



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Women in Health Administration Announces 2026 Woman of the Year: Anne Tanner, MN, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE

LOS ANGELES, CA (November 6, 2025) —Women in Health Administration of Southern California (WHA) is proud to announce **Anne Tanner**, MN, RN, NEA-BC, FACHE, as the 2026 WHA Woman of the Year. This prestigious honor will be celebrated at the annual Woman of the Year Gala on Friday, June 5, 2026, aboard the iconic Queen Mary in Long Beach, California.

For nearly four decades, Anne Tanner has been a trailblazer in healthcare administration and clinical operations, recognized for cultivating cultures of inclusivity, excellence, and collaboration. Through her visionary leadership, she has driven transformative improvements in virtual care, workforce strategy, and leadership development—reshaping how organizations deliver care and support their teams.

As Executive Director of Patient Care Services at Children’s Hospital of Orange County (CHOC), now part of Rady Children’s Health, Tanner continues to advance clinical and operational performance, building strong teams and mentoring emerging healthcare leaders. Her commitment to empowering others through guidance, innovation, and purpose has made her a respected voice and trusted leader throughout the healthcare community.

“I’ve spent my career believing that true leadership isn’t measured by the titles we hold, but by the leaders we develop and the barriers we help others break through,” said Anne Tanner. “This recognition belongs to every woman who’s ever doubted herself, then found her voice. It belongs to the mentors who invested in me, and to the emerging leaders I’ve had the privilege to champion. WHA’s mission isn’t just about celebrating success about multiplying it.”

A Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and Past President of its Southern California Chapter, Tanner’s influence extends far beyond operational excellence. She founded ACHE SoCal’s Physicians’ Council, Past Presidents’ Council, and the LIFT Student Scholarship Program, which has raised more than \$30,000 to ensure financial barriers don’t derail promising careers. Her leadership on the Health Care Leadership Quorum Advisory Committee and the Hospital Association of Southern California Board demonstrates her commitment to shaping healthcare policy and practice at the highest levels.

“Anne Tanner represents the evolution of healthcare leadership: someone who can architect system-wide change while never losing sight of the individual leader who needs guidance,” said Tricia Gray, WHA President. “She doesn’t just open doors—she builds scaffolding so others can climb higher. That’s the kind of leadership that transforms not just organizations, but entire generations of women healthcare executives.”

A Legacy of Trailblazing Women Leaders

The Woman of the Year honor places Tanner among an extraordinary cohort of healthcare visionaries. Recent honorees include **June Simmons** (2025), Founding President and CEO of Partners in Care Foundation, whose pioneering work in community-based care coordination has touched thousands of vulnerable Californians; **Julie Sprengel** (2023), President and CEO of CommonSpirit Health’s California Region, who leads one of the nation’s largest health systems through unprecedented transformation; and **Jill Martin** (2022), Executive Vice President of Cedars-Sinai Medical Network, whose strategic vision has redefined integrated care delivery.

This legacy extends through leaders such as **Lara Khouri** (2016), Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer of Children's Hospital Los Angeles, whose strategic foresight shaped pediatric healthcare innovation; **Johnese Spisso** (2017), who transformed UCLA Health into a national powerhouse; **Dr. Margaret Peterson** (2018), who championed healthcare equity in underserved communities; and **Shawn Sheffield** (2019), whose strategic acumen positioned USC Keck Medicine for sustainable growth.

More Than Recognition — An Investment in Tomorrow's Leaders

The Woman of the Year Gala serves a dual purpose: celebrating today's leaders while funding tomorrow's. Sponsorships directly support WHA's scholarship programs, including the Gail Margolis Professional Development Scholarship (named for WHA's founding member and first Woman of the Year honoree) and the Graduate Student Scholarship for emerging healthcare executives.

"When you sponsor this event, you're not buying a table—you're buying into the future," Gray added. "You're investing in the next generation of healthcare leaders. You're giving a mid-career professional the executive training that propels her to the C-suite. And you're joining a network of organizations that understand: investing in women leaders isn't just the right thing to do—it's the smart thing to do."

Since its founding in 1981, WHA has built a robust community of healthcare leaders spanning payers, providers, regulatory agencies, and support service organizations throughout Southern California and beyond. As a designated Women's Healthcare Executive Network affiliate of the American College of Healthcare Executives, WHA provides members with access to a nationwide network of professionals committed to advancing women in healthcare administration.

Join Us in Celebrating Excellence and Inspiring Tomorrow

The 2026 Woman of the Year Gala will be held Friday, June 5, 2026, from 5:30–10:30 p.m., aboard The Queen Mary in Long Beach, offering an unforgettable evening of networking, inspiration, and celebration against the backdrop of one of Southern California's most iconic venues.

Sponsorship opportunities are now available at multiple levels—from Spotlight (\$15,000) to Scholarship Donation (\$2,000)—each offering unique benefits including gala tickets, marketing visibility, WHA membership, and opportunities to engage directly with Southern California's most influential healthcare leaders. All sponsorships support WHA's scholarship and professional development programs.

For **sponsorship information**, visit <https://whasocal.org/sponsor-benefits>

About Women in Health Administration of Southern California (WHA)

Founded in 1981, Women in Health Administration of Southern California (WHA) is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) professional association dedicated to advancing women in healthcare administration through education, networking, mentorship, and scholarship. As a designated Women's Healthcare Executive Network affiliate of the American College of Healthcare Executives, WHA connects members with a nationwide network of professionals committed to transforming healthcare leadership.

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