



Mahmood Ali Allam, the new owner of Jamestown Mobil, formerly XtraMart. Photo by Sam Bari

XtraMart is now Jamestown Mobil

By Sam Bari

The new owner of the XtraMart on Narragansett Avenue, Mahmood "Ali" Allam, made changing the name to Jamestown Mobil his first official act. "Other than that, for right now, everything will pretty much stay the same," said the affable Allam.

"Before making any changes, I want to get to know the store, and see what customers want and need," Allam said. "So, the prices aren't going to change, and we'll study the inventory and make adjustments as they are needed."

Allam, 53, a Cumberland resident, knows what he is doing. Jamestown Mobil is the third store he has purchased since moving with his family to the U. S. in 1997. They previously lived in Dubai, and Oman, where he was the accounting and finance manager of a large insurance firm.

Armed with a degree in commerce from Pakistan's Karachi University, and years of business experience, Allam brought his wife and three children to Cranston. There, he bought his first convenience store, the Sunoco Food Mart. He then moved his family to Cumberland in 2002, where they purchased a house. He sold the Cranston store in 2006 and acquired another franchise store in Johnston.

Recently, the XtraMart Corporation offered the Jamestown store to Allam, and he thought the price was right, so he negotiated a deal. "It all happened very fast," Allam

said. "It only took a few weeks. I signed a three-year lease with Nick Robertson, the owner of the property, last Saturday. It all worked out very well."

Allam says he doesn't mind the 45-minute daily commute. "We would love to move to Jamestown, but that wouldn't be convenient right now," he said. "My 14-year-old son, Bilal, is captain of the football team at Cumberland High School, and he wouldn't want to move. My oldest boy, Saad, 18, attends Tufts University in Boston where he is studying bio-med engineering. He comes home on the weekends. I think it will be a while before we can move."

He also has a daughter, Zubuia, 21, who graduated from Loyola University in Chicago where she attained a master's degree in medical sciences. "Presently, she is applying to several universities for medical school," Allam said proudly. His wife, Hina, also studies bio-med manufacturing at the University of Rhode Island.

Allam said that moving to the U. S. has been a wonderful experience for him and his family. "My wife and I thought about it for a long time before we made the decision to move," Allam said. "When the children started growing up, we felt that the opportunities for a good education were better in New England than anywhere else, so we applied in 1995. The process was long, but not difficult. I couldn't work when we first

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