

## RAJEEV KUMAR CPA CGA

Finding a job in their field is one of the biggest challenges that internationally trained professionals face when they arrive to Canada. Receiving labour market information, learning job search strategies and getting workplace training at the moment of their arrival increases their chances to access a job in their respective industries, and accelerates their full engagement in Canadian society. COSTI helps individuals who have acquired professional qualifications outside of Canada and who have been unable to access employment in their field of expertise through its Enhanced Language Training (ELT) Program.

Rajeev Kumar arrived to Canada from India in July 2013. He had a



Bachelor Degree in Commerce from the Punjabi University and was an Associate Member of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India. He is an example of how COSTI's ELT Program makes a difference in the lives of newcomers with international work experience.

*"The biggest problem I faced when I arrived to Canada was finding a job in my field. Back home I was working as a Manager in Finance at a multinational corporation. But here, when I applied to managerial positions the employers replied that I didn't have the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation and when I applied to entry level jobs they said that I was over-qualified.*

*I started working as a labourer at a candy factory to be able to pay the rent for my basement apartment and buy food for my family. I also contacted COSTI and registered for their ELT program in September.*

*I attended COSTI's classes during the day and then went to the factory to work from 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm. I did that for three months. In November, I found a job at Bhanot Professional Corporation, an accounting firm located in Mississauga.*

*While working at the accounting firm, I started to pursue my Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation. I worked and studied at the same time for three years. When I obtained my designation, a colleague asked me to join him as a partner. In January 2017 we opened Kang & Kumar, CPA and began our own practice.*

*COSTI showed me how to navigate the labour market to find a job. I learned how to contact prospective employers, make cold calls, build a résumé and showcase my skills. I was trained to use the accounting software that is used in Canada and learned everything a newcomer needs to know about the Canadian workplace culture, like punctuality and discipline. What I liked the most about the program were the group discussions at the end of each class and the mock interviews. COSTI staff practice with you and give you the confidence you need to succeed.*

*Another important component of the program is arranging internships and co-op opportunities with prospective employers. At the end of the program, at least 75% of the students get a job. And if they don't get a job, they gain exposure and knowledge. I am very happy. I have established my own company and created a job for someone else. Actually, our current employee is a newcomer who graduated from COSTI's ELT Accounting Program, just like me! We look forward to expanding our business and being able to hire more staff in the next five years."*

COSTI's Enhanced Language Training Program is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and offered at no cost to participants. It is available for professionals with international work experience in Accounting, Office Administration and Customer Service, Teaching, Information Technology and Health Care sectors. The course provides clients with Canadian workplace training, specific language and terminology classes, job search and pre-employment preparation, computer skills upgrading, and six weeks of unpaid internship placement.

Our language training and employment programs address the unique needs of newcomers to Canada by supporting them in seeking employment in their chosen profession or trade. As newcomers come to Canada, they bring with them new ideas, energy, skills, resources, and a strong desire to succeed and contribute to their new country. In order to contribute, they must first be given the opportunity to develop the tools needed to secure employment in their new country.

With support received from private donors and corporations, we hope to broaden our services and further expand our employment programming to help newcomers who arrive to Canada as refugees, find permanent employment.