A MESSAGE FROM ALUMNI OFFICE

Dear Alumni,

There are many great things happening within our RIT Croatia and Alumni community that we would like you to know about. In order to more effectively share news and events with you, we will be publishing an Alumni online newsletter twice per academic year.

We invite you to share your news with us, let us know what’s happening so we can share your successes and interesting stories with your colleagues.

We hope you will enjoy it!

Alumni Office

COMING UP SOON...

RIT CROATIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Since our Alumni Association is constantly growing, this year we are introducing two roles to support our Alumni community: President and Vice President!

What happens next?

1. February 10th - March 4th: VOTE FOR YOUR CANDIDATE

2. By March 15th: ALUMNI PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENT

What does the current alumni president have to say?

Ana Jarak: “In 2012 I was elected by my peers to represent the RIT Croatia Alumni for two years. It was a great honor for me, I must be honest. We’ve started some great initiatives and I am looking forward to the further expansion of our Association! Thus, I am using this opportunity to ask you to get engaged and to vote for new President/Vice President and remember: Each of us plays an important role in the continued success of RIT Croatia and our Association. Big accomplishments begin with small acts.”

THE ALUMNI BENEFIT PROGRAM

The program is designed to provide RIT Croatia Alumni with additional benefits: special discounts on various services including entertainment, dining, travel, transportation, shopping, insurance, and more. Every Alumni participating in the program will obtain an Alumni benefit card as proof of membership.

Our goal is to complete the project within this academic year and to issue Alumni benefit cards to the Alumni community in the academic year 2016/17 in a light of RIT Croatia’s 20th anniversary.

If you have your own business or work for a company that can possibly offer services at a discounted price, please contact Marina Drmać in the Alumni Office at: marina.andros-drmac@croatia.rit.edu

SAVE THE DATE FOR...

Annual Alumni GET TOGETHER
WHEN? ... April, 2nd 2016
WHERE? ... Zagreb, exact location TBA via email

Annual “Global Service Day”
WHEN? ... September, 17th 2016
WHERE? ... Zagreb, exact location TBA via email
In this newsletter issue, we talked with Mihaela Čališ, our 1st International business program graduate and with Božana Zekan, RIT Croatia Alumni 2004. Mihaela already started a successful career which we wanted to hear all about, while Božana was recently awarded a certificate for outstanding Teaching Performance as a Lecturer and Researcher at MODUL Vienna University.

How long have you been working for Oradian?
I started working at Oradian as an intern, during my senior year. At first this was supposed to be just a part time job before I started my master’s studies. As the summer went by, I was given more responsibility and interesting tasks and in the end when I was offered a full time contract in September, I decided to stay... and I’ve been here for 8 months already...

What is it that you actually do there?
I work in the sales department, the one place I never imagined myself to be working. It is funny how it all works out in the end when a person is open minded and willing to work. This is actually a good question, since I do not do typical sales tasks. I actually coordinate between the Zagreb team and our team in Nigeria, where we mostly do business, and I am a sort of micro-managing our clients: accounts management, training and implementation of our software.

How did you get your job there?
My first contact with Oradian was at Career Education Day when I personally met the management of the company... everything else is history.

Bill Gates proclaimed Oradian will seriously help the battle against poverty. How does it feel working...
for a company like that and how do you personally feel about Gates’ words?

Oradian is a financial technology (fintech) company – we deliver technology (cloud-based platform Instafin) that connects people to financial services. It is amazing when you realize the impact this product has on microfinance institutions that are serving people at the base of the economic pyramid. Instafin enables microfinance institutions, co-operatives and credit unions to serve the most rural clients affordably and effectively. Oradian’s motto is: we grow as our customers grow. Call me a dreamer, but I do believe it is possible. Just imagine having over 10,000 clients and their loans and savings accounts managed only on paper or an excel sheet – that is what our customers are struggling with. And when you see growth of our clients on a weekly basis (and I see it personally since I am working on software statistics) it definitely puts a smile on your face. I thought I understood different cultures, but every day I get surprised by how often we, citizens of developed countries, take things for granted.

What is your typical work day like?

In the mornings it is usually peaceful until around 11am, then boom, everything starts happening in Nigeria or in Ghana so everybody needs me. Finally, around 6pm when I am ready to go home, there are 6 new urgent tasks to do. :)

Nevertheless, I do not think I have had one typical day; it is a startup company so everyday something new happens or needs to be done. It can get very stressful but it is all about organization and priorities. Sometimes I do a bit of training for our customers or presenting to future clients, implementation, coordination, writing proposals and order forms, doing statistics and writing reports. The best part is when I can hear our CEO negotiating the price with the potential clients and be involved in discussions on strategy.

Is work life anything like you’ve hoped for?

I do not think I was ready for this; I still do not want to grow up. When I say not ready for this, I mean I never thought there would be days when I would just want to stay at home and rest. I used to make fun of my sister when she started working and was totally unwilling to go out and have fun. On the other hand, it is a nice feeling to be financially independent. And what I love the most about this job is the ability to grow each day.

What do you remember when you think about RIT Croatia?

Haha, since I am a geek, I remember studying late at night with my friends before finals. In a way I loved finals week, so stressful but so much fun at the same time. My friends and I would usually stay up late trying to study and explain to each other how to easily remember the difference between spot and forward rate in investment class. :) Then there are all those fun events, like cooking the food for International Food day and not wanting to taste it yourself...

In general, what it was like to study in Dubrovnik? Have you got friends there? Are you in contact?

I loved studying in Dubrovnik. It was my home away from home and I love going back although I do not go as often as I would like to. I have met many nice people there, some of whom became my very close friends. We still keep in touch; distance does not matter.

Now Then when you look back, are you glad you attended RIT Croatia?

If I look back, choosing ACMT/ RIT Croatia was most likely the best decision I could have made considering my career aspirations that did not change over time.

What prevailed in the selection?

I did not want to study in Zagreb; I wanted to stay close to my home, Makarska. Yet, at the same time, I wanted to combine tourism studies with international experience (internships, ability to learn from foreign instructors). Hence, all roads took me to RIT Croatia in 1999.

Can you highlight any particular aspect of your education at RIT Croatia, which brought you where you are?

I would probably say advice from my professors. If I were to single out anyone, I would definitely mention Rick Lagiewski and C J Wallington, who were my professors, mentors and friends. They knew that I wanted to stay in academia after I finished my studies and were always supporting me down this path. I have learned a lot from them.

How does it feel to be recognized and awarded? What does it mean for you?

It means a lot to me – especially since I am the first recipient of such an award. I really love my job, both teaching and research, and I believe students notice this. I enjoy being in the classroom, I invest a lot of time and energy into making the courses interesting and tangible for students, so that I can trigger discussions. In my opinion, this is the best way to learn. And it is always good to hear that your work is appreciated.

How does it feel to build an international / global career?

I am happy here, there are many opportunities to develop myself. I am learning on daily basis. ACMT/ RIT Croatia helped me a lot as it opened many doors to me. After finishing my studies in Dubrovnik, I continued immediately with the MSc studies in Rochester, always working at the same time. I have learned that in our field degrees matter a lot, but so does the work experience – one needs to have both to be a good lecturer.

What’s the life in Vienna like?

I love Vienna. Needless to say – it is a beautiful city. I moved a lot in my 20s: Dubrovnik, Williamstown MA, Rochester NY, Dublin Ireland, and now Vienna for last 7,5 years. This is a city in which there is literally always something happening. Big, yet small at the same time, close to home, the only city in which I have lived that I get to experience all four seasons: beautiful fall in Wienerwald, snow in winter, mild springs, and very hot summers.
HAVE YOU TRIED THE HOSCO AND ALUMNI ONLINE COMMUNITY PLATFORMS YET?

A year has passed already since we became part of HOSCO web platform, a closed network of leading hospitality schools and employers from all around the world. Through a single point of contact, talents from selected hotel schools use HOSCO to access leading hospitality companies and their available positions on a global market basis. The platform enables members to better select their job placements in hospitality sector and to access valuable social tools and applications.

In 2015, RIT Croatia became a part of a newly formed RITOnline platform. It allows you to reconnect with your colleagues all over the world, whether you are aiming to advance in your current field, planning for a new career, moving to another country/town or looking for a business partner. RIT Online Community is designed to help you in your search.

2015: THE YEAR OF 1ST ZAGREB GRADUATES AND 16TH YEAR OF DUBROVNIK GRADUATES!

** ** ** ** **
CONGRATULATIONS GENERATION 2015 ON A SUCCESSFUL CAREER START!

2015 Graduates Career NewsFlashes: Tomislav Cvetko, Business Analyst Intern at McKinsey&Company; Andrija Stilinović, Intern at Ernst&Young; Katarina Glavan, Executive Assistant at Eastman Cooke & Associates; Tea Maček, Generating Demand Trainee at Nestle Adriatics; Goran Pekica, Researcher/Business Development Officer at Alexander Hughes; Emil Varga, Business Development Manager at Penkridge Group; Dario Bijelic Online Revenue consultant at Phobs; Marcela Biuk Guest Relations Officer at DoubleTree by Hilton; Josip Lučić, Intern in the Upstream – Group Exploration & Production Business Support department at MOL Group; Mihaela Čališ, Business Development at Oradian.

SEPTEMBER 2015: RIT CARES, THE 1ST GLOBAL ALUMNI INITIATIVE!

In September 2015, RIT Alumni Association introduced a new initiative: a global day of community service projects. “Eleven global Alumni chapters, with more than 100 alumni, parents, students, and friends of RIT joined the initiative”, said Kelly Redder, assistant VP of RIT for Life and director of RIT Alumni House.

RIT Croatia Alumni chapter gathered in Dubrovnik where we spent an amazing day at Children’s Centre “Dom Maslina” playing with the kids, cleaning and gardening their outdoor areas and playgrounds. Our professor, Zrinka Friganović Sain held a language workshop for the kids.

Thanks again to all who joined us in this initiative and hope to see all of you in the future as well! For those of you who did not have a chance to join us this time, visit the following link as a sneak peak into the RIT Cares Dubrovnik’s event.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE HOSCO AND ALUMNI ONLINE COMMUNITY PLATFORMS YET?

At the beginning of the AC year 2015/16, Dubrovnik&Zagreb campuses welcomed more than 230 Freshmen students.

We all remember our first days at RIT Croatia – and what could be better way to introduce them to campus life, than having our Alumni talking about their RIT Croatia study experience.

In Dubrovnik, Toni Njirić ‘13, Mario Zovko ‘15 and Damir Krupić ‘12 shared with incoming Freshman generation their memories and experiences from student days. A lot of talking and discussion was about projects in classes, presentations, co-op, study abroad and other obligations and requirements.

In Zagreb, we had a panel discussion, in which Tana Zimmerman ‘07, Morana Rabatić Andrić ‘01, Izet Ždralović ‘01 and Robert Bračun ‘04 shared their college experiences and career paths. Students were very happy to have the opportunity and meet their Alumni colleagues and this student-Alumni event proved to be a great initiative we will continue with.

Thanks again to Toni, Mario, Damir, Tana, Morana, Izet and Robert.

ALUMNI PANELS FOR INCOMING FRESHMAN GENERATION!

SEPTEMBER 2015: RIT CARES, THE 1ST GLOBAL ALUMNI INITIATIVE!

In September 2015, RIT Alumni Association introduced a new initiative: a global day of community service projects. “Eleven global Alumni chapters, with more than 100 alumni, parents, students, and friends of RIT joined the initiative”, said Kelly Redder, assistant VP of RIT for Life and director of RIT Alumni House.

RIT Croatia Alumni chapter gathered in Dubrovnik where we spent an amazing day at Children’s Centre “Dom Maslina” playing with the kids, cleaning and gardening their outdoor areas and playgrounds. Our professor, Zrinka Friganović Sain held a language workshop for the kids.

Thanks again to all who joined us in this initiative and hope to see all of you in the future as well! For those of you who did not have a chance to join us this time, visit the following link as a sneak peak into the RIT Cares Dubrovnik’s event.

2015 Graduates Career NewsFlashes: Tomislav Cvetko, Business Analyst Intern at McKinsey&Company; Andrija Stilinović, Intern at Ernst&Young; Katarina Glavan, Executive Assistant at Eastman Cooke & Associates; Tea Maček, Generating Demand Trainee at Nestle Adriatics; Goran Pekica, Researcher/Business Development Officer at Alexander Hughes; Emil Varga, Business Development Manager at Penkridge Group; Dario Bijelic Online Revenue consultant at Phobs; Marcela Biuk Guest Relations Officer at DoubleTree by Hilton; Josip Lučić, Intern in the Upstream – Group Exploration & Production Business Support department at MOL Group; Mihaela Čališ, Business Development at Oradian.

2015: THE YEAR OF 1ST ZAGREB GRADUATES AND 16TH YEAR OF DUBROVNIK GRADUATES!

** ** ** ** **
CONGRATULATIONS GENERATION 2015 ON A SUCCESSFUL CAREER START!

2015 Graduates Career NewsFlashes: Tomislav Cvetko, Business Analyst Intern at McKinsey&Company; Andrija Stilinović, Intern at Ernst&Young; Katarina Glavan, Executive Assistant at Eastman Cooke & Associates; Tea Maček, Generating Demand Trainee at Nestle Adriatics; Goran Pekica, Researcher/Business Development Officer at Alexander Hughes; Emil Varga, Business Development Manager at Penkridge Group; Dario Bijelic Online Revenue consultant at Phobs; Marcela Biuk Guest Relations Officer at DoubleTree by Hilton; Josip Lučić, Intern in the Upstream – Group Exploration & Production Business Support department at MOL Group; Mihaela Čališ, Business Development at Oradian.

SEPTEMBER 2015: RIT CARES, THE 1ST GLOBAL ALUMNI INITIATIVE!

In September 2015, RIT Alumni Association introduced a new initiative: a global day of community service projects. “Eleven global Alumni chapters, with more than 100 alumni, parents, students, and friends of RIT joined the initiative”, said Kelly Redder, assistant VP of RIT for Life and director of RIT Alumni House.

RIT Croatia Alumni chapter gathered in Dubrovnik where we spent an amazing day at Children’s Centre “Dom Maslina” playing with the kids, cleaning and gardening their outdoor areas and playgrounds. Our professor, Zrinka Friganović Sain held a language workshop for the kids.

Thanks again to all who joined us in this initiative and hope to see all of you in the future as well! For those of you who did not have a chance to join us this time, visit the following link as a sneak peak into the RIT Cares Dubrovnik’s event.

ALUMNI PANELS FOR INCOMING FRESHMAN GENERATION!

At the beginning of the AC year 2015/16, Dubrovnik&Zagreb campuses welcomed more than 230 Freshmen students.

We all remember our first days at RIT Croatia – and what could be better way to introduce them to campus life, than having our Alumni talking about their RIT Croatia study experience.

In Dubrovnik, Toni Njirić ‘13, Mario Zovko ‘15 and Damir Krupić ‘12 shared with incoming Freshman generation their memories and experiences from student days. A lot of talking and discussion was about projects in classes, presentations, co-op, study abroad and other obligations and requirements.

In Zagreb, we had a panel discussion, in which Tana Zimmerman ‘07, Morana Rabatić Andrić ‘01, Izet Ždralović ‘01 and Robert Bračun ‘04 shared their college experiences and career paths. Students were very happy to have the opportunity and meet their Alumni colleagues and this student-Alumni event proved to be a great initiative we will continue with.

Thanks again to Toni, Mario, Damir, Tana, Morana, Izet and Robert.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE HOSCO AND ALUMNI ONLINE COMMUNITY PLATFORMS YET?

A year has passed already since we became part of HOSCO web platform, a closed network of leading hospitality schools and employers from all around the world. Through a single point of contact, talents from selected hotel schools use HOSCO to access leading hospitality companies and their available positions on a global market basis. The platform enables members to better select their job placements in hospitality sector and to access valuable social tools and applications.

In 2015, RIT Croatia became a part of a newly formed RITOnline platform. It allows you to reconnect with your colleagues all over the world, whether you are aiming to advance in your current field, planning for a new career, moving to another country/town or looking for a business partner. RIT Online Community is designed to help you in your search.