

**National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement's
Founder and President Banafsheh Akhlaghi
Named Top 100 Leading Lawyers in California**

Thursday, September 21, 2006 - The National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement (NLSCA) would like to congratulate its Founder and President, Banafsheh Akhlaghi, for being named one of "California's Top 100 Leading Lawyers" by the California Daily Journal. This is the second consecutive year that Ms. Akhlaghi has been recognized by the Daily Journal for her outstanding work in ensuring the human rights and dignity of Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (MEMSA) peoples post-9/11.

The annual "Top 100" list is determined by the Daily Journal's staff and the California legal community. According to the Journal's editor, Martin Berg, "It starts with questions. What were the big issues of the year that affected people's lives across the state, and who were the lawyers and judges who helped shape how those issues played out? Who is working behind the scenes influencing the political debate or the profile of the state's judiciary?"

Attorneys from a wide variety of backgrounds were recognized this year. Ms. Akhlaghi was featured on the cover of the 2006 Northern California publication, alongside two fellow honorees: United States Attorney Kevin Ryan, and General Counsel for Chevron Corp, Charles James.

Ms. Akhlaghi was categorized in "The Crusaders" section of the publication, for her courageous and timely dedication to protecting the rights of the MEMSA community after 9/11. Ms. Akhlaghi's work, through The National Legal Sanctuary for Community Advancement, was applauded for providing legal services to over 300 community members in the last year on pro-bono and sliding-scale basis.

We are honored by the Daily Journal's recognition of Ms. Akhlaghi and NLSCA, and are grateful for the light being shed upon this much-needed work in the post-9/11 arena of discrimination. As NLSCA moves into its third year in existence, we aim to foster a dialogue of hope; one that will bring about resolution of the many issues challenging the MEMSA community and our nation.