

"Companis
helped me find
my community."
-Sumeet



Companis
Where compassion meets action

Our Mission: Companis makes our community healthier, safer, and more just by fostering skilled volunteer service.

We match volunteer professionals with nonprofits to bridge the gap in delivering vital services in King and Snohomish counties.

Our Vision: Every nonprofit has the person-power it needs to serve and succeed, and every person moved to serve their neighbors has the opportunity to do so in a way that facilitates personal and professional growth, relationships, a sense of purpose and community.

Our vision is a world where compassion meets action.



Shea Deines

People Powering Change

Behind every cause, movement, and mission, are individual people pitching in to make their community better. When a nonprofit doesn't have the people it needs to move their mission forward, they end up at a standstill -- and we're all worse off for it.

Our nonprofit partners do a lot, often with very little. Finding someone with the exact skills that will take them to the next level and increase their impact can mean a fundamental shift in their work and outcomes.

At Companis, we're uniquely positioned to match volunteer professionals with nonprofit missions that improve the quality of life in their communities. From food banks fighting hunger to health care clinics providing life-saving care in a pandemic, it takes people - their passion, expertise, and relationships - to rise to the occasion.

When a partner needs people power, Companis is there. We connect people of purpose to community-changing opportunities and watch the magic happen.

Sumeet Pamma is one of those people powering change. He comes from an agricultural family that emigrated from Punjab, India, and when they landed in California in 1978 his parents resumed farming in their new country. "It's in our blood that we are farmers," says Sumeet.

Born in 1991, Sumeet is the youngest child, and lack of childcare quickly created barriers to building their American dream. His mother's parents joined them in the U.S. to help raise him and his three older sisters. This freed up both of his parents to seek work and bring home two incomes, a key to getting ahead. Finally, the Pamma family was able to buy their own 40 acres of land. Today they have a thriving agribusiness.

"I grew up farming from the age of 11, as soon as my left foot could reach the clutch of a tractor," Sumeet recalls. This is where he gets his work ethic, and a deep appreciation for the people who were working alongside him. "It was an opportunity to work in the communities I serve today...working alongside migrant workers and people at a stage where my parents had been before I was born."

But times have changed. A four dollar minimum wage in the 1980s went a lot further than a seven dollar minimum wage in the 2010s.

Sumeet saw how families struggled with a lack of safe, reliable daycare for their children. Not everyone had the grandparents that he did. He started thinking: What if we started a childcare program just for migrant workers? Daycare intended specifically for farm workers that opens with the sunrise, so they could get to the fields before the heat.

This idea led Sumeet to the Masters in Nonprofit Leadership program at Seattle University because, he says, Seattle is the philanthropy capital of the world. But when Sumeet arrived in the Northwest, his only connections were with the school. "I reached out to my professors and said, Hey, I don't know anybody here, and my professor said you gotta meet this guy, Gary."

This is how Sumeet came to be a part of Companis. "That guy," Gary Davis, is Companis' Executive Director.

Gary connected Sumeet with Byrd Barr Place in Seattle's Central District, which helps people help themselves through direct services, community action and advocacy. He initially served as their administrative assistant and grew into running their entire food bank. "It was a place that gave me the opportunity to grow and utilize the skill set that I had. And with Companis having my back, I never had the fear of being taken advantage of, I never had the fear that I was being boxed in and told not to do too much. They really gave me the space to do important work, and flourish," says Sumeet.

Sumeet flourished -- and so did the food bank, serving 1,200 more people in a year under his direction and successfully advocating for culturally appropriate food items. (Continued on back page)



Sumeet loved this community work so much, he did a second placement as a Companis Worker. This time it was with Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) which helps refugee and immigrant women and families. He began as their Interim Youth Program Manager and was hired three months later as their Annual Giving Officer. Sumeet helped create and lead ReWA's first individual giving program, bringing in more dollars than ever before to support ReWA shifting its programs during the pandemic.

"Companis strategically places people that have the skills already with organizations that need the help. So that's one of the main reasons why I give and why I hold Companis so near and dear to my heart." says Sumeet.

Today, Sumeet is embarking on a new chapter in California, closer to his parents and their farm. He has accepted the position of Development Manager of Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services, the largest nonprofit provider of basic human needs in Sacramento County. He credits Companis with helping to launch him on this path.

"Companis opened a door for me. It allowed me to showcase my skills. Without Companis, I wouldn't have the skills to get the job offer that I just accepted."

Everything we do starts and ends with relationships. That means getting to know our volunteers and our nonprofit partners personally.

Here's the secret: We listen.

Deep listening and strong relationships are how we make the right connections at the right time.

When you invest in Companis, you're investing in relationships, the interconnected web that makes our community whole.



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