



# Leading by example

*Sonia Qureshi, COG's Director, Joint Projects & Services takes pride in working for an organization with gender-balanced leadership and which serves as a model for the nuclear industry.*

COG's leadership team was very different when Sonia Qureshi joined the organization in 2016, after almost 20 years at Atomic Energy of Canada Limited / Candu Energy.

"The management team was almost all-male, at that time," says Sonia. "But there has been gradual change since then."

With COG poised to welcome Stephanie Smith, as its first female CEO, Sonia believes the changes she's witnessed at COG, including a leadership group soon to feature more women than men, serves as an example to the nuclear industry.

"Having COG at the forefront of the movement toward gender parity is really exciting and powerful," says Sonia. "It provides an example to women, working with our members utilities and suppliers, and demonstrates that if we work hard, there are no barriers to what can be achieved."

In addition to Sonia's role as Director, Joint Projects & Services (JP&S), and a member of COG's senior leadership group, she is also chapter lead for the Golden Horseshoe West branch of Women in Nuclear Canada (WiN Canada).

WiN promotes the role of women in the Canadian nuclear industry. COG's support of professional development opportunities for women, including WiN events and initiatives, has created a working environment where professional growth at COG is more accessible than ever before.

"I believe that women at COG feel supported by the organization and its leadership. Before, in nuclear, like in so many industries, there was a lingering feeling, as a woman, of 'Will I get there?' or 'Will I have the opportunity to succeed?'. Now, we have COG leadership, the head of the Canadian nuclear regulator, CNSC's Rumina Velshi, OPG's [and COG board member] Carla Carmichael, among oth-

ers, and these individuals help to facilitate expectations and aspirations for women in the nuclear industry."

Sonia sees COG's move toward gender-balanced leadership as well as the diversity of its staff as key ingredients strengthening COG collaboration, moving forward.

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"We're special at COG because we really are a collaboration of so many different kinds of people from all over the world. It's like we're CANDU experts without borders... Our differences help to make it welcoming for any person to come to COG. We each play an important role in helping to move the CANDU industry forward."



Sonia Qureshi (left) with COG colleagues, Thanuja Janathasing and Taruna Matharu at the WiN Canada annual conference. Sonia is the WiN Golden Horseshoe West chapter chair.

*This story is one of an on-going series about COG employees; a diverse group in expertise, gender, age and nationality. Our team reflects the diversity and strengths of our Members and the COG community. Their skills help create the best in collaboration for nuclear innovation. Through COG, our Members and the nuclear community worldwide achieve results that contribute to the highest standard of safety, efficiency and environmental performance. Together we create Excellence Through Collaboration.*