



From Legal Corridors to Corporate Boardrooms – Our Women Walk the Talk! Women of Power Series - Part One

- Written by Anupama Gopalakrishnan | Miindia Exclusive | ©2013

When Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook launched the Lean In movement (triggered by her book launch *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*) – to help women’s economic mobility, several applauded the work. A few weeks later, her job posting in a much acclaimed newspaper looking for a woman editorial intern (unpaid!), much backlash followed - when critics howled on the organization suggesting that empowering women shouldn’t mean people have to work for free.

First off, this isn’t about feminism. In a world that is rampant with political, social and economic issues including job losses, women of South Asian origin are leaping forward “leaning in” to positions of power and responsibility. Here’s to Miindia’s “Women of Power” series that showcases women that go beyond the traditional taxonomy of political and economic might. These educated and responsible change agents are transforming the world with fresh and exhilarating ways. Their broad innovative ideas have changed the way we look at the world today. They have embraced the ability to dream big and assert their value by enjoying their womanhood with great responsibility and élan.

Miindia.com provides a snapshot of the top four in Part I – Women of Power series, presenting Mamatha Chamarthi, Pragati Mathur, Mina Sooch and Shalina Kumar – who have redefined and expanded power to achieve success for themselves, their families, their companies, their world and not to forget their immediate community – the real power of the true American dream!



MAMATHA CHAMARTHI - *Vice President and CIO, Consumers Energy*

Education: Master’s degree in business administration from Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management as well as master’s degrees in computer science, software engineering and English literature.

Mamatha’s tenure with Consumers Energy as its Vice President and CIO has moved the organization from a reactionary IT organization that responded to requests from business partners, to having a valuable seat at the table with technology influencing and driving the company’s strategy and annual objectives.

Speaking about her role in this change, Mamatha mentioned, “Our organization continues to transform, but, technology transformation is not just an IT transformation; it is a transformation of digital capability across the company. Through the transformation journey, we are building ‘technology muscle,’ increasing our technology, innovation and analytical skills to ensure we are

able to maximize the business value of our technology investments. IT and the business need to co-evolve in this transformation. Our business is moving from an end-user of technology to a collaborative leader by governing technology investments, increasing analytical and technology skills and tapping the innovative thinking of the workforce. We are driving this transformation that will ultimately allow us to realize our strategy”

Prior to joining Consumers Energy, Mamatha held senior leadership roles at Daimler Chrysler, where she led both the merger and eventual separation of Daimler from Chrysler. In her current capacity as Vice President and CIO of Consumers Energy, she not only leads an organization that builds creative technological solutions for business challenges, but also injects her expertise and experience by taking on non-technical challenges. Mamatha stated that, “The cross-functional nature of information technology gives professionals like me an opportunity to lead key initiatives in the company, like accountability for improving our company’s J.D. Power customer engagement scores, even when technology plays only a supporting role. At Consumers Energy I’ve also been able to partner externally with the State of Michigan to bring jobs and talent to the state. It’s not often we can talk about domestic job growth in today’s global environment! These are examples of how the CIO role is expanding across organizations into areas historically led by other functions.”

Consumers Energy is the principal subsidiary of CMS Energy. For more than 125 years, Consumers Energy has provided combined gas and electric service to nearly 6.8 million of Michigan’s 10 million residents. As the nation’s fourth largest utility, and with more than 7,500 employees, Consumers Energy plans to invest about \$7 billion in its operations through 2017, making it the second-largest investor in Michigan. Consumers Energy is very proud of its commitment to investing in Michigan and growing the state’s economy.

Mamatha attributes her success to employees. She maintains that building strong networks both internally and externally creates powerful relationships. A successful leader walks away with a lengthy list of achievements – and a team that carries on the vision. Mamatha feels her diverse education and guidance from her mentors were a catalyst in shaping her career.

Other achievements: Mamatha Chamarthi sits on the boards of the Michigan Council of Women in Technology (MCWT) and Midwest Technology Leaders. Mamatha is a member of the Wall Street Journal Executive Taskforce for Women in the Economy and serves as an advisory board member and mentor for the “Elevate - We Build Character” mentoring program for information technology (IT) professionals. Mamatha has also been appointed to serve on the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder. In 2012, she was appointed to the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) Cyber Security Executive Advisory Committee, and also to the Michigan Cyber Security Advisory Council.



PRAGATI MATHUR - Boeing Chief IT Architect and Director, IT Enterprise Architecture

Education: Master of Business Administration from Walsh College, Master of Science in Information Technology at Carnegie Mellon University.

Pragati Mathur joined Boeing in October 2012 as Boeing’s Enterprise IT Architecture leader. She was most recently the Director and Chief Architect for Global Sales and Marketing Division and Enterprise Data at General Motors. She held numerous other positions at General Motors, including Global SAP chief architect; Chief Architect – North America; and Senior Enterprise Architect – common systems. Her background includes experience in strategy, architecture, system design, program management, business consulting and senior level technical management.

Pragati has been responsible for simplifying and standardizing all enterprise architecture components including information management, infrastructure, technology and systems, and in her new role has been governing Boeing’s enterprise architecture processes with a focus on integration across key business and IT process areas.

According to Pragati, Boeing IT’s mission is to expertly plan, deliver and maintain the IT products and services required to successfully run Boeing’s global operation and to ensure our long-term competitiveness. By providing IT solutions that are innovative, cost effective, and reliable and secure, we further enable and support growth and productivity while protecting Boeing’s systems, information and people.

Boeing is the world’s leading aerospace company and the largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners and military aircraft combined. Additionally, Boeing designs and manufactures rotorcraft, electronic and defense systems, missiles, satellites, launch vehicles and advanced information and communication systems. As a major service provider to NASA, Boeing is the prime contractor for the International Space Station. The company also provides numerous military and commercial airline support services. Boeing provides products and support services to customers in 150 countries and is one of the largest U.S. exporters in terms of sales.

Pragati attributes her success to her loving family, great mentors who helped her and guided her in school and workplace throughout her career. Pragati maintains that education is one big key to success. Both academic and workplace education has contributed to her success.



Honorable Shalina D. Kumar - Chief Circuit Judge Pro Tempore

Education: Judge Shalina Kumar graduated with distinction from the University of Michigan with a B.A. in psychology and the University of Detroit-Mercy School of Law.

Shalina D. Kumar was an associate of the Southfield based law firm of Weiner & Cox, PLC, specializing in complex civil litigation, medical malpractice and wrongful death actions with extensive trial experience.

Judge Kumar was appointed to the Oakland County Circuit Court in September 2007. Her Civil litigation experience in private practice extended from 1997-2007. Judge Kumar’s Medical Malpractice, Wrongful Death, Complex Litigation trial practice also extended from 1997-2007. In her previous role, Judge Kumar was the Associate Attorney: Weiner & Cox P.L.C. from 2004-2007; and at Sommers, Schwartz, Silver & Schwartz P.C. from 2000-2004.

Judge Shalina Kumar was admitted to the Bar in Michigan in 1996. She has been a member of the Oakland County Bar Association, American Association of Justice, Michigan Association for Justice and served in the Sylvan Lake City Council between 1992-1993.



MINA SOOCH - *President and CEO, ProNAi Therapeutics; Managing Partner and Co-founder Apjohn Ventures*

Education: MBA from Harvard Business School in 1993 (at the young age of 25, one of the few WSU grads to attend HBS over its 100 years). Graduated summa cum laude and commencement speaker from Wayne State University in 1989 with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering.

Mina Sooch brings with her over twenty years of pharmaceutical and healthcare experiences as an entrepreneur and operator, strategy & finance advisor, and venture capitalist. Mina is President and CEO of ProNAi Therapeutics, a clinical stage cancer biotech company in Michigan. Mina has co-founded with Don Parfet (from the Upjohn family) Apjohn Ventures, a \$15M life sciences Venture Capital Fund since 2003 and served as entrepreneur in residence at \$100M Northcoast VC firm to learn the VC business prior to Apjohn. Mina has also co-founded Apjohn Group, a healthcare business accelerator, and several local biotech start-ups including ProNAi and Afmedica.

She has served on all the boards of her nine portfolio companies at Apjohn Ventures providing strategic, financial, operational, and M&A advice, including as a board member at ProNAi, Svelte, ZyStor, Nephron/CytoPherx, and Asterand with board observer roles at Ikano, Afmedica, Kereos,

and RenaMed. Apart from all the titles she has established in her successful career, Mina has served on not-for-profit boards of the Midwest Healthcare Investment Network and Michigan Venture Capital Association, including being the Chairman in 2009 and 2010.

Prior to venture capital, Mina spent eight years as a global account manager at Monitor Group, a top tier global strategy consulting firm based in Boston, with her client base consisting of mid-cap and large-cap healthcare companies and multi-billion dollar private equity companies. With a focus on M&A, she has worked on over 30 deals including \$7B Pharmacia & Upjohn merger in 1995 and \$1B merger of PharMerica in 1997. Mina was a co-founder of Monitor's Corporate Finance practice in 1998 and she began her career spending several years in research and product development at Ford Motor Company, Dow Chemical Company, and Proctor and Gamble.

Speaking about her responsibilities, Mina as CEO of ProNAi has a primary responsibility of setting the vision/priorities for the company long term and short term, recruiting and leading the management team, managing all aspects of operations to hit key milestones within time/budget, raising private financing with angels and Venture Capitalists, building relationships with over 30 pharma companies for eventual exit, managing the board, communicating with all shareholders, presenting at industry conferences, and writing new patents and grants.

ProNAi Therapeutics is private, venture-backed biotech company based in Michigan. The company was founded in 2004 and is a Delaware C Corporation. ProNAi is applying proprietary, DNA interference technology (DNAi®) to discover and develop novel drugs for cancer and other diseases. The company's most advanced drug candidate, PNT2258, has striking clinical and preclinical activity in hematological and solid tumor models. ProNAi has completed a successful Phase I trial that more than met its endpoints at START in Texas. Her most recent accomplishment at ProNAi includes raising another \$5M (for a total of \$25M) in the last year to fund the current Phase II study recruiting at sites in Michigan and Indiana, and with that investment seeing early clinical efficacy and continued safety data in non-hodgkins lymphoma (NHL) patients with their lead cancer drug PNT2258.

In scientific terms, Mina attributes her success to good 'genes', where she credits her dad Jagdish Patel who was the first to go to college in his family (top of his class) and the first to come to America in 1968 for his MS in Civil Engineering at Wayne State University. Mina commends her mom Sushila for teaching her the value of hard work, responsibility, compassion, having fun, and living with a positive attitude. Mina also credits her success to her husband Arvinder and children (Alex and Amanda) for giving her the space to work 70-80 hour weeks and travel all over the country for her career over the last 20 years. As Mina rightly states "a combination of strong work ethics and leadership skills can make a lot of difference" for today's woman in the corporate world.

Mina's future goal is to successfully partner/sell ProNAi to a large pharma/biotech company in the next 1-2 years with the lead cancer drug PNT2258 eventually approved and helping lymphoma and solid tumor cancer patients live longer and better; creating another great success for MI biotech cluster. She would love to continue her entrepreneurial passion and lead another life sciences portfolio company in Michigan through clinical development and exit/IPO. She wishes to expand her public and private board roles to contribute back to the community and industry.

On behalf of the Michigan Indian community, miindia.com applauds these women on their success and wishes them the best in their future endeavors. For comments and feed-back e-mail info@miindia.com