motivation is rooted in seeing her students succeed. "When I guide students and see them flourish in their careers, it's the best feeling," she says. That sense of purpose drives her through long days, industry challenges, and the constant push for excellence.

She's quick to acknowledge those who stood by her during her toughest times: "I'm thankful to Shiva Sir and Jayasree Madam, the founders of HS Angels Makeovers. Their guidance helped me stand tall again."

Advice for Young Women

Hema believes passion and respect are the foundations of any meaningful career. "Always respect your elders and parents," she says. "Be passionate about your dreams, and one day you will achieve success, no matter how long it takes."

Her story is proof that determination paired with humility can overcome even the toughest obstacles.

A Life Shaped by Family and Faith

Looking back, Hema remains deeply grateful to her loved ones. "Without my family and friends, I wouldn't be here. My parents, my loving sisters and brother, my husband and son—they've all understood me and guided me through low times. Their support is my strength."

This gratitude, combined with her drive to keep learning and teaching, gives Hema Varma a rare depth as both a professional and a person.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Ramya Devarajan

Coordinator - Primary School And Social Activist

DR. RAMYA DEVARAJAN: TEACHING WITH CHALK, RHYTHM, AND HEART

50

These are the words Dr. Ramya Devarajan lives by, and they reflect the essence of her extraordinary journey as an educator, artist, and social changemaker.

From Dance Floors to Classrooms — Finding Purpose Early

As the Primary Coordinator and Head of Department at Hithashaala School, founder of Kalodaya Dance Institute, honorary doctorate awardee, scribe, motivational speaker, and cultural curator, Dr. Ramya Devarajan wears many hats — all stitched with compassion and purpose.

“Education should be joyful, not judgmental,” she says, recalling how, even as a child, she admired the quiet power of teachers to transform lives with a simple smile. Her years as a classical dancer — over three decades of performances and training — naturally blended with her calling as an educator. Whether choreographing an intricate Bharatanatyam piece or guiding young students through academics, she learned to view both art and education as ways to shape confident, compassionate human beings.

Lessons in Strength — Family, Mentors, and Unseen Battles

Dr. Ramya Devarajan credits her parents as her earliest teachers. “My father’s humility and consistency and my mother’s strength of compassion taught me everything I value today,” she shares. What began as teaching dance soon expanded into academic leadership and social service. A turning point came while serving as a scribe for visually impaired students — writing over twenty exams on their behalf. “One student held my hand after an exam and said, ‘Today I didn’t feel blind. You made me feel powerful.’ That moment changed my life,” she says.

The world didn’t always recognize her multifaceted potential. “You’re just a dance teacher,” she was told. “You don’t look like a school leader.” Rather than letting these judgments define her, she used them as fuel to prove that excellence is not limited by labels.



Dr. Ramya Devarajan

Influential Women Leader
in Education

Achievements Rooted in Impact, Not Titles

Dr. Ramya Devarajan work has earned her accolades including:

- **Honorary Doctorate in Education, Social science and Science (2024)**
- **Indian Iconic Woman of the Year (2025)**
- **South India Excellence Award (2024)**
- **Salute Achievers Award (2025)**
- **She Magazine Women Influencer (2025)**

But she insists that her greatest reward is simpler: *“A child once told me, ‘Ma’am, because of you, I want to become a teacher.’ That will always be bigger than any trophy.”*

Her initiatives have redefined education for many — from inclusive classrooms that integrate differently abled children, to mentoring girls who doubted themselves into becoming school toppers. She introduced the first-of-its-kind scribe training workshops in her school, teaching students to practice empathy as a life skill.

Challenges that Built Character

Despite the recognition, Dr. Ramya Devarajan has faced her share of obstacles — juggling her love for dance, her commitment to education, and her deep involvement in social service. Systemic gaps in accessibility became personal to her as she worked closely with underprivileged and visually challenged students. Instead of being discouraged, she sponsored aids, trained volunteers, and built networks to bring resources directly to those who needed them.

Her guiding principles — Compassion with Action, Excellence over Perfection, and Gratitude Always — have kept her anchored through every challenge.

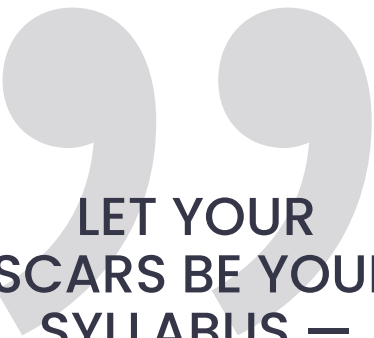
A Day in Her Life — And the Secret to Balance

How does she balance being an educator, leader, dancer, and mother? “Balance isn’t about dividing time equally; it’s about being fully present where you are,” she says. With a strong family support system — her husband, her son (a NEET aspirant and talented drummer), and her sisters — she treats her school like her extended family. Dance, she says, is her “prayer, therapy, and reset button.”

Projects with a Purpose

Currently, Dr. Ramya Devarajan is:

- Leading a **Community Wellness Program** integrating dance, environmental awareness, and cultural revival.
- Designing an **Empathy Curriculum** that teaches life skills, scribe training, and value-based education.



LET YOUR
SCARS BE YOUR
SYLLABUS —
TEACH THE
WORLD WITH
WHAT YOU’VE
SURVIVED.

- Mentoring students and teachers under her **Blue Stars Initiative**, combining talent-building with compassion.
- Writing a motivational book, *“Chalk Dust and Stethoscopes,”* that intertwines her educational journey with her son’s dream of becoming a doctor
- Publishing research on **innovative learning in multilingual classrooms** to help educators across India.

Dreams for Tomorrow

Looking ahead, Dr. Ramya Devarajan hopes to establish an **Inclusive Learning Academy** for children with learning disabilities and unique talents. She also plans to take Indian classical dance to orphanages and rural schools as a form of healing and identity-building, while representing India at global education forums. Her vision includes training 100+ scribes in every school she mentors — ensuring empathy becomes part of every student’s academic experience.

Advice for Young Women

“Never let titles define you,” she says firmly. “Whether you are called a housewife, a helper, a dancer, or a doctor — wear every role with dignity. Don’t wait to be chosen. Create your stage, write your speech, and clap for yourself. Be bold, be kind, be unapologetically you.”

Dr. Ramya Devarajan’s life is proof that when passion meets purpose, titles become irrelevant and impact becomes everything. Her story shows that education, like dance, is not about flawless steps — it’s about creating rhythm, meaning, and joy in every move.



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Sandhya Dulgaj

Talent Delivery Manager - HR

SANDHYA DULGAJ: LEADING WITH PURPOSE, RESILIENCE, AND HEART

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For over 13 years, Sandhya Dulgaj has been shaping careers in the IT sector, building high-performing teams, and redefining the way organizations attract and nurture talent. As Talent Delivery Manager at Intellias, she has grown from an individual contributor into a strategic leader—driven not just by ambition, but by a deep sense of responsibility to her work, her family, and herself.

A Calling Found in People and Purpose

Sandhya didn't stumble into HR—she chose it deliberately. The fast-paced, evolving nature of IT recruitment drew her in, but it was the human connection that made her stay. "Over time, this profession became more than just a career—it became my passion," she says. "Building high-performing teams and aligning talent strategies to business goals felt deeply fulfilling."

From day one, her approach was purpose-driven. Whether she was helping a young engineer land their first role or aligning senior leadership hires with company strategy, Sandhya focused on impact, not just numbers.

The Role Models Who Built Her Strength

Behind Sandhya's drive stands a powerful influence—her mother. A true multitasker, her mother managed a demanding government job, cared for a differently-abled daughter, and still held the family together with unwavering grace.

"Her resilience taught me what it means to work hard without complaint," Sandhya reflects. "She showed me that strength isn't about what you say—it's about what you carry and how you keep moving forward."

It's this example that has shaped Sandhya's leadership style: empathetic yet firm, humble yet unshakably committed to excellence.



Sandhya Dulgaj

Influential Women Leader in
Human Resource



Achievements That Speak of Grit and Growth

Sandhya's career is marked by milestones that mirror her values. In 2024, she was recognized as **"TA Leader of the Year"** at the GCC Workplace Awards and earned the **"Beyond Services Award"** at Intellias for exceptional organizational contributions.

In 2025, the recognition went even further. Named among **"50 Under 50 Women of the Year"** by OutStory Media and awarded **"Most Influential Women Leader"** by Hypedge and She Inspire Magazine, Sandhya received her honor from acclaimed actress and motivational speaker Smita Jayakar—a moment she calls "humbling and unforgettable."

"These awards represent more than professional success," Sandhya says. "They're a reflection of authentic leadership, empathy, and purpose-driven growth."

Challenges That Forged Resilience

Her journey wasn't without hurdles. Navigating high-volume recruitment in an ever-changing tech market was demanding enough—but doing it as the single breadwinner of her family added layers of responsibility.

Supporting her mother and differently-abled sister while excelling in a high-pressure corporate environment required discipline, self-motivation, and a willingness to make personal sacrifices.

"There were times I had to choose work over comfort, responsibility over rest," she recalls. "But every challenge shaped me into a stronger, more empathetic leader. It taught me that leadership isn't about power—it's about showing up, even on the hardest days."

Principles That Guide Her Path

Integrity, empathy, resilience, and accountability are Sandhya's non-negotiables. She leads with transparency, listens deeply to candidates and colleagues alike, and holds herself responsible for every outcome she drives.

"These values aren't just professional—they're personal," she explains. "They define how I show up at work, how I mentor young professionals, and how I live my life."

Building the Future of Recruitment

Sandhya's work at Intellias goes far beyond filling roles. She is spearheading initiatives to modernize hiring through AI-powered tools, creating faster, more inclusive recruitment processes.

One of her proudest projects is **IntelliMentorship: Sourcing Bootcamp**, designed to give MBA freshers hands-on exposure to industry tools and mentoring from seasoned recruiters. "It's about creating opportunities, not just jobs," she says.

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YOU.

Sandhya Dulgaj

Sandhya is also integrating AI-driven platforms like HireEZ, Seek-Out, and ChatGPT-enabled sourcing assistants to reduce manual effort, personalize candidate outreach, and improve quality-of-hire. “Recruitment is no longer about speed alone—it’s about precision, inclusion, and strategy,” she adds.

Eyes on the Horizon

Looking forward, Sandhya hopes to amplify her impact as a strategic talent leader and thought influencer in GCC forums and HR conferences. She aspires to mentor more women, empower early-career professionals, and champion the adoption of advanced recruitment solutions.

“Being recognized for leadership is an honor,” she says, “but inspiring others to believe in themselves—that’s the real legacy I want to leave.”

Advice for Young Women

Sandhya’s message to women starting their careers is both practical and empowering:

“Believe fiercely in yourself, even when no one else does. Your circumstances don’t define your future—your courage, choices, and consistency do. Take up space, chase opportunities, and don’t let guilt hold you back from growth or independence. You have every right to succeed on your own terms.”

A Life Led by Purpose

For Sandhya Dulgaj, success isn’t about titles or awards—it’s about responsibility, impact, and the people who count on her. Her story reflects a rare mix of professional excellence and personal strength, proving that purpose can carry you through even the toughest seasons.

As she puts it best: *“Your journey may be tough, but your purpose is tougher. Keep rising, not just for yourself—but for everyone who believes in you.”*



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Aditi Altekar

DGM - Group HR Technology Lead

ADITI ALTEKAR: LEADING WITH PURPOSE, PROGRESS, AND QUIET RESILIENCE

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A Journey Shaped by Curiosity and Courage

For Aditi Altekar, leadership was never about titles—it was about impact. Currently serving as a senior HR technology leader at a large diversified business group, Aditi's career path began far from HR. Trained as a software developer, she spent her early years building core banking solutions across Asia. Yet, something felt missing. "I craved a connection to something more human—more meaningful in the day-to-day lives of people," she reflects. That realization led her into HR technology over a decade ago, where her technical expertise now meets her passion for shaping how organizations care for their people.

Across her career, Aditi has consistently delivered technology solutions that don't just automate processes but transform employee experiences. Her approach balances structure with empathy, logic with intuition—and her belief that meaningful progress is built one day at a time.

Lessons from Family, Mentors, and Loss

Behind her professional milestones lies a deeply personal story. Aditi credits her parents, Dr. Ravikant Altekar and Manasi Altekar, for grounding her in humility, integrity, and perseverance. Losing her mother to cancer a decade ago became a defining chapter. "Her grace during those years taught me more about leadership and courage than any classroom ever could," Aditi says. Her mother's words still guide her: "Grace isn't about avoiding the storm—it's about learning to dance in the rain."

Professionally, she found guidance in mentors and senior leaders who modeled leadership rooted in empathy, clarity, and trust—showing her that real authority comes not from control, but from belief in your people.



Aditi Altekar

Influential Woman Leader For
Excellence in HR Technology

Achievements That Go Beyond Technology

Across 17 years, Aditi has proven that HR technology can be a strategic driver, not just a support function. In her consulting years, she led global implementations for clients in power, manufacturing, and automotive sectors, achieving measurable impact:

- **40% reduction** in manual HR processes
- **30% improvement** in data accuracy
- **25% shorter** implementation timelines

In her corporate roles, she has driven multi-year HR transformations that:

- Increased employee self-service adoption by **65%**
- Cut onboarding times by **30%**
- Reduced compliance gaps by **20%**

Today, she leads enterprise-wide HR digital transformation—modernizing recruitment, onboarding, learning, and offboarding processes to create an integrated, future-ready employee experience. “This work isn’t just technical,” she explains. “It’s cultural. It’s about aligning people, processes, and platforms so they evolve together.”

Challenges That Became Catalysts

Aditi’s path wasn’t without obstacles. Transitioning from pure technology to HR required her to quickly learn how business systems intersect with human needs. Later, as a consultant, she led high-stakes projects across diverse industries and geographies—often without formal authority—learning to influence through vision and trust rather than hierarchy.

Personally, coping with her mother’s loss while advancing in demanding roles taught her to find strength in stillness and perspective in pain. “Challenges are where the most meaningful growth happens,” she says. “They teach you resilience you didn’t know you had.”

Recognition with Deeper Meaning

In 2025, Aditi received several honors, including **the Influential Women Leaders Award**, a **Best HR Tech and Digital Leader of the Year Award**, and a **Dynamic Women HR Leader Award**. She was also named among the **Top 1000 Women Leaders (10% Club)** by a prominent leadership platform.

“These awards are mirrors, not milestones,” Aditi shares. “They reflect every late night, every challenge, every lesson from mentors and teams who believed in the vision. The true recognition isn’t in the award—it’s in who you become on the way to earning it.”



YOU DON'T
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TO TAKE
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AND CONSISTENCY
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THAN
PERFECTION
EVER WILL.

Values That Guide Her Leadership

Three principles anchor Aditi's journey: **integrity, empathy, and adaptability**. Integrity, instilled by her parents, keeps her grounded when decisions are tough. Empathy, reinforced by mentors, guides how she leads teams through change. Adaptability enables her to embrace transformation rather than fear it. "These values aren't abstract," she explains. "They shape every decision, every conversation, every team I build."

Living Intentionally, One Day at a Time

Outside work, Aditi draws strength from her family's unwavering support and finds grounding in everyday rituals like cooking and reading. Balance, to her, isn't perfect symmetry but conscious alignment with what truly matters. "Life is fragile and precious," she says. "I've learned to be fully present wherever I am—at work or at home."

Her personal motto—"take one day at a time"—keeps her centered amid constant change. Whether she's leading digital transformation across a business group or dreaming of someday opening her own restaurant, Aditi approaches every step with intention.

Looking Ahead: Building Workplaces That Evolve with People

Aditi, currently pursuing her **DBA in Digital Leadership**, represents the emerging breed of leaders for whom technological advancement and human-centric values are inseparable. Looking ahead, she envisions HR ecosystems where digital transformation does more than automate—it actively aligns innovation with core organizational values, fostering inclusion, agility, and long-term well-being for all stakeholders.

Her goal is to serve as **Chief Digital Officer**, guiding organizations to harness technology not just for operational efficiency, but as a catalyst for deeply human innovation. For Aditi, the new frontier of leadership involves empowering teams to adapt, collaborate, and create lasting impact—blending business priorities with the well-being of employees and communities.

Aditi's commitment to mentoring cross-functional digital capability owners is central to her leadership philosophy. By nurturing collaboration across departments and encouraging creative problem-solving, she ensures organizations thrive amid digital transformation. Her mentorship accelerates professional growth, broadens leadership skillsets, and prepares future-ready organizations capable of sustained success in a dynamic landscape.

Advice to Young Women: Your Path, Your Pace, Your Choice

"To every young woman building her own path," Aditi says, "remember this—you've made it this far. You'll make it ahead as well. Don't measure your journey against someone else's



highlight reel. Whether you choose career, family, health, or a dream that makes no sense on paper—what matters is that it's aligned with what you value."

She encourages young leaders to embrace quiet resilience, to speak up, take risks, and trust their own rhythm. "You don't need to have it all figured out to take the next step. Grace, intention, and consistency will take you further than perfection ever will."

Her Guiding Thought

"Small steps in the right direction can turn out to be the biggest steps of your life."

For Aditi Altekar, these steps—taken with integrity, empathy, and purpose—have led to transformation not just for organizations, but for every team she has touched along the way.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Komal Pandey

Deputy Manager - Talent Acquisition

KOMAL PANDEY: REDEFINING LEADERSHIP WITH CLARITY, COURAGE, AND QUIET POWER

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Where Purpose Meets People

"I didn't choose HR just for its structure; I chose it for its impact." For Komal Pandey, Deputy Manager – Talent Acquisition at TORQ Commodities, human resources isn't about filling positions—it's about shaping futures. With over eight years of experience, she approaches hiring as an act of alignment, connecting purpose, people, and performance.

From the beginning, her fascination with people wasn't limited to resumes or interviews—it was about understanding human potential. "I see talent not as a resource, but as the soul of an organization," she says, reflecting on why she chose this path. Her journey is proof that you can build a career rooted in both strategy and empathy without sacrificing either.

Lessons from Family and Icons

Komal credits much of her outlook to two influences: leadership author Robin Sharma and her father. "My father told me every woman must learn to stand on her own feet. That message wasn't just advice—it became my compass," she shares.

Starting her career as a wide-eyed fresher, Komal learned early to navigate environments where recognition wasn't freely given. Over time, she rose to create tangible impact—designing global hiring frameworks and being recognized as one of India's **Top 10 Influential Women Leaders in HR (2025)**.

But her milestones extend beyond corporate walls. Her semi-classical dance journey led to a feature in a YouTube short film, *Jogi*, and her love for storytelling led her to publish her first horror fiction book, *The Horrors of Victoria Street*. For Komal, these aren't distractions—they're expressions of self that enrich her leadership.



Komal Pandey

Top 10 Influential Women Leaders
in Human Resources

Achievements Measured in Impact, Not Applause

Komal's proudest accomplishments are tied to transformation—both organizational and personal. At TORQ Commodities, she built a global talent ecosystem tailored to a highly niche commodities market. "It wasn't about filling roles—it was about creating a sustainable pipeline of purpose-driven people who aligned with our long-term vision," she explains.

Her recognition as a strategic innovator in HR was rewarding, but her real measure of success lies elsewhere: "Achievement isn't about titles or awards—it's about leaving a human footprint. If I've helped even one person rediscover their worth, that's success to me."

The Silent Struggles of Corporate Women

Like many women in leadership, Komal faced an unspoken layer of challenges. Being expressive and approachable—traits often mislabeled as "soft"—meant she had to work harder to establish authority. "There were rooms I wasn't invited to, decisions made without my voice, and ideas I heard echoed only after being repeated by others," she recalls.

What hurt more was seeing a lack of support among women themselves. "In a world where we're already fighting for equal ground, it's disheartening when women pull each other down instead of lifting each other up," she reflects. This realization fueled her belief in conscious allyship: *"We don't just need more women at the table—we need women who bring other women to the table."*

Through these challenges, she learned to lead with clarity rather than noise, proving that authority doesn't have to come at the cost of authenticity.

Guided by Unshakable Values

Integrity, intentional presence, fairness, and vision—these aren't just words for Komal; they are the pillars of how she lives and leads. "If my name is attached to something, it must reflect ethics and quality. I don't wait for applause to move forward—I follow long-term vision, not short-term noise," she says.

Her leadership philosophy is deeply human: show up fully, do the right thing even when unseen, and keep growing inward as much as outward.

Building with Intention, Balancing with Alignment

Komal doesn't romanticize balance. "I'm a hustler by nature, but even hustlers need harmony," she admits. Whether through dance, writing, or simply taking silent moments in her day, she grounds herself in practices that fuel her rather than drain her.



“
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"I've stopped chasing a perfect work-life balance. Instead, I seek alignment—where my work reflects my purpose, and my personal life feeds my clarity."

Projects with Purpose, Vision Beyond Titles

At TORQ Commodities, Komal is integrating predictive analytics into hiring to make it smarter and more strategic. Personally, she's narrating divine and spiritual stories on YouTube to merge storytelling with healing.

Looking ahead, Komal is working on a self-help book aimed at helping ambitious individuals align their inner and outer worlds. "My long-term vision isn't about visibility—it's about impact. I want my work to speak long after I've moved on," she says.

A Message to Women Who Dare to Lead

Komal's words are simple but powerful:

"You don't need to raise your voice to raise your value. Walk with intention—let your silence speak, and your work echo where words can't."

To young women, she offers advice shaped by experience:

"Don't wait for validation to start. Build. Learn. Fall. Rise again—quietly, fiercely, unapologetically. Independence isn't a milestone, it's a mindset. People may underestimate you because you're soft-spoken or kind. Let them. Just don't underestimate yourself."

Walking in Quiet Power

Komal Pandey represents a form of leadership that doesn't shout to be heard, yet leaves a lasting impact wherever it goes. Her journey—spanning corporate strategy, creative expression, and personal resilience—reminds us that leadership is not about fitting a mold but about redefining it.

As she continues to create meaningful spaces for others to grow, Komal's life proves a timeless truth: being different doesn't mean you don't belong—it often means you're meant to lead

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Sushma Singhvi

Founder President, Gunjan Foundation

SUSHMA SINGHVI: BUILDING FUTURES THROUGH EDUCATION AND EMPATHY

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At 72, **Sushma Singhvi**, Founder President of **Gunjan Foundation**, continues to prove that purpose knows no retirement. With 21 years of dedicated service in the social sector, she has empowered over 2,300 children and young adults through education, scholarships, and mentorship. Her work is rooted in a simple yet powerful belief: *“Education is the most powerful tool to bring about lasting change.”*

A Childhood Dream to Make a Difference

From an early age, Sushma Singhvi felt a calling to serve society. “I always believed that even a small act of support can uplift a life,” she says. This empathy, combined with a conviction that education transforms not just individuals but entire communities, set the course of her life’s work.

In 2004, she established Gunjan Foundation as a modest effort to help children from marginalized families access schooling. Over time, this mission evolved into structured scholarship programs—**Gunjan-Sashakt** for school education and **Gunjan-Utkarsh** for higher studies—both with a special focus on empowering girls.

Lessons from Family and a Father’s Belief

Sushma credits her parents as her greatest role models. “Their values, compassion, and unwavering commitment to helping others shaped me,” she reflects. Her father’s advice—*“Dream big and you will achieve your dreams through hard work. Don’t let hurdles dishearten and successes spoil”*—became the foundation of her leadership philosophy.



Sushma Singhvi

Lifetime Achievement Award
(Social Service)

This belief guided her through a journey where fulfillment came not from personal milestones, but from enabling others to thrive. Each student who completed school, each young adult who found dignified work, became a milestone more meaningful than any accolade.

Transforming Lives, One Student at a Time

Under Sushma's leadership, Gunjan Foundation has touched thousands of lives. Children of daily wage earners, rickshaw pullers, security guards, and domestic workers have received the support they needed to stay in school, graduate, and secure jobs. Through **Gunjan-Utkarsh**, many students have pursued degrees in engineering, medicine, law, and management, going on to join leading companies such as Wipro and L&T Technology Services.

"Watching shy girls grow into confident college students or young boys from modest backgrounds begin careers in reputed firms is deeply fulfilling," Sushma says. "When a parent tells me, 'Because of Gunjan, my child has a future,' that is my true measure of success."

Challenges That Strengthened the Mission

The path, however, has never been easy. Sushma built Gunjan Foundation without corporate backing, choosing to grow it step by step through persistence and personal commitment. In the early years, earning the trust of families was difficult. Parents, particularly from conservative or economically fragile backgrounds, often withdrew their daughters from school for early marriage or domestic work.

Convincing these families that education was not just important but transformative required endless dialogue and community engagement. Over time, attitudes began to shift—and many of those same daughters are now educated, independent young women inspiring others.

Financial constraints were another hurdle. Without the resources of large foundations, Sushma relied on discipline, credibility, and transparent operations to raise funds. She also took great care to ensure scholarships went only to students who genuinely belonged to economically weaker sections, a process requiring both fairness and compassion.

"Challenges have shaped our mission," she says. "Each obstacle pushed us to think more creatively, connect more deeply, and grow more responsibly."

Guided by Values That Never Waver

Empathy, integrity, discipline, and perseverance define Sushma Singhvi's approach. These values have ensured that Gunjan Foundation's work is transparent and sustainable. "Trust is the foundation of everything we do," she explains. "And trust comes from honesty and consistency."



THE BEST
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Her discipline—whether in managing time, maintaining standards, or staying focused despite difficulties—has been key to sustaining the Foundation for over two decades. And her perseverance has kept her moving forward, no matter how heavy the challenges.

Recognition That Reflects Real Impact

Over the years, Gunjan Foundation's work has earned several honors, including the **Lifetime Achievement Award from IWLA**, recognition among **India's Top 10 Most Impactful NGOs by Brand Honchos**, and a **Gold Category Certificate of Excellence from Give Foundation** for transparency and impact. In 2018, the Shabd Nagari Organization listed it among **Delhi's Top 10 NGOs**, and in 2025, **LBB Delhi NCR recognized it among the Top 20 NGOs making a difference in society**.

While these accolades are deeply meaningful, Sushma sees them as affirmations rather than endpoints. "The real reward is when a student succeeds or a family begins to believe in education. That's the honor I cherish the most."

A Vision to Expand and Empower

As Gunjan Foundation marks two decades, Sushma's goals are clear: strengthen the **Gunjan-Sashakt** and **Gunjan-Utkarsh** programs, expand support to underserved regions beyond Delhi, Jaipur, and Ahmedabad, and build a self-sustaining ecosystem that nurtures students both financially and emotionally.

"My long-term dream is to see every child we support become an empowered, responsible individual who contributes meaningfully to society," she says.

Advice for Young Women: Dream Big, Stay Strong

To the next generation, Sushma Singhvi's message is straightforward:

"Believe in yourself—even when others don't. Education is your strongest foundation. Be confident in your voice, stay curious, and never stop learning. Don't let marriage end your dreams. Remain financially independent and true to your identity. Surround yourself with people who uplift you, but also learn to be your own support system. Most of all, dream big—and work even harder to make those dreams real."

A Life Lived for Others

Quoting Gandhi, Einstein, and Zinn, Sushma Singhvi often says: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Her journey with Gunjan Foundation proves that when empathy meets discipline, even modest beginnings can create profound, lasting change.

At 72, she remains as committed as ever to ensuring that no child is denied education due to circumstance. For her, service is not a chapter of life—it is the story itself.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Shivani Vashisth

Pastry Chef - Coach & Consultant

SHIVANI VASHISTH: FROM CORPORATE BOARDROOMS TO BAKING DREAMS

70

Rediscovering Passion in the Kitchen

For **Shivani Vashisth**, life has been about embracing change and daring to start again. Once a successful **National Sales Manager**, she chose to pause her corporate career to raise her son. What began as joyful afternoons baking for him soon grew into something much bigger—a passion that transformed into her profession. Today, Shivani is a **Pastry Chef, Coach, and Consultant** with six years of experience, guiding aspiring bakers and building communities around the art of patisserie.

“I’m a former national sales manager turned pastry chef and baking mentor,” she says. “It all began when I baked for my son during his early childhood, and what started as a hobby became my purpose.”

A Journey Shaped by Support and Courage

Shivani’s husband has been her role model and constant support. His discipline and encouragement gave her the strength to pivot careers and follow her newfound passion. The transition was not an easy one—shifting from a structured corporate role to the creative unpredictability of baking required patience, study, and resilience.

She pursued formal education in patisserie, worked at **The Imperial, New Delhi**, and soon discovered her true calling not just in baking, but in **mentoring others**. Through her workshops, she has empowered hundreds of learners, many of them women looking to restart or reinvent their careers.

Each milestone shaped her path: the pause for family, the leap into culinary school, the professional stint in luxury hotels, and the eventual decision to focus on teaching. “Every phase has been a turning point,” she reflects, “but together they have built a career that feels purposeful and fulfilling.”



Shivani Vashisth

Leading Pastry Chef & Baking
Coach of the Year

Achievements Rooted in Empowerment

For Shivani, achievements are not only about awards or recognition but about the lives she has touched. “My most significant achievement is transforming my passion into a purposeful career that empowers others—especially women—to become confident, independent home bakers.”

She has mentored hundreds of students through workshops, adapted her teaching to online platforms during the pandemic, and created a reputation for balancing creativity with practical business advice. One of her proudest moments was receiving the **Influential Women Leaders Award**, recognising not only her skill but also her commitment to enabling others.

Challenges That Defined Her Strength

Like many women balancing family and ambition, Shivani's journey has not been without obstacles. Restarting her career after a long break came with self-doubt and external pressures. As a **naval family wife**, relocations and unpredictability were constant companions.

One of the most difficult moments came when she had to let go of her pastry chef position at The Imperial during the pandemic. “It felt like a setback,” she recalls, “but it pushed me to rebuild from home, explore the online teaching space, and discover new ways of staying relevant.”

Those challenges, rather than halting her progress, strengthened her adaptability. She shifted from running a home bakery to becoming a mentor, ensuring her passion continued to grow in new directions.

Guided by Values That Matter

Shivani credits her resilience to the values she has held firm throughout her journey: **passion, integrity, resilience, and empowerment**.

“I believe in giving my best with honesty, staying committed even in difficult times, continuously learning, and using my skills to uplift others,” she says. For her, success is not measured by financial gain alone, but by the confidence her students carry when they begin their own baking journeys.

The Motivation to Keep Going

What fuels Shivani's dedication is the transformation she witnesses in her students. Watching hesitant learners turn into confident bakers and entrepreneurs fills her with pride. “Every challenge is an opportunity to grow, and knowing that my journey inspires others keeps me moving forward.”

Her motivation also stems from her own lived experience of restarting from scratch. Each success story she nurtures reminds her that she is not just baking cakes, but shaping possibilities.



WHEN
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LIFE-CHANGING
JOURNEY.

Finding Balance in a Demanding Life

Balancing her role as a mother, wife, and professional has been another learning curve. “Maintaining balance comes down to clear priorities and strong planning,” she explains. By setting boundaries for work, involving her family whenever possible, and embracing flexibility, she has built a rhythm that allows both her career and personal life to flourish.

“Some days are about business, others are purely for family,” she says. “The key is to embrace both without guilt.”

Current Initiatives with a Purpose

Shivani is currently working on several initiatives designed to make baking accessible and empowering:

- **Long-Term Mentorship:** A structured three-month program covering foundational baking skills, from cakes to breads.
- **Specialised Workshops:** Themed short courses on trending recipes, festive bakes, and advanced techniques.
- **Brand Collaborations:** Partnering with Indian food brands to co-create recipes and introduce bakers to unique ingredients.
- **Baking for Empowerment:** A women-focused initiative offering subsidised or free training for underprivileged women to create home-based businesses.

“These are not just projects,” she says, “but steps towards creating a legacy of meaningful service through baking.”

Looking Ahead: A Bigger Vision

Shivani’s aspirations stretch far beyond her kitchen. She envisions launching a **dedicated online academy** with multilingual courses, making professional baking education accessible across India and beyond. She dreams of building a strong **community of certified bakers**, particularly women, who will mentor others and sustain a culture of sharing knowledge.

She also plans to **publish a baking book**, blending recipes with life lessons and entrepreneurial insights, and to collaborate with more brands to promote local ingredients and healthier baking practices.

“Ultimately, I want baking to be recognized not just as a hobby, but as a respected profession—one that brings joy, income, and identity to anyone willing to learn.”

A Message of Inspiration

When asked to share a thought with readers, Shivani’s words reflect the heart of her journey:

“When passion meets purpose, even the smallest spark can light up a life-changing journey.”

To young women, her advice is clear:

“Never underestimate the power of starting small. You don’t need perfect conditions to chase your dreams—just the courage to begin, the consistency to learn, and the belief that you are capable of creating your own path. Your story matters.”

The Legacy She Hopes to Leave

Shivani Vashisth’s story is about courage, adaptability, and the choice to turn personal passion into collective empowerment. From corporate boardrooms to baking studios, she has proven that success is not about staying on one path but about finding meaning in the journey itself.

Her life and work remind us that beginnings don’t need to be perfect—they just need to be made with heart.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Madhulika Dutta

Author and Psychologist

EXPANDING MINDS, BREAKING BARRIERS: THE JOURNEY OF MADHULIKA DUTTA

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At just 22, **Madhulika Dutta** is redefining what it means to merge science, empathy, and creativity. An aspiring clinical neuropsychologist, CBT practitioner, and ABA therapist, Madhulika works at ITSA Hospitals in Raipur while also being an award-winning author of *Glittery Dreams and Behind the Mask*. Her unique path bridges rigorous neuroscience with storytelling that resonates across cultures.

"The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size." – Oliver Wendell Holmes This line, Madhulika says, reflects her mission to expand awareness around mental health and human potential.

From Classroom Fascination to a Lifelong Calling

Madhulika's journey began in class 11, when a psychology lesson ignited an enduring fascination with the human brain. "I've always been drawn to medicine, but I wanted something more personal," she says. "Psychology—and later, neuropsychology—became the perfect intersection between science and understanding human behavior."

Her academic path took her through **an MSc in Clinical Psychology, Neuroscience and Brain Mapping training at AIIMS Bhubaneswar, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Neuropsychology** from CHMR, New Delhi. These experiences laid a foundation for her clinical work, where she examines how brain function directly shapes thoughts, feelings, and actions

But Madhulika's story doesn't stop at science. Her parallel life as a writer has allowed her to articulate psychological insights through literature. "Both roles require deep empathy and clarity," she explains. "My writing sharpens my ability to connect with clients, while clinical practice keeps my storytelling authentic."



Madhulika Dutta

Young Women Leader Award

Recognitions That Reflect Purpose, Not Prestige

In just two years of professional experience, Madhulika has earned distinctions most people only dream of:

- **Youngest Woman to receive 40+ awards"** Madhulika has set a national record by being recognized as the youngest woman to receive over 40 awards by the National Book of Records 2025.
- **The Bharat Vibhushan Award**, the highest civilian recognition under the National Book of Records.
- **The Karamveer Chakra Award** (Government of India and United Nations), making her the youngest Indian recipient.
- **The Nari Pratibha Samman** on Republic Day, honoring her contributions to society.
- National and international awards for her books *Glittery Dreams* and *Behind the Mask*.
- Twice invited as a **guest speaker at the World Poetry Festival in New York**, representing Indian literature.

"These awards aren't just personal milestones," she says. "They prove that psychology and storytelling can influence not just individuals, but communities and even global conversations."

Overcoming Challenges with Clarity and Conviction

Building credibility as a young psychologist and English-language author in Raipur—where mental health awareness is still emerging—was no easy feat. "I had to explain to people what psychologists actually do," Madhulika says. "Many assumed therapy was only for 'serious illness,' not personal growth or stress management."

Breaking into competitive literary spaces posed its own hurdles. Establishing herself as an author of internationally recognized books required persistence, patience, and belief in her unique voice.

Yet these obstacles became strengths. "Working in a developing city taught me cultural sensitivity, resilience, and the power of clear communication. It made me a better practitioner and advocate."

Values That Guide Every Step

Madhulika believes psychology should be accessible to everyone, not just urban centers or privileged groups. "Our work must go beyond therapy rooms. We have to address misconceptions, empower communities, and make psychological support part of everyday life," she says.

She is guided by:

- **Equity** – ensuring mental health knowledge reaches underserved regions.
- **Authenticity** – telling real stories in both clinical and literary spaces.
- **Responsibility** – using recognition not for personal gain but for community impact.



THE MIND
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SIZE

Creating Change on the Ground

Currently, Madhulika is working on **expanding mental health awareness programs in Raipur and across Chhattisgarh**, conducting workshops to educate communities and mentoring emerging psychologists in smaller cities. She's also developing **training systems that make psychology both practical and culturally relevant**—a direct response to the barriers she faced early in her career.

Her vision doesn't stop there. "I want to pioneer programs that equip psychologists to work effectively in developing regions, while continuing to use literature to share psychological insights globally," she says.

Balancing Passion and Well-Being

In a field where emotional investment can be overwhelming, Madhulika prioritizes her own mental health. "Integration works better than strict separation," she explains. "My writing informs my clinical practice, and vice versa. I protect my personal time, set clear boundaries, and use the same stress-management tools I recommend to clients."

Living in Raipur helps. "The pace is different from big cities. It allows me to transition more mindfully between work and personal life," she says.

A Message to Young Women: Start Where You Are

Asked what advice she would give to young women, Madhulika responds without hesitation:

"Don't wait for permission to pursue what fascinates you. Your background isn't a limitation—it's your unique advantage. Start where you are, with what you have. Every major achievement in my life began with a single curious question or a small brave step."

She encourages women to embrace unconventional paths. "When I chose to write books while building my psychology practice, some people thought it didn't make sense. When I promoted mental health awareness in Raipur, some thought it was too ambitious. But being different is exactly what opens new doors."

Looking Ahead: Building a Legacy of Awareness

Madhulika's future goals include **creating sustainable systems for psychology education, training, and outreach**—ensuring that her impact lasts long after her individual contributions. She also plans to write more books to make complex psychological concepts approachable to a global audience.

But beyond any award or title, she measures success by the moments she sees change in real time: "When someone realizes their struggles have names, explanations, and solutions—that's my reward."



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Alice Mathew

PhD in Education

"NO RETREAT, NO SURRENDER": DR. ALICE MATHEW ON LIFELONG LEARNING, COURAGE, AND SERVING WITH COMPASSION

78

For nearly five decades, **Dr. Alice Mathew** has lived by a simple but powerful creed. From her early days as a young nurse in India to becoming a respected professor in the United States, and now as a voice motivating older adults in Kerala, her life is a testament to persistence, compassion, and the belief that service to others defines true success.

A Childhood Dream Becomes a Lifelong Calling

"I've been a caring and compassionate person from the very beginning," Dr. Mathew reflects. "I wanted to take care of people — nursing was not just a career choice, it was my passion."

Graduating as a general nurse in 1976, she began her career at the Cardiothoracic ICU in CMC Vellore, later working in Saudi Arabia and Oman before migrating to the United States in 1997. It wasn't an easy move. With a handicapped husband and a young son to support, survival came first.

"I worked two jobs until my son finished college. Only then could I pursue my dream of higher education," she says. By 2008, she had earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing education. At age 60, she achieved what few dare to attempt — completing her PhD in Education with distinction.



Dr. Alice Mathew

Lifetime Achievement Award
(Education)

Becoming a Teacher, Mentor, and Role Model

Dr. Mathew spent 15 years teaching associate, bachelor's, and master's level nursing students in the United States, rising to the position of professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Her approach was rooted in sincerity and a deep commitment to transforming students into compassionate nurses.

"I never tried to be a role model," she says with humility. "I just worked sincerely, with dedication and compassion. But wherever I went, people told me, 'You are my role model.'"

Her academic work included research publications, poster and oral presentations at professional conferences, and active participation in mentoring programs. She was nominated three times for the Florence Nightingale Awards and once for the Daisy Award in the U.S.

Overcoming Challenges, Achieving Milestones

Life in a new country was demanding. "The biggest challenge was surviving in the U.S. with my family's circumstances," she recalls. "There were moments of doubt, but I never gave up."

Her persistence paid off — both professionally and personally. Among her notable achievements are:

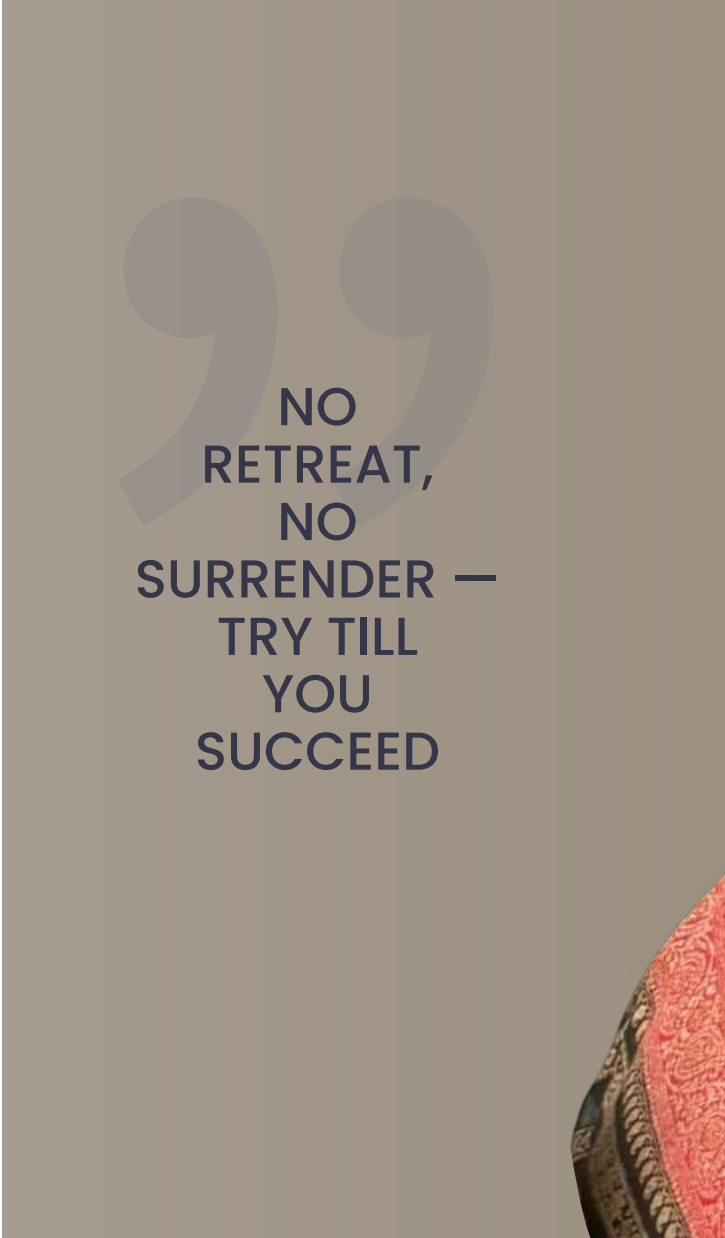
- Completing a PhD at 60 and serving as a university professor.
- Receiving the *Outstanding Alumni Professional Award (2011, USA)* and *Nursing Excellence Research Showcase Award (2008, USA)*.
- Winning the *Social Influencer Award (2023, IAPC USA)*, the *NADE Women Empowerment Award (2023, USA)*, and the *Influential Women Lifetime Achievement Award (2025, India)*.

Today, she considers her current work — inspiring older adults to live joyful, purposeful lives — just as meaningful as her academic milestones. "Helping others discover happiness in their later years feels like a new kind of achievement," she says.

Guided by Principles That Never Fade

Dr. Mathew credits her steady moral compass for shaping her long career. "Sincerity, trustworthiness, accountability, responsibility, compassion, integrity, and justice — these principles guided me through every stage of life," she explains.

Her personal philosophy also emphasizes balance. With careful time management, clear boundaries, and the ability to say no when necessary, she maintained both a demanding professional life and a fulfilling personal one. "Organization is key. You have to prioritize what matters — both in your career and at home."



NO
RETREAT,
NO
SURRENDER —
TRY TILL
YOU
SUCCEED



A New Mission: Inspiring Older Adults

In 2023, Dr. Mathew retired and returned to Kerala to care for her husband. What she saw around her sparked a new mission. “I noticed the loneliness and struggles older adults are facing. My own experience helped me understand their pain,” she says.

Through her YouTube channel and speaking engagements, she motivates seniors to embrace life with positivity. “Age is just a number. There are so many ways to enjoy the years ahead,” she says. Her talks focus on building resilience, staying socially engaged, and finding purpose even after retirement.

Looking Ahead: Continuing to Serve

Even after nearly half a century of service in nursing and education, Dr. Mathew has no plans to slow down. “My positive attitude and my desire to innovate keep me moving forward,” she says. Her goals now center on expanding her outreach to older adults, helping them combat isolation and live with dignity.

Advice to Young Women: Be Bold, Be Independent

Asked what advice she would give young women, her words are both practical and empowering:

- “Be courageous and bold to face challenges.”
- “Continue your education and seek financial independence.”
- “Practice self-love, self-respect, and emotional intelligence.”
- “Develop a strong sense of self — success will follow.”

These lessons come not from theory, but from a lifetime of perseverance, sacrifice, and achievement.

“No retreat, no surrender — try till you succeed,” Dr. Alice Mathew reminds us. Her story is proof that passion and perseverance can defy age, circumstance, and expectation — and that true success lies in serving others while staying true to oneself.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Jigna Garasia

"MBBS MD FICOG - Reproductive Medicine.
Nadkarni Hospital"

DR. JIGNA GARASIA: HEALING HEARTS, BUILDING HOPE, AND LIVING BEYOND MEDICINE

82

When Dr. Jigna Garasia speaks about her journey as a gynecologist and infertility specialist, her words carry the weight of lived experience and the quiet courage of someone who has faced both professional and personal storms. Today, she serves at Nadkarni Hospital & Test Tube Baby Center in Killa Pardi, Gujarat, as an infertility consultant and colposcopist. But her path to medicine—and to her calling—was anything but straightforward.

A Calling Shaped by Life, Not Choice

"I never initially wanted to become a doctor," Dr. Garasia reflects with candor. "I became one due to circumstances, not choice. I had never imagined I would become a gynecologist, but life had its own plans."

Her medical journey began in 1995 at B.J. Medical College, Ahmedabad, an institution she proudly calls her alma mater. But it wasn't until she witnessed her first delivery that everything changed. *"Seeing the smile on the faces of family members brought me immense happiness and inspired me to do even more for such patients."*

Infertility became a deeply personal mission. After conceiving her own daughter following five years of marriage, she experienced firsthand the societal pressure women endure. "Only a woman can truly understand another woman's struggle," she says. That understanding drove her to dedicate her career to supporting couples facing similar pain.



Dr. Jigna Garasia

Influential Women Leader
in Healthcare

The People Who Shaped Her Path

Dr. Garasia credits her mentor, the late Dr. Purnima Nadkarni, for inspiring her to go further. “She was a legend in the field, and her dedication to women’s health left a deep mark on me,” she recalls. With her mentor’s guidance, she learned not only to treat medical issues but also to approach each patient with empathy and resolve.

Her family, too, has been her anchor. Her husband and daughter, Naisargi, have stood by her through every high and low. “Their constant support has been my strength,” she says.

Surviving Life’s Toughest Tests

Between 2016 and 2019, Dr. Garasia’s life took an unexpected turn. Health complications led to major surgery in which part of her intestine was removed. “There was always a big question about my survival and fitness,” she says. Yet she emerged from the ordeal stronger and wiser. “Today, I am a rare disease survivor living my life smoothly and fully. Through all of this, I came to understand myself better and learned how to manage my problems.”

These years of uncertainty taught her resilience on an entirely different level. They also inspired her memoir, *“Beyond Medicine,”* in which she shares the lessons she learned both as a doctor and as a patient

Finding Balance in Self-Care

Despite her demanding profession, Dr. Garasia makes it a point to dedicate two hours every day to herself. “That’s my time—whether it’s the gym, yoga, gardening, or meditation. Whatever gives me happiness, I do it,” she says. These moments of reflection and physical wellness are not indulgences but essential practices that help her recharge and show up fully for her patients.

The Heart of Her Work: Empathy and Determination

As an infertility consultant, Dr. Garasia sees pain, frustration, and societal stigma up close. Yet she also sees the joy of transformation. Each successful pregnancy, each smile on a patient’s face, reinforces her purpose. “These experiences shaped me into the doctor I am today,” she says with quiet pride.

Her message to all women is both simple and profound:



**NEVER
GIVE UP.
TRY, TRY,
AND
TRY
UNTIL
YOU
SUCCEED.**

“Live your life to the fullest. Be financially independent. Believe in yourself.”

Words She Lives By

When asked about the quote that guides her, she responds without hesitation:

“NEVER GIVE UP. Try, try, and try until you succeed.”

It's a philosophy she has lived through personal illness, societal pressure, and professional hurdles—and one she now shares with every woman who feels weighed down by expectations or setbacks.

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Today, as she reflects on nearly three decades in medicine, Dr. Garasia sees not just the milestones but the personal transformation behind them. From a reluctant medical student to a compassionate infertility specialist, from a patient facing uncertainty to an author sharing her story, her life has been a testament to perseverance.

“When I look back, I can truly visualize how far I've come, and how all these challenges have shaped the person I am,” she says.

Her journey is not just about medical expertise—it's about humanity, courage, and the relentless pursuit of purpose. And while her patients know her as the doctor who never gives up, her own life shows exactly why that mantra rings so true.

**Dr. Jigna Garasia, MBBS, MD, FICOG
(Reproductive Medicine)**

Obstetrician & Gynecologist | Infertility Consultant | Colposcopist
Nadkarni Hospital & Test Tube Baby Center, Killa Pardi, Gujarat



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Riya Manish Gadhavi

Model, Entrepreneur, Author, Spiritualist

RIYA MANISH GADHAVI: BUILDING A LIFE OF PURPOSE, CREATIVITY, AND SPIRIT

86

At just 23, Riya Manish Gadhavi from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, has already made her mark as a **model, entrepreneur, author, and spiritualist**. Balancing the stage lights with spiritual depth, she blends creativity and conviction in everything she does. Her achievements range from winning pageant titles to becoming an award-winning author, but for Riya, success is measured less by trophies and more by the ability to make her parents proud and inspire others.

Her father, a businessman and spiritual guide, introduced her to entrepreneurship and spirituality. Working alongside him while studying at the Amrut Modi School of Management, she absorbed lessons on discipline, courage, and faith. Her father's teachings—and her mother's strength—remain her compass.

A Childhood of Creativity and a Legacy of Strength

Riya's path was shaped by a household where business acumen met artistic passion. Her early years were filled with dance, theatre, and modeling. She learned Bollywood, belly dancing, semi-classical Kathak, and Latin styles such as salsa, bachata, and cha-cha. "Dancing always felt meditative—it was my way of connecting inward," she recalls.



Riya Manish Gadhavi

Women Icon of the Year

The Turning Point: Loss and the Fire to Continue His Legacy

Riya's life took an unexpected turn when she lost her father, her role model and constant source of encouragement. "The pain of losing him is something I can never put into words. But his love and guidance never left me—it became the fire within me," she says.

Determined to honor his memory, she wrote her first book, *Spiritualism: Enrich Your Spirit*, to share his teachings and inspire others to see life's magic with a fresh perspective. The book was featured at the World Book Fair in Delhi in 2025, an achievement she humbly credits to her father's blessings and her mother's undying support and motivation.

Achievements That Matter Beyond Awards

Riya has earned titles such as **Miss Ahmedabad Juniors**, was the youngest finalist at **Miss Fabb Ahmedabad (2018)**, received the **Rising Star of the Year Award (2024)** from Page 3 Excellence Awards, and was named **Women Icon of the Year (2025)** at the Influential Women Leaders Awards.

But she views her greatest achievement differently:

"My father's blessings and teachings and my mother's proud smile are my biggest achievement. They give me the courage, faith, and positivity to face anything."

Challenges That Forged Her Strength

Life after loss brought Riya face-to-face with her toughest challenge—finding the strength to rise each morning without her father physically there. "When even the thought of losing someone terrifies you, actually living through it feels unbearable," she shares. Yet she channeled her grief into growth, holding on to the values of humility, gratitude, and service that her parents instilled in her.

Another challenge came from balancing her many roles—model, blogger, author, entrepreneur, and spiritual guide. "Every day demands something different," Riya explains. "There's no perfect ratio for balancing personal and professional life. You stay flexible, listen to your heart, and prioritize what matters most in that moment."

Values That Shape Her Path

Riya believes in surrendering to divine guidance and staying true to who she is. She carries a clear philosophy:

- Stay grounded and humble.
- Recognize everything as a blessing.
- Keep an open mind and heart.
- Spread love and help others whenever possible.



LIFE
CAN BE
MAGICAL,
IF YOU
BELIEVE IN
THE MAGIC
OF
YOUR GOD.

These principles guide her as she works to grow in every field she touches—from writing her next book to preparing for her upcoming projects.

What Keeps Her Moving Forward

Asked what fuels her ambition, Riya's answer is simple: her parents. "They are my wind beneath my wings. Their faith in me makes me work harder, fight through challenges, and keep winning." Her mother, once the quiet strength behind the family, has become a role model alongside her father. "Now my goal is to become an amazing combination of both of them," Riya says.

Shaping the Future: Vision and Aspirations

Currently, Riya is focused on personal and professional growth—juggling projects in modeling, lifestyle blogging, and spiritual writing. She's developing fresh content, working on her growth, and dedicating time to creative ventures.

Her long-term aspiration is clear: **to continue her father's legacy while building a life full of purpose, creativity, and service.** She dreams of inspiring others to see life as a gift and to recognize the magic within themselves.

Advice to Young Women: Independence Begins Within

With debates around women's independence everywhere, Riya offers a thoughtful perspective:

"Independence is not just about where you work, how much you earn financially, how you travel, or what you wear. True independence starts inside your mind, heart, and soul. When you are free from within, that strength reflects in every part of your life."

"Life Can Be Magical"

Riya's journey is more than a story of achievements—it's a reminder that courage, faith, and love can turn pain into purpose. Whether she's performing on stage, representing Gujarat in a pageant, or writing about spiritual growth, she carries her parents' teachings as her anchor.

Her words linger long after the conversation ends:

"Life can be magical, if you believe in the magic of your God."



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Jyoti Gill

Founder & CEO of J. G. Gill Architect & Interior Designer

JYOTI GILL: DESIGNING SPACES THAT BREATHE, HEAL, AND INSPIRE

90

When Space Became a Language

Jyoti Gill didn't choose architecture. "It chose me," she says with a quiet conviction. As a child, she would rearrange rooms, sketch in her notebooks, and wonder how sunlight could transform a wall into something alive. "I realized that space holds energy, and I wanted to shape it," she recalls.

Architecture, for Jyoti, is not just form and function. It is what she calls "*the alchemy of form, feeling, and future.*" Over the years, this perspective evolved from intuition into a design philosophy that blends sustainable innovation, spiritual science, and human connection.

Learning from Resilience and Rootedness

Jyoti's mother showed her that strength need not be loud. "Her quiet resilience taught me grace in grit," Jyoti says. Professionally, the writings and work of Laurie Baker and B.V. Doshi guided her belief that buildings should serve life, not just aesthetics.

Her early career began in conventional practice — glass, steel, and deadlines. But a pivotal shift came when she began weaving ecological responsibility, cultural wisdom, and Vastu Shastra into her designs. Recognition from programs like **Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women and The Real Women Award** affirmed her vision of aligning design with impact.



Jyoti Gill

Lifetime Achievement Award

Achievements that go Beyond Awards

Jyoti doesn't measure success in trophies. "The true award is when a mother says her child sleeps better in a home we designed," she explains. Still, her contributions are far from unnoticed: she has earned commendations from national green building councils, women-in-business forums, and architectural institutions for integrating sacred geometry and high-performance standards in institutional projects.

Her consultancy has delivered designs that merge Vedic architecture with cutting-edge sustainability, influencing both urban layouts and individual buildings. Equally important to her is mentorship — guiding young professionals, especially women, to see design as a responsibility, not just a career.

The Hardest Battles: Tradition, Innovation, and Perception

Convincing clients — and sometimes even herself — that intuition and intelligence can co-exist has been a defining challenge. "Walking the line between tradition and modernity is not easy," she admits.

As a woman on construction sites, she was often mistaken for an assistant rather than the lead architect. "I've switched from site boots to school lunch boxes in the same hour," she laughs, though the reality behind it was anything but light. Balancing stakeholder negotiations, technical deadlines, and family responsibilities required what she calls "*integration, not separation.*"

Values that Anchor every Design

Jyoti's work is guided by principles that go deeper than trends:

- **Integrity in design:** Decisions must serve both people and planet.
- **Cultural continuity:** Buildings should honor memory while staying relevant to the future.
- **Ecological responsibility:** Sustainability is a starting point, not an afterthought.
- **Empathy as leadership:** Teams thrive when leaders listen before they direct.
- **Spiritual awareness:** The built environment shapes human consciousness.

These values form her compass — ensuring that every project is both meaningful and measurable in its impact.

What Keeps her Moving Forward

"Every building we create has the power to heal or harm — emotionally, ecologically, and culturally,"

“
YOU DON'T
HAVE TO RAISE
YOUR VOICE
TO
MAKE AN IMPACT.
SOMETIMES,
THE QUIETEST SPACES
ARE
THE MOST POWERFUL.”



Jyoti says. This belief keeps her pushing forward, even on difficult days. She sees architecture as an ethical act, one where every decision leaves a trace on the lives of those who live, work, and dream in the spaces she builds.

Her motivation also comes from a deeper sense of purpose: “Women design differently. We bring intuition and intention together. What we build — in families, careers, or communities — can outlast us.”

Finding Flow Between Work and Life

When asked about balance, Jyoti resists the idea of strict compartments. “Balance isn’t static — it’s a dance,” she says. Some days involve answering site calls during school pickups; other days, her child sits beside her as she sketches late into the night. “You don’t have to do it all at once — but you must do it with presence,” she reflects.

Current Initiatives and a Vision for the Future

Today, Jyoti is working on institutional and government projects that integrate **astro-urban planning**, **Vastu-based zoning**, and **net-positive building strategies**. Her team is also developing educational tools to help young designers embed spiritual and ecological intelligence in modern planning.

Her long-term goal? To establish a **design research lab** where ancient wisdom meets cutting-edge sustainability — and to mentor **over 1,000 women in architecture and urban planning**. She also dreams of designing a **global women’s leadership retreat center** that embodies energy healing, dialogue, and inclusive design.

Advice for the Next Generation

“You don’t need to choose between being strong and being sensitive,” Jyoti says. “Architecture needs both. Believe that your intuition is a skill. Your vision is valid. Leadership isn’t about loudness — it’s about presence.”

Her favorite words to share with young professionals echo this belief:

“Design is not a service, it’s a responsibility — to memory, meaning, and the future.”

And perhaps her quietest yet most powerful advice:

“You don’t have to raise your voice to make an impact. Sometimes, the quietest spaces are the most powerful.”

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Shilpa Gupta

Front Office Manager

SHILPA GUPTA: REDEFINING HOSPITALITY WITH INTEGRITY, EMPATHY, AND EXCELLENCE

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Finding Purpose in Hospitality

For **Shilpa Gupta**, hospitality has never just been a profession—it has been a way of life. With over 11 years of experience, she currently serves as a **Front Office Manager**, where every day brings the opportunity to create meaningful guest experiences.

“Hospitality was a natural choice,” she reflects. “I’ve always enjoyed interacting with people and making them feel welcomed. Early in life, I realized how small gestures create lasting impacts, and I wanted to be part of an industry that thrives on such meaningful connections.”

Beyond her professional role, Shilpa is deeply interested in leadership psychology and regional cuisines, passions that enrich both her work and her worldview.

A Journey Shaped by Discipline and Integrity

Shilpa’s role model has always been her father. His discipline and quiet dedication taught her that true leadership is not about titles but about setting an example. These values became the foundation of her career in hospitality.

She began her journey in **Front Office operations**, where she discovered the power of attentiveness and authentic guest connections. Within just two years, she was promoted to a managerial position, an early milestone that tested her skills in decision-making and team leadership.

A defining turning point came when she was entrusted with **pre-opening operations for a hotel**. It demanded resilience, multi-tasking, and strategic foresight under pressure—skills that now define her leadership style. Each role since then has layered her learning, shaping her into a professional who believes in empowering teams and creating experiences that guests carry with them long after checkout.



Shilpa Gupta

Influential Woman Leader in
Tourism & Hospitality

Achievements That Speak of Impact

Over the years, Shilpa has led her teams to achieve remarkable milestones. Among them, securing the **highest guest satisfaction scores in the region** stands out. She also successfully managed hotel operations during the pandemic, ensuring safety, continuity, and morale at a time when uncertainty was the only constant

Mentorship is another achievement she treasures deeply. Several of her team members have grown into leadership roles under her guidance, something she views as a lasting contribution to the culture she has built.

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. She has been honoured with **Best Leader of the Year**, while her department earned the title of **Best Department of the Year**. One recognition especially close to her heart is the **Quality Champion Award**, celebrating her team's **97.3% quality score among 160+ hotels**.

"These awards are a reflection of teamwork and shared dedication," she says. "They remind me that excellence is never a solo achievement—it's a collective journey."

Challenges That Built Resilience

Shilpa's path has also been marked by challenges, some of them deeply personal. One of the most difficult phases in her career was navigating workplace bias and unethical behavior. She recalls moments when her professionalism was misunderstood and her values tested. On one occasion, when she stood firm against inappropriate advances from a superior, the response from higher authorities was silence, prioritizing the brand's image over her dignity.

"It was painful," she admits. "But it taught me resilience and the importance of standing up for myself. I realised that no matter what, I could never compromise my ethics. That experience made me even clearer about the leader I want to be—one who ensures a safe, respectful, and unbiased environment for everyone."

Through these experiences, Shilpa learned that strength is not only about endurance but also about self-respect. It is this strength that she now passes on to her team by creating an environment where dignity and fairness are non-negotiable.

Guided by Core Values

At the heart of Shilpa's leadership are three values: **integrity, respect, and empathy**.

For her, integrity means doing what is right even when it is difficult. Respect, she believes, must extend to every individual, regardless of role or background. And empathy, the cornerstone of hospitality, enables her to connect with both guests and team members on a human level, leading with kindness without losing professionalism.



DO NOT
SHRINK YOURSELF
TO FIT INTO SPACES
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YOU ARE MEANT
TO EVOLVE
AND SHINE.



Building with Purpose: Current Initiatives

Shilpa's vision for hospitality goes beyond managing operations. She is actively working on projects that priorities **personalized guest journeys**, ensuring every visitor feels like more than just a booking number. From thoughtful welcomes to meaningful farewells, her approach ensures guests leave with memories, not just receipts.

Sustainability is another priority close to her heart. She is championing eco-friendly initiatives such as reducing single-use plastics and introducing mindful practices in hotel operations. At the same time, she is driving **transformational team development programmes**, where training is not limited to skills but also nurtures confidence, empathy, and leadership potential.

"These initiatives are steps toward building a legacy of service, sustainability, and human connection," she says.

A Vision for the Future

Looking ahead, Shilpa aspires to lead larger teams and properties, where she can continue to influence guest experiences and team culture on a bigger scale. She dreams of mentoring future leaders, particularly women in hospitality, empowering them to rise without fear or limitation.

Ultimately, she envisions a hospitality industry where success is not only measured in revenue but in the **positive footprint it leaves on communities and the environment.**

"My aspiration is simple," she shares. "I want people to remember me not just for the work I did, but for how I made them feel—valued, inspired, and unstoppable."

Balancing Work and Life

In an industry that demands round-the-clock dedication, balance can feel elusive. For Shilpa, it's about being present in the moment.

"At work, I give my 100% with focus and dedication. Once I step out, I immerse myself in moments that matter—whether it's a quiet cup of tea with family, a soulful playlist, or silence for reflection. Balance is not about equal hours, but about wholehearted presence."

Wisdom to Share

When asked about her guiding philosophy, Shilpa offers words that reflect her resilience and growth:

"Do not shrink yourself to fit into spaces you have outgrown. You are meant to evolve and shine."

Her advice to young women carries both strength and tenderness:

"Believe fiercely in yourself, even when no one else does. Never compromise your dignity for opportunities—the right ones will come when you stay true to who you are. Speak up for what is right, support other women, and remember—your strength lies in your authenticity."

The Legacy She Hopes to Leave

Shilpa's story is not just about career achievements, but about a philosophy of living rooted in kindness, courage, and persistence. For her, leadership is not about authority—it is about responsibility. And success is not about awards—it is about impact.

As she continues her journey, one truth shines through her experiences: **resilience, integrity, and empathy will always outlast challenges, and authenticity will always open the right doors.**

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Renu Khetwal

Physiotherapist

THE GREATEST WEALTH IS HEALTH: DR. RENU KHETWAL ON STRENGTH, RESILIENCE, AND SHAPING SPORTS PHYSIOTHERAPY

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In a profession often dominated by men, **Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) has carved out her own space as a leading sports physiotherapist, mentor, and educator.** She is the founder of **Zen-Enso Physiotherapy & Sports Rehabilitation**, where her philosophy is clear: empowering athletes to heal, perform, and thrive. Awarded Best Physiotherapist in Karnataka (2019) and recognized among the Top 10 Influential Women Leaders in Healthcare 2025, her journey is a story of passion backed by relentless work.

Virgil once said, *"The greatest wealth is health,"* a line PT. Renu quotes often — and lives by.

From Court and Track to Clinic: A Calling Found Early

Growing up, Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) was never far from a badminton racquet or an athletics track. Her early love for sports wasn't just about competition — it sparked curiosity about how the human body moves, adapts, and recovers.

"Physiotherapy fascinated me because it's dynamic and hands-on. You see real results in real time. You help someone stand, run, or even win again," she says.

After specializing in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy, Renu began working with sports teams and individual athletes. She expanded her skills through certifications in manual therapy and dry needling and collaborated with multidisciplinary teams, enhancing care that blended science with empathy.

A defining moment came when she **launched her own clinic**, Zen-Enso. "Starting my own setup wasn't just a career step — it was an education in leadership, communication, and adaptability," she recalls. "I realized physiotherapy isn't only about treating injuries. It's about empowering athletes to perform at their best."



Dr. Renu Khetwal

Top 10 Influential Women Leaders
in Healthcare

Carving a Path Through Challenge and Doubt

Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) achievements are substantial: helping injured athletes return to peak form, educating patients about their own recovery, and conducting national and international workshops for budding physiotherapists. But the road hasn't been smooth.

"In the early days, I was told repeatedly that I wouldn't succeed in a male-dominated field," she shares. "But time proved otherwise. I chose persistence over discouragement."

Her resilience was recognized when she was named *Best Physiotherapist in Karnataka (2019)*, a moment that validated years of work. By 2025, her leadership in healthcare education earned her a place among the *Top 10 Influential Women Leaders*.

For Renu, these titles are milestones — but never finish lines. "Awards remind you of what you've done. They shouldn't define what you'll do next."

Guided by Empathy, Grounded in Science

The values steering her career are simple yet powerful: empathy, respect, and evidence-based practice. "Every patient deserves care that's tailored to them — not just their injury, but their goals, fears, and lifestyle," she says.

These principles guide both her clinical work and her initiatives:

- **Developing personalized exercise programs** that fit individual needs.
- **Community outreach programs** that bring health awareness to underserved populations.
- **Continuing education workshops and online courses** to equip physiotherapists with cutting-edge techniques.
- **Patient education resources** to help people understand and manage their own recovery.

"Knowledge is empowering — for patients, for professionals, for communities," she says. "When people understand how their bodies work, they take charge of their own health."

Motivation, Balance, and the Power of Self-Care

What keeps Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) going isn't just professional pride — it's the lives she touches every day. "When an athlete returns to the field after months of rehab or a patient regains pain-free movement, that's all the motivation I need."

But sustaining this drive requires balance. "It's easy to let work consume you, but you're not effective if you're exhausted," she explains. Her own strategies include:



THE GREATEST
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AND THAT
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TOO.
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GIVE OTHERS.

- Scheduling personal time as firmly as professional appointments.
- Prioritizing sleep, exercise, and hobbies.
- Seeking support when needed and practicing gratitude every day.

“Balance isn’t about dividing time evenly,” she says. “It’s about being fully present wherever you are — in the clinic or with your loved ones.”

Looking Ahead: Expanding Expertise, Mentorship, and Impact

Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) aspirations are as forward-thinking as her methods. She plans to continue **expanding her expertise in sports science, mentoring young physiotherapists, and improving healthcare quality** through innovation and collaboration.

Her workshops already reach audiences across India and abroad, building a network of physiotherapists who are as committed to learning as they are to healing. “Education is a ripple effect,” she says. “When you train one physiotherapist well, you indirectly improve care for hundreds of patients.”

Words for the Next Generation of Women in Healthcare

Asked what advice she’d give young women entering challenging careers, Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) doesn’t hesitate:

- *“Be kind — to others and yourself. Prioritize self-care.”*
- *“Take risks, step outside your comfort zone, and celebrate even small successes.”*
- *“Learn to say no when it matters, and practice gratitude daily.”*

Her philosophy is rooted in authenticity and courage — qualities that carried her through skepticism and self-doubt to become a respected voice in Indian sports physiotherapy.

As she puts it: *“The greatest wealth is health — and that applies to your career and personal life, too. Protect your energy, invest in yourself, and you’ll have more to give others.”*

Dr. Renu Khetwal (PT) journey is proof that resilience, skill, and compassion can redefine what success looks like — for patients, for professionals, and for women determined to lead.



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Purnima Padmasna

Banker (Chief Manager in PSB)

PURNIMA PADMASNA: LIVING EVERY DREAM IN A SINGLE LIFETIME

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Chief Manager at Bank of Maharashtra, celebrated model, poet, and motivational speaker — Purnima Padmasna has proved that life does not have to fit into one mold. From becoming a respected banking professional to earning the second runner-up crown at Mrs. India One in a Million 2022, she has pursued every dream with unshakable determination.

“तू ज़िंदा है तो ज़िंदगी की जीत पे यकीन कर, अगर कहीं है स्वर्ग तो उतार ला ज़मीन पर,” she says, quoting her favorite line, a reflection of her belief in living fully and fearlessly.

Inspired by a Life Lived in Service

When asked about her role model, Purnima speaks of her maternal grandmother with deep admiration. A housewife, teacher, social worker, and freedom fighter at just 14 years old, her grandmother embodied courage and resilience long before such words became buzzworthy. “She performed many roles in one life and left a legacy that still inspires our entire village,” Purnima recalls.

That spirit of service and strength continues to guide Purnima, whether she’s leading teams at the Bank of Maharashtra or walking the runway for renowned designers like Anjalee & Arjun Kapoor and Anupama Dayal.



Purnima Padmasna

Influential Woman Leader in
Marketing & Communication

Defining Moments: From Humiliation to Honor

Purnima's journey has not been without struggle. After graduating with distinction in Biochemistry, she dreamed of becoming a scientist. But social expectations and financial constraints halted her education, and marriage proposals were overshadowed by high dowry demands.

One incident became a turning point. A prospective groom's family humiliated her father — simply because he could not meet their demands. "I told my father, 'Give me one year. I will become a Probationary Officer myself so that no one ever disrespects you again.'"

Without coaching classes, she prepared on her own, studying day and night. On March 10, 2008, she achieved what she had promised, securing a position as Probationary Officer in Bank of Maharashtra. Today, with 17 years of service, she proudly holds the post of Chief Manager — a success story that commands respect not only from her family but from colleagues across the bank.

Achievements Beyond Titles and Crowns

Purnima considers her greatest achievements deeply personal. "The day I became a mother — first in 2011 and again in 2014 — was the most extraordinary feeling. Nothing compares to creating life itself."

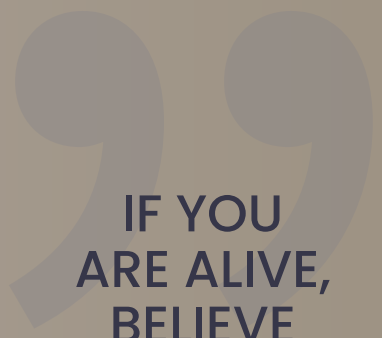
On the professional front, being crowned second runner-up at Mrs. India One in a Million 2022 was another milestone. Along with the main title, she won two special awards — Body Beautiful and Beautiful Skin. Combined with her long-standing recognition in creative writing, these honors reflect the many facets of her personality.

But she remains humble: "I have always believed that life gives only one chance to fulfill our dreams. I refuse to waste it."

Challenges That Shaped Her Principles

Every barrier Purnima faced — from halted studies to societal pressures — has strengthened her core values: *Honesty, Truth, and Hard Work with full devotion*. These principles have shaped not only her career but her approach to everything from parenting to modeling.

She dismisses the idea of balancing multiple roles as an impossible burden. "When you have the desire to achieve something, even God comes down to help you. I plan my work, create a strategy, and everything falls into place. It never feels heavy."



IF YOU
ARE ALIVE,
BELIEVE
IN LIFE'S VICTORY;
IF HEAVEN
EXIST,
BRING IT
DOWN TO
EARTH.



Motivation: A Single Life, A Single Chance

Purnima's driving force is simple: *We live only once*. "Whatever we wish to do, we should do in this lifetime. There are no second chances." This philosophy fuels her energy — whether she is leading a zonal banking team, walking the ramp as a showstopper, writing poetry late into the night, or mentoring young women.

Giving Back Through Action

Beyond her professional and personal milestones, Purnima devotes time to projects that uplift others. She is currently involved in initiatives to support education for blind children, a cause she feels deeply about. "I want to do something meaningful for those who are considered underprivileged or unable to compete on equal terms. Everyone deserves an opportunity to shine."

Her future goals align with this vision — creating programs and support systems for individuals who have the potential to achieve but lack resources or guidance.

A Message for Young Women: Believe Completely

When asked what advice she would give to young women, Purnima's answer is clear and unwavering:

"Believe yourself, believe your heart and mind, and do whatever they say — because we do not live twice."

Her words are not mere encouragement; they are the principles by which she has lived, defying societal constraints and proving that persistence, faith, and courage can build a life of both purpose and passion.

Living With No Regrets

From walking prestigious ramps to leading in the corporate world, from motherhood to mentoring, Purnima Padmasna embodies the belief that every dream deserves a chance. Her story reminds us that challenges are not roadblocks but stepping stones — and that no one should wait for permission to pursue what truly matters.

Her favorite quote sums up her philosophy:

"तू ज़िंदा है तो ज़िंदगी की जीत पे यकीन कर, अगर कहीं है स्वर्ग तो उतार ला ज़मीन पर"

("If you are alive, believe in life's victory; if heaven exists, bring it down to earth.")

Purnima has done exactly that — creating her own heaven through courage, discipline, and relentless belief in herself.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Netrvathi Dubey

Numerology & Vaastu & Life Coach

NETRVATHI DUBEY: ENGINEERING DESTINY THROUGH FAITH AND NUMBERS

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After excelling as a BE Engineer and MBA topper from Mumbai University, Netrvathi Dubey seemed set for a high-flying corporate career. Yet, a single numerology consultation in 2008 shifted her entire worldview. The clarity and success she gained from that experience ignited an inner calling—a desire to understand the hidden forces shaping life and use them to guide others.

“God helps those who help themselves,” she says, a simple belief that has become the foundation of her journey as Founder of **Guiding Staars**, an institution dedicated to transformation through Numerology and spiritual sciences.

From Corporate Boardrooms to Spiritual Guidance

Netrvathi spent more than 15 years thriving in the IT industry, yet friends and colleagues often sought her counsel long before she considered herself a guide. The true turning point came when her mentor, **Mr. Arvind Sud**, introduced her to the deeper truths of Numerology.

“During challenging times, I witnessed how this knowledge could bring alignment and direction,” she recalls. “It gave me courage to walk away from the conventional path and dedicate myself to helping others discover their own clarity.”

With that bold step, **Guiding Staars** was born—not just as a practice, but as a platform to empower people to take charge of their destiny without fear.



Netrvathi Dubey

Outstanding Contribution in
Numerology and Vastu

Redefining Spiritual Practice

One of Netrvathi's greatest challenges has been changing how people perceive occult sciences. Too often, spiritual practices are clouded by superstition or misused as tools of fear.

"My mission is to replace fear with faith," she explains. "Spiritual knowledge should empower people, not control them. I see myself as a medium—it's not me, but the divine working through me."

By focusing on education and transparency, she's helped thousands discover that Numerology and allied sciences are not about predicting doom, but about understanding patterns and making informed, conscious choices.

Guided by Integrity and Divine Purpose

Honesty and integrity form the pillars of Netrvathi's work. "Whatever guidance I give, it must come from a place of truth. I believe I'm only an instrument—God decides how people receive and apply it," she says.

Her clients describe her approach as deeply compassionate yet practical. She does not promise miracles, but instead equips people to help themselves, aligning their personal efforts with divine timing and energy.

This philosophy has earned her wide recognition, including awards such as:

- **Visionary Divine Guide**
- **Renowned Numerologist of the Year**
- **Most Influential Woman of the Year**
- **Iconic Numerologist & Life Coach**

Yet for Netrvathi, these accolades are only reflections of the lives transformed along the way.

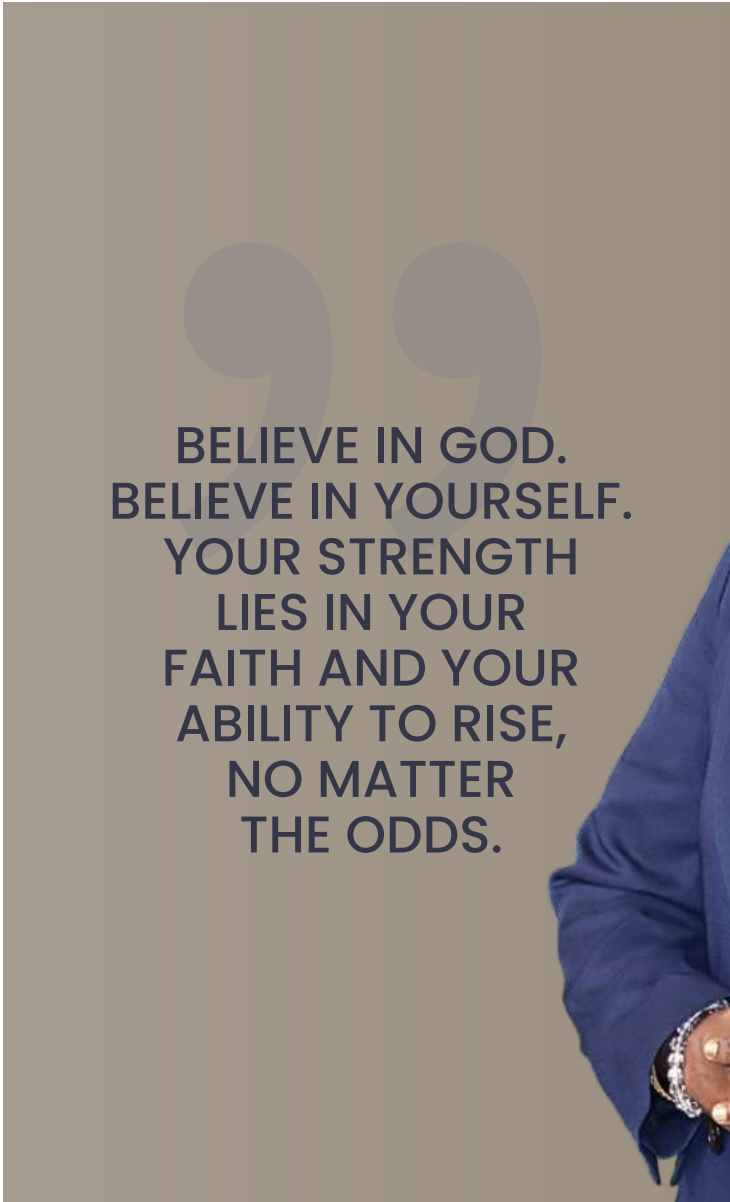
Measuring Success in Changed Lives

Ask her about achievements, and she speaks not of titles or wealth but of the joy in seeing clients and students grow. "When someone calls to say they've overcome an obstacle or achieved something they never thought possible, that is my true success," she says.

The love and blessings she receives in return are her greatest motivators. "Every message of gratitude, every happy face keeps me going. It reminds me why I chose this path."

Finding Balance Through Surrender

Balancing a demanding career in spiritual counseling with personal commitments has been another test. Yet, Netrvathi believes the key lies in letting go of control.



BELIEVE IN GOD.
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.
YOUR STRENGTH
LIES IN YOUR
FAITH AND YOUR
ABILITY TO RISE,
NO MATTER
THE ODDS.



"I've learned to see myself as an instrument of God's will. That surrender brings peace and clarity—even when my schedule is overflowing. It's not always easy, but trusting the divine order helps me give my best at home and in my work."

Service Beyond the Self

In addition to her professional commitments, Netrvathi works actively with NGOs and Gaushalas, supporting causes that uplift humanity, protect animals, and preserve **Sanatan Dharma**. For her, this service is not charity—it is gratitude in action.

"Whatever we receive from the universe must be given back in some way," she says. "Serving others keeps us grounded and connected to the bigger purpose."

Looking Ahead: Expanding Guiding Staars

Her vision for the future is both ambitious and heartfelt. Netrvathi aims to make **Guiding Staars** a trusted platform reaching more people across India and beyond, helping them unlock their true potential through practical spiritual knowledge.

"My goal is to be part of many more success stories—not because of me, but because people learned to believe in themselves and in God's guidance."

A Message to Young Women: Believe, Always

Netrvathi Dubey's advice to young women is straightforward and empowering:

"Believe in God. Believe in yourself. Your strength lies in your faith and your ability to rise, no matter the odds."

She encourages women to embrace both inner confidence and spiritual grounding, reminding them that no challenge is too great when faith and effort come together.

A Life Built on Faith and Service

From her early days as an engineering student to her rise in the IT industry, and now as one of India's most respected numerologists, Netrvathi Dubey's journey reflects courage, clarity, and deep spiritual purpose.

By transforming fear into faith, and uncertainty into direction, she continues to touch countless lives while remaining firmly rooted in humility. For her, success is not about recognition—it is about seeing others discover their power, align with divine guidance, and live fuller, freer lives.

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Priyanka Singh

B2 Certified Spanish Trainer. I Teach Students of All Age Groups
from School Students to Working Professionals

PRIYANKA SINGH – RUNNING TOWARDS DREAMS, ONE STEP AT A TIME

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Introduction: A Journey of Passion and Purpose

Priyanka Singh, a 40-year-old B2 Certified Spanish Trainer, is proof that it's never too late to start anew and build a life rooted in passion, learning, and balance. What began as a personal interest during the COVID-19 pandemic has grown into a fulfilling career where she teaches Spanish to students ranging from schoolchildren to working professionals.

"Learning Spanish was initially just something I did for myself, but it turned into a profession that I deeply cherish," she says. Her story is one of rediscovery — from overcoming postpartum depression to running marathons in a saree, she continues to challenge limitations and inspire women to put themselves first.

From Curiosity to Career: How Spanish Became a Calling

Priyanka's love for learning was sparked early, thanks to her mother, whom she calls her biggest inspiration. "My mother instilled in me a passion for continuous learning," she reflects. During the pandemic, she enrolled in an online Spanish course at Delhi University. What began as a curiosity soon became a defining moment — one that would lead her to a new professional path.

After completing her course, Priyanka joined a language institute and began teaching Spanish to students across all age groups. With each class, she saw the impact language learning could have on someone's confidence, and she found her true calling. Today, she continues to teach, mentor, and grow her private Spanish lessons, with dreams of one day opening her own language institute.



Priyanka Singh

Unique Women Achiever Award

Rediscovering Strength Through Fitness and Dance

Priyanka's journey has not been limited to academics and teaching. A fitness enthusiast and a passionate Kathak dancer since the age of five, she has kept her connection with Indian culture alive through countless performances. After the birth of her daughter in 2014, she faced postpartum depression — a period that tested her emotionally and physically.

Her turning point came in 2018 when she joined aerobics and Zumba classes, sparking a lifestyle shift that helped her regain confidence. In 2022, she took up running, turning it into a powerful symbol of self-reliance and endurance.

In January 2025, Priyanka made headlines by running the **42 km Tata Mumbai Marathon in a saree**, dedicating her run to all Indian women and mothers. "Running in a saree was my way of celebrating Indian culture and encouraging women to embrace fitness," she shares. The feat was challenging — battling lower back pain and fatigue — but she crossed the finish line with pride, earning recognition on the Tata Mumbai Marathon's official page.

Overcoming Challenges with Resilience

Priyanka's life has been a testament to stepping out of her comfort zone. Moving from a stay-at-home mom to a professional trainer required courage, patience, and determination. "Overcoming my health challenges, balancing family and career, and finding my identity outside of motherhood were the toughest parts," she admits.

Her philosophy is simple yet powerful: stay determined, trust yourself, and focus on progress rather than comparison. "I view myself as my own competition — that mindset fuels my growth," she says.

Celebrating Achievements and Milestones

Priyanka's dedication has earned her recognition across multiple fields. She was honored with the **Unique Woman Award at the Women Substance Network Awards** for her versatility and contributions. Her Kathak performances have earned her accolades, including the **Best Kathak Dancer Award** from Nrityangana Academy in both 2022 and 2023, and she has been recognized by the Nandanik Foundation for her cultural contributions.

Her podium finishes at several running events and her marathon achievement reflect her commitment to fitness and to inspiring others through action, not just words.



THE FUTURE
BELONGS
TO
THOSE
WHO
BELIEVE
IN
THE BEAUTY
OF THEIR
DREAMS.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Balancing Roles: Mother, Educator, and Athlete

For Priyanka, balance is not just a concept but a deliberate practice. “Maintaining a balance between personal and professional life is a challenging task. It requires not only dedication but also the support of your family,” she explains. She sets clear priorities, plans her schedule carefully, and makes sure to spend quality time with her daughter.

Her ability to wear many hats — trainer, dancer, runner, mother — without losing herself is what makes her story so relatable and motivating for women everywhere.

Looking Ahead: Dreams That Keep Her Moving

Priyanka is currently expanding her Spanish classes and preparing to launch her own fitness studio, where she envisions offering a holistic workout experience for women. She has also taken up Yoga and Aerial Yoga, with plans to become a certified instructor in the future.

Her long-term aspirations include taking an advanced Spanish course in Spain, participating in major marathons worldwide, and creating spaces where women can prioritize their well-being while pursuing careers and passions.

Words to Live By

Priyanka leaves readers with one of her favorite quotes:

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” – Eleanor Roosevelt

Her message to young women is clear and empowering: “Cultivate a skill or a passion. Even with education, life can take unexpected turns — but a skill can give you independence, identity, and joy. Start small, stay consistent, and never underestimate your own potential.”

Priyanka Singh's story is a reminder that it is never too late to reinvent yourself, to chase dreams that may have once felt out of reach, and to find strength in every step of the journey. Whether through language, dance, or marathon running, she continues to inspire women to embrace growth, health, and self-belief — proving that when passion meets perseverance, transformation is inevitable.



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Dr. Garima Ganeriwal

Freelance Consultant, Real Estate

DR. GARIMA GANERIWAL: TURNING CHALLENGES INTO CHAPTERS OF GROWTH

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"I am my favourite poem—written in confidence and grace." That's how Dr. Garima Ganeriwal, Founder Director of Taskia Enterprises LLP, describes herself—and it's easy to see why. With over 26 years of experience across corporate strategy, real estate consulting, government liaison, and entrepreneurship, she has built a career defined not by titles, but by transformation.

Early Curiosity and the Spark of Purpose

From her first corporate role developing products for national and international markets, Dr. Garima's curiosity was never about chasing revenue alone. What fascinated her was the soul of a business—the people who built it, the purpose driving it, and the untapped potential waiting to surface.

That curiosity turned into a calling when she realized she had a unique ability to help struggling ventures pivot, grow, and rediscover their identity. "Entrepreneurship is a living entity," she says.

"It breathes through people, adapts to change, and thrives on vision." This philosophy eventually led her to step out on her own, founding Taskia Enterprises and mentoring brands and startups across sectors.

A Career Built on Resilience and Reinvention

Dr. Garima calls her journey a "mosaic of reinventions." From leading corporate teams to building her own venture, she learned to blend strategic foresight with creative disruption. A defining milestone was helping a mid-size company raise its first round of funding, sparking a transformation that rippled across the organization.

But perhaps her proudest professional moment came when she built a business from scratch—one that embodied her values of resilience, empathy, and integrity. Along the way, she earned an Honorary Doctorate and the prestigious Gaurav Ratna Padma Bhushan Sammaan from the World Human Rights Commission, affiliated with the United Nations. These recognitions, she says, are not just personal honors but reflections of "every business I've guided, every founder I've mentored, and every woman who chose courage over conformity."



Dr. Garima Ganeriwal

Women Personality of the Year

Facing Solitude and Bias with Unflinching Strength

The road to leadership was not smooth. As a single woman navigating male-dominated spaces, Dr. Garima was often underestimated. “Rejection became my teacher,” she recalls. “Every ‘no’ was just redirection—an invitation to grow stronger.”

Her toughest moments came not from financial gaps or strategic obstacles, but from battling professional uncertainty while shouldering personal solitude. Yet she learned to turn these challenges into fuel, reshaping setbacks into stepping stones. “Staying optimistic is a discipline,” she says. “It’s a choice you make every single day.”

Guided by Values That Never Waver

At the heart of her work are principles that never bend: resilience, empathy, integrity, and a relentless commitment to learning. “Every interaction is a mirror,” she explains. “Every day brings a lesson if you’re willing to see it.” These values not only define her leadership but also the mentorship she provides to the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Recognition and the Responsibility of Leadership

Throughout her career, Dr. Garima has earned numerous awards for excellence—including *Best Entrepreneur of the Year* by South India Excellence 2025 and the *Telangana Business Global Award 2025*. Earlier in her corporate journey, she was known as the “lady with fire in her belly,” recognized for unmatched productivity and drive.

For her, accolades are less about personal glory and more about collective impact. “These awards represent the businesses I’ve built, the people I’ve helped believe in themselves again, and the vision of leadership that prioritizes purpose over position,” she says.

Motivation: Watching Others Rise

What keeps Dr. Garima moving forward after decades of success? Transformation. She is energized by watching people and businesses evolve, by witnessing possibilities turn into reality. “When I help someone rediscover their confidence, it fuels my own,” she says. “Living your truth fearlessly gives others permission to do the same.”

Balancing Life Without Compromise

For Dr. Garima, balance isn’t about dividing time equally—it’s about integrating life and work with intention. She builds in pauses for journaling, travel, poetry, and solitude. “Being single has taught me to create a life full of purpose and self-celebration,” she explains. “I don’t balance roles, I blend them so that personal joy fuels professional clarity.”



I
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AND
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Initiatives That Shape the Future

Currently, Dr. Garima is mentoring startups in sustainable impact sectors and developing a platform to bridge funding with growth strategy. She also works on projects with the transport department, prioritizing women's safety and road awareness. Her expertise extends to international brand acquisition, helping global ventures enter the Indian market with precision and purpose.

Looking ahead, she plans to launch an accelerator exclusively for women entrepreneurs—designed to pair bold vision with empathetic leadership. She's also writing a book on entrepreneurial resilience: part memoir, part practical guide.

Advice to Young Women: Own Your Story

To young women navigating ambition and self-doubt, Dr. Garima offers simple but profound counsel:

"Own your story. Whether it's messy, magical, or still unfolding—own it unapologetically. Don't wait for validation. Lead even if your voice trembles. Build something that outlives you. And remember—Picture abhi baaki hai mere dost—your best chapter is yet to come."

No Retreat, No Surrender—Just Grace in Action

With over two decades of professional triumphs, Dr. Garima Ganeriwal stands as a reminder that leadership is not about perfection, but persistence. Her life reflects the power of showing up with resilience, serving with empathy, and daring to dream bigger—even when the world doubts you.

As she puts it herself: *"I am my favourite poem—written in confidence and grace."*

INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Shalini Kakani

Architect & Urban Planner

SHALINI KAKANI: BUILDING SPACES, SHAPING LEGACIES

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In a city where rapid urbanization often threatens to overshadow cultural roots, architect and planner Shalini Kakani has spent over two decades bridging tradition and innovation. As the Principal Architect at Vartulah Design Associates in Hyderabad, and Principal at JNIAS School of Planning and Architecture, her journey reflects not just professional excellence but also the quiet strength of a woman who has carried responsibility with dignity and vision.

Following Her Father's Footsteps

Architecture is more than a profession for Shalini—it is a family legacy. Her father, a respected architect and town planner, played a pivotal role in shaping Hyderabad's urban fabric with integrity and foresight.

"My father was my greatest inspiration," she recalls. "He embodied honesty, humility, and a deep sense of purpose in public service. His work continues to guide me even after his passing."

Carrying forward this legacy, Shalini earned her Gold Medal in B.Arch, followed by a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning from JNAFAU. Today, while pursuing her PhD at SPA Vijayawada on the spatial rights of informal workers, she channels both academic rigor and practical wisdom into her projects.

The Dual Challenge of Home and Career

Shalini's professional path has been anything but easy. Beyond the deadlines and demands of her work, she faced personal trials that tested her endurance. Managing her children's education and well-being almost single-handedly, she also weathered financial setbacks and several obstacles.

"Those years were among the toughest," she admits. "Balancing professional commitments while holding my family together required everything I had. But giving up was never an option."



Shalini Kakani

Influential Woman Leader in
Architecture

Instead of breaking her, these challenges built resilience. They shaped her into a leader who understands that strength is not just about ambition—it's about persistence through adversity.

Achievements Rooted in Purpose

Over her 20-year career, Shalini has worked with some of Hyderabad's most respected names, including **Mr. G.S. Gupta, Mr. Rajkumar Malpani, Mr. Sunil Surana, Mr. S.A. Huda IPS, and Mr. Aditya Gowra**. Her portfolio spans **residential and commercial architecture, interior design, and landscaping**, always grounded in sustainability and cultural relevance.

Her dedication to mentoring is equally impactful. As Principal of an architecture institution, she leads with a hands-on approach, guiding students through real-world projects and encouraging them to think critically about the social role of architecture.

In addition, she has actively participated in **heritage conservation efforts**, advocating for the preservation of Hyderabad's historic sites. "Our built heritage is not just stone and mortar—it is memory, identity, and a bridge to our cultural roots," she says.

Her contributions have earned her prestigious recognition, including the **She Inspire Leadership Award by IWLA**, an honor that she describes as "a celebration of resilience and purpose."

Living by Values

At the heart of Shalini's work lies a set of principles she refuses to compromise on: **hard work, honesty, and integrity**. She believes these values form the foundation for innovation, leadership, and trust.

"In architecture, as in life, the temptation to cut corners is real. But staying true to your principles ensures that your work stands the test of time," she explains.

Current Projects: Designing for Legacy

Shalini is currently leading the **development of a design school**, a project close to her heart. This institution, expected to be completed within the year, aims to cultivate design thinking, innovation, and responsibility among future architects. "Education is where lasting impact begins," she notes.

Her other projects include a **landscaping initiative for Dadawadi Jain Seva Samasthan** in Hyderabad, developed in collaboration with Pranava Group, where she is creating serene, culturally-rooted outdoor spaces. Alongside, she continues to work on **residential interiors**, designing with context and sustainability at the forefront.



HOLD ON TO
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TRUST IN THE
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AND INTO
YOUR LIGHT.

Shalini Kakani

Looking Ahead: Carrying Forward a Family Tradition

Architecture for Shalini is not just a profession but a family calling. As a third-generation architect, she feels the weight and pride of carrying forward a legacy that began with her grandfather, who served the Nizams in the early 1900s, and was carried forward by her father, the town planner who shaped Hyderabad's growth.

Now, with her son pursuing architecture at the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, the legacy continues into its fourth generation. "It is not just heritage—it is responsibility," she reflects. "I want to expand my work in education, research, and practice so that architecture remains connected to people, culture, and sustainability."

Advice for Young Women

Her journey, marked by challenges and achievements, has made Shalini deeply empathetic to the struggles of other women in demanding fields.

Her advice is both practical and profound:

"Balance work and life with strength. Let your struggles shape your wisdom, and carry your truth with quiet grace. Success is not about noise—it is about authenticity and resilience."

The Quiet Power of Resilience

Shalini Kakani's story is not one of shortcuts or overnight recognition. It is a story of decades of discipline, perseverance, and a commitment to values stronger than circumstance.

Her philosophy resonates in every project she takes on: creating spaces that are functional yet soulful, innovative yet respectful of history, ambitious yet humane.

As she continues her journey, her words linger as both advice and affirmation:

"Hold on to your values, even when the world wavers. Trust in the quiet power of your energy, and it will carry you through storms and into your light."



INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025

Ruptrishna Choudhury

Entrepreneur

RUPTRISHNA CHOUDHURY: BUILDING A CLEANER FUTURE FOR GOA AND BEYOND

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Finding Purpose Beyond the 9-to-5

At just 27, Ruptrishna Choudhury has taken a bold leap that many only dream about. Originally from Guwahati, Assam, she pursued her education in Bangalore and Gwalior before moving to Goa in September 2023. But her move was not just geographical—it marked the start of a profound shift in her life's purpose.

"I knew the corporate world wasn't where I belonged," she recalls. After working as a research analyst, she chose to quit her job and follow her inner voice. What she discovered was a pressing problem she could no longer ignore: Goa, India's beloved tourist paradise, was drowning in waste. Beaches littered with bottles, plastic, and unmanaged garbage became the trigger that propelled her into action.

This decision led to the birth of **Mrinal Welfare Foundation**, an NGO named after her father, and dedicated to waste management and sustainability in Goa.

Inspired by Her Roots

Ruptrishna's father is her greatest role model and the inspiration behind her work. "He always taught me to dream big and act fearlessly," she shares. Naming her foundation after him was a way to honor his influence and keep his spirit alive in her mission.

Her journey, though short so far, has been anything but easy. Building an NGO from the ground up in a tourist-heavy region has tested her patience, resilience, and determination. Yet she sees every hurdle as a learning experience. "Even if a few things are not in place at the end of the day, I remind myself that it's just a phase. It will pass," she says with quiet confidence.



Ruptrishna Choudhury
Social Entrepreneur of the Year

Challenges That Shaped the Path

Setting up an NGO in Goa has been a test of perseverance. Slow documentation processes, bureaucratic delays, and the lack of urban facilities were among the first hurdles. “Being a city girl, it was difficult adjusting to a place where legal work takes weeks, sometimes months,” Ruptrishna explains.

Another challenge came from societal perceptions. “In a male-dominated field, I’m often asked, ‘How are you doing this alone?’ or mocked for the work I do because sustainability is not widely understood.” Yet she refuses to be discouraged. Each sneer only strengthens her commitment to her cause.

Recognition and Milestones

Despite being only a year into her journey as Director of Mrinal Welfare Foundation, Ruptrishna has already received recognition for her efforts. She was awarded the **Social Entrepreneur of the Year** by Hyde Edge Media, a milestone that validated her vision and encouraged her to dream even bigger.

But for her, the most meaningful achievement is more personal. “Being able to find myself among the crowd has been my greatest achievement,” she says. It is this deep sense of purpose that fuels her every day.

Values That Keep Her Grounded

Ruptrishna’s guiding principles are simple yet powerful—respect for everyone, staying true to her roots, and focusing on being a good human above all else. “Titles will come and go,” she says, “but the person you become is what truly matters.”

She draws her strength from faith and intuition. “Trusting God and my inner voice keeps me going, even when life feels chaotic. My dad’s words still guide me—he reminded me to chase big dreams without fear and to focus on being a good individual.”

Balancing Work and Life

Running an NGO can be exhausting, but Ruptrishna prioritizes her mental and emotional well-being. “I give myself enough rest when needed and make sure I spend time with loved ones whenever I get back from work,” she says. This balance helps her return to her mission with renewed energy and clarity.

Building a Cleaner, Greener Goa

Ruptrishna’s current project focuses on recycling solid glass waste into cullets, which are then remanufactured into new bottles. This process helps reduce up to 60% of carbon emissions, making it a significant step toward sustainable waste management.



I AM
THE MASTER
OF
MY FATE,
I AM
THE CAPTAIN
OF
MY
SOUL.



Her efforts extend beyond waste collection—she aims to transform how Goa handles its landfill crisis. By collecting glass waste from bars, restaurants, and tourist spots, she hopes to restore the natural beauty that makes Goa special. “This is a movement to protect the soul of Goa,” she says passionately, “so that future generations can see the Goa we all fell in love with—not beaches filled with trash.”

Looking Ahead: A Vision for Sustainable Tourism

Ruptrishna's dream is to expand her efforts nationwide. She envisions opening waste management centers in other tourist destinations, particularly those struggling with alcohol-related glass waste. Alongside this, she hopes to launch programs that educate rural children about sustainability and climate change, ensuring that the next generation is equipped to protect their environment.

“As a tourism student, I have always wanted to help destinations preserve their heritage, natural beauty, and culture,” she explains. Her plans are ambitious, but her resolve is unshakable.

Words to Live By

When asked to share a quote that resonates with her journey, Ruptrishna chooses a line that perfectly reflects her spirit:

“I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.”

Her advice for young women is equally empowering:

“Just don’t stop. If your heart and mind are in it, nothing can hold you back. Trust your intuition—it’s a gift we all have. Don’t rush if you’re unsure, but once you know, step out with zero fear and faith that you are protected. Never lose your kindness, never feel small for speaking the truth, and always show up for yourself.”

The Road Ahead

In just a year, Ruptrishna Choudhury has turned her vision into reality, proving that courage and clarity can reshape entire communities. Her work is a reminder that change begins with a single step—and sometimes, with a single woman deciding that enough is enough.

WOMEN'S glory AWARDS

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STRONG, POWERFUL, INDEPENDENT WOMEN GLOBALLY

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WOMEN **EMPOWERMENT** BEGINS
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This special edition of SheInspire Magazine focused on the journey of awardees of the **INFLUENTIAL WOMEN LEADERS AWARD 2025**. These women break all the barriers and set up new goals for generations to come. We capture the essence of their stories and bring it to you through this special edition. We tried to inspire the readers, through their stories of resilience, struggles, and triumphs, that inspire us all to strive for a better, more inclusive future.

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