



## "I CONSIDER MYSELF FORTUNATE"

For Gyan Kadariya '20, the Path to Maryland Began in a Refugee Camp in Nepal

IT WOULD BE an understatement to say that Gyan Kadariya has come a long way. In many respects, his life today is a world removed from the experiences of his first 13 years. Gyan was born in 1997 in a refugee camp in Nepal, to ethnic Nepali parents

who were born and raised in nearby Bhutan. His parents were forced to flee Bhutan when many ethnic Nepali were stripped of Bhutanese nationality in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Eventually, the family received the opportunity to move to the United

States, arriving in Baltimore, Md. in 2010.

Gyan dove into his studies in middle school, but it was not an easy adjustment. "There was a language barrier to overcome, and it took me a couple of years to get comfortable conversing in English," he says. "But it wasn't just the language. I had to get used to things like learning to use a computer and an elevator for the first time."

Gyan first heard of UMD's Incentive Awards Program (IAP) from his guidance counselor at Digital Harbor High School in Baltimore. He set his sights on Maryland and, once accepted, applied for and received an IAP award. The IAP is more than just a scholarship—it provides academic guidance, mentoring and a nurturing community to exceptional students who have overcome difficult circumstances.

"My IAP cohort and colleagues are like family to me," Gyan

states. "We're a close-knit group and we go out of our way to help one another. Without my colleagues and the IAP staff, I would have felt a little lost when I arrived on campus."

Gyan will graduate this June with a B.S. in information science. His immediate goal is to find a position in his field to help provide as much support as he can to his parents and two sisters.

Asked what he'd like to share with donors who support IAP and other UMD scholarship programs, Gyan readily responded:

**"I'd like to say 'thank you.'"**

**Without them, someone like me would be almost like a tree without roots."**

Gyan says he will always be a proud Terp. "I consider myself fortunate to have the education I've received here and I'll strive to be a good ambassador for Maryland. No question about that—Maryland is now a part of me."

## DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

The Southern Management Leadership Program Was a Crucial Lifeline for Sandra Raymundo '18

I APPLIED TO the Southern Management Leadership Program (SMLP) during my senior year at Prince George's Community College. SMLP is a scholarship initiative targeted at students interested in entrepreneurship, starting a business or leading a company. I was 19 and had recently arrived from Honduras, where I'd finished high school.

At first, it was hard to adapt to living in a new country, but I had one goal in mind: to obtain a college degree. I was the first in my family to

attend college. I had a full course load, but I also worked full time so I could help family members in Honduras. After sharing my story and my goals with the SMLP program managers, I was selected for the scholarship.

The most significant benefit I received from the scholarship was the support and guidance from the managers and the other students in my SMLP cohort. Of course the financial factor is very important, but having people offering me support and advice was the best thing I got

from the program. My transition to UMD was not easy, but this support network made things much better. Being in the SMLP program was like being part of a family.

**The donors who support SMLP and other scholarship programs are giving young people a great opportunity to accomplish their dreams. Their generosity is life changing—not just for the students they help, but for their families too. I hope to make a positive impact in the lives of others like they did in mine.**

After graduation, I was accepted into the master's in accounting with data analytics program at Villanova University, sponsored by the accounting firm KPMG. UMD

prepared me well for this program. Since completing the program last summer, I've been working as an audit associate at KPMG.

I'm very proud to be a Terp. I'm part of the UMD Latinx Alumni Network. UMD shaped me into a professional, gave me more self-confidence and a valuable educational experience. And I made great friends along the way.

