

## **Dr. Maboud Ansari**

William Paterson University

Dr. Maboud Ansari (Professor) received his B.A. from Teachers College, Tehran, Iran, his M.A. from Tehran University, and Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research, New York.

His books include *Modern Sociological Theories*, 2nd ed. (Danjeh, 2005); *The Making of the Iranian Community in America* (Pardis Press, 1992); *Iranian Immigrants in the United States* (Associated Faculty Press, 1988); translation into Persian of C. Wright Mills' *The Sociological Imagination* (Enteshar Press, 1979); a translation into Persian of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Samt Press, 1993). He also wrote two entries for publication in the *Encyclopedia of New York State* on "Islam in New York State" and "Iranian-Americans." His current research interests focus on Muslims in New York and New Jersey and he is now working on a book on this subject.

Professor Ansari was a member of the Board of the Persian Cultural and Humanitarian Associations of New Jersey from 1985-2000. He is an advisor to the Student Muslim Association on campus. He has also been an editorial member of *CIRA Journal* (Center for Iranian Research and Analysis) since 1997.

## **Dr. Ahmad Ashraf**

Columbia University

Professor Ashraf has taught sociology and social history of Persia at the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, Princeton University, and Tehran University. He is the author of several books and numerous articles, including *Historical Obstacles to the Development of Capitalism in Iran* (1980). His writings have covered such topics as social hierarchies in Persia, tradition & modernity, Iranian national identity, agrarian relations in Persia, and charismatic leadership and theocratic rule in post-revolutionary Persia. Prof. Ashraf has served on the Editorial Board of the *Iranian Studies*, *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, and *Iran-Nameh*. Since 1992, he has been serving as a Trustee-at-Large of the American Institute of Iranian Studies. He is also the Managing Editor of *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.

## **Kamran Elahian**

Global Catalyst Partners

Kamran Elahian, Iranian venture capitalist, is a man of many accomplishments. In 1975, at the age of twenty, he had earned both a BS in Computer Science and a BS in Mathematics from the University of Utah Salt Lake City, Utah. In 1977, he earned a Master of Engineering in Computer Graphics from the University of Utah, SLC. In 1978, he worked for Hewlett Packard designing automation software. Then Elahian began co-founding companies. In 1981, CAE Systems, Inc (sold to Tektronix Corp for over \$75 million within 3 years of founding). In 1984, Cirrus Logic, Inc (revenue grew to over \$1 billion within 10 years); in 1989, Momenta Corp (failed within 3 years but led to other companies and to personal growth); in 1993, NeoMagic Corp (achieved IPO valuation of over \$300 million within 4 years); in 1996, Planetweb, Inc; in 1997 and Global Catalyst Partners. Kamran Elahian is also one of co-founders and has served as Chairman of the Board of Centillium Communications since they started operations in April 1997. He co-founded 3 more companies - Actelis Networks, cahoots.com and KangarooNet.

## **Dr. Iraj Etessam**

Etessam Associates

Dr. Etessam was born in Iran. He received his Master of Architecture from the University of Tehran in 1955 and his doctorate in Architecture from the University of Florence in 1960. He was a professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Tehran and the University of Washington, Seattle. He is currently the President of Etessam Associates in San Francisco, California. He has published numerous books and articles on architecture and he has won several awards and prizes.

He is married to Irandokht, an interior design consultant, and they have two daughters: Lili who has a master's degree in Architecture and Shirin, who has a B.A. in Film Directing.

## **Dr. Akbar Ghahary**

Persian Cultural Foundation

Dr. Akbar Ghahary, an Iranian-born American executive in the manufacturing sector, is the CEO and Chairman of the Board of Safas Corporation, an equity partner with General Electric Capital Corporation.

A member of the American Chemical Society and Society of Plastic Engineers, Dr. Ghahary owns several international patents, including eight US patents, mostly in polymers and advanced composites.

Dr. Ghahary has been an active member of the Iranian-American community for the last twenty-six years. His commitment to serving cultural and humanitarian projects has involved him in extensive charitable work with various cultural organizations. He has been a former president of the Persian Cultural and Humanitarian Association; treasurer and a trustee of the Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, and is the co-founder and president of the Persian Cultural Foundation.

## **Dr. Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak**

University of Maryland

Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak is Professor and Founding Director of the Center for Persian Studies at the University of Maryland. For nineteen years he was Professor of Persian language and literature and Iranian culture and civilization at the University of Washington. He has studied in Iran and the United States, receiving his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Rutgers University in 1979, and has taught English and comparative literature and translation studies, as well as classical and modern Persian literature at the University of Tehran, Rutgers University, Columbia University, and the University of Texas.

Professor Karimi-Hakkak is the author of nineteen books and over one hundred major scholarly articles. He has contributed articles on Iran and Persian literature to many reference works, including The Encyclopaedia Britannica, The Encyclopaedia Iranica, and The Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies. His works have been translated into French, Dutch, Spanish, Russian, Greek, Arabic, Japanese, and Persian. He has won numerous awards and honors, and has served as the President of the International Society for Iranian Studies and several other professional academic organizations.

## **David N. Rahni, Ph.D.**

Pace University

David N. Rahni is recognized for his three decades of community based leadership endeavors in the Persian American Community and beyond. He has extensively written on civil and constitutional rights as it is pertinent to the recent immigrants. His writing on the historical and cultural aspects of the people of Iran is also regarded well in the community. He has served as the co-founders of numerous Persian-American organizations.

David N. Rahni is Professor of Chemistry at Pace University, New York since 1986. He has served as Pace's founding director of the graduate program in Environmental Science. He has been the recipient of the 2000 Algorithm Scientific International Award, co-sponsored by many agencies including the UNDP, UNESCO and the Third World Academy of Sciences. He was selected the 1996 Distinguished Scientist by the American Chemical Society's Westchester Section. During 1993-94, he was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar at the Technical University of Denmark (DTU) and Visiting Professor at the University of Oxford, UK. Dr. Rahni has held visiting scientist positions with IBM Thomas J. Watson Research Center and Ciba-Geigy Research Division.

## **Ross Mirkarimi**

Board of Supervisors

Ross Mirkarimi is a progressive district supervisor on the Board of Supervisors at City Hall in San Francisco, California. He was elected in 2004 to represent the city's fifth district. Mirkarimi cofounded the California chapter of the Green Party. Mirkarimi has also been involved in these civic and community service activities: Director for SF Nuclear Freeze Zone Coalition, union negotiator for DAI Association union, member of the IFPTE Local 2, member of the Harvey Milk Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Democratic Club, member of the Iranian-American Chamber of Commerce, environmental analyst for the Harvard Study Team (Iraq) Bayview Hunters Point, California Base Closures, and member of the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Mirkarimi's ethnic and cultural background is Iranian and Russian-American. He was born in Chicago, Illinois and grew up in Rhode Island. He has a Bachelor's degree in political science from St. Louis University, a Master's degree in international economics and affairs from Golden Gate University, and a Master of Science degree in environmental science from the University of San Francisco. He has lived in San Francisco since 1984.

## **Dr. Jasmin Moshirpur**

Mount Sinai School of Medicine

Jasmin Moshirpur, M.D., is currently the Dean of the Affiliate Affairs at The Mount Sinai School of Medicine and the Medical Director of the Queens Health Network. Dr. Moshirpur began her career at Elmhurst Hospital Center in 1970 as the Director of the Obstetrics and Gynecology Out-Patient Department; in that role, she pioneered an outstanding program for the community that rigorously emphasized preventive medicine.

She has been the President of the Iranian-American Medical Association ( New York Chapter), President of the Shiraz University School of Medical Science Alumni Association, and Member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of the Professional Studies Review. She has published numerous articles and won several awards.

## Dr. Firouz Naderi

### Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Dr. Firouz Naderi is Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Associate Director for programs, project formulation and strategy. Before this appointment, he was the Head of Mars exploration, a program aimed at searching for past or present life on the Red Planet. During his tenure, three successful missions orbited or landed on Mars including the two recent Mars rovers, Spirit and Opportunity. Before Mars, he managed NASA's Origins program with the ambitious goal of finding other Earth-like planets around other stars. Naderi, who received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, has been with JPL since 1979, with a career spanning program and project management for satellite communications systems, Earth remote sensing observatories, astrophysical observatories and planetary systems. Naderi has received the NASA Distinguished Service Medal and Outstanding Leadership Medal, the Space Technology Hall of Fame Medal and the Liberal Prize from an Italian foundation, awarded to an international personality who has "contributed profound changes in ideas in modern times." Two years earlier this prize had been awarded to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI.

## Shirin Neshat

### Artist

An Iranian-born artist who has lived in the United States since 1974, Shirin Neshat portrays the emotional space of exile in her photographs and films. She questions the role of women in Islamic society, recognizing the tensions between a collective cultural identity and one driven by individual concerns. Neshat uses the chador, the head-to-toe Islamic covering that is mandatory for women in Iran, as an icon for repression and female identity. *Passage* (2001) was commissioned by composer Philip Glass, whose orchestration rhythmically underscores the ritualized movements of the funerary preparations and procession that are the film's subjects. Neshat's panoramic shots of the landscape provide an epic backdrop for the two throngs preparing the funeral: men carry a shrouded corpse across sand dunes, and chador-covered women dig a grave with their hands. Eventually, the actions of the men and women move from the ritual to the elemental as repetitive movements give rise to dust, sticks, stones, and fire, which form a metaphoric circle of life, death, and the hope of renewal.

## Ibrahim Pourhadi

### Library of Congress

Ibrahim Pourhadi came to the U.S. as a student a half century ago. Born in Pahlavi (now called Anzali), in northern Iran, he went to school in Tabriz and Tehran, before attending the American University of Beirut for a time. From the University of Michigan and Andrew University in Michigan, where he earned a Master's Degree, Pourhadi went to work for the U.S. Navy, teaching Middle Eastern studies and languages. He then went to Princeton University, first as a student, and then as an instructor in what was then called the "Oriental Department." It was at Princeton that Pourhadi made the acquaintance of Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas who recommended Pourhadi for a position at the Library of Congress in 1959. He now oversees the library's collections from Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. He has also written numerous articles, including annotated inventories of libraries in Iran, and of Muslim libraries in the Middle Ages.

## Dr. Minoo Varzegar

Rutgers University

Dr. Varzegar received her High School Diploma from Hollywood High School, Los Angeles. Later she received her B.A. in English, M.A. in Linguistics, M.A. in Psychology, M.A. in Teaching English, and Ph.D. in Teaching English (Psycholinguistics) from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, USA.

She was the Head of the English Department for fourteen years, President of the Association of Professors of English in Iran for five years, Director of the Center for Psychometrics and Testing and Director of the Language Center. She was a Member of the Editorial Board of ACTA MEDICA IRANICA, Journal of Foreign Languages, Journal of Human Sciences, and Advisory Board of American Biographical Institute. Professor Varzegar has published 29 books and 55 articles, presented 71 papers in national and international conferences, and conducted 26 research projects. She has been the recipient of numerous national and international awards and honors.

She was a professor at the University of Tehran and has taught at the University of Illinois, William Paterson University, Columbia University and currently she is a full-time faculty at the Writing Program of the English Department at Rutgers University.