

# San Woman of the Year nominee

San Associate Professor Payal Mukherjee was one of 4 impressive nominees for the 2019 NSW Premier's Woman of the Year Award.

Recognising the outstanding achievements of inspiring females, A/Prof Mukherjee was nominated for the award because of her advocacy for gender equality in medicine and against domestic violence, and because of her passion for excellence, innovation, and research.

The San ear nose and throat surgeon was humbled by the nomination and paid tribute to her family's belief in the power of education.

"I think while I naturally always strived to do my best, it is my family, and their experiences, that I believe have shaped who I am today" she says.

"My grandparents were raised around the time of the Partition, when India and Pakistan were created during massive civil unrest and an internal refugee crisis.

Life was extremely difficult and my grandmother, even though she would have made a great doctor, while she was resourceful and learned where she could, had no opportunity for extended education.

Similarly my parents' generation faced massive educational disruption with communist riots and violence causing school closures and it is a sign of his tenacity that my father still managed to graduate with a double degree in engineering, funded through scholarships.

As a result, I was brought up with a

strong urge to fight against social injustice and value education over financial rewards. I also learnt that all human beings can learn from personal adversity and drive social change."

A/Prof Mukherjee's family immigrated to Australia when she was 13.

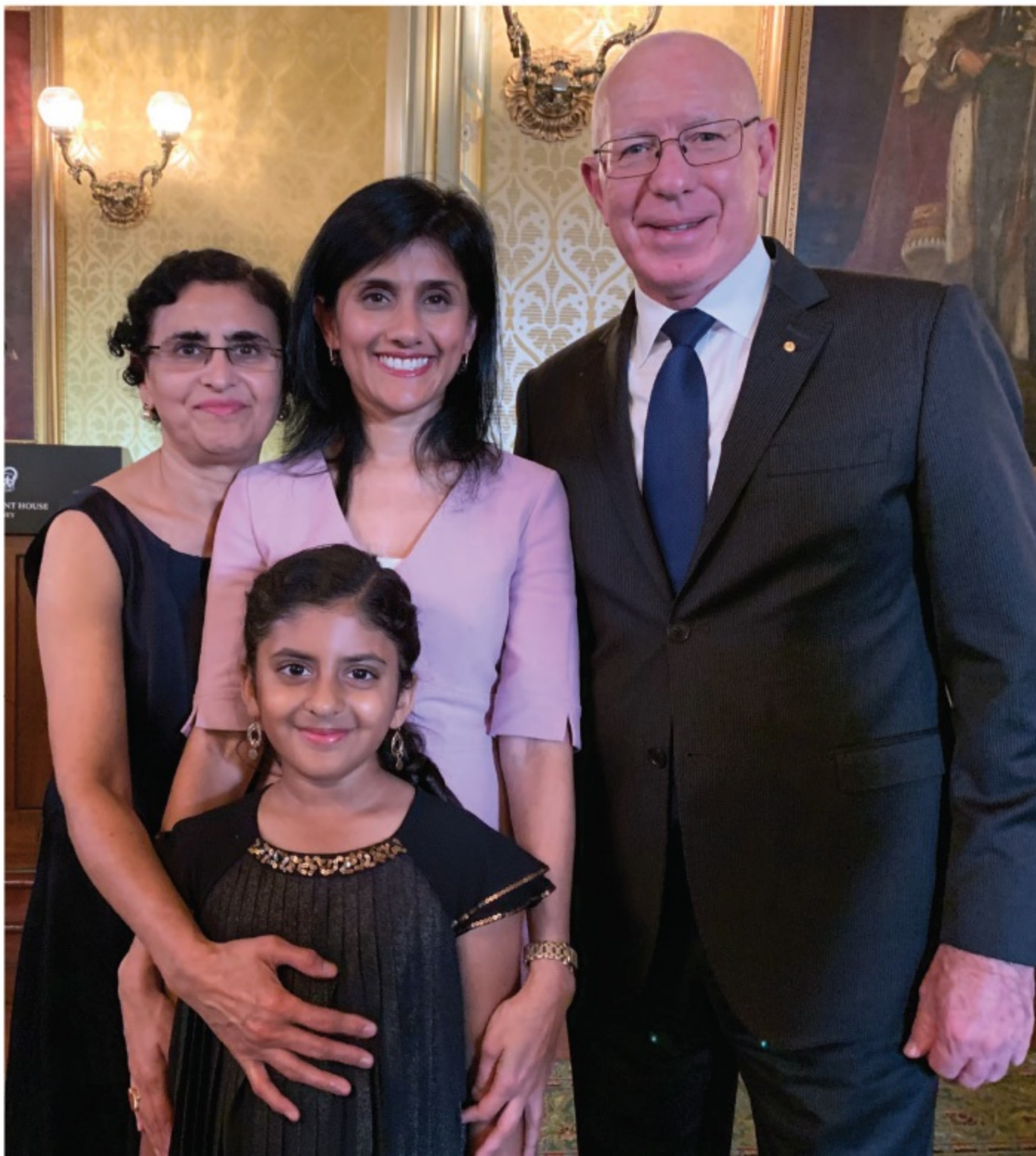
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*"I know I've had opportunities that many others haven't, and I think that's why I was drawn to medicine and love research, and why I'm still studying."*

*As a surgeon, I see the resilience of people struggling with the diverse things life delivers them, whether it's issues due to their hearing and health, domestic violence or other problems, and it inspires me to do my best to improve things where I can.*

*It's been incredibly rewarding to see those tangible changes improve people's lives".*

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Other Woman of the Year nominees included sexual harassment campaigner Tracey Spicer AM, NRL ambassador and mental health advocate Ruan Sims, and disability entrepreneur Laura O'Reilly, all pictured here with NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian. Ms Spicer was named as the awardee on March 7th.

Associate Professor Mukherjee, mother Manju and daughter Esha met NSW Governor David Hurley at Government House as part of her nomination celebration.