

CANDIDATE PROFILE



ANNA PRIKHODA

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Anna Prikhoda grew up in Kostanay, Kazakhstan - a city that's a three hour drive from the Russian border and is home to 250,000 people. Just over five years ago, she said goodbye to an established accounting career and began a new life in a country she'd never been to. The goal was to make a better life for her family.

"When I was in Kazakhstan, I received my Bachelor of Commerce degree in Financial Management and was a practicing accountant for seven years. I knew that I wanted to continue being an accountant in Canada because that was my best opportunity to give my family a better quality of life. When I was deciding where in Canada to go, Manitoba was a great choice - despite the cold winters," Prikhoda says with a laugh.

In 2014, Prikhoda, her husband and then four-year-old son immigrated to Canada and started creating a new life for themselves. With the help of Manitoba Start, a non-profit that helps newcomers find employment in Manitoba, Prikhoda secured a three-week paid term position at New Flyer as a Cost Analyst, which was extended to seven months based on the value of her previous accounting experience.

At the end of her term, she began looking for the next opportunity. The experience at New Flyer provided her with the valuable work experience she needed to keep advancing in the accounting profession.



“Whenever I mentioned to my managers that I was working towards my CPA designation, they were all excited because it showed my dedication and willingness to keep learning.”

"My next accounting opportunity came in 2015, when I was hired on at Loblaws as a Financial Analyst. It was also during my time there that I started the journey towards my CPA designation by taking preparatory courses with the CPA Western School of Business (CPA WSB)."

For the next three years, Prikhoda worked to establish herself and support her family at Loblaws in different financial departments while studying to finish preparatory courses in the evenings and on weekends. It was then that she learned about the CPA Manitoba Foundation and their efforts to help support accounting and business students like herself.

"My friend told me about the CPA Manitoba Foundation and that there were awards and bursaries I could apply for. I decided to go for it."

Fortunately, the Foundation approved her application for bursary support. Over the following three years, Prikhoda received general bursaries from the Foundation, including

the CPA Manitoba Foundation Benevolent Fund, which helped her cover a percentage of her education costs. The Foundation has been able to support Prikhoda and over 140 candidates and students like herself since its start in 2015.

“ Although it might be hard at times, I truly believe you can succeed at whatever you want to do. ”

“I want to thank the Foundation and its donors for their generosity. It truly helped bring me one step closer to receiving my CPA designation and has made a big difference for my family and me,” says Prikhoda.

After being admitted into the CPA Professional Education Program (CPA PEP) and gaining experience, she went on to accept a position as Senior Financial Analyst at the University of Manitoba (U of M) in July 2018.

“When I moved into this role, it was really exciting to have the newly added challenge of working in the non-profit sector.”

Some of her tasks include preparing various reports to stakeholders, estimating financial projections and working closely with internal organizations to monitor construction costs to bring more value to the university. Among the extensive projects currently going on at the U of M, Prikhoda is apart of the accounting team that has helped with the new engineering building and the creation of the SmartPark Innovation Centre.

“ Skills like communication and teamwork have had a big impact on my effectiveness at work. ”

“Although I just recently started at the university, I’ve already grown and learned so much. I am very thankful for the mentorship and support I’ve received from learning my position and working towards the CPA designation.”

“The profession has a great reputation. Whenever I mentioned to my managers that I was working towards my CPA designation, they were all excited because it showed my dedication and willingness to keep learning. I have been able to apply everything from my studies to my current position at the university and that has been truly valuable to me.”

CPA PEP not only teaches candidates about technical competencies like Finance and Taxation but also enabling competencies like problem solving and communication.

“Learning about the enabling competencies in CPA PEP has had a major impact on how I approach my position. Skills like communication and teamwork have had a big impact on my effectiveness at work.”

“Being at the university and seeing the students in class has also reminded me why I’m so excited to do what I do. All the decisions we make financially directly impacts them and when I see those decisions making a big difference, it makes the role that much more special.”

Her advice for current CPA candidates and students is straightforward – just start working towards your goals.

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“Oftentimes the hardest part of working towards the designation, or in anything in life, is making that first effort to start. Although it might be hard at times, I truly believe you can succeed at whatever you want to do – whether your goal is passing the Common Final Examination (CFE) or moving to another country.”

Prikhoda is set to write the CFE in the Fall of 2019 and wants to thank everyone who has helped her and her family over the years.