



# NEWSLETTER

Volume #39

Edition #03

March 2024



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*Theme* - **Breaking Barriers:  
Women Redefining Success in Business**

# FOUNDER'S DESK

**Gurpreet S. Pasricha**  
Founder Trustee



Dear PCC Members,

With immense pride and gratitude, I reflect on the outstanding success of the PCC Toronto Gala 2024, held on February 24th at the Canadian Convention Centre. It was more than just an event; it was a testament to the unwavering spirit of our Punjabi Community, a celebration of our collective growth journey. Over 200 Punjabis from diverse backgrounds came together, weaving a tapestry of professionals, business owners, and entrepreneurs. It was a remarkable showcase of our community's achievements across various fields, underscored by our shared commitment to communal progress.

Buoyed by this milestone, we at PCC are fueled with renewed determination to forge ahead. Our calendar is brimming with upcoming events, each designed to further our mission of unity and advancement. On March 8th, 2024, we successfully conducted our second session of the Member Mixer Series, a global platform fostering mutual growth and collaboration among Punjabis worldwide.

Furthermore, I'm thrilled to share the success of our inaugural event under the Entrepreneur Café series held on February 18th, 2024, and commend the NJEDA Tech and Life Science Programs CSIT Grant Programs. Looking ahead, we have an exciting lineup for next month, including the Baisakhi Celebration on April 13th, 2024, and another Networking Mixer on April 17th, 2024, in Jaipur and New York, respectively.

Finally, stay tuned for the unveiling of several new programs aimed at serving our community even more comprehensively. Our goal is to foster connections and support in every possible way, emerging stronger together. The journey has just begun, and PCC's Pandora's Box holds a wealth of opportunities for all our members.

Warm regards

# Heartfelt Thanks

to our CHARTER MEMBERS



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# WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women Entrepreneurship is always a challenge, and becomes a greater challenge if you decide to pursue your dreams by entering the intensely competitive apparels business and redefining it successfully. It is our pleasure to share the journey of Aishwarya Priyadarshini (AP), promoter of a leading Apparel Brand Aujjessa. Her products are available at leading stores, E-Commerce portals. To understand her journey of redefining business as a young woman, Dr. Parvinder Singh (PS) PCC Ludhiana member interviewed her.

**PS: Good Day Aishwarya, you are a qualified designer from APJ and an MBA from GGNIMT, with a successful corporate career, why did you opt for entrepreneurship?**

AP: My Dreams and my background as a Designer fuelled a desire in me, to do something on my own and since the corporate world was no longer fascinating for me, I opted to both define and also seek the purpose of my life. Secondly, I was also highly impressed by Designer Ritu Kumar who had ventured with minimum resources at Kolkata to launch handcrafted sarees. To emulate her, I also decided to pursue my dream of empowering traditional weavers and craftsmen by showcasing their creations in contemporary styles.

**PS: Before launching Aujjessa, what were your views about entrepreneurship?**

AP: I was very clear from Day 1, that it would be really challenging to start your own venture. However, I also believed that my energy and enthusiasm coupled with excitement would prevail upon my fears, and the reward would be an emotionally satisfying journey.

**PS: Did you face any challenges as a women entrepreneur?**

AP: Quiet a few, I would say. Women are perceived to be weaker in terms of physical strength, emotional stability, business experience and leadership potential. These biases are very evident, when you work with small vendors and craftsmen who are unorganised and distrustful of women entrepreneurs. In the entire business eco system a woman needs to earn her credibility and respect. Due to these factors, many women with dreams and talent, rationalise and remain stuck in the so called safe and secure jobs.

**PS: Could you tell us something about your operations in terms of turnover, geographical reach and production?**

AP: Since we are an incubated company, we cannot disclose our turnover. However, we manufacture around 2.4 lakh to 2.8 lakh dresses annually and our products are available PAN India through retailers, e commerce portals and our own website.

**PS: Since inception, have you made strategic changes in your product mix?**

AP: Fashion industry thrives on change, and as an apparel brand, we need to offer new styles and concepts to remain relevant. We started as a Sarees brand, and evolved to a multi apparel products company. Covid made us realise the need for creating a niche that was both stable and profitable. Our existing business of ethnic wear was facing a lot of competition from substandard products and pricing pressures, directly impacting our EBITA. We researched, brainstormed and launched our Maternity range, in which if we are able to create a dominant position, we will be able to scale and strengthen our business.

**PS: There seems to be a visible shift to Western wear in the apparel choices of Indian women, don't you think by offering only Indian styles, you are operating in a shrinking market?**

AP: In my opinion Ethnic wear market is not shrinking at all. Indian women will never stop wearing Indian style garments using traditional forms of prints and embroidery, as they lend elegance and reinforce our identity. The cut and style may change but the Indian Ethnic wear will not only survive but will always have the pride of place in our wardrobes. Here I will also underscore that the vision of my enterprise is to empower Indian craftsmen and preserve our heritage, due to which our being rooted to Indian ethnic wear is a matter of faith and not only a business convenience.

**PS: What would be your message to young women and wannabe entrepreneurs?**

AP: My advice would be to work hard, Dream Big, Accept mistakes, Upskill, learn laterally & continuously research. My message for Women reading would be to believe in yourself, accept challenges and set standards for others.



**Aishwarya Priyadarshini**

Member - PCC Global Chapter  
Promoter and Director  
Aujjessa Private Limited

# TIERED LEVEL MEMBERSHIP



## PCC CHARTER MEMBERSHIP

An exclusive group of established Business Owners, C-Level Executives and Professionals working together to network, locate business opportunities, and raise capital

### Benefits

- Enriched Network, access to Global Charter Member Directory
- Equity Co-investment Opportunities
- Exclusive Bespoke Events (Boat / Yacht Party / Retreats)
- Priority listed for opportunity to participate in the following:
  - ▶ Global Events
  - ▶ Off-site leadership meet-ups
  - ▶ Speaking opportunities
  - ▶ Free attendance for regular events and meetings
- Featured coverage on PCC Platforms & Media
- Discounted sponsorship opportunities
- Dedicated facilitations for introductions and meeting opportunities across our global chapters

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## PCC STANDARD MEMBERSHIP

### Our Programs

- Member Connect (Inter-Chapter Engagement)
- Investment Opportunities
- Mentor Mentee
- Leaders on Roll
- Expert Adda Podcast

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### Benefits

- Enriched Network, access to Standard Members Directory
- Connect with our global community where there are experts, mentors and influencers who can support your professional and entrepreneurial aspirations. Engage with members with your interest or domain expertise at chapters around the world
- PCC assists budding entrepreneurs in their start-up journey by conducting meaningful webinars with investors globally through our Punjabi Angels Program: Punjabi Chamber of Commerce works as an interface between various stakeholders that drive the start-up ecosystem
- Member to Member Benefits (M2M): Opportunity to benefit from our member discount program. Products/services offered at a discount exclusively to our members
- Mentoring sessions with experienced and engaging mentors and serial entrepreneurs

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# BREAKING BARRIERS: WOMEN REDEFINING SUCCESS IN BUSINESS

I am blessed to have parents who told me that I could achieve anything, as well as support and role-modelling from my family and mentors throughout my career. This support and even cheer-leading helped me to build my confidence in my youth and allowed me the belief in myself to take risks, to put my hand-up for assignments and roles even when I did not check all the boxes in the job description. It gave me the confidence to advocate for myself and know that I should ask for advocacy of others. It has helped me to grow to increased levels of leadership.



**Priya Dhawan-Chahal**  
Member - PCC Toronto Chapter  
District Vice President, Midtown  
Toronto Region at Scotiabank

That is not always the case. As a Punjabi woman, whose mother was a pioneer in Canadian Banking in the 1960s, and the mother of a daughter who has unlimited potential, I'll say that as a society we've come a long way, but we still do have a way to go. That's what drives me to push for progress. Until we see the diversity across all levels of every organization, we all need to take the responsibility and keep pushing for progress.

As we approach International Women's Day, we should celebrate how far we've come with gender equality, but also recognize and commit to real action to continue to narrow the gap. It's about celebrating the women upon whose backs we walk, the allies who support us, and our future women leaders.

So, I encourage each and every one of you to ask of yourself, "What can I do to support or make an impact on the next generation of women leaders – or even one woman leader? How can I role-model, encourage or support their development, growth and success?" And then put one simple idea into action. You'll be glad that you did, and the impact that you make will be more than you can imagine.





# A Quick Glance at Past Events

## Entrepreneur Cafe Series: First Event: Tech Trends for Startups (Amritsar Chapter)



## NJEDA Tech and Life Science Programs & CSIT Grant Programs (New Jersey Chapter)

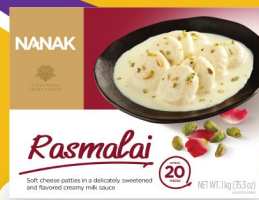


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# BREAKING BARRIERS: WOMEN REDEFINING SUCCESS IN BUSINESS

In recent decades, women have been breaking barriers in the business world, challenging traditional norms and reshaping the landscape of entrepreneurship and corporate leadership. As societies increasingly recognize the importance of diversity and inclusivity, women have demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination, surmounting longstanding obstacles to establish themselves as influential figures in various industries. Their accomplishments not only serve as a source of inspiration for aspiring female leaders but also contribute to a more inclusive and innovative business environment.



**Sharanjit Dhingra**  
Member - PCC Toronto Chapter  
Barrister & Solicitor  
SD Law Office

These women breaking barriers have not only achieved personal success but have also paved the way for a more equitable future in business. By challenging stereotypes and advocating for equal opportunities, they foster an environment where talent and merit take precedence over gender. Through mentorship, networking, and initiatives that support female entrepreneurship, these trailblazers actively contribute to dismantling systemic barriers. As their influence continues to grow, it sends a powerful message that diversity is not just a social imperative but a strategic advantage for businesses seeking creativity, resilience, and a broader spectrum of perspectives. The ongoing efforts to celebrate and amplify the achievements of women in business are crucial steps toward building a more inclusive and equitable global economy.



# A Quick Glance at Past Events

## Toronto Gala (Toronto Chapter)



## Health & Wellness for High-Achieving Women (New Jersey Chapter)



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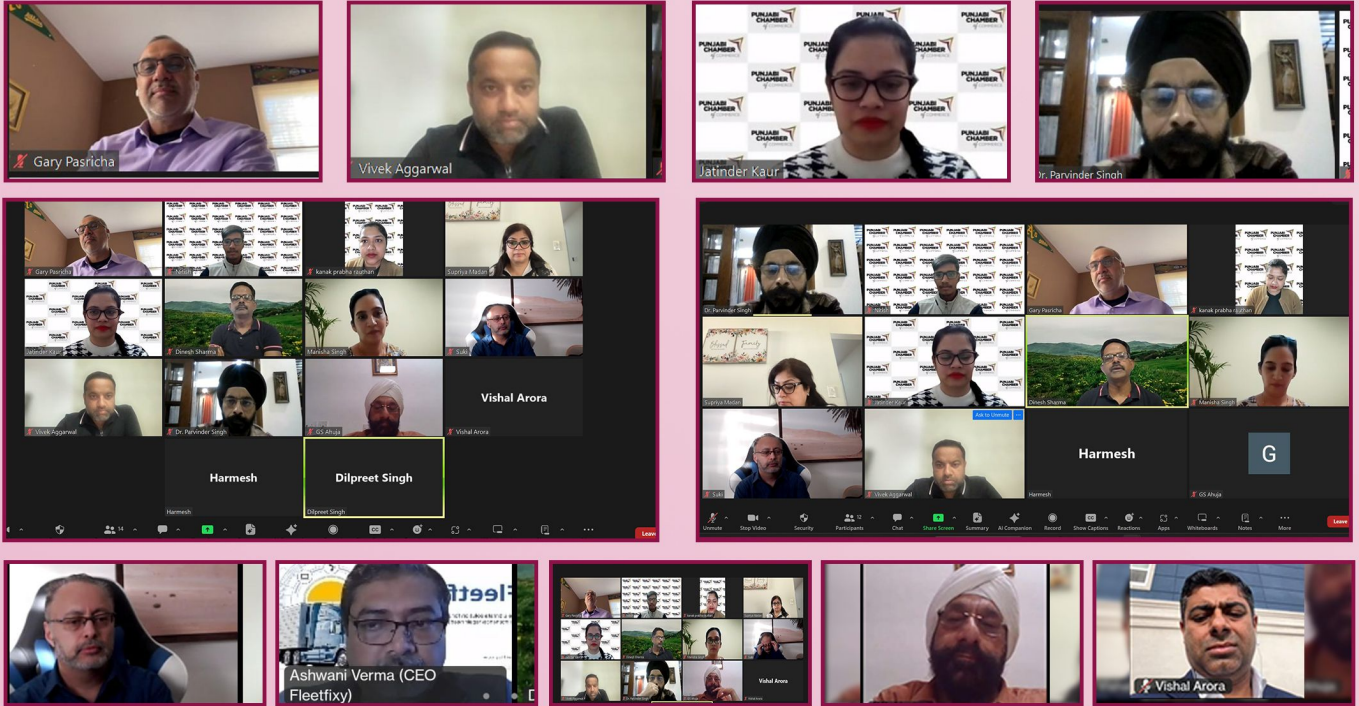
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# A Quick Glance at Past Events

## Member Mixer

(Global Chapter)



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- 🔑 Directional Support
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- 🔑 Gain Self-Empowerment



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# OUR UPCOMING EVENTS



## Networking Mixer

📅 March 27, 2024

🕒 6:00 pm onwards

📍 Sheraton, 125 Raritan Center Pkwy, Edison, NJ 08837

**Ticket Price: Free**



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## Resources for Growths

Panel Discussion on Products, Resources, and Assets

**Date:** April 10, 2024

**Time:** 6:00 PM to 6:30 PM (Appetizers and Networking)  
6:30 PM to 7:30 PM (Panel Discussion), 7:45 PM (Dinner)

**Venue:** Urban Rasoi, 2800 NJ-27

Unit 1, North Brunswick, NJ 08902, United States

**Ticket Price: \$40**

**Free for Charter Members**

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## Member Mixer

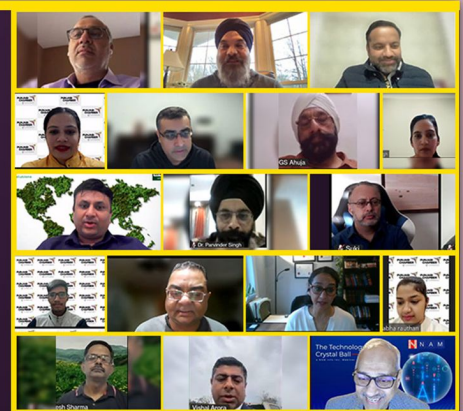
**Date:** April 12, 2024 **Platform:** Zoom

**Time:** 06:30 pm (IST), 09:00 am (EST), 02:00 pm (GMT), 05:00 pm (GST)

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# OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

  
**PCC Jaipur Chapter**  
**Baisakhi Celebration**  
 April 13, 2024



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NETWORKING MIXER

📅 April 17, 2024  
 🕒 6:00 - 8:00 PM  
 📍 Nomiya Sushi & Izakaya, 600 Old Country Rd, # 1148 B (Roosevelt Field Mall)



Appetizers served, courtesy of Ajay at Nomiya - Cash Bar  
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<p>Cost Per Golfer: \$350 \$1200 Per Foursome</p>	<p>Beverage Sponsor: Fee: \$3,500 Dinner Sponsor: Fee: \$5,000 Complimentary Foursomes: 1 Signage on 9th Hole</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Early Bird Special until March 31, 2024: \$250 Per Golfer, \$800 Per Foursome</p>

For sponsorship-related inquiries, please get in touch with us at: [newjersey@punjabichamber.com](mailto:newjersey@punjabichamber.com)

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# Punjabi Chamber of Commerce



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