

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction . . . . .	iii
Message. . . . .	v
Foreword . . . . .	vi
NEELAM DHAWAN . . . . .	1
PRIYA CHETTY RAJAGOPAL. . . . .	2
SUCHITRA K ELLA . . . . .	4
SUDHA IYER . . . . .	5
ANURADHA SRIRAM . . . . .	6
AKILA KRISHNAKUMAR . . . . .	8
KIRAN MAZUMDAR SHAW . . . . .	9
DEEPTI REDDY . . . . .	10
REKHA M MENON . . . . .	11
REVATHI KASTURI . . . . .	13
SANDHYA VASUDEVAN . . . . .	15
Dr. VILLOO MORAWALA PATEL . . . . .	16
AMUKTA MAHAPATRA. . . . .	18
Dr. REKHA SHETTY. . . . .	19
YESHASVINI RAMASWAMY . . . . .	21
BEENA KANNAN . . . . .	23
BINDU ANANTH . . . . .	24
PARVEEN HAFEEZ . . . . .	25
MALLIKA SRINIVASAN . . . . .	26
SUSHMA SRIKANDTH . . . . .	27
SHEELA KOCHOUSEPH . . . . .	29
HASTHA KRISHNAN . . . . .	30
HEMALATHA RAJAN . . . . .	31
HEMA RAVICHANDAR. . . . .	32
KAMI NARAYAN. . . . .	34
UMA RATNAM KRISHNAN . . . . .	35
SHALINI KAPOOR. . . . .	37
PREETHA REDDY . . . . .	38

Dr. THARA SRINIVASAN . . . . .	40
AKHILA SRINIVASAN . . . . .	42
RAJANI SESHADRI . . . . .	43
SHOMA BAKRE . . . . .	44
SANGITA JOSHI . . . . .	45
GAYATHRI SRIRAM . . . . .	46
JAYSHREE VENKATRAMAN . . . . .	48
GEETANJALI KIRLOSKAR . . . . .	49
KALPANA MARGABHANDU . . . . .	50
SHARADA SRIRAM . . . . .	51
SAMANTHA REDDY . . . . .	53
SHOBHANA KAMINENI . . . . .	54
VINITA BALI . . . . .	56
RAJSHREE PATHY . . . . .	58
GEETHA VISWANATHAN . . . . .	59
VALLI SUBBIAH . . . . .	60
RANJINI MANIAN . . . . .	62
VANITA MOHAN . . . . .	63
TILISA GUPTA KAUL . . . . .	64
SHARAN APPARAO . . . . .	65
SUNEETA REDDY . . . . .	66
VANAJA ARVIND . . . . .	67
Dr. KAMALA SELVARAJ . . . . .	69
SAKUNTALA RAO . . . . .	70
NEETA REVANKER . . . . .	71
MAURA CHARI . . . . .	73
HAMSANANDHI SESHAN . . . . .	75
MAHIMA DATLA . . . . .	77
Dr. NIRMALA LAKSHMAN . . . . .	78
NANDINI RANGASWAMY . . . . .	79
PRITHA RATNAM . . . . .	81
Dr. THARA THYAGARAJAN . . . . .	82
REVATHY ASHOK . . . . .	83
SANGITA REDDY . . . . .	85
GEEHTA PANDA . . . . .	87

## INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades Indian women have entered work force in large numbers and many of them hold senior positions now. Gone are the days when we hardly saw women in leadership positions in organizations. Some of India's top companies are now giving specific mandates to head-hunting firms to fill middle and senior management roles with women candidates.

Women are also increasingly starting businesses of their own. Surprisingly entrepreneurial women exist in smaller towns as well. According to an estimate by the website, [www.naukrihub.com](http://www.naukrihub.com) women entrepreneurs account for about 10 percent of the total number of entrepreneurs in India, with the percentage growing every year. If this trend continues, it is likely that in another five years, 20 percent of the entrepreneurial force will consist of women.

When women comprise of almost 50 percent of the total population it is but natural that they will be increasingly contributing their bit to the economy. However heart warming all this sounds, the truth is that the glass ceiling still has not been broken in our country. According to a recent study, only 26.1 percent of the listed companies (392 of 1,500 firms) have a woman on their boards. Out of the 278 directors on the BSE Sensex companies, there are only 10 women directors. Apart from this, women executives in India earn 40 percent less than what men earn over their entire career. Even when compared to global counterparts, corporate India stands below average. Over 77 percent of the 200 largest companies in the world, as ranked by Fortune, had at least one women director on their board as of 2006. Only 36 percent of Indian companies have women holding senior management positions as compared to 91 percent of companies in China (Source: [www.naukrihub.com](http://www.naukrihub.com)). Closer home, in CII itself only 85 companies have women representatives out of a total of 2552 member companies

There are definitely many road blocks in a woman's professional journey. The most important is work life balance. Are women more burdened by family responsibilities than men? Can women put in sustained hard work and long hours? A survey of working women in Chennai conducted by Cerebrus Consulting for Madras Management Association reveals some interesting facts. The work place treats men and women equally. Women have a high sense of self worth and professional ambition to match. Yet most women are unable or unwilling to travel extensively, relocate, work long hours, network, dedicate time for professional development, and look at long term. Career does not rank first in their priority, but family.

Women who want to set up business face their own share of problems. Many of them with good ideas lack the confidence. They find it difficult to raise the necessary working capital.

Then there are family issues and socio cultural problems. Many women are not able to find a mentor who will give them the necessary push. Even women inheritors do not have it as easy as their male counterparts.

This directory of women achievers hopes to serve as an inspiration for the many talented women out there to move forward and make success in their career and enterprise.

## MESSAGE

Dear Members,

It gives me immense pleasure to present to you the first CII Compendium on Women Achievers from the 5 Southern States of India. These achievers who are featured here are making an important contribution for enhancing the status of women in the workplace & taking the job to great heights, and also nurturing an eco-system that respects diversity, inclusivity, and equal opportunity for all segments of business and society.



Recognizing these women will lead to creating more space for women-socially, economically and politically as these women with diverse background have kept raising the bar and breaking untouched barriers leaving a trail to follow. These women achievers from South India have made a major contribution to the development of our country. They have access to and control an enormous store of indigenous knowledge and wisdom. They are the powerful Indian women from South India who have made India shine on a global platform. There is a common thread that binds all these achievers: they succeeded in transgressing the constraints of a patriarchal society in their own ways.

I congratulate all the achievers featured here and Ms Gayathri Sriram, my Co Chairperson WETF for bringing out this compendium. A special mention needs to be made of thanking each and every member of the CII Southern Region's Women's Empowerment Task Force for making this possible. It is worth mentioning here that they have undoubtedly given their valuable time and suggestions for putting this together.

Best Wishes,

**Pamela Anna Mathew**

*Chairperson, CII SR Women's Empowerment Task Force &  
Managing Director O E N India Limited, Cochin*

## FOREWORD

Dear Members,

As we are standing on the eve of commemorating the hundred years of International Women's Day on 8 March 2011, CII SR Women's Empowerment Task Force has planned to recognize established and emerging women achievers from 5 Southern States who have shown outstanding leadership in business and in business context. Despite their predominant role in the primary sectors of the economic development, women today, continue to be marginalized with limited access to public and private services. To counter these trends, the experiences and perspectives of women need to be heard, and their capacity for economic and social contributions to the community should be recognized and strengthened.

As you read the profiles of one achiever after the other, you'll get a glimpse of their contribution to the ecosystem they live in or work. You'll also wonder that what drives these achievers to keep going till the goal is achieved.

I am grateful to Pamela for inviting me to chair the Jury to select the achievers. As a prelude to the development of this compendium on women achievers, a series of brainstorming sessions on developing the selection criteria was organized at CII office with the Jury Members. I would like to personally thank all the Jury members [a five member team which comprised of Ms Sharda Jagan, Ms Sabitha Rao, Mr Venugopal and Ms Sushila Ravindranath] on CII's behalf for giving in their valuable time and suggestions to develop the selection criteria. Out of 250 nominations received through contacts or member companies, based on the selection criteria, the Jury Committee pruned the list to 73 achievers in the final round.

I also take this opportunity to congratulate all the women achievers featured here to be a part of this historical document. I also congratulate the CII SR Women's Empowerment Task Force which has taken all the efforts to recognize established and emerging women achievers from 5 Southern States through this compendium.

Sincere Wishes,

**Pradipta Kumar Mohapatra**

*Chairman Jury Committee and Past Chairman CII SR &*

*Chairman Executive & Business Coaching Foundation India Ltd Chennai*





## NEELAM DHAWAN

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Neelam Dhawan has countrywide responsibility for revenues and profitability and ensuring the greatest leverage from HP's Services, Personal Systems and Imaging & Printing businesses. With a portfolio that extends to offshore activities, BPO, Software Engineering, Research and IT Services, Neelam is focused on shaping the company's overall business agenda and leading its strategy and corporate development efforts to make HP the most admired company in India.

Previously, Neelam was the Managing Director of Microsoft India, a position she held from 2005 to 2008. During her tenure, she sharpened Microsoft's strategic focus and improved its operating efficiency and execution, as well as its financial performance and customer focus. Prior to this assignment, Neelam held a variety of successful leadership positions in leading Indian IT companies, including HCL and IBM.

Neelam holds a bachelor's degree in Economics from St. Stephen's College, New Delhi, and a Masters in Business Administration from the Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi University. In a career spanning more than two decades, Neelam Dhawan has raced to the top of the Indian IT world. Back in the 1980s when she started working for HCL Computers, there were very few women entering information technology. Though the rate has improved now, women still account for less than 20 per cent of the Indian IT work force.

She follows the rule of exception. She has full confidence in her team. If there is a mistake, she steps in. Neelam relaxes with puzzles and crosswords. She enjoys cooking Sunday meals. She loves London, for its crowds, familiarity and the country's rich cultural history. For her successful career she gives credit to her extremely supportive family.



## PRIYA CHETTY RAJAGOPAL

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As the head of Corporate Practice, Priya's focus with Stanton Chase Bangalore is to implement a non IT focus in a completely IT-oriented city. A member of Stanton Chase International's Business Excellence Committee, Priya has also played a large role in establishing its Global Diversity Practice. She has successfully led Chief Executive Officer level search assignments for a diverse selection of companies in India. Before joining Stanton Chase, Priya had over 19 years of experience in the service industry covering credit cards with Diners Club, and business centers with Diners Business Services (DBS). In her last assignment, she had dual responsibilities as General Manager, DBS Corporate Services, and Regional Manager - Asia for Alliance Business Centers Network, USA, during which she interacted with hundreds of leading corporate and multinational companies setting-up in Bangalore. Priya was responsible for the launch, operations, marketing and profitability of one of the largest and most well known business centers in India. She has also provided thought leadership, high brand recall, and strategic impetus to the group. Priya is also on the Marketing Committee of the Office Business Center Association International, the worldwide business center trade body in the USA.

Priya was conferred the Indira Gandhi Priyadarshini Award for Excellence in 1997, and was also recognized for her achievements by the Guild of Women Achievers in 2000. In 2004, she was selected by the British Government for the prestigious Chevening Scholarship for Women in Leadership and Management in the UK. Active in various business groups, Priya was the previous Chairperson of the Indo American Chamber of Commerce (IACC), Karnataka, and was recently elected to the National Executive Council of the IACC, the first woman to hold either of these positions. In addition to being the Founder-Chair of the IACC's Women's Business Council, Convener of the CII Women's Business Leadership Forum and a Charter Member of TiE, Priya has been nominated to the Advisory Council



of Common Purpose, India. A columnist in her spare time, she is also a regular speaker on Women's Leadership at industry and company fora.

An outstanding student and a National Merit Scholar, Priya holds a Bachelor of Arts, as well as postgraduate degrees in Marketing Management and in Public Relations.



## SUCHITRA K ELLA

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Suchitra has been involved in all the stages of project implementation in her company. In the late 80s and early 90s, she and her husband lived in the US before returning to India to set up a biotech firm. It was not easy raising finance, attracting talent, convincing customers about their products, all posed major challenges. When the couple set up Bharat Biotech in 1996, “the land was barren with stones, bushes and a few custard apple plants. During construction work, we used to commute back and forth each day carrying five-litre drinking water cans. There were no restrooms too at the construction site,” Suchitra has said in an interview. Suchitra used to put in a 12 hour day. She had to have a tight rein over finances for the first three years till the first product came out. Suchitra describes her role in the company saying “If my husband is the brain of the company I am the heart.”

She is proud that Bharat Biotech is the second company in the world to be able to manufacture mercury-free vaccines for Hepatitis-B. today she handles new projects, HR & Administration, corporate communication and corporate affairs.

The company is like her third child. For Suchitra, having children is not an excuse to not take up new challenges on the work front.

A graduate in Economics from the University of Madras, she studied Business and Marketing in the US at Wisconsin and South Carolina. in the areas of. She started her career specializing in Business Development & Marketing Operations, putting in more than a decade in US Corporations. A PG Diploma in Patent Law from Nalsar, Hyderabad followed.

Suchitra serves in various prestigious professional panels and committees and is passionate about doing her bit for society. She organizes Blood Donation Camps and has supported several free vaccination programs for deserving & needy children all over India.



## SUDHA IYER

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Srijana Group companies do web business, knowledge services, health services, storage maximization, and family services. Sudha is also the chairperson and managing director of Haritas Health Services, a company that focuses on delivering health education to people with diabetes and other chronic ailments. Sudha is interested in combining current methods of health education and motivation from the West with traditional Indian approaches to create a unique paradigm that will promote health awareness and well-being among Indians.

Sudha got her Bachelors degree in Science from University of Mumbai, a Masters in Biology (Molecular Biology) from University of Notre Dame, another Masters in Biology (Molecular Neurobiology) from Johns Hopkins University, and a Ph.D. in Health Sciences (Patient Education and Communication). Dr. Sudha Iyer serves on the Governing Council of Young Indians, which is part of CII, as the National Chair of the Healthcare program. She was selected as one of the 24 fellows of the inaugural India Leadership Initiative of the Aspen Institute and the Goldman Sachs Global Markets Initiative. She works with students to improve their skills and to transform families in Kakinada.



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**A**nu Sriram is the Co-Founder and Jt. Managing Director of Integra Software Services Pvt. Ltd., a leading e-Publishing Company, based in Pondicherry. She has a B.S in Electronics and an MBA.

When Anu co-founded Integra with her husband Sriram Subramanya with five employees, 16 years ago, the concept of BPO industry did not exist. She selected Pondicherry for her initiative as she wanted to provide employment opportunities to the local talent in her hometown, and put Pondicherry on the global map of BPO companies. In fact Anu had the tough job of bringing up two babies, one was Integra and another her first son as both were born at the same time. The initial years were a lot of sacrifices and juggling around. After obtaining a few anchor customers, Integra started rapidly expanding and today has around 1400 employees. Over the years she and her husband took responsibilities of the areas they were passionate about. Anu oversees Finance and HR. Her passion lies in people development, especially mentoring and grooming young internal talent into highly successful and effective managers and leaders.

An independent survey by Datamonitor on Customer Satisfaction in 2009, ranked Integra Number 2 for Customer Satisfaction worldwide.

Anu has overseen 2 acquisitions in the US. Understanding cross cultural challenges and integrating these companies profitable were rewarding experiences.

Being a woman herself, she is passionate about empowering and developing women in Integra. More than 50% of Integra's employees are women. She was instrumental in launching 'Sakhthi Oli', an initiative to empower women employees in Integra. The NASSCOM Diversity Award, which Integra received in 2009 is testimony to her achievement in this

regard. In 2010, Integra also won the Award for Best Employer for Women Development, from the iGroup.

Anu has won the “Outstanding Woman Entrepreneur-SSI” from the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council. She was selected as one of the 15 Faces of the Future, by India Today.

She is totally committed to supporting her husband in his vision of making Integra the No.1 Company globally in their space and in transforming Integra into a true multinational corporation with a global identity.

A multifaceted lady, Anu is also actively involved in promotion of a multitude of social causes through the Sriram Charitable Trust which she founded jointly with her husband. The Trust helps with various educational institutions to improve the quality of education, to empower rural women through self-help groups in addition to many such initiatives.

Looking back she feels that a positive attitude and support from her family especially her husband were critical to her reaching this far. A mother of two teenage sons, Anu’s hobbies and interests revolve around spirituality which include reading, yoga, meditation, enjoying nature and being with people.



## AKILA KRISHNAKUMAR

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**S**unGard Offshore Services is the Indian subsidiary of the \$4Billion Fortune 500 global leader in financial services, higher education and public sector solutions. Akila has extensive experience in bringing to market enterprise software products. In 1993, Akila started up the product development center for a leading US consulting firm. Recognized as one of the early attempts at offshore product development for enterprise class applications, she has guided the growth of the unit into a world-class centre that today delivers solutions for SunGard's businesses worldwide.

Akila began her career with Wipro in 1983, before moving on to head Regional Professional Services of International Computers Limited (UK) where she worked at ICL offices in Bangalore, Chennai and London. Through her career spanning 23 years, she has successfully built and led many product development teams and businesses. She is passionate about building innovative and high performing teams with very strong work ethic and commitment.

She was the Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Karnataka and continues to serve on the executive committee.



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Kiran has been termed India's Biotech Queen by The Economist and Fortune, and India's mother of invention by The New York Times. She is one of the nine Indians to be listed in the 100 most influential persons of the world in the 2010 Time Magazine. In 1978, she joined as a Trainee Manager with Biocon Biochemicals Limited in Ireland.

Collaborating with the same Irish firm, she founded Biocon India with a capital of Rs. 10,000/- in 1978. The initial operation was to extract an enzyme from papaya. Her application for loans was actually turned down by banks because biotechnology was then a new word and the company lacked assets. Over the years, the company has grown under her stewardship and is today the biggest biopharmaceutical firm in India. It is a fully integrated healthcare company that delivers innovative biopharmaceutical solutions. From discovery to development and commercialisation, Biocon has the defining science, cost-effective drug development capabilities and significant manufacturing capacity to move ideas to market.. Last year Biocon's revenues crossed Rs 2400 crore.

Kiran was born in Bangalore, and educated at the Bishop Cotton Girls School and Mount Carmel College at Bangalore. After completing her Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology from Bangalore University in 1973, she went to Ballarat Institute of Advanced Education (now University of Ballarat), Australia to study brewing and qualified as a master brewer in 1974.

She is a civic activist, especially with respect to municipal administration in Bangalore. She is a serious art collector. She has authored 'Ale and Arty,' a Coffee table book about brewing beer illustrated by paintings of some of India's renowned artists. Famous brewing families and beer firms are the subject of the book. She is also an enthusiastic trekker. In her effort to preserve the character of Bangalore, she has been proactively involved in various city improvement plans like the Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF).



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Deepti Reddy was born in Hyderabad and was raised in New York. She returned to the city moved to the city when she got married at eighteen to Satish Reddy, the son of Anji Reddy of Dr Reddy's Laboratories. Having lived in New York for a major part of her life she realised that Hyderabad did not have any city-based portals or magazines. So after she finished her postgraduation in business administration, she came up with the idea of starting a city-based website with a friend. The website did not exactly make waves, as Hyderabad was not very internet savvy in 1998. That was followed by the dotcom bust. As soon as the website was wound up, her husband Satish Reddy and she got the idea of launching a print magazine. In December 2002 Wow! Hyderabad was launched as a means of letting people know what the city was all about. Wow!, which has content on the city, its lifestyle, its people and its events, made a decent beginning with a circulation of about 7,000 and has seen it grow to about 35,000. "What sets it apart from other magazines is its penetration. Some people believe that the magazine is just for the Page 3 crowd, but we have seen Wow! copies being even picked up even around the streets of Charminar," Deepti points out. "An initial investment of Rs 10 lakh set the ball rolling and now with further investment the magazine is evolving to create a niche of its own," she says. The magazine is also available for non-resident Indians in the United States and the United Kingdom at \$32 and £18 respectively.

Deepti is a mother of two who admits that it is a struggle definitely to be a wife, mother and to be doing something on your own. "I wouldn't say it is easy but if you are focused you can do it and you can balance all of those things," she says. She is persistent and acts consistently for results.





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**R**ekha leads Accenture's corporate functions in India, one of the company's largest geographies, and is also the COO for Accenture India Business. She joined Accenture in January 2004 and has been instrumental in building robust geographic services operations from scratch. In her role, Rekha is responsible for human resources and recruitment; human capital and diversity; marketing and communications; finance; procurement; delivery excellence; legal; facilities and services; and business continuity management functions across all of Accenture in India. Recognizing the growth potential of the emerging Indian economy, India has been designated as a strategic country for Accenture. In her role as the COO of Accenture's India Business, Rekha also has the responsibility to manage and support the growth of its domestic business.

Rekha has more than 20 years of industry experience and has an impeccable record of setting up and managing corporate functions and business operations in IT and IT-enabled services. Risk-taking is an important feature of Rekha's professional character. When all her classmates at XLRI were making a beeline for MNC jobs, Rekha took up an offer with the relatively low-profile Eicher Goodearth in 1981. She began her career on the shop floor, the only woman among 500 men. The atmosphere was intimidating at times but Rekha persevered. She has said before, "It's me who has made it in an organisation, not a woman in a man's world."

The tradition continued at Ashok Leyland, where she was again the only woman among 3,000 men! Prior to joining Accenture, she headed Talisma Corp. in India, which she helped start. In 1997, her spirit of risk-taking enabled Rekha to work for Talisma, a small product start-up in the technology space, where she helped turn it into a recognised niche player. She was also a part of the India start-ups and executive management teams of Levis Strauss, Akzo Nobel and Cargill Inc.

A gold medalist from the XLRI School of Business, Rekha has active interests in hiking, long-distance cycling and photography. She is also involved with numerous NGOs, working closely with underprivileged children. She lives in Bangalore with her husband and two children.



## REVATHI KASTURI

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Revathi is an Entrepreneur who has set up Laqsh which focuses on vocational education. Laqsh works on bridging the talent gap. The retail Industry, the hospitality Industry, the financial services Industry and the IT and ITES industry, are all experiencing robust and perhaps hyper growth; but at the same time facing a huge challenge in terms of availability of trained people as well as high attrition. There is a big demand supply mismatch. While 90 percent jobs being created require vocational skills and soft skills; 90 percent of school/college graduates are unemployable with only bookish skills. Laqsh provides quality training for skill repair at an affordable cost and reach out to urban and semi urban India to meet the shortfall. It undertakes recruitment, holistic training and placement services for the youth. With the founding team having a strong technology and training services background Laqsh proposes to leverage new media including internet, television and E learning to scale and offer Quality education. LAQSH is now a National Skills Development Council (NSDC) partner & is all set to skill 1.27 million youth over the next 10 years.

Revathi was till recently Managing Director Novell West Asia which includes ASEAN & India and was responsible for building the Novell business in the region. Prior to this she was Founder & President of Tarang Software Technologies; A SEI CMM Level 5 Global IT services company focused on E-learning and payment systems with 300 employees. Before her entrepreneurial stint Revathi worked with Wipro Technologies where she was the Chief Executive - Finance Solutions Division; heading a global software business of \$50 Million with 850 people operating out of 3 Development Centers.

Revathi has over 30 years of experience in the IT Industry and has led businesses engaged in enterprise software development, systems integration, customer support as well as IT hardware. She has intimate knowledge of the finance industry having built and implemented

solutions for securities, banking and insurance segments for well over 14 years. Revathi received her Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay in 1980.

She was awarded the Woman of the year by Business Today for the year 2001. She was on the board of NASSCOM as an Executive Council Member for 6 years & is Currently on the Regional Council of NASSCOM Karnataka. She is also a charter member of TIE Bangalore and is actively working on Fostering Entrepreneurship Amongst Women through TIE for Women. She is a mountaineer and loves traveling and trekking.

## SANDHYA VASUDEVAN

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Sandhya has spent more than 20 years in the financial / technology services industry. She has handled general management of finance companies, financial product development, re-engineering, software development for the finance companies, share market operations – both trading as well as portfolio management, project management, insurance back office operations, which included scoping for new jobs for migration, marketing, operations, customer service and quality initiatives, etc and Change Management.

Before joining the Deutsche Bank Group she led the TF India Operations of Thomson Reuter, which is responsible for the Content Operations, Product development and maintenance of the systems, commercial activities that support the acquisition, value- add processing, and deployment to product of Thomson's world-class content.

Sandhya is involved with the Sri Shankara Cancer Foundation and believes that everybody needs to contribute their bit back to society.



## Dr. VILLOO MORAWALA PATEL

**Designation:**

Founder, Chairperson & Managing Director,

**Company:**

Avesthagen Limited

**Address:**

Discoverer, 9th Floor International Tech Park Whitefield Road  
Bangalore

Phone No: +91 80 2841 1665

Email ID: info@avesthagen.com

**A**VESTHAGEN is globally recognized as a leading system biology company with a unique model focused on the convergence of food, pharma and population genetics. Viloo started her professional career at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) at Hyderabad in 1978. Her Ph.D. studies in plant molecular biology at University Louis Pasteur ignited a passion to develop new products. The Ph.D. was followed by 9 months as a post-doc at the Ghent University, Belgium, working with scientists from all around the world that really sparked off her entrepreneurial spirit. She then returned to India with an idea rooted in her mind – to create a platform that would bridge Academia and Industry. Thus was the seed sown that would give birth, a few years later, to Avesthagen.

In 1998 Viloo registered Avesthagen as a public-private model as perhaps the best way to build an innovation model. The public-private model found few takers from Academia, Industry, and Financial Institutions. The need for speed in gearing for the 2005 opening up of India to WTO was the trigger to go solo and to create a full private entity, Avestha Gengraine Technologies Pvt. Ltd in early 2000. A year later, ICICI Ventures, Global Trust Bank and Tata Industries invested 8 crores in the company, which had now settled in its new laboratories in the International Technology Park at Whitefield. This was only the beginning. Since then Viloo has ceaselessly worked to build the company and raised significant international funding, attracting foreign investors and partners who saw a potential in the young Indian biotech sector. Avesthagen now has 650 employees. Foreign investment stands at 31% today.

**Educational Qualifications:** B.Sc. Osmania University, Hyderabad; M.Sc. Bombay University, Mumbai. Ph.D. University Louis Pasteur, Strasbourg, France; Post Doc. University of Ghent, Belgium

Many honours and award have come to Villoo. Some of them are as follows:

- ‘Karmaveer Puraskar’ as a ‘Corporate Citizen’ for her contribution in the field of agriculture and healthcare in Nov 2009 by iCongo for Citizen Action and social Justice.
- Outstanding Zarathushti entrepreneur Award from World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce 2009.
- Has been recognised by the Adolfo ibanez University for her achievements in innovation and creation of value. This award was conferred upon her at the opening of ventureL@b by the president of Chile, Michelle Bachelet in Nov 2008
- Awarded the ‘Officer of the National Order of Merit’ by the President of the French Republic in February 2008
- Kerana Tuhan Untuk Manusia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
- Indian Council For Small and Medium Exporters (ICSME)
- The BioSpectrum Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2006
- The Outstanding Women Entrepreneur for the year 2005-06 from FICCI

## AMUKTA MAHAPATRA

**Designation:**

Director

**Address:**

Schoolscape, Centre for Educators,

Chennai

Mobile Number: 9940071854

Email Id: amuktha.m@gmail.com

Schoolscape is a centre for educators which focuses on the preparation of the teacher and enables schools, education departments and organizations to enhance quality of learning in the classroom. Amukta has been associated with the field of education since the 1980s when she started her teaching career at the Krishnamurti Foundation India school in Chennai. Since then, she has set up the Abacus School, Madras, where for the first time in India, Montessori ideas of education were applied right up to the elementary level while following the mainstream syllabus. She has worked with several NGOs and schools; she has designed a programme for public-private partnership in Karnataka that still continues to function. While working with UNICEF, she helped to develop along with a seven-member internal task force, a Quality Package to be implemented in government schools across ten states. Monitoring and observation formats were also designed and field-tested in different states along with training for field staff and third party evaluations.

Amukta received the Best Teacher's Award from 'Lady Kalyani Sivaswami Ayyar Best Teacher Award', 2001.

She has been a member of several committees such as National Resource Group (NRG) for SSA; NEGAEE, NCERT, Delhi; R. Govinda Committee on teacher education; and CABE Committee (1987-'89). She has organised many national and international conferences; some of them being – the International Democratic Education Conference in 2004 in Bhubaneswar; 50 years of Montessori in India at Kalakshetra, Chennai in 1989. She has participated and presented papers at national and international seminars.

She has published articles and papers; her work has been mentioned in 'Improving Government Schools, what has been tried and what works' published by Books for Change, 2005 and 'Back to School', Best Practices edited by Vimala Ramachandran, Sage Publications, 2004





## Dr. REKHA SHETTY

**Designation:**

Managing Director , Farstar Distribution Network

**Company:**

Farstar Distribution Network Ltd.

**Address:**

359, North Main Road, Anna Nagar West  
Chennai

Phone No: 26150313, 26153658

Email ID : rekhashetty123@gmail.com

**R**ekha been in the corporate innovation business for 25 years and has a number of interesting case studies to her credit. . Farstar Distribution Network, a unique consultancy company set up by her is devoted exclusively to innovation and creativity under the brand name Mindspower. She consults with some of the Region's major corporates on long term Innovation Initiatives that involve everyone from doorman to Chairman. Her client list includes ICICI Bank, Ashok Leyland Ltd., Hyundai Motors Ltd., TVS Group, TI Group, Durgapur Steel Plant, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. and other blue chip companies

She is an author, an entrepreneur and an original thinker. In her very first assignment in United India Insurance, she developed a nationally acclaimed advertising campaign. As group Vice President of the Apollo Hospitals, she pioneered the concept of hospital marketing and health insurance.

Rekha's thoughts come from a deep study of many disciplines: Management, Sociology, Psychology, Economics, History and Spirituality. As a member of the Syndicate of the 200 years old, Anna University, she has helped introduce a 40-week programme on innovation for budding engineers. She is also on the board of studies of the Psychology Department at the Madras University. She is a faculty of leading business schools for the MBA course like Madras University and Great Lakes Institute of Management and speaks at global seminars on innovation. She has conducted Mindspower programmes worldwide in places as far flung as Siberia, Sri Lanka, Singapore and USA. She was also awarded the Outstanding Young Person Award by Jaycees. She was invited by the U.S. State Department to be part of an expert team from 10 countries to study the problems and solutions to drug addiction.

A theatre buff, she has also written and directed musicals. She was one of Asia's first women District Governors for Rotary International and was awarded Rotary's highest Award –

Service above Self. Her book published by Penguin, “The Zero Heart Attack Path” attracted worldwide attention. Her second book “Portable Roots“, the transcreation of a Tamil book, was released at the Frankfurt Book Fair. Her third book “Corporate Strategy, Minds power Innovation” addresses a subject on which she is considered a management guru. Dr. Rekha Shetty has successfully integrated western thought with the Eastern ethos of creativity .Her fourth book “Innovate! 90 Days to ‘Transform your Business’ continues to create ripples in India and abroad.

Rekha began her career with a brilliant academic record with two university ranks. She has A Ph.D from Madras University on the subject of Innovation. Rekha’s other interests are writing, gardening and music. She enjoys social action and making things better.



## YESHASVINI RAMASWAMY

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

e2e People Practices Private Ltd

**Address:**

499/6, 9th Main, 9th Cross, RMV [Raj Mahal Vilas] Extension,  
Sadashivanagar, Bangalore 560080

Landline: +91 80-4171 2710 ; Mobile number: +91 9844037944

E-mail: [apoorva@e2epeoplepractices.com](mailto:apoorva@e2epeoplepractices.com),

[yeshasvini@e2epeoplepractices.com](mailto:yeshasvini@e2epeoplepractices.com)

A former management consultant at Infosys BPO Yeshasvini has built her expertise in people management areas such as policy formulations, people structuring and audits, leadership training & interventions, talent acquisition and creating people engagement models to help organizations track their ROI in the areas of retention and business performance. Over the years, she has managed migrations “Build Operate Transfer” models from countries such as USA, Australia and England in the areas of people engagement in the Financial, BPO, and IT industry segments. She has trained more than 3000 people in areas pertaining to leadership principles, self management, managing people in a dynamic environment, personality development, certification awareness programs, etc. She has also been instrumental in building robust recruitment processes. Prior to starting her entrepreneurial venture, she headed the People Practices function for the Velankani Conglomerate which comprises of companies in very diverse fields ranging from Financial Services, Infrastructure support to Food services.

A die-hard entrepreneur at heart, Yeshasvini helps people define what true entrepreneurship is and what it takes to be a leader. She also brings to the table real life experiences that help people discard myths of businesses. With her interactive and thought provoking style of communication, Ms. Yeshasvini has become popular at leading business schools in Bangalore in her capacity as visiting faculty.. She also writes columns on HR for the Hindu Business line on a regular basis. She is one of the core members of the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) Women Business Leaders Forum (WBLF) in Bangalore.

Yeshasvini is the brain behind Satsang, a non profit initiative, consisting of a group of 15 senior professionals. The cornerstone of this initiative is to identify struggling entrepreneurs, mentor them, and if necessary take over many functions of their enterprise, turn

the company around and exit it. If their attempts are not successful, they may advise the entrepreneur to look at something else.

She is a Certified Psychometric Analyst from the Team Value Profiling Services, (An associate of Thomas International, UK) coupled with a certification in the Basics of People Capability Maturity Model ® (P-CMM) V 2.0 from SEI, USA and more recently been a part of Young Leaders Program (YLP) in Hong Kong and China, an initiative supported by the Bill Clinton Global Leadership initiative organized by GIFT, are some of her accomplishments.



## BEENA KANNAN

**Designation:**

Managing Director and Lead designer

**Company:**

Seematti Silks,

**Address:**

Seematti Retail Outlets

M G Road, Ernakulam, Kerala, South India

Seematti Retail Outlets, K K Road, Kottayam, Kerala

Phone No: +91 481 2563396, 2563367; 0481 2563396

E-mail: beena@seematti.com

Seematti textiles headed by Beena Kannan is the most preferred shopping destinations for Keralites. Beena discovered her passion for designing saris when she finished college. She travels throughout India and visits remote villages to source different varieties of saris. Beena Kannan has designed world's longest hand woven silk sari that won a place in the Guinness Book of World Records and Limca Book of Records. It is 486.6 metres long. The total weight of the sari is 72.583 kg. The weight of the silk used in the crafting was around 57kg, while the cost of making the sari was around Rs 2.04 crore. Intricate designs on this record-making sari reflect India's rich cultural legacy. The themes of the pallavs are varied and encompass history, epics, folklore, myths, famous personalities, places and monuments of India.

She is a hard core business woman, a mother of three and a mother-in-law. Beena Kannan was born 17 July 1960 in Kottayam, Kerala, India. After university, she joined the family textile retailing business in 1980, the first woman in the family to work. She worked with her father and husband till her husband passed away. She has put her heart and soul into work after this loss and has been recognized as one of the best wedding silk sari designers in south India. She has done her bit for the sari to retain the pride of place even in the face of onslaught from Western and North Indian fashions. She has launched her sari designs in UAE (2207) and USA (2009). Her rapport with the weaving communities has earned for her a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from Coimbatore Erode Weaving community in 2009.

Multitasking is second nature to her. She works out regularly at the gym unless she is traveling. She took up dancing about ten years ago and is totally committed to Bharat Natyam.



## BINDU ANANTH

**Designation:**

President

**Company/Organization:**

IFMR Trust

**Address:**

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IIT research Park, Taramani, Chennai - 600 113

Phone No: +91 44 6668 7000

E-mail: [bindu.ananth@icicifoundation.org](mailto:bindu.ananth@icicifoundation.org);

[bhuvaneswari.r@ifmr.co.in](mailto:bhuvaneswari.r@ifmr.co.in)

**B**indu worked with ICICI Bank in its micro finance practice between 2001 and 2005 and was Head of the New Product Development Group within the bank's rural finance business in 2007. She founded the Centre for Microfinance, IFMR, and has published in the Small Enterprise Development Journal, the Economic and Political Weekly, the OECD working paper series and the IFMR working paper series. The IFMR trust, floated by the institute of financial management and research, has raised a Rs 600 crore private equity fund to invest in commercial enterprise of low-income households, especially in rural areas. The network enterprises fund, which is the trust's private fund, will provide support across supply chain in sectors like handicraft, food processing, and rural tourism, among others. Bindu has substantial expertise in business planning, rural financial services, venture capital, supply chain management, development of innovative financial models, communications and people management.

She has a master in public administration and International development from Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government (2007).



## PARVEEN HAFEEZ

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

Sunrise Hospital

**Address:**

Seaport - Airport Road, Kakkanad, Kochi - 682 030

Landline: +91 484 2428913 - 16

Mobile number: 9605283918

E-mail : [info@sunrisehospital.in](mailto:info@sunrisehospital.in)

Parveen is the backbone of the entire hospital project with her constant focus on maintaining the highest standards of service and attention to detail. While doing her first year degree in SN College, Parveen started working with a travel agency owned by her uncle. “The first salary I got was Rs 350,” she recollects. Armed with a degree in literature she entered business in her early 20s and now heads a multi-crore business venture which is on an expansion mode. Her various business ventures have all proved very successful. In 1996 she began with the Medlace Group of Companies, which included Medlace, Medlace Disposables, and Concern India. Her ‘hands-on’ management style involves interacting daily with her dedicated team of medical professionals on a one on one basis. To the patients at Sunrise Hospitals, her familiar smiling face and personal touch, instills confidence and reinforces the fact that their health is in capable hands. Parveen also heads the finance department, a key role within the organization. Apart from managing the hospitals Parveen also runs a software firm - Iware Solutions – at the Infopark which deals in total hospital management and printing management.

“I didn’t know much about business and I had to learn from scratch.” But being a people person she could handle most of the problems easily and is now the hands-on head of the office. Parveen says her husband, consultant gynaecologist and laparoscopic surgeon, and chairman of Sunrise Institute of Medical Science (P) Ltd, was totally dedicated to his profession but she has had his full moral support.

She loves cooking and makes sure that she cooks at least one meal a day. “You ask me any preparation, be it Mughalai or Malabari, I can make it.” Parveen is a mother of three. She says all the three are very independent and manages household chores in her absence. Parveen who is so busy with her work gets to spend very few hours with her daughters. But she says it’s not the quantity but the quality of the time she spends with your children that matters. “We do go on holidays often. I want my daughters to grow up as good human beings. I don’t ask for more.”



## MALLIKA SRINIVASAN

### Designation:

Chairman of Board of directors (TAFE), Member of Executive Board, Indian business School, Director, TAFE Access Ltd, Chairperson TAFE Reach Ltd and Non-executive Director Tata tea Ltd

### Company:

TAFE, IBS, Tata Tea

### Address:

Huzur Gardens, Sembian, Chennai - 600011

Landline: 91-44-5375865, (91)-(044)-2537 5861-64

**T**AFE the flagship of the Amalgamations Group had a turnover of Rs 85 crore when Mallika joined the family business in 1986. Today, it is the second-largest farm equipment manufacturer in the country. TAFE is also the third-largest tractor manufacturer in the world. Its turnover has crossed \$1 billion. The company leads in export of tractors. It is also the world number two when you take small tractors (below 100 HP). In terms of profitability it is number one.”

Mallika herself has been given every award possible for business women. How did she manage to hold her own in what is a male bastion? Admittedly, TAFE is closely held by her family. Her father A Sivasailam was the chairman of the company and the Amalgamations Group till he passed away recently. “There was no pressure on either me or my sister to enter the family business. My parents made sure that I received a good education. Once I joined TAFE, all my father said was that I should make a success of whatever I did and that I must grow. The elements of success are the same whether you are a man or a woman, whether you are in automobiles, engineering or retail. Manufacturing and selling cosmetics must be just as difficult as producing and selling tractors. You should enjoy what you are doing,” she says.

Mallika is the eldest daughter of industrialist A Sivasailam. She did her in MA (econometrics) from Madras University. Thereafter, she went abroad to pursue further studies. She did her MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. She believes in regular exercise and relaxes with Carnatic music.





## SUSHMA SRIKANDTH

**Designation:**

Director & Chief Operating Officer

**Company:**

AVT McCormick Ingredients Private Ltd

**Address:**

Plot #225/1A 5-7, Kaipoorikkara, Marampilly P.O  
Aluva 683107

Phone Number: +91 484 26 77511,

Mobile number: 9895177511

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**A**VT McCormick is a 50-50 Joint Venture between the South India based agri company A.V. Thomas & Company, India & McCormick & Co. Inc, USA, the largest spice company in the world. AVT Mc today has a turnover of Rs. 185 Crores and is in the export of value added steam sterilized spice powders & blends. The company is a fully integrated food processing company that manufactures & exports spices for the retail and food service channels in the overseas markets of the USA, UK, Europe, Scandinavia, Taiwan, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Japan and New Zealand. The company has 290 employees, including managers & executives.

In some ways, AVT Mc and Sushama were responsible for putting value added Indian spices in the world map. AVT Mc, because McCormick is the largest Spice company globally and being a state of the art facility; Sushama because in 1996, there were not many women International marketing persons in India. So the blend was a novelty and caught the attention & interest of many.

Sushama has won innumerable awards and is a part of many work related panels and committees.

Born & brought up in Cochin, Kerala, and educated St. Teresa's School and College. Was Chairman, College Union, President Rotaract Club of St. Teresa's, Leader of the team that won the Kerala University rolling Trophy in University Youth Festival 1978. Selected as University best actress, 1978. Married in 1980, moved to the US in 1986 and graduated in Masters in Business Administration & International Affairs.

Over the last 4 years, she has turned to meditation, spiritual reading and developing a journal of positive experiences of both spiritual leaders and ordinary people who have

made extra ordinary things possible. The idea is to develop a series of lectures that will help her share her knowledge and experiences as a Corporate trainer. She truly believes in the” power of one” and that no task is impossible; granted it may be difficult, but it is still possible.



## SHEELA KOCHOUSEPH

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

V Guard

**Address:**

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Phone No: -91-0484-2539911, 2530912, 2531314, 2530135

E-mail: mail@vguard.in

**V**-Star Creations, the first Kerala based company to hit the market with branded ready-to-wear apparel for women, is the brain-child of Mrs. Sheela Kochouseph. The company was established in 1995. Finding a niche market, Mrs. Sheela roped in the services of talented fashion designers who came up with a range of chic ethnic designer wear for the modern Indian woman. Elegantly styled, meticulously crafted, exquisitely embellished and affordably priced, the products became a rage across south India soon after launch.

Spurred by its success in designer wear, V-Star forayed into the production of lingerie and intimate wear for women. Marketed under the brand name Vanessa, the products have gone down well with discerning women across the sub-continent. The company then ventured into the manufacture of inner wear for men, sold under the brand name Valero. Though this market was crowded by large players, V-Star was able to hold its own because of its obsession with quality. V-Star products can now be found in all up-market boutiques across peninsular India and the Middle East.

Born in 14-12-1953 , Father late Mr. Vavoo (Gold & Cloth Merchant , Wadakkancherry ) , done schooling at Trichur, married to Mr. Kochouseph Chittilappilly ( MD - V-guard Industries , Wonderla Holidays - Bangalore ) . Two children Arun Chittilappilly ( Exe. Director - Wonderla Holidays ) married to Priya ( Director - Wonderla ) , Mithun Chittilappilly ( Executive Director \_ V-guard Industries , Director V-star creations (P) Ltd.) married to Joshna ( Executive Director - V-star creations (P) Ltd. ). Achievements:

Sheela has been adjudged the Outstanding Women Entrepreneur in 1999 by Indian Junior chamber Zone XX and she also won Best Woman Entrepreneur Award for the year 2003-2004 given by St.Thomas college Pala. She aspires to make her brands Vanessa & Valero as the most competent International brand.



## HASTHA KRISHNAN

**Designation:**

Director & President,

**Company:**

Ma Foi Randstad

**Address:**

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Chennai - 600 086

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**H**astha joined Ma Foi in 1994. She has held a number of key positions in the organization in the last 17 years. After a stint in Executive Search, she moved on to head Ma Foi Europe operations for about 3 years. Hastha then returned to India and took charge of key account management, before heading Executive Search. Hastha is now Director and President - Executive Search, Selection & Professional Staffing.

Hastha started her career as freelance market research consultant and had around eight years of work experience in Market Research before joining Ma Foi. With strong client relationship skills and extensive involvement in people development, Hastha believes in hands on management. According to her, capability building and empowerment are fundamental aspects for professional success. One has to continuously build skills and acquire knowledge to sustain in the market. Hastha also regards social responsibilities as part of professional development and strives to help the underprivileged in education. Being a trustee in Ma Foi Foundation, she is actively involved in the various initiatives of this CSR wing of Ma Foi Randstad.

Hastha has deep interest in reading books and writing. She holds a Masters in English with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and English.



## HEMALATHA RAJAN

**Designation:**

Executive Director,

**Company:**

Ma Foi Randstad

**Address:**

Ma Foi Management Consultants Limited

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**H**emalatha is the co-founder of Ma Foi Management Consultants Limited and has played a pivotal role in building Ma Foi into an organization which works with passion, integrity, transparency and commitment.

A Finance professional with over 20 years of experience in Finance, Audit and Executive Search, she heads the financial, administrative & HR activities in Ma Foi Randstad and has played a key role in enabling the evolution of key systems and practices in accounting and administration and organization policies.

She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce from the Nagpur University and earned a FCA degree prior to working as an Auditor. Hemalatha is a fellow member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India. Prior to starting Ma Foi, she worked as an Auditor with M/s. S.B. Billimoria (a part of M/s. Delloite) and later was a Partner in M/s. Revathy & Latha Chartered Accountants.

She strongly believes and advocates the empowerment of underprivileged children and women. To do that she started the Sornammal Educational Trust along with her husband Pandia Rajan more than a decade back. More than 55000 women are a part of this Trust and the Trust works with Self Help Groups in and around Chennai and in the Districts of Madurai.

She is also the Managing Trustee of the Ma Foi Foundation which supports 4000 under privileged children by empowering them through Education and other activities. The Foundation also supports healthcare through the Ekam Trust.

She plays an active role in many associations like Madras Management Association, FICCI Ladies Organization, Golden Jubilee Biotech Park, Rotary Club of Adyar & Loyola – ICAM College of Engineering & Technology

Her passion is to help budding entrepreneurs and she has been involved in many new initiatives.



## HEMA RAVICHANDAR

**Designation:**

Independent HR Consultant

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**H**ema has 27 years of experience as an executive, a consultant and a Strategic HR Advisor behind her. She was Senior Vice President & Group Head HRD - Infosys Technologies Ltd. and the Infosys Group, globally until July '05. She designed and drove the HR Agenda for Infosys as it scaled up from 250 to 39,000 employees in the Group. This included leading efforts for screening more than a million resume annually. She has vast experience in Human Resources Development, Change Management, Leadership & Management Development, Off-shoring HR Processes, Diversity and Anti-Sexual Harassment Initiatives and Immigration Scenarios. She Designed and drove large scale HR interventions aimed at Future Proofing the organization - Broad Banding, Role-based organizational paradigm, Compensation Restructures, defined and institutionalized HR Business Processes for P-CMM, Six Sigma and ISO certification and Incubated and led the HR Consulting Group in Infosys with extensive client interactions specifically in the area of off-shoring HR Processes – value-added Client Advisory, defining HR processes and mentoring client HR teams

**Achievements/Milestones:**

- HR Professional of the Year Award – 2005 (2)
- Outstanding HR Professional of the Year Award – National HRD Network - 2004
- Lister, 25 Most Powerful Women in India List of Business Today – 2004
- Lister, Successful Women Professionals of the Year List of Dataquest – 2004 & 2005
- Lister, 25 Hottest Young Executives of the Year List of Business Today – 2002
- Led Infosys HR to win : In India & In USA
- Business Today- Hewitt's Best Employer of the Year–Ranking#1 in 2001&2002
- Dataquest Best Employer Rankings in 2001 & 2002 and in top 5 2003& 2004

- Business Today – Mercer Best Companies to Work - Ranking # 2 for 2004
- Computer World's Top 100 Companies to Work For – 2003 and 2004
- ASTD's Excellence in Practice Citation for Training Interventions
- Optimas Award for Training Innovation for Progeon

She is involved in individual social responsibility activities in the area of nurturing merit among under privileged children and fostering use of senior experts ([www.senior experts.org](http://www.seniorexperts.org)) and she aspires to stay engaged on emerging HR issues on a pan industry basis.



## KAMI NARAYAN

**Designation:**

CO-CEO

**Company:**

Premedia Global,

**Address:**

12th floor, Phase II, Ascendas International Tech Park,  
Chennai – 600113

Landline: 91 44 42913999

Mobile No: 9841217286

Email Id: hbangaru@premediaglobal.com

**K**ami Narayan is the Co-CEO of PreMedia Global Inc., a leading content services company with operations in the US and India. She plays a pivotal role in managing global operations and overall administration of the firm. Prior to founding PreMedia, Kami headed M&A at OfficeTiger, an outsourcing company based in Chennai where she also managed the US-India interface and was responsible for project implementation. Earlier, she worked at her family's business group where she conceptualized and executed several strategic initiatives. Kami started her career with Arthur Andersen's business advisory practice helping multinational companies negotiate joint ventures and set up Greenfield operations in India.

Kami is a gold-medallist from the National Law School of India, and holds an MBA from the Harvard Business School. She was awarded "Woman Entrepreneur of the Year" by TIE Chennai (The Indus Entrepreneurs) in 2009.

With a keen interest in social causes, Kami co-heads the S.Viswanathan Foundation, a charitable organization focussed on primary education, healthcare and Indian classical arts.





## UMA RATNAM KRISHNAN

**Designation:**

COO- RBS Business Services HR

**Company:**

Royal Bank of Scotland Business Services Pvt Ltd

**Address:**

5th Floor, Altius Block, Olympia Tech Park

Guindy Chennai 600 032

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Email Id: uma.r.krishnan@rbs.com

Uma started her career as a diplomat in Paris and then after a management degree moved to ANZ Grindlays Bank, the HDFC Bank and worked in the Business Process Outsourcing industry (BPO) as the Chief Executive Officer of Optimus Global Services – the BPO arm of Polaris Software Lab till she joined the Royal Bank of Scotland Group. During the last 10 years she has been in leadership positions driving strategy and business growth. She was part of the Senior Management Team and the International Group Leadership program at ANZ Grindlays and a member of the core leadership team at HDFC Bank where she conceptualized, provided strategy and vision, set up and managed full fledged independent businesses. At Polaris she was involved in setting up the BPO operations from ground up –strategy and business plan, board approval, setting up infrastructure, creating the management team, creating the Operations and Delivery Capability, identifying Product & Service Offerings and Sales and Relationship Management. At RBS Business Services Uma was Executive Director and Head of Retail, Corporate, Commercial and Insurance Operations and has now taken on a new global role as COO-Business Services HR in RBS

Being appointed to the Indian Foreign Service after securing an all India Rank of 13 laid the foundation for Uma's career. She was interested in studying further and so decided to take up an MBA course at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM Bangalore) and majored in Finance and Marketing after which she joined ANZ Grindlays Bank where Uma learnt the ropes of banking. HDFC bank was her biggest challenge and Uma emerged professionally enriched and successful, when the entrepreneurial spirit beckoned. This was a different challenge, that of setting up and driving a BPO subsidiary for Polaris software as the CEO. The next move was in the global arena with RBS.

Uma is focused totally on her work but believes life is multifaceted. She enjoys her family consisting of husband who is an e commerce entrepreneur and a daughter and son who are studying architecture and engineering respectively

She is engaged in several CSR activities and is mentoring small rural organizations who have been funded by microfinance institutions. She is a fitness enthusiast, travel buff –has trekked to Everest Base Camp and Mount Kilimanjaro., has holidayed in Alaska and has experienced the wildlife in Africa. She wants to use every opportunity to see new places, and experience new cultures. She enjoys reading, music and art.



## SHALINI KAPOOR

**Designation:**

Executive-Architect

**Company:**

IBM, India

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Shalini is the leader of Mobile Industry solutions at India Research Labs. She is leading innovations in the area of emerging market solutions, social commerce and smart planet solutions. Some of her technical innovations have addressed the grassroots of the Indian population hence she has been the change agent in IBM. As an Executive architect she has designed solutions for complex integration projects, catered to several client engagements, provided architectural guidance to repeatable solutions and led creation of Center of Excellences within several System Integrators through focused technical programs for them. In her journey at IBM she has technically led multi million dollar deals and influenced client decisions in favor of IBM technologies.

Shalini is the first woman in IBM India to be Senior Certified Architect and one amongst the only 5 Senior Certified architects in India.. She is a Distinguished Lead Architect, as certified from The Open Group. She is member of IBM Academy of Technology and Co chair of IBM Technical Experts Council leading the Hyderabad chapter. She has received several performance awards and is identified as Techgen which is the IBM pipeline for Senior technical executives. She is a computer Science engineer and Masters in Information Systems.

Shalini indulges herself in creative pursuits including writing and reading while she is not doing school projects for her 2 sons aged 9 years and 5 years. Her husband is Executive Director Finance, Dell International. She attributes her success to the balanced upbringing provided by her parents. She is a self made woman with a sense of high achievement and positive attitude.



## PREETHA REDDY

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

Apollo Hospitals

**Address:**

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Preetha oversees the operations of 44 Hospitals, 51 Clinics and 400 Pharmacies of the Group in India and parts of Asia through a network of a highly skilled team of professionals. The current employee strength of the Apollo group is 30,000. She joined as Joint Managing Director in 1989. Her major responsibilities include, planning, designing and funding new projects with the objective of directing the company towards optimal utilization of funds and resources. She provides the policy guidelines for the efficient management of the Group's Nursing Colleges (8 currently), the College of Physiotherapy and the College of Hospital Administration. She is on the advisory Board of Med Varsity and the Apollo Telemedicine Networking Foundation. She also plays an advisory role in the group's other initiatives such as Apollo Health Street - the medical business process outsourcing, Medical Insurance and Third Party Administration: DKV Insurance and Family Health Plan.

Preetha introduced the concept of Tender Loving Care (TLC) which integrated service delivery with clinical outcomes resulting in exceptional patient experiences. Apollo is the first hospital chain in the country to have introduced this integration. She provided the leadership role during the Group's quality certification process with the ISO 14001 and 9001. She also spearheaded the JCI accreditation process in four Group Hospitals (Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, Ludhiana, Dhaka). Preetha was largely instrumental in Apollo Hospitals, Chennai being rated "Grade A" by CRISIL and being one among the two hospitals in India to be awarded a "Grade A" for service and business excellence. Preetha has introduced many innovative concepts aimed at ensuring uniformity in service delivery across all Apollo Institutions.

Preetha plays a key role in the Group's corporate social responsibilities including spearheading SACH (Save a Child's Heart) which is aimed at providing succor to children

from the economically under privileged sections of society. SACH has performed over 2000 free/concessional Cardiac surgeries and screened over 10,000 children from India and several parts of Africa. She guides the various divisions of the group on infrastructure planning, layout and design concepts. She is an avid collector of art and is patron of performing arts.



## Dr. THARA SRINIVASAN

**Designation:**

Director

**Company:**

SCARF Chennai

Email ID: scarf@vsnl.com

**D**r Thara is a psychiatrist by profession. She is the founder member and director of the NGO Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF) since 1996. SCARF which celebrated its silver jubilee year in 2009 is a premier not for profit organization devoted to the cause of mental health in India. SCARF is involved in care, rehabilitation, research, academics and teaching, community mental health, awareness and education and lobbying. It is a Collaborating Centre of the World Health Organization for Mental Health research.

Thara's interest in the field of disability led her to complete her PhD on "Disability in schizophrenia". Using this data, she lobbied untiringly for the recognition of this disability on par with other disabilities. She was also responsible for the development of a scale "Indian Disability Evaluation and Assessment Scale (IDEAS)" which has been acknowledged by the government as the official tool to measure psychiatric disability.

On the academic side, Thara has forged research links with many international and national organizations working in the field of mental health. She is a member of the expert advisory panel to the Director General of WHO, Geneva, and a member of the International Advisory Group for several projects of the World Health Organization. She is also on the visiting faculty of the Columbia University, New York.. She has over 120 scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals and is on the editorial committee of few international journals.

She initiated two major programs, both of which have been very successful. One is the ICONS- an international conference on schizophrenia which attracts over 400 delegates from all over the world. The other is the film festival "Frame of Mind" which has had good public acclaim. She is also responsible for pioneering the use of mobile tele psychiatry in rural areas.

One of the early Ashoka Fellows (1988-90), She was working closely with the foundation as a panelist to select fellows in the 1990s. She is a recipient of many awards, such as The Sadguru Gnananda National Award to Women for Excellence in Social Service in 2004, The Tamil Nadu State Award for work in Disability of the Mentally Ill in 2003. The most recent one was the President's Gold Medal from the Royal College of Psychiatry, UK in 2010.



## AKHILA SRINIVASAN

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

Shriram Investments Ltd

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It was 1986 and Akhila had just completed her post graduate degree in economics and was contemplating a career either in the civil services or academia. Instead, she ended up joining the Chennai-based Shriram Group as an executive trainee in marketing by answering an advertisement in the paper. She had been married for just two years. By 1993, Akhila had become General Manager of the company, President a year later, and managing director by 2000.. Akhila is the only woman executive of her rank in the group, has also been instrumental in striking global alliances for her group companies. In 2005 Akhila assumed the position of Managing Director Of Shriram Life Insurance, a joint venture with the Sanlam Group of South Africa.

She has an MPhil in Economics and is currently pursuing her PhD from the Madras University. Akhila has built up a vibrant group of professionals and executives in all the businesses she has been involved with. Strategizing of business models, building effective winning teams, and forging productive relationships with all the stakeholders have been her forte. She has gone truly beyond the balance sheets. She is the very soul of all the social welfare and community development initiatives taken up by the Shriram Group. Under her leadership the group set up the Shriram Foundation in 1993. Since then the Foundation has been actively engaged in orphan and destitute care, primary education for the rural poor, and micro credit financing through Self Help Groups.

Much recognition and awards have come her way. She is the honorary consul for Netherlands. Akhila was the chairperson of FICCI Ladies Organisation, Chennai chapter for 2007-08. She has been selected twice by Business Today magazine as one of the most powerful women in business in the country. Akhila is the state president of the Art of Living Foundation founded by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. She is also a lover of and a patron of performing arts.





## RAJANI SESHADRI

**Designation:**

Vice President & Global Head – Telecom Pre-Sales

**Company:**

Tata Consultancy Services

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Rajani has over 25 years experience in the industry. Her experience in building the business, delivering large scale transformations, coupled with thought leadership has enabled her to be a strategic business consultant to CXOs of large telecommunication companies and enabled them to achieve key business results - Cost efficiency, Operational excellence and Innovation. Prior to the current assignment, she led the TCS Telecom Europe Business for three years and in a career of over 20 years with TCS has played a number of roles in Business Development, Delivery and Process & Quality.

As a business leader, she builds strong professional connections with key CXOs and brings a deep understanding of customer needs, strong domain skills and a sharp focus on solving problems at both, the tactical and strategic levels. An advocate of quality, she has been instrumental in institutionalizing policies and frameworks, positively influencing TCS's process excellence journey and enabling simplification of its governance models. She has spearheaded the SEI-CMM, TL 9000 and Business Excellence initiatives contributing substantially to transforming the telecoms business for TCS. She is also an architect of TCS's People Practices formalized when the company was assessed at Level 5 of the SEI-People CMM model.

As an active coach over the past ten years, she has groomed many young leaders, who now lead businesses within TCS.

As the MMA Outstanding Woman Manager of the Year in 2004, she is often invited to speak at events that seek to encourage women leaders both within the company and in external forums, on topics ranging from telecom, leadership, women empowerment and diversity. She is a member of the CII National and Regional Committees on Women Empowerment.



## SHOMA BAKRE

**Designation:**

Managing Partner

**Company:**

EmPower Research Knowledge Services Pvt. Ltd.

**Address:**

EmPower Research and Knowledge Services Pvt. Ltd.

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Bangalore - 560038

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Shoma has over 16 years of experience in diverse areas - media, human resources, business development, and teaching. She started her career as a lecturer in English literature in a small town in Assam. She then completed her MBA from the San Jose University in California, USA. Shoma spent about seven years in the U.S., working with companies such as Applied Materials and N-Media, Inc., a start-up, before returning to India.

In 2004, Shoma co-founded EmPower Research, to provide integrated media and research services to FT1000 customers, across the U.S., and EU regions. Shoma is an entrepreneur by chance and not by choice. She had never aspired to be an entrepreneur but opportunity came knocking at her door and she simply followed her instinct that this was the right choice for her. She was at the right place at the right time and had the right idea presented to her. At EmPower, she heads the media practice, and the overall operations - Human Resources, Finance, IT Support, Facilities and Administration, and Quality.

As a managing partner, she has played a key role in growing EmPower Research to a 300 plus people organization within a span of six years. She has successfully shaped the company to deliver insightful research at very competitive prices leveraging the offshore cost advantage and talent pool. Owing to its stellar year on year growth, EmPower Research was listed by NASSCOM as one of the Top 50 emerging ITES companies in India in 2009. Shoma also guided EmPower Research to achieve ISO 9001 certification and pass on the benefits of global best practices to both customers and employees.

Shoma is active on the various leadership forums of NASSCOM. She has also delivered her leadership story and mentored at the inclusivity initiatives in NASSCOM. . She is also on the board of a prestigious B School. Shoma is a prolific painter and a very passionate Indian classical music learner/singer. She is an avid reader of biographies and autobiographies.



## SANGITA JOSHI

**Designation:**

Managing Partner,

**Company:**

EmPower Research Knowledge Services Pvt. Ltd.

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Sangita has over 18 years of experience in the areas of marketing and research. After her MBA from IIM, Bangalore, Sangita started her career as a Management Trainee at Tata Steel. Over the next ten years, she had successful stints with large MNCs such as Godfrey Philips, Gillette, and Whirlpool, where she managed large brands in specific territories. Sangita then spent two years at IIM, Bangalore, teaching and sharing her experience in the areas of retail management, trade marketing and sales promotion as a Visiting Professor.

In 2004, Sangita co-founded EmPower Research, to provide integrated media and research services to FT1000 customers, across the US and EU regions. At EmPower, she heads the research practice, answering critical business questions for global customers through innovative social media research and analyses.

As a managing partner, she has played a key role in growing EmPower Research to a 300 plus people organization within a span of six years. She has successfully shaped the company to deliver insightful research at very competitive prices leveraging the offshore cost advantage and talent pool. Owing to its stellar year on year growth, EmPower Research was listed by NASSCOM as one of the Top 50 emerging companies in India.

Sangita Joshi is a voracious reader and an avid armchair tennis player.



## GAYATHRI SRIRAM

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

Ucal Auto Pvt Ltd

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Gayathri started her professional journey as a teacher of English at a school for learning disabled children. Her interest in Education was piqued when she volunteered time at a school in Princeton New Jersey which specialized in understanding and meeting the needs of differently-abled children and this passion culminated in two Master's degrees in English and Reading Language Arts. Having armed herself with the necessary educational qualifications, Gayathri went on to teach at the highly prestigious Lawrenceville Preparatory school, which is rated one of the top private schools in the US. A couple of years later, she opted to move to the US public school system and over 12 years held several posts teaching middle school through college freshmen.

Gayathri returned to India in 2003 to join her family businesses at UCAL, an auto component major in India. A completely different experience from teaching, Gayathri had to practically re-invent herself as a business person and learn to handle day to day issues on the job. Rising to the challenge, Gayathri worked diligently at learning all aspects of business and production and is now the Managing Director of UCAL Products and UCAL Auto, Tier 1 suppliers to the Indian and export automobile markets.

Not wanting to leave her education degrees and experience behind, Gayathri is also working on a new business idea combining her knowledge of core concepts in education and business, which she is hoping will take off in a big way.

Gayathri's first achievement was to be selected from numerous candidates to teach English in an All-American environment despite being Indian. This decision was made purely on her reputation as an outstanding teacher. Her second achievement was being recognized by her peers to be their mentor and guide in the educational ecosystem. Gayathri's 3rd achievement was to take the risk to come back to an unknown business/engineering environment

completely alien to her professional background, to make a success of it and being considered extremely competent by her customers and employees alike. Gayathri also considers being elected to the Tamil Nadu state council of CII and being on the governing council of Young Indians (Yi) as major achievements as both these experiences have confirmed her personal credibility and ability to take up any portfolio and do an outstanding job of running it.

Gayathri envisions the next 10 years as being crucial to growing and transforming her businesses both in the auto space and in the knowledge space. She believes under her leadership, her team will have the confidence to strategise and take the risks necessary to become both a niche and scale player. She also thinks that women in general will play a very definitive role in shaping the business climate in India over the next 10 years.

She is active in the Chennai English theatre scene, is very fond of music and plays the piano, goes swimming when she wants to relax and enjoys being a mother.



## JAYSHREE VENKATRAMAN

**Designation:**

Director, TAFE and Vice President Amco batteries

**Company:**

TAFE Amalgamations,

**Address:**

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Jayashree began her career with AMCO Batteries as executive assistant to the CEO where she underwent rigorous training at the shop-floor level with responsibilities in all functional areas including operations, finance and marketing. Jayshree was soon promoted to the post of general manager (Planning and Coordination) leading the marketing and exports functions. Within a short span of three years, Jayshree was instrumental in helping the company enhance its turnover from Rs 60 crore to Rs 70 crore. In 1993, Jayshree was elevated to the post of associate vice-president of TAFE's Power Source Division (PSD), responsible for all AMCO operations in Bangalore. She was in charge of setting up a state-of-the-art two-wheeler battery plant at araimalainagar, under PSD. Starting with producing 3,000 batteries per month, the plant now produces 450,000 batteries per month.

This is the first plant in the battery industry in the country to have been adjudged and certified to conform to ISO 9001 (improved process efficiencies) and ISO 14001 (preservation of environment, reduced use of scarce resources and energy). Today, she is admired as a management thinker and entrepreneur by the leading business houses and management schools in India.

Jayashree won the distinguished alumnus award from Indian Management Institute (IMI), the highest alumni honor from this institute. Jayshree Venkataraman graduated with distinction from IMI's one-year full-time postgraduate program in International Management in 1989. She holds a degree from Stella Maris College in Chennai and a Masters in Business Economics from Ethiraj College, also in Chennai.



## GEETANJALI KIRLOSKAR

**Designation:**

Chairperson

**Company:**

Kirloskar Technologies

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Geetanjali is a leading reputed Advertising professional in India. She set up and ran Quadrant Communications Ltdan advertising agency which was a joint venture between Kirloskar and the Interpublic Worldwide Group (IPG), the world's 2nd largest advertising network based in New York and she has set up a non-profit venture "The India Japan Initiative", a unique organization that aims to connect the minds of people between India and Japan. Through several initiatives in the Business and Cultural area. Geetanjali also writes regularly for leading newspapers and magazines in India, on travel and brand building.

She recently hosted a 38 episode TV Chat Show, the first reality show of its kind on Indian TV, for the news channel Times Now. Geetanjali has a successful and long track record in Advertising and Communication areas, has been inducted on several important government related bodies such as India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) of the Govt. of India.

Geetanjali is a keen sportsman, and is frequently on Hiking and Mountaineering expeditions, River Rafting, Driving expeditions and Lawn Tennis.



## KALPANA MARGABHANDU

**Designation:**

Director, Websphere Adapters and AIM Development, India

**Company:**

IBM India Software Lab, IBM Software Group

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Kalpana has 24 years of industry experience and has worked for IBM from 1993. She has been with India Software Lab since its inception in 2001 and has played key leadership roles across functions in growing the lab to its present level. Currently, she is the Director – WebSphere Development, leading the WebSphere Mission in IBM India Software Lab. Born and brought up in Bangalore, Kalpana completed her Masters Degree in Engineering from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore in 1982, after which she embarked on an 11-year career with PSI Data Systems. Kalpana joined IBM in 1993 as Software Specialist. Initially, her role in IBM was technical, involving development of various products. She progressed to more leadership positions and in 1995, became Consultant Software Specialist. In 1999, Kalpana moved to Management. She performed the role of Lab Manager for the India Software Lab for 4 years and in 2005, was made Program Director, India Software Labs - responsible for Lotus, Tivoli, Information Management Pillars and also the File Systems projects.

She is a co-chair for WIT Executive Steering Committee, Member of the Global Women's Council, GMT (Growth Market Team) Ambassadors for Gender Diversity, Member of the India Leadership Forum and also participates in external Women's forum like NASSCOM , CII.

Kalpana has received several awards in recognition of her leadership with the India Software Lab, and was named the recipient of the IT People Award for Women Leadership in 2007 and the Women In Leadership (WILL) Women's Choice Award in 2008. She is also on the Board of IBM India.





## SHARADA SRIRAM

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

Ideal Play Abacus India Pvt Ltd

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Email Id: [contact@playabacusindia.com](mailto:contact@playabacusindia.com)

Sharada started her career as a Funds Manager of Unit Trust of India 1994. She was then involved in the family business between 1996 and 2002. In 2003 she set up along with others Ideal Play Abacus India Pvt Ltd (IPA). This was quite unique as all the promoters were women. The ISO 9001:2000 certified IPA is affiliated to Play Abacus Malaysia and the Guang Xi Abacus Association, China. Children (ages 4 to 12 years) are first taught simple addition and subtraction on the Chinese tool – the abacus. They then move on to larger numbers. After constant practice in a structured manner, the beads are formed in the mind and the children can start calculating mentally. This process is called “imagery” and is a ‘right brain function’. The children then learn multiplication, division and decimals. On completion of the course children can handle very easily and swiftly any basic arithmetic operation. They are trained to work with both left and right parts of the brain. The course also improves speed, accuracy, power of concentration, listening skills, retention and self confidence. There is a noticeable improvement in overall academic performance.

In a short span, the company has set up over 700 centres all over India with more than 1000 trained teachers and has over 70,000 students. IPA has also recently opened centres in other countries such as Botswana, USA and Saudi Arabia . IPA has programmes such as Vedic Maths ,Amazing Memory (in association with Dr Yip, World Adult Memory Champion) for children of age 12 and above and a handwriting programme for children of age 5 and above, Creative Art India, an international art programme and 2 new English programmes – Learning Box in association with Learning Box UK and Brite English programme.

At the Franchise Awards 2006 event at Delhi held in Dec 2006, Sharada, in her capacity as Managing Director, Ideal Play Abacus India Pvt Ltd won the prestigious “Best Woman Entrepreneur of the Year 2006 “given by Franchise India and Eurokids. She has in her role

as managing director encouraged many housewives and unemployed women to work. Most franchisees, teachers and employees are women.

Sharada being a former bharatanatyam dancer is deeply involved in classical music and dance.

She is a gold medalist in B.Com, Stella Maris, Madras. She got the All India 10th rank in The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and secured the award for “The best paper on Auditing” in the year 1994. She is a gold medalist from the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India. She was also the best Outgoing Student of Stella Maris College in the year 1991

## SAMANTHA REDDY

**Designation:**

Managing Director

**Company:**

B2B software technologies Ltd

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Versatile and Dynamic Samantha co-founded B2B Software Technologies Ltd in 2000 which is in the Healthcare and Enterprise Solutions domain. She is known for providing decisive leadership, management and guidance in an intensely competitive environment. Over the past years Samantha has played a multi faceted role in operations, finance, administration and strategic planning. She has been instrumental in establishing wholly owned subsidiaries in multiple countries and spear heading the marketing strategies from concept through implementation.

She is a team player and a strong motivator with the ability to recognize emerging opportunities to lead the company swiftly forward. Samantha is cancer survivor and is admired for her grit, determination and enormous resilience.

Elected CII State Council Member since 2004 she has been heading the III (Industry Institute Interaction) panel. She is also the Chairperson of Center of Excellence, Mallepally under the PPP scheme with the government of India.



## SHOBHANA KAMINENI

### **Designation:**

Executive Director, Apollo Hospitals Group

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Hyderabad

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Shobana is part of the founding family of Apollo Hospitals Group and she was its employee number three when she joined the hospital at age 20. The Apollo Hospitals Group is Asia's largest healthcare provider and the world's 4th largest 'For Profit' hospital with 8500 tertiary & secondary care beds, Health BPO, 75 Clinics, Pharmacies, Educational Institutions, Research, Insurance, Wellness spas, and Health Media. Her experience has been largely in the sphere of project management wherein she established most of the Apollo Hospitals Group's large projects. As Executive Director of new initiatives, Shobana is currently involved with the pharmaceutical retailing – 1200 pharmacies, supply chain management, Clinical Trials, Research and the Apollo Group's foray into Health Insurance. (Apollo Munich Health Insurance in collaboration with Munich Re). She dispels the common myths associated with a traditional entrepreneurial venture and says that no venture or opportunity is too small. She says that the first phase of entrepreneurship involves a willingness to take on a new venture and assume its risks.

Shobana attributes Apollo's success to its ability to confront competition rather than trying and annihilate it. She says that there were fewer women when she started out and hence lesser competition, in contrast with today's scenario where a woman has to compete with several others for the same profile. She agrees that there might be a glass ceiling in some industries. Shobana stresses on the ability of women to find their own space through hard work and perseverance.

Shobana is also Vice-Chairperson of the KEI Group. KEI is involved with the development of leisure facilities and theme parks (TRAC India), port management services (KEI-RSOS), Power Projects (KEI Energy & Apollo Energy) Pharma GPO & exchange (IH-X.com).

Shobana has a degree in Economics. An avid sportsperson, Shobana was a national-level squash player. Her other interests include social development for women. As an active member of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Shobana was the Chairman of CII (Southern Region). She has also on earlier occasions chaired the CII National Committee on entrepreneurship.



## VINITA BALI

**Designation:**

CEO and MD

**Company:**

Britannia Industries

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E-mail: jaya@britindia.com

Vinita was appointed Managing Director of Britannia on 31st May 2006. Vinita joined as Chief Executive Officer of the Company in January 2005. She started her career with Voltas Ltd.-a Tata Group company focusing on consumer products, where she launched Rasna soft-drink concentrate. In 1980, Vinita joined Cadbury India, where she had a successful career in roles of increasing responsibility, not just in India, but also in the UK, Nigeria and South Africa. Vinita also served on the Boards of Cadbury Nigeria and Cadbury South Africa.

The Coca-Cola Company chose her as its worldwide Marketing Director in 1994 where she was responsible for the worldwide strategy for Coke, and was one of the key players in doubling its historical growth rate. In 1997 she took over as Vice President of Marketing for Latin America, and in 1999 relocated to Chile as President of the Andean Division with sales in excess of USD 1 Billion. In 2001, she was made a corporate officer of The Coca-Cola Company and appointed Vice President of Corporate Strategy reporting to the Chairman. After an eventful nine-year association with Coke, Vinita joined her mentor at Coke, Sergio Zyman at the Zyman Group in July 2003 as a Managing Principal and Head of the Business Strategy practice in the company's Atlanta office. As a member of the company's Board of Managers, Vinita shared responsibility for developing and managing Zyman Group's consulting business.

Vinita then joined Britannia to help turn around its fortunes. The economic Times says that her experience in Cadbury's and Coca-Cola did her a world of good in taking on competition in the FMCG sector. It was her first crucial domestic assignment after considerable time overseas. The challenges were many. She had to build a new team and set up a competent organisational structure after the old team's exit. She has been successful in creating a sense of excitement and challenge within the team to reach aspirational and ambitious

goals. Britannia's portfolio has been diversified with innovations in each brand keeping changing consumer needs and habits in mind, and Vinita has pursued a healthier lifestyle positioning for the brand.

She received her Bachelor's Degree in Economics from LSR at the University of Delhi and her MBA at the Jamnalal Bajaj Institute of Management Studies at Bombay University. She pursued postgraduate studies in Business and Economics at Michigan State University on a scholarship from The Rotary Foundation, and was selected to work as a Graduate Intern at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Vinita has a strong belief in creating sustainable models of corporate social responsibility and is passionate about women's issues and the rights of the deprived. She enjoys sports, theatre and Indian classical music. She has been a student of Kathak for many years.



## RAJSHREE PATHY

**Designation:**

Chairperson and managing Director,

**Company:**

Rajshree group of companies

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The Rajshree group has varied interests - Food and Agro business, Energy, Real Estate, Travel, Health, Hospitality and Arts. She also promotes performing arts and contemporary art movement in Coimbatore through the Contemplate Art Gallery and COCCA. Rajshree Pathy is the daughter of famous industrialist G. Varadaraj, of PSG Families engaged in Charities and Educational Institutions for more than a century. Her father was also a former Rajya Sabha MP. She is known for her boundless energy and can do spirit which gave her the strength to recover from the sudden death of her father in 1990, disregard the well meaning advisors who told her to sell out, and then take her Rs 50-crore Rajshree Group to its current projected turnover of Rs1,000 crore (with major interests in white crystal sugar, alcohol, co-generation of power and organic fertilizers. "They thought the sugar business was a politically sensitive industry in India and it would be too difficult for a young woman to manage it successfully," she has said in an interview to Economic Times. She has also said that perceptions and the business changed within a year. Today Rajshree is a really respected in the industry. She has been the head of both the South Indian Sugar Mills Association and Indian Sugar Mills Association. She constantly commutes between Coimbatore and Delhi—not to mention Davos, Maldives, London or wherever else her diverse interests take her—and is an involved mother to Aishwarya and Aditya. She also finds time to indulge in her passion for the arts.

A die-hard lover of design, Rajshree has had a keen eye for the arts even as a child. She recalls that she wanted to buy an M F Husain painting at the age of 17 even though she had no idea who he was! Even though she could not study art formally as her mother wanted her to stay back home, Pathy has found a way to make the knowledge of art more accessible. Her art initiative—Contemplate—will be supporting two art establishments, an Art Museum and the Art Institute which will be functional by 2011. Co-founded with her daughter Aishwarya, an artist, the initiative will collaborate with artists and art organisations to create opportunities for contemporary art exposure. She is a fashionista, scuba diver and art collector. She has an abiding interest in ayurveda.





## GEETHA VISWANATHAN

**Designation:**

Fashion Designer and Educationalist & Managing Director

**Company:**

Srijati Institute of Fashion Technology

**Address:**

16/15, 3rs Floor, 3rd Cross Street,  
Kasturibai Nagar, Adyar, Chennai – 600 020

Mobile Number: 98414 21939

Email ID: viswageet@gmail.com

From her childhood Geeta has had a passion for fashion designing. After marriage and three children she started her own fashion showroom Preyasi from her residence in 1985. Today it caters to not only Indian customers, but also to a clientele spread over 60 countries. Exclusive collections have been created by her studio for the Khadi Board. Her designs created for Tamil Nadu's CO-OPTEX has been well recognized. She has conducted a number of Fashion Shows in and around the country. Apart from the fashion business Geetha has also been a successful image consultant. In this role she has been counseling people from different backgrounds and cultures.

Geetha's dream of setting up an educational institution providing quality hands on knowledge on fashion designing has taken shape in the form of Srijati Institute of fashion Technology (SIFT). Her association with contemporary artists in this field is helping SIFT specialize in providing hands on experience to students. SIFT has tied up with Loyola Institute of Vocational Design offering diploma and post graduate diploma in fashion designing for the past nine years. FIS (Fashion Industrial School), is a unit of SIFT recognized by the Tamilnadu Government. SIFT is an approved centre for TNOU (Tamilnadu Open University) for conducting BSc. Course in Apparel and Fashion Designing and a one year Diploma course in Fashion Designing. Geetha is also the Principal of St. Joseph Fashion Industrial School, Neerpiar in Madhurandhagam. Geetha's non-profit organization "The Kutil Crafts of India helps women learn the traditional arts directly from the traditional artisans and become successful entrepreneurs. She has an M.A. in English and a B.Sc., in Apparel and Fashion Designing. She holds a Diploma in Fashion Designing from ALT, Bangalore

Geetha is the recipient of the National Award "Shiksha Bharati Puraskar, the Best Woman Entrepreneur of Tamil Nadu, The Best Bridalwear Designer, by Marks & Spencers, London.



## VALLI SUBBIAH

**Designation:**

Founder

**Company:**

Kids Central Chennai

Phone Number: 044 24473551

Email ID: annapoorani11@gmail.com, call on Tuesday

Valli's first stint was with children at the Harrington House School, Chennai where she realized that educating young children was her calling. She then went on to do a one year Diploma in Montessori and primary teacher training at Children's Garden School. The School KFI was her first teacher placement. Here she imbibed J. Krishnamurthi's approach to teaching. She used all these experiences to develop a programme where there is a constant learning and teaching process for both the teacher and the student and applied this during her 3 year tenure at Sishya under mentor Kit Thomas.

With a Bachelors in Education for high school teaching at Mysore Regional College of Education, NCERT, Valli taught at Erode for 6 months at Kalaimagal Kalvi Nilayam. She also taught sciences/ environment at SOS Village Chatnath Homes.

The need to expand her universe and stretch the limits of education, took Valli to the US. Here she pursued a degree between Tufts University and Harvard. She continued at Tufts, teaching lab school at the day care center and then moved on to the Fayerweather Street school as a student teacher. She then went on to teach grades K through five for the next five years. Valli simultaneously worked at TERC researching curriculum for science and math and applied this toward elementary teaching. Her connection with India was strong as every summer she visited India and contributed to many schools and NGOs in the field of innovative education.

In 1999, Valli moved back to India permanently. Utilizing all her prior experience as an educator, she started the AMM after school. She believed that world-class elementary education in India was severely lacking and that it was necessary for education to focus on the young child. The after school program continued for 2 years and then she slowly started adding more services like a regular preschool for younger children. And thus was born Kids

Central. Today the school has programs for children the age of 9 months to 3rd standard. The after school program also continues to run.

Kids Central's curriculum and the school's various activities has been designed to encourage interaction between students of different age groups, foster respect for each child's thinking and appreciation of multiple perspectives, build team spirit, promote experiences which encourage observation, reflection, research, analytical thinking and problem solving and increase a child's independence. Kids Central uses theme-based artistic, sensorial or numerical projects that cover aspects of art, math, social studies, sciences, languages and music.

When Valli is not completely immersed with her role as an educator, she dons a chef's hat as she experiments with innovative global recipes, learnt first hand from her many travels. She is an avid reader and is very involved in the theater, music and cultural scene not only in Chennai. She also combines her passion for traveling with a love for social anthropology. She never misses the opportunity to visit different schools in other cities, meet with other educators and interact with students.



## RANJINI MANIAN

**Designation:**

Founder and CEO

**Company:**

Global Adjustments

**Address:**

38 D Coral Garden,  
2nd Main Road, RA Puram,  
Chennai 600 028.

Landline: +(91)-(44)-24617902, 24617903

E-mail: [info@globaladjustments.com](mailto:info@globaladjustments.com)

During the past 14 years in the relocation industry in 6 cities in India, Ranjini has worked with thousands of clients from over 75 nationalities. She has authored “Doing Business in India for Dummies”, writes regular columns in leading business dailies and is a sought after speaker. She has co-chaired the Worldwide Employee Relocation Council’s Global Workforce Symposium, received their ERC Meritorious Service award and has led Global Adjustments so as to be chosen as one of the top 10 ‘cool companies’ of India by Business Today. She is the only Indian Executive Committee member on the Women’s leadership Board at Harvard University.

Ranjini is a multicultural expert who pioneered and continues to be the editor of India’s first free cultural magazine for expatriates, ‘At A Glance – Understanding India’ and is the architect of India’s only cross-cultural e learning portal [www.globalindian.com](http://www.globalindian.com). She is fluent in French, Japanese and Spanish besides English and several Indian languages. She has co-authored the India chapter in the newly released “Sage Handbook of Intercultural competence”. She is also in the process of writing her next book, Upwardly Mobile, which will be published by Penguin. The book is going to focus on what India needs to become global in the true sense. It also talks about playing to India’s strengths and making it work to its advantage.

She received a Bachelors degree from Elphinstone College, Mumbai and a Diploma in French Literature from the University of Sorbonne, Paris. Despite the hectic life she leads, she maintains her balance studying Vedanata literature and spending time with family.



## VANITA MOHAN

**Designation:**

Executive Director

**Company:**

Pricol Ltd,

**Address:**

087-A Avanashi Road, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu 641037

Landline: 91 42 2533 6000

Mobile number: 9417511509

E-mail: i\_s\_vanitha@yahoo.com, vanithamohan@pricol.co.in

Vanitha has been the Executive Director of Pricol since 1st June, 1999. She is also a director in Prime Agri Solutions (India) Limited, Pricol Travels Limited, Sagittarius Investment Private Limited, Shrimay Enterprises Private Limited, Ashwanth Enterprises Private Limited and Supriya Investments Private Limited. She heads the Human Resource Development and Internal Audit functions of the Company. She is the Managing Trustee of Project Siruthuli, formed by the leading Corporates of Coimbatore with the objectives of making Coimbatore clean and green by desilting of tanks in and around Coimbatore in order to recharge the ground water levels, an extensive afforestation programme to plant 15 lakh trees in the next 3 years and to facilitate an effective garbage and sewage water treatment for Coimbatore.

She is a commerce graduate with a post graduate diploma in Business Management from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK



## TILISA GUPTA KAUL

**Designation:**

Head-microfinance,

**Company:**

Agri and gold loans Dhanlaxmi Bank Thrissur

Phone Number: 022 43561700

Email: tilisa@gmail.com

With more than seven years of experience in the BFSI segment, Tilisa has been an invaluable addition to Dhanlaxmi Bank. She has brought her inherent creativity to the table, time and again, as head of the Microfinance and Agricultural business, overseeing lending to Microfinance Institutions. She also has direct exposure to Self-Help- Groups in rural areas. Tilisa worked extensively in the microfinance sector at the grass root level and has also enjoyed a stint in the retail foreign exchange business. Prior to joining Dhanlaxmi Bank, she was entrusted with the task of setting up and managing the Microfinance portfolio at Reliance Capital Limited, which added richly to her experience in the Microfinance sector. In addition, she has had earlier associations with ICICI Bank and Travelex Global & Financial Services Pvt Ltd.

She entered the professional world well equipped with a postgraduate degree in commerce and a PGCBM from XLRI Jamshedpur.

Her painting, sketching and dancing skills are all indicative of her apparent creativity. She is an avid traveller and adventure sports aficionado.



## SHARAN APPARAO

**Designation:**

Founder

**Company:**

Apparao Galleries

**Address:**

#7Wallace Gardens, 3rd Street Nungambakkam

Chennai

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When not many thought of art business, she did. When not many believed in brand building for art and artists, she did. In her words, “I think ahead of time and observe what others do not see,” and this propels her to new heights on the national and international arena of art business. Sharan Apparao, proprietor of Apparao Galleries, and a recipient of a number of Women Achievers Awards lives by the mantra, ‘love what you do’. Sharan started the gallery when she was 21, (in 1984) drawing inspiration from Merchants and Masterpieces: The Story of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The story of Apparao Galleries is no less inspiring. She started small - in Chennai - more on an adventurous scale and that excitement is still alive. “I just gave it a shot. I believed that I could find a way out,” she reminisces. She looked beyond the canvas, sketching a business plan and now as a gallerist and curator, her diary is full, conducting regular shows across Indian metros as well as in Singapore, London, Dubai and Paris.



## SUNEETA REDDY

**Designation:**

Chairperson Aircel , Executive Director-Finance at Apollo Hospitals

**Company:**

Enterprise Limited (AHEL),  
Landline: 044-28296940 & (011-23349276/7)  
E-mail: suneetareddy@apollohospital.com

**M**s. Suneeta Reddy received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and Marketing. She holds a diploma in Financial Management from the Institute of Financial Management and Research, Chennai and has completed the Owner/President Management Program at Harvard Business School (HBS), Boston, USA.

She is on the Board of many organizations in the healthcare, hospitality and telecom sectors. During her 25 year tenure she has spearheaded many initiatives in the healthcare, hospitality sectors and she is an active member of industry bodies representing the healthcare sector. She is a widely recognized for her contribution to the Indian healthcare industry and has held leadership positions including Co-Chairperson of Healthcare Sub Committee Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). She is currently the Vice Chairperson for Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI).

Suneeta received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and Marketing. She holds a diploma in Financial Management from the Institute of Financial Management and Research, Chennai and has completed the Owner/President Management Program at Harvard Business School (HBS), Boston, USA.





## VANAJA ARVIND

**Designation:**

Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director

**Company:**

Thinksoft Global Services Limited.

**Address:**

Type II, UNIT-5, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai Instronics Estate,  
Thiruvanniyur,

Phone: 44 4392 3200

Email : vanaja.arvind@thinksoftglobal.com

**M**s. Arvind served as Chief Operating Officer of Thinksoft where she was responsible for Customer Satisfaction, Profitability, Quality, Productivity, Recruitment, Training and Retention and with a mandate to create “excellence in execution”.

Vanaja has filled a variety of roles and responsibilities in the IT industry. She started her career working for an Indian Financial services Co. She quickly moved on to running her own Software consulting firm for a few years before joining Citibank in 1990 initially as a Project Manager. Ms. Arvind's 5 year stint at Citi saw a string of achievements including large migration projects of entire credit cards and consumer Loans products and the SEI CMM level 3 assessment for the Citibank India Technology group.

In early 1995 Vanaja quit Citibank to head an ISP Co. She joined IBM Global Services as its Head of Quality in India, where she steered them in record time to achieve CMM Level 4 certification and laid the foundation to reach CMM Level 5 within couple of years. She went on to work at AT&T's facility at New Jersey and was responsible for managing quality for a mega outsourcing project by IBM for AT&T having more than 1500 software developers. She moved back to India as IBM's Country Manager for the SMB services sector.

Vanaja has consistently received professional recognition at the senior levels of the IT industry. She has over the years, in her own way has been consistently campaigning for bringing about paradigm changes in Quality and Productivity management, Project Risk Management and related areas . She is also a committed to championing and projecting the positive and critical economic role played by SME's in IT services in India. She is also a strong advocate of women's rights and gender equality.

Vanaja completed her Masters in Sociology from Madras University and Master in Science degree in Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh, U.S.A.

She lives in Chennai with her husband. She enjoys spending her personal time with her canine friends that include a Golden retriever, two basset hounds apart from the neighbourhood cat that decided to adopt her. A keen practioner of yoga, when time permits she also experiments with baking variety of breads and herbal cooking.



## Dr. KAMALA SELVARAJ

**Designation:**

Associate Director

**Company:**

GG Hospital Chennai.

Phone Number: 28272460

Email Id : drkamala@gghospital.in

**D**r. Kamala Selvaraj pioneered the First Test Tube Baby of South India in August 1990 and since then has had many achievements – including several firsts - in assisted reproduction.. In 1992 - For the first time in India she made a surrogate baby possible . In 1992 - Her clinic performed the first Sperm attached Oocyte Fallopian tube Transfer (SOFT) . In 2008 - first Frozen Egg (Oocyte) baby, was delivered by her clinic. For the first time in South East Asia, under her care, twins were born to a patient with Mayer-Rokitansky-Kustner-Hauser Syndrome through a surrogate. She has fulfilled the dream of thousands of couples in India and from countries like Dubai, UK, US, Australia, Sri Lanka and Canada to have children of their own.

In 2002, she was awarded PhD for her thesis on “Premature Ovarian Failure and its management”. She has many publications to her credit in several National and International journals as first author and has authored chapters in textbooks on assisted reproduction. Kamala is the recipient of several awards including Best Lady Doctor award (1993), Mahila Shironmani Award (1995), Rajiv Gandhi Memorial National Integration Award (1995) and Seva Ratna Award. She constantly updates herself in assisted reproduction by participating in national and international conferences Kamala graduated from Kasturba Medical College, Manipal. She completed DGO and MD from Madras Medical College Chennai.

In the last 20 years, she has helped more than a thousand childless couples. “Today, G.G. Hospital, which she founded in 1982, gets about 80 to 120 pregnancies a month of which at least 50 to 60 are test tube babies. There was nobody to guide her on taking it forward. She has learnt things from scratch, prepared her own culture medium and tried to make things as simple and economical as possible for poor patients. She takes out time of her real busy schedule for swimming, travelling, cooking, gardening and music.



## SAKUNTALA RAO

Director F&A Practice,  
Growth Markets Unit

IBM

Sakuntala has more than 25 years of experience covering areas such as audit supervision, F&A practice in house, management consulting and F&A practice lead roles with IT/BPO services providers. She has worked for international companies such as Price Waterhouse Coopers, KPMG, Infosys and IBM, as well as in Oman based companies and India's leading local management consulting company.

In the course of her career Sakuntala has led projects leading to re-engineering of a company she worked in, and she has also led projects on process improvement, human resource management with a focus on recruitment and counseling of consultants, knowledge management and overall strategy. Her experience spans several industries including Banking and Financial Services, Oil & Gas,

Public Services, Manufacturing, Trading and Telecommunications. Sakuntala joined IBM in 2003 and set up and ran the F&A solutions and business development teams in India with a focus on driving profitable growth for the business globally. She has recently moved to a Solutions Sales role in IBM's Growth Market Unit of Global Process Services

Sakuntala graduated with an MBA from Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh UK and also holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Bangalore University, India). Her professional qualifications include being Chartered Accountant – Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, India as well as the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, UK. Achievements/Milestones: Presidents Gold Medalist in CA in India for coming first in the CA final exam (May 1984). Awarded a special prize by the then PM of India, Mrs Indira Gandhi. Gold medalist in Bcom for the first Rank (Bangalore Univ). Also first rank in Karnataka State in Pre-university.

She wants to continue to do what she enjoys and learn new things every day!



## NEETA REVANKER

**Company:**

Sasken Communication Technologies Limited

**Designation:**

Whole time Director; CFO and Global Head HR, IT, IS and Admin

Bangalore - Corporate Headquarters

Sasken Communication Technologies Ltd

Between 1991 and 1994 Neeta was in Indian Aluminium Company Limited.

Then followed a year in Microland Limited. In 1995 she joined Sasken Communication Technologies Limited as a Manager in the Finance team. She has since been in roles that have required strong core finance capabilities and a deep rooted understanding of the laws, in the face of changing regulations. Besides, she also has displayed vast process knowledge and risk intelligence. Using her financial insights and understanding of the business, Neeta has driven necessary and positive changes across the organization in partnership with other business executives. Since 2002, the role of Finance as a business partner within Sasken has evolved, Neeta being an integral driver of this transformation. She is currently the CFO and Global Head of HR, IT, IS and Admin and Member of Sasken Board.

Neeta has made significant contributions to Sasken's first printed Annual Report as a closely held Company. She has also made visible contributions in the implementation process of ESOP. Neeta was involved in the drive for transparency in governance at Sasken. She published the 1997-98 Annual report with accounts as per US GAAP. Between 2001 and 2003 Neeta was a key participant in Sasken's recovery from the recession in the Telecom sector. In 2005 she was a major contributor to the IPO of Sasken. The company went public in August 2005. During September 2006, Sasken acquired Botnia Hightech Oy, a Finnish company, now known as Sasken Finland Oy. Neeta played a pivotal role in this acquisition. In 2008 she was given additional responsibilities of IT, IS and Admin. She was also given charge of HR, at the beginning of the recession. She played an important role in Sasken's action plan to manage impact of recession. In 2010 she was inducted to the board of Sasken.

She has been awarded Excellence in Finance in SME by IMA India. Neeta enjoys playing cricket and as a student has won many tournaments for her university. Neeta's primary vision is to coach and mentor aspiring leaders; to give back as much as possible in various

ways and help build a strong organisation in parallel. She also takes the initiative in creating an equal opportunity work environment. In this regard, she guides aspiring women leaders in their career progression. Further, Neeta is a keen proponent of maintaining diversity in the workplace. She has championed a number of initiatives to ensure a congenial and inspiring work place for all employees and looks forward to continuing the same.



## MAURA CHARI

**Designation:**

Founder

**Company:**

Wellnessocean.com

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maura@wellnessocean.com

phone: 09845005504

Maura Chari was born in a small town in Germany. Her father was a school principal and her mother a homemaker. She has three siblings. To be able to earn herself some extra pocket money, she started working different jobs from the age of 14 in a bakery or restaurant, distributing newspapers during weekends and school vacations. When she was around 12 her grandmother taught her to cut and stitch clothes and she soon started designing and making her own clothes and started selling them to friends and boutiques. That's how she started her first small business, which helped her in the subsequent years to finance her studies. She did her B-Tech in Garment Design and technology at a German technical university and then worked for two years in a German import company.

She was sent to Bangalore to manage the purchases and production for this German Importer and met Sridhar Chari, a leather garment exporter and her future husband, and decided to make Bangalore her new home. A serial entrepreneur, Maura was quick to conceptualize Linkers Buying Services in 1992, which was into the product sourcing and quality control for foreign companies. She saw the growing demand and leveraged on her knowledge about the Indian market and her German origin, to be able to successfully form an 'intermediate' organization for foreign companies. Maura's entrepreneurial flair once again surfaced when she was sourcing Ayurvedic wellness products out of India. She quickly spotted the chance when the demand for the same products started coming also from Indian customers. Since such wellness products were not available for Indian customers exclusively, she formed Wellnessocean.com targeting the Indian market. Wellnessocean.com is an online retail store. Customers pay online or deposit the payment in our bank account in advance; the orders are couriered and home-delivered to

any place in India within 3-4 days. A 'bootstrapper' by practice, Maura has bootstrapped Wellnessocean.com with the earnings from Linkers Buying Services.

Maura plans to grow the sales and product ranges of the internet store and to include and support many more small scale companies in India and abroad. Being an online shop, there is scope to extend the reach to India's neighboring countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal Bangladesh etc and other international markets in the near future.





## HAMSANANDHI SESHAN

Director, Delivery Excellence, IBM India

IBM Global Services Ltd

**H**amsanandhi started working in 1990. She has been in the IT field all along doing various different roles. She worked in several different platforms and technologies. Playing different roles in newer and first of a kind areas has always helped her build and sharpen her skills. It has better prepared her to take risks and she has learnt to be good at handling surprises! She chose to be in the management side rather than the technical side, as she has a flair for working with people, teams and her strengths are in conceiving the big picture and influencing teams to work on them. During her 20 years of Professional work, she began as everyone else, but held on and sustained simply because, she was willing to experiment, willing to take risks and always relied on her personal capabilities. She has learnt from her mistakes and by way of education.

Being a perfectionist she strives to deliver high quality deliverables in any manner – be it at home or at work and she expects the same from her team. She believes in mentoring and she uses her mentors effectively. Hamsanandhi feels that as a woman, it is also important to have the right balance and be able to have the courage to chart your career. “Pace it”, she says. “Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass. It’s about learning to dance in the rain.

She has won several awards during her career in IBM since 1995 – for technical achievements and an award for turning around a project with a Canadian client in 2000. She won the Golden Circle award in 2010 – one of the 24 in Growth Markets. The Golden Circle comprises the highest echelon of IBM’s top sales performers from brands, client sets, and channels globally, who have been evaluated not just on the basis of their outstanding sales performance, but also by their commitment to client satisfaction, teaming, and winning with Values. The Golden Circle qualifiers are the company’s topmost 500 sales and services employees, 24 percent of which come from Growth Markets.

Currently she has been chosen to 'Transform the services within the Delivery Excellence' in the organization. Her family moments are mostly in the tennis rackets, musical instruments or in the Harry Potter books! Hamsanandhi is a Bangalorean at heart and by birth. Multi-lingual with Indian languages , with the ability to read and write the scripts as well.



## MAHIMA DATLA

**Designation:**

Senior Vice President – Biotechnology and Products,  
Biological E Ltd

**Company/Organization:**

Biological E Ltd

Datla, completed her graduation in Management, Emphasis Business Administration from Webster University, Regents College, London, in 1998. After toying with several ideas, she decided to join the family business. She began as a management trainee, working under the then deputy managing director. She was a quick learner and got involved with all aspects of business like restructuring exercises, expansion plans, distribution, logistics, raising funds for vaccines or setting up facilities. The company started with two products (vaccines) in the early 70s and has expanded to a portfolio of about ten with several others in the pipeline,” says Datla. And much of this success is credited to Datla. She says she stumbled on to the vaccine side of the business and ever since have been deeply passionate about it. She has been in charge for co-ordination of development of cell culture based in-activated Japanese encephalitis vaccines in India in partnership with Intercell of Austria, which is at the forefront of the industry.

Ms. Datla is an elected member of the Steering Committee for the DCVMN (Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers Network) since April 2001. She is also a member of the Biotechnology Committee in FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) and CII (Confederation of Indian Industry).



## Dr. NIRMALA LAKSHMAN

Joint Editor, Director,  
The Hindu

Nirmala is a seasoned commentator on a range of social and development issues as well as the arts, literature and culture. She regularly writes editorials and articles in The Hindu on all these subjects. She has also published in depth interviews with experts in her fields of interest. Some of these have been reproduced in well known anthologies published abroad. She is the author of an anthology of contemporary Indian journalism titled *Writing A Nation* in 2007 which through a wide selection of newspaper articles examines the rich and diverse contours of Indian journalism.

In various senior roles at The Hindu for more than two and a half decades, Nirmala has edited the feature sections of the newspaper including the Sunday Magazine and the Literary Review. She instituted the Literary Review in 1991 which grew from a 4 page to an 8 page supplement making The Hindu the only newspaper that provides extensive space for literature and writing in India. She also introduced the popular children's supplement Young World in 1990 to attract younger readers to the newspaper and also initiated the Newspaper in Education programme. She conceptualized and created the highly popular young people's weekly supplement NXg in 2008. In the 1990s she formulated and edited Folio, a niche publication as part of the Sunday Magazine that was themed around society and the arts.

Nirmala was a Press Fellow at the University Cambridge, UK, and has also been a Fellow of the 21st Century Trust in the UK. She is the chairperson of the Media Fellowship Committee of the National Foundation of India, and is also currently on the Board of Trustees of National Foundation of India. She also serves on the board of PRADAN.

She has a PhD in Post Modern Literature from the University of Madras and a Masters Degree from the United States. Nirmala has an abiding interest in the role of media in a democracy.



## NANDINI RANGASWAMY

Managing Director

Chandra Group,  
Coimbatore

Nandini has been at the helm of affairs as the Managing Director / Managing Partner of all the Group concerns since 1994. During her tenure, the Groups turnover and growth have improved manifold and there are plans to foray into new and niche markets. Besides this she handles the affairs of the GRG Educational Institutions as its Founder Trustee & Secretary. She is an avid social worker & Philanthropist. She also holds directorship in Magna Electro Castings Limited. She is the Chairperson, CII, Tamil Nadu State Council & Senate Member, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.

Nandini was married at a very young age and was a content home maker with two children. She comes from a business family and a split in the joint family forced her to run two textile mills which were not doing well. She had to face the situation with no experience, no formal education, but only grit and determination. Her mentor was her mother in law, Mrs. Chandrakanthi who was a remarkable lady. Says Nandini, “Mrs. Chandrakanthi taught me the values that I in turn pumped into the business. She taught me that there was no short cut to success. I had been watching her living that from day to day. I saw how she started out with just one school for girls in 1956 and went on to build the GRG institutions to make such a significant difference to women’s education in the Coimbatore region. All this, without having the backing of sound education herself! She taught me to keep myself firmly rooted to the ground and still dream the impossible.” After ten years of struggle Nandini managed turn the business around and look towards expansion and diversification.

Today Nandini has received many honours and awards. She was conferred the Kongunattu Sathanaiyallar Award by Nachimuthu Industrial Association Institutions in February 2008 for her outstanding contribution to industry, education and social service. She

was also conferred with Pinnacle of Excellence award by Rotary club, Coimbatore in the year 2009.

Today her life is all about nurturing her two sons to be successful in taking their family legacy of values and trust forward into the next generation and beyond. When she finds time at all, she relaxes watching movies.



## PRITHA RATNAM

Joint Managing Director

Sundaram Industries Limited, Chennai

Pritha joined Sundaram Industries since 1995 and has been running the Retreading Business Division. Between 2004 and 2006, two new businesses were set up in addition to the Retread business. The business of devulcanizing waste rubber compound was established in technical collaboration with Lev gum, Israel in 2004. Driven by the environmental concerns that we face today, Pritha wanted to find ways to recycle and reuse waste rubber compound. This business provides an eco friendly solution to the world as well as offers rubber product manufactures an opportunity to make huge savings on their raw material costs.

She established the third business Sun Tyre and Wheel Systems in May 2006. This division manufactures Solid Industrial Tyres for the material handling industry, with 95% of its sales exported to all major countries in the world. This division has recently acquired a plant in Sri Lanka in October 2010 to manufacture Solid Tyre and has expanded its manufacturing capacity in order to meet the increasing demand from customers.

There are 1200 employees in the three business divisions she supervises in 24 manufacturing locations in South and Central India and one location in Sri Lanka.

Pritha did her B A Fine Arts from Stella Maris College, Chennai and was the University topper. She received Gold Medals both in Fine Arts & Sanskrit.



## Dr. THARA THYAGARAJAN

Co founder, Chairperson and Managing Director

Madura Microfinance

**M**adura is a for-profit social enterprise that uses a strategic science based approach to the problem of poverty. This particularly involves understanding the influence of information dynamics and social network structure on economic outcome and using this to create targeted product innovations with large scale potential. Madura's initiatives include microfinance - small loans to rural entrepreneurs, micromarkets - audio-visual, print and mobile based products to create local market linkages, and microeducation - digital education for illiterate and semi-literate entrepreneurs and job seekers. As a microfinance provider Madura has the distinction of the highest cost efficiency worldwide (recognized by Forbes in its earlier avatar of Microcredit Foundation of India) and is a highly profitable company offering the lowest rates of any microfinance institution in the country today. With over 1500 employees across 200 locations in Tamil Nadu, Madura has disbursed over Rs. 650 Crores in loans to date. Tara is also a visiting scientist at the National Centre for Biological Sciences in Bangalore where she works on understanding how distributed electrical activity gives rise to perception and behaviour. She has discovered the phenomenon of Coherence Potentials that suggests parallels in brain function to the spread of ideas and innovation in society. She has a PhD in Neuroscience from Stanford University and did her post doctoral work at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD (USA).

Prior to becoming a scientist she did a BA in Mathematics at Brandeis University and an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management where she was an Austin scholar. She has worked previously in the textile and pharmaceutical industries in various roles including marketing, project management and strategic planning.

She writes on a science based approach to understanding poverty in her column called Physics of Poverty at [yourstory.in](http://yourstory.in).





## REVATHY ASHOK

Runs her own consulting practice

Revathy Ashok has had successful leadership experience of over three decades spanning variety of industries - Private Equity, software and IT enabled services, manufacturing, infrastructure and real estate, international trading organisations in senior management positions handling wide variety of portfolios, namely, raising capital, business development, finance, commercial and other strategic general management functions.

She has experience in managing publicly listed and venture funded entities, subsidiaries of Global MNCs and joint ventures of which last four years were spent in real estate private equity. She has extensive experience joint venture negotiations, structuring, equity financing, syndicated debt and investor relations.

With her experience in helping set up companies from scratch and growing them to scale, Revathy has a strong passion for working with emerging companies and the start up eco systems. She frequently mentors entrepreneurs on their start up ventures and has her own consulting practice. She is an active member of the Indian Angel Network and has so far made four investments and is also currently involved in helping IAN set up an incubator.

As Managing Director, Head – Finance of Tishman Speyer India, a large US based Real Estate Private Equity Fund with USD 53 Bn assets under management she helped set up their operations in India and oversaw the investments in excess of USD 150 Mn over four years. During her tenure with Syntel and the Microland Group as Group CFO responsible for all their financial activities across the globe, she has dealt with leading international and domestic financial investors and has successfully raised capital from marquee investors. As Director Finance and Business Development, she was responsible for setting up Tyco Electronics (erstwhile AMP) in India and played a key role in the growth and financial success of the Group over the years being part of the Top Management team responsible for

providing strategic direction for the Group's rapid growth and expansion in India and was responsible for setting up two Joint Ventures for the group, a wholly owned subsidiary in the Middle East and integrating Tyco's worldwide acquisitions in India.

Revathy has held several senior Board and Advisory positions. She is currently an independent member on the Board of Welspun India, on the advisory Boards of start ups and an honorary member on the board of Academy of Theater Arts. She is a Charter Member, Secretary and Member of the TiE Governing Council, Bangalore and a Member of the CII SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON CHAMPIONS NETWORK working to establish linkages between large corporates and the high potential entrepreneurial eco system.

In 2005, she was named as one of the 10 most powerful women in the Indian IT industry by Dataquest. Revathy is a speaker at several industrial forums including lectures at the Indian Institute of Management and other institutes

She earned a bachelor's degree in science from Mount Carmel College and is a gold medalist from the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

She wants to use the tremendous wealth and breadth of leadership and management experience behind her to strengthen the start up , early stage eco system that would help create the next generation leaders. Revathi wants to give back to society in the areas of education, skills development and women's empowerment .



## SANGITA REDDY

Executive Director, Operations

Apollo Hospitals Group

Sangita's responsibilities involve policy, growth and strategy, for the group. Her role is pivotal in directing the group's operations. Under her stewardship the Apollo Hospitals in Hyderabad has emerged as Asia's first Health City. It has done so by introducing multi-dimensional holistic healthcare to India. Sangita's inputs are central to the structure and values of the Apollo culture. She leads the Human Resources and IT functions across the group. She has also been instrumental in extending community-based hospital projects, with a special focus on rural areas. One of her initiatives has been Apollo Reach, which aims to build a string of secondary care hospitals in rural areas across India. She also leads the clinics division of the group aimed to enhance access.

In addition, Sangita is managing director of Apollo Health Street. Under her guidance, Apollo has become a leading offshore services firm that provides consultancy to some of the largest payers and providers in the U.S. She has been a pioneer in advocating the benefits of a global delivery model. For more than 20 years, Ms. Reddy has worked in multiple segments of the healthcare sector. She has presented papers at several international forums including the World Health Congress. In doing so, she has earned the respect of international healthcare leaders and has influenced the development of healthcare information technology industry.

Her passion for caring for all has made her the ideal head for "Apollo Philanthropy". The initiative includes SACH, SAHI, CURE and the BHB.

Sangita graduated in science with honors from the Women's Christian College, Chennai. She has taken post-graduate and executive courses in Hospital Administration from Rutgers University and Harvard University in the U.S. and National Singapore University in Singapore. In 1998, she received the Young Manager of the Year Award from the Hyderabad

Management Association, and in 2005-06 was awarded the Top Woman Entrepreneur in the Information and Communication Technology Sector.

She is a member of the Rockefeller Working Group, where she is responsible for Private Healthcare Development. Sangita is also a director of AHIL, PCR Investments Limited, Apollo Health and Lifestyle, Apollo Mumbai Hospitals Limited, Medvarsity Online Limited, Family Health Plan and Apollo Health Resources Limited.

Ms. Reddy has been elected as Head of FICCI, Andhra Pradesh division and is on the FICCI National Executive Committee.



## GEEHTA PANDA

**Designation**

Senior Executive

**Company**

Hewlett Packard Enterprise Services

**G**eetha is a Senior Executive in, Hewlett Packard Enterprise Services. She is responsible for a large enterprise customers' "End User Computing" Service Desk Operations.

Her job is a dynamic customer facing one needing her to deliver to the customer's financial objectives as well as making sure that Information Technology is most available for the customers to make a clear distinction in their market place.

Geetha has over 20 years of work experience in diverse industries such as IT, Financial Services and Biotechnology!!

Several years ago, when IT Enabled Services (ITES) was a huge growth opportunity for India, Geetha worked with several multinational corporations Globally, transforming and growing the industry in India . As the head of Customer Care In Monsanto, she worked relentlessly in remote villages with the Indian Farmers educating and enabling adoption of Biotechnology!

Geetha is an MBA in Finance and has direct interest in Fine arts!!

Amongst her other achievements, Geetha was also voted the most promising Women Leader (Niche Segment) in the year 2000 by a popular UK based News Channel!