



Contact: Carolyn Northrup  
619-368-3274  
Communications Chair  
Howell Foundation  
[northrupcarolyn@gmail.com](mailto:northrupcarolyn@gmail.com)

## Howell Foundation Announces New Board Members

Three appointees bring key components to the women's health research foundation

The [Doris A. Howell Foundation](#) for Women's Health Research welcomes three new appointees to the Board: Carmen Colombo, Ph.D, Eileen Steres Gaffen and Aditi Gnanasekar. "We welcome Carmen, Eileen and Aditi as new directors to the Howell Board," said Carol Tuggey, Chairperson of the Howell Foundation Board. "They represent two key components of women's health: the need for cutting-edge research based on women's health issues, and the dissemination of the latest information on women's health."

"Carmen, Eileen and Aditi join the Howell Foundation at an exciting time as we strategically solidify and grow our trademark programs," said Tuggey. "They are leaders in their respective fields, and we value their in-depth perspective. We are confident these additions will complement the Board's skills and experiences and are appreciative they accepted to serve on our Board."

### About Carmen Colombo, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC



Carmen Colombo is the Chief Nursing Officer of [Sharp HealthCare's Specialty Hospitals](#): Sharp McDonald Center, Sharp Mesa Vista, and Sharp Mary Birch Hospital for Women & Newborns. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Stanford University, Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Pt Loma Nazarene University, a Master's of Business Administration from the University of Redlands, and Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing from the University of San Diego.

Carmen has more than 20 years as a leader in women's and newborn's health. She is an executive member of the Council of Women's and Infants Specialty Hospitals and The National Association of Behavioral Healthcare. Her interest in women's health began early in her career when she worked as a women's healthcare advocate for the Beach Area Community Women's Clinic. Over the years, her interest in research has expanded from working in the pharmaceutical industry to nursing research.

“I was a recipient of a Howell Foundation scholarship to support my doctoral nursing research while at The Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science at USD,” said **Dr.** Colombo. It was an honor to receive this scholarship from an organization with a notable history of supporting women’s health research. It is a privilege to be able to serve on the Board of Directors as it offers me an opportunity to give back and promote the scholarly work of others in the field of women’s health.”

### About Eileen Gaffen



Eileen Gaffen is president of the Del Mar-based public relations agency [Steres Gaffen Media](#) founded in 2014. She helps companies connect with their customers across traditional and social media platforms, improve reputation and influence, launch new products, build their brand, and grow profitable revenue.

During her 30+ year career, Eileen held several key public relations management positions with major brands – Hallmark and Sprint. She began her career as a television news producer with KFMB News8 in San Diego. Recognition includes an Emmy, Southern California Golden Mike, San Diego Press Club Excellence in Journalism, and Public Relations Society of America Silver Anvil awards.

Eileen is President of the San Diego Press Club board of directors, former board member of Women in Business San Diego, and a member of the Economic Development and Advocacy Council of the North San Diego Business Chamber.

“The Howell Foundation is about education, research, and next generation,” said Gaffen. “I learn so much about women's health from the top physician researchers and scientists in San Diego. Knowing that my contribution is going toward women's health research scholarships is rewarding. Having an opportunity to meet and hear from the student scholars several times a year at luncheon programs gives me faith in the next generation and the future of medicine.”

## About Aditi Gnanasekar



Aditi Gnanasekar is a rising senior at University of California, San Diego, and is studying Bioengineering: Biotechnology. She is a student in Dr. Weg Ongkeko's cancer and immunology research lab and has been investigating the roles of microbiome and mycobiome in cancer progression and prognosis.

In addition to receiving a Howell Scholarship consecutively for two years, Aditi is the most recent recipient of the prestigious [Barry Goldwater Award](#), designed to support and encourage students to pursue research careers in the natural sciences, engineering and mathematics field. She hopes to attend medical school in the future and become a physician-scientist.

“The Howell Foundation has been incredibly supportive of my undergraduate scientific research endeavors,” said Gnanasekar. “I am inspired by the Foundation's mission to educate and empower women in medicine and STEM. As part of the Board of Directors, I hope to become a mentor for other scholars and spotlight women's health research.”

## About the Doris A. Howell Foundation

The Doris A. Howell Foundation for Women's Health Research is dedicated to making a long-term, positive impact on women's health. Established in 1995, the Howell Foundation is the premier organization advancing women's health research. The organization does so by funding undergraduate and postgraduate research scholarships and grants to scientists researching issues affecting women's health; providing a forum for medical experts, scientists, doctors, and researchers to convey timely information on topics relevant to women's health and the health of their families; and through outreach events, funding and supporting research initiatives that improve the health of under-served women and increase awareness and advocacy in the community.