

## **Anousheh Ansari**

On September 18, 2006, Anousheh Ansari captured headlines around the world as the first female private space explorer. She also earned a place in history as the fourth private explorer to visit space and the first astronaut of Iranian descent. This was the accomplishment of a lifelong dream for her.

Back on Earth, as a successful serial entrepreneur, Anousheh returned to her job as co-founder and chairman of her latest technology company, Prodea Systems, focused on simplifying the digital home experience.

An active proponent of world-changing technologies and social entrepreneurship, Anousheh has dreamed of space exploration since childhood. Her family provided the title sponsorship for the Ansari X Prize, a \$10 million cash award for the first non-governmental organization to launch a reusable manned spacecraft into space twice within two weeks. With the success of the X Prize competition, Anousheh had helped launch a new era in private spaceflight.

In 2001, Anousheh served as co-founder, chief executive officer and chairman of the board for Telecom Technologies, Inc. After earning three key U.S. patents and growing the company to 250 employees with 100% sequential growth since inception, the company successfully merged with Sonus Networks in a deal worth approximately \$750 million dollars.

A living example of the American dream, Anousheh immigrated to the United States as a teenager who did not speak English. She immersed herself in education, earning a bachelor's degree in electronics and computer engineering from George Mason University, followed by a master's degree in electrical engineering from George Washington University. She is currently working toward a master's degree in astronomy from Swinburne University.

Anousheh is a member of the X Prize Foundation's Vision Circle, as well as its Board of Trustees. She has received multiple honors, including the World Economic Forum Young Global Leader, DFW International Community Alliance Hall of Fame award, the Working Woman's National Entrepreneurial Excellence Award, George Mason University's Entrepreneurial Excellence Award, George Washington University's Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, and the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award for Southwest Region.

She currently works to enable social entrepreneurs to bring about radical change globally, with organizations such as ASHOKA and the PARSA Community Foundation.

Anousheh Ansari dreamed of going into space since she was a little girl in Iran. That young girl, however, could not have known the impact she one day would have on dreamers around the world. Ultimately, Anousheh would build a lifetime of accomplishments in a few short decades, from creating a multi-million-dollar business to driving technological change to blasting into space. She hopes her tale of determination, struggle, and ultimate triumph will inspire children and women everywhere to dream big, study hard and see obstacles as merely problems to be solved.