



A JOB IS MORE THAN JUST A WORKPLACE

Considering the fact that people spend so much of their lives at work, it makes sense that a job is more than just a workspace; it can forge an extraordinarily close-knit group of people who inhabit not only a job but a team. I consider myself very lucky to be a member of an amazing workplace team—a place where I am a vital part of the community, where everyone contributes, and where we resemble a family.

Hello, my name is Oksana Filatov, and I am a school office manager for Community Outreach Academy (COA). I have been a part of this outstanding organization from the beginning, but it has not always been easy; the road to success has been long and hard. In 2001, when we had only a small number of students, faculty, and limited resources, we had to compromise and look for ways to improvise to survive. Over time, slowly and surely, we blossomed into one of the best charter schools in the Sacramento area. Not only is our school the best place for students, it is also the best place to work. In fact, our charter organization, Gateway Community Charters (GCC), is proud to have been nominated as one of the Best Places to Work in Sacramento by the Sacramento Business Journal, and we took second place in the Best Places to Work in Sacramento awards in 2017. Also in 2017, Community Outreach

Academy received the Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase School Award. We have been recognized multiple times by the Russian American Media (RAM) as the Best of the Best in Education—and for good reason. Working at COA feels like working with my family in the finest imaginable way; we all support each other, working together toward creating a better tomorrow. COA is a place where everyone shares the same vision and is dedicated to the same mission. This facilitates a wonderful environment where everybody is there for one another.

One of our school's slogans is "Capturing Kids' Hearts," and I truly believe that we are making a difference in the lives of our students by serving their needs every day. I am proud to lead our professional clerical team and to be a part of this organization that leads with its whole heart. Our professional clerical team is made up of dedicated women who sacrifice to make our school a better place. We are a team of people who juggle careers and families, continuously giving more than 100% because we believe in a better and more successful future. I am proud of my team; we are all different, but our common goal is to serve the youth of our community. Our goal, furthermore, is to go above and beyond what we have already achieved, and we are able to look back at our

beginnings as a reminder that anything is possible. We attribute our remarkable success to the families and community that make up our school, as well as our leader and school principal, Larissa Gonchar, who was recognized as a Silver Star Recipient by the Association of California School Administrators. Larissa's example and effort have helped to make change and growth possible. Caring deeply for our students, she inspires all those around her and dedicates herself fully to achieving greatness, going above and beyond. Our students, however, are at the heart of our school. We are able to make things work on a daily basis because our students give us the courage and faith to make things possible. As much as our school's success is due to our students and community, it is also thanks to the teachers and staff members who tirelessly work behind the scenes. The joy of seeing smiles light the faces of our students motivates us, which allows us to stride toward a greater future. Whatever it takes, our kids are worth it!



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