

April 15, 2025

Dear AIR Board of Directors and Award Committee,

I must admit that I initially hesitated to write this letter—not out of ingratitude, but because I had hoped to receive this recognition quietly. However, one of my mentors reminded me of the importance of visibility. As a first-generation Latina, my presence in spaces where I may not always see myself reflected carries significance. Moments like this are not just personal milestones; they can serve as encouragement for others who, like me, may not always envision themselves in the rooms they aspire to enter. Therefore, accepting this honor fills me with deep gratitude.

I want to thank those who generously took the time to write letters of support for my nomination. This award acknowledges my work and reflects the extraordinary colleagues, mentors, and peers who have supported me.

I would also like to thank my mentors, Patricia DiBartolo and Minh Ly. Their insights, support, and invaluable time invested in me have profoundly shaped how I approach my work - with purpose, care, and hope. In particular, Minh, whose mentorship, unwavering support, and collaborative nature as a colleague have been instrumental in my personal and professional growth. I've been lucky to work with other incredible colleagues and collaborators—Cate Rowen, Kathleen Foley, Kathryn Aloisio, Jayne Mercier, and Elizabeth Kramer. Working closely with them— in and beyond the office — has been a continual source of inspiration and growth. I have learned from their expertise and examples, and I have truly felt supported and encouraged by all of them.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the COFHE Early Career group - Corinne Greenblatt, Katie Stephenson, Srishti Chandana, Marianne Bujacich, and Thanh Tran. Our collaboration has offered valuable insights into the field, and I look forward to continuing our work together.

Finally, I want to thank my family for their unwavering love, support, and belief in me.

I'm excited to continue growing within this community and to continue to contribute to the important work we all share.

With gratitude,

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