

Local family share their story about moving to Canada

Ravi Joshi came to Red Deer from India in 2010 and worked at Denny's and the Black Knight Inn, but in 2017 his situation changed after a family emergency in India. He returned to Red Deer, looking to try something new.

"I was jobless and was looking for anything to start with. But to be honest, I wanted to try my skills and experience in the retail industry," Ravi said. He sent out hundreds of resumes, with no results.

"One of my friends told me to visit Ms. Pawandeep Chahal who is an Employment Consultant at the Cosmos Group of Companies," said Ravi. "She helped me set my goal, and motivated me. She designed my best resumes and cover letters, provided interview notes, did job searches, and kept on sending me job links until I got a job." Ravi is now a Store Manager in one of the Dollarama outlets in Red Deer.

United Way Central Alberta provides funding for the Career Pursuits program at Cosmos under its Income Priority Area. The program supports clients to gain industry-specific work experience and skills and works to get clients employed in competitive jobs, with a personal living wage. They also offer wrap around supports to enable clients to connect to other community-based resources, including affordable child care, housing, transportation, counselling and natural supports. They have extensive partnerships with businesses and cross-industry leaders to help give their clients a competitive edge in launching their new careers.

Also in 2017, Ravi's wife Geeta Joshi came to live in Canada as a Permanent Resident. Geeta also wanted to enter the workforce. "As I had always been a working woman in India, I was not happy to stay at home without doing anything." Geeta said. She also met with Pawandeep at Cosmos and received similar services to Ravi's. "Pawandeep was amazingly helpful and influential in raising my confidence," said Geeta. "She regularly sent me emails with links for new openings in Red Deer. One day, I got a link about a job fair for Giant Tiger. They were opening their first store in Red Deer. I went to the interview and got my first job in Canada as a cashier."

The goal of United Way Central Alberta's Income Priority area is to move people from poverty to possibility. Together, we can provide supports for people to find work, housing and develop life skills. Those supports helped Ravi and Geeta succeed in their

desire to find meaningful and vital employment. "No words are sufficient to explain how thankful I am and will always be to Cosmos Group of Companies Red Deer," said Geeta. "Ms Pawandeeep will always hold a very special place in my life and career path."