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### **The New York Women's Foundation Honors Two Dynamic Young Women Leaders In Queens, NY**

New York, NY—Luna Ranjit and Ana Maria Archila were the recipients of the NYWF® 2007 Helen LaKelly Hunt Neighborhood Leadership Award for their exemplary leadership and their exceptional contributions to improving the lives of immigrants in their communities.

Luna Ranjit, born in Katmandu, is a co-founder and the Executive Director of the Long Island City-based Adhikaar for Human Rights and Social Justice. Ranjit saw the challenges the underserved Nepali community in Queens. "For me not being involved in social justice was not an option." Ranjit stated.

"The realization that our rapidly growing community went unnoticed, even in New York City, sowed the seeds for Adhikaar."

Currently, Adhikaar is overseeing the first comprehensive research study on Nepali people living in New York City.

Ana Maria Archila left her native Colombia at age 17 to come to the United States. Since then she has become a tireless advocate for immigrant rights in New York City. In her role as Executive Director of the Latin American Integration Center (LAIC) in Woodside, Queens, Archila works to promote the empowerment of immigrants and their participation in the political process. She has also become a powerful voice for change in the arenas of healthcare access and education reform in New York City.

"At LAIC we work on making the government accountable and changing the balance of power," Archila said, "We want to build a vehicle for immigrant power."

"Immigrants are the lifeblood of this City," stated NYWF® President and CEO Ana L. Oliveira, "yet they are so often among the city's most underserved populations. We are so inspired by Ana Maria and Luna, who came to this country as young immigrants themselves and have dedicated their lives to the empowerment of other immigrants in New York City."

The Keynote Speaker for the event was another community leader, Purvi Shah. Shah is the Executive Director of Sakhi for South Asian Women, a community-based organization serving women who have experienced intimate partner violence. While most of the women they work with live in New York City, Sakhi also gives assistance to South Asian women throughout the U.S., and globally. Ms. Shah is also an NYWF® board member.

The New York Women's Foundation (NYWF) was established in 1987 as a public philanthropy to be a voice for women and a force for change. We are a cross-cultural alliance of women helping low-income women and girls in the five boroughs to achieve sustained economic security through expanded opportunities. We work together to transform the conditions of poverty and to create an equal and just future for low-income women and girls. For more information go to [www.nywf.org](http://www.nywf.org)