



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Women in Health Administration of Southern California Announces Anne Tanner as
2026 Woman of the Year and Signature Gala Panel

*Honoring a Trailblazing Leader with a Powerful Gala and Executive Panel on the Future
of Healthcare Leadership*

LOS ANGELES, CA (May 1, 2026) — 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. The evening will also feature a dynamic leadership panel bringing together five of Southern California’s most influential healthcare executives for a candid conversation on the future of healthcare leadership, equity, and innovation.

For nearly five decades, Anne Tanner has been a trailblazer in healthcare administration, recognized for cultivating cultures of excellence and collaboration through workforce strategy, leadership development, and virtual care innovation.

As former Executive Director of Patient Care Services at Children’s Hospital of Orange County (CHOC), now part of Rady Children’s Health, Tanner built high-performing teams and mentored the next generation of healthcare leaders.

“True leadership is not measured by where we stand, but by how many we empower to stand with confidence beyond us—breaking barriers, seizing opportunities, and moving past the barriers they once thought were impossible,” 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 and Past President of the ACHE Southern California Chapter, Tanner founded the LIFT Student Scholarship Program, raising more than \$40,000 for emerging leaders, and has served on the boards of ACNL and HASC.

“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.”

Meet the Moderator and Panelists

This year's gala will feature a moderated panel discussion with leaders whose careers span health systems, federal policy, nursing, consulting, and operations. Together, they will explore the evolving landscape of healthcare leadership and what it takes to drive lasting, systemic change.

Anne M. McCune, MBA, JD | CEO, Carol Emmott Foundation

Anne McCune is a nationally recognized healthcare executive with senior leadership experience at top academic medical centers and major consulting firms. She currently serves as CEO of the Carol Emmott Foundation, a national nonprofit dedicated to accelerating gender parity in healthcare leadership. Previously, she held COO roles at Stanford Children's Health, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, and City of Hope, and consulting roles at Accenture, Optum, and KPMG. She has been named one of Modern Healthcare's Top 25 Women Leaders in Healthcare and is a fellow of ACHE and the National Association of Corporate Directors.

Melanie Fontes Rainer, MEd, JD | Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer, L.A. Care Health Plan

Melanie Fontes Rainer is Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer at L.A. Care Health Plan, the nation's largest publicly operated health plan, serving more than 2.6 million members. With nearly two decades of experience in healthcare policy and law, she has focused on privacy, cybersecurity, civil rights, and AI. She previously served as National Director of Civil Rights and Chief Privacy Officer at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and holds a JD from the University of Arizona.

Kimberly C. Long, DHA, MSN, FNP, RN, FACHE | CEO, Association of California Nurse Leaders; Retired Hospital CEO

Dr. Kimberly Long brings more than 35 years of experience spanning executive healthcare leadership, nursing practice, education, and executive coaching. As CEO of the Association of California Nurse Leaders, she champions the advancement of nursing leadership statewide. Her executive career includes tenures as Hospital CEO, Chief Operating Officer, System Chief Nursing Officer, and Vice President for Clinical Services. A Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Dr. Long also serves as a Legal Nurse Consultant and Expert Witness and holds a Doctor of Health Administration along with Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Nursing.

Bonnie Panlasigui, MHA, FACHE | Senior Vice President, Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Hospital & Health Plan and Governor, American College of Healthcare Executives

Bonnie Panlasigui is a healthcare executive with twenty years of progressive leadership experience across integrated health systems, including C-suite and President roles at HCA, Alameda Health System, Dignity Health, and Summa Health System. She currently serves as Senior Vice President and Market Area Leader for Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara, overseeing 6,900 employees and nearly 500,000 members. In 2025, she was elected to the Board of Governors of ACHE and is a passionate advocate for advancing women and minorities into C-suite leadership. She holds an MHA from George Washington University and a BS from USC.

Nate Shinagawa, MHA, FACHE | Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, UCI Health

Nate Shinagawa oversees daily operations of UCI Health's six-hospital enterprise, with annual net revenue exceeding \$4.5 billion and more than 13,000 employees. A Cornell University alumnus with an MHA and Fellow of ACHE, he brings more than 15 years of senior hospital leadership across Banner Health and the Guthrie Clinic. He has been recognized as a Becker's Healthcare Health System COO to Know (2023–2025) and Academic Medical Center COO to Know (2024–2025).

The 2026 Woman of the Year Gala promises an unforgettable evening aboard the iconic Queen Mary—a celebration of extraordinary leadership, powerful storytelling, and the kind of authentic connection that only happens when the right people are in the same room. This is not just a recognition dinner. It is a gathering of the most influential voices in Southern California healthcare, united to honor a trailblazer and invest in the next generation. Every sponsorship directly funds WHA's scholarship and professional development programs, including the Gail Margolis Professional Development Scholarship and the Graduate Student Scholarship for emerging healthcare executives.

Space is limited—and this is one evening you will not want to miss. Join us on June 5, 2026, aboard the Queen Mary in Long Beach as we celebrate Anne Tanner and those shaping the future of healthcare. Sponsorship opportunities are available at multiple levels, each one a direct investment in rising leaders. Secure your seat and explore sponsorship options at <https://whasocal.org/events>

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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