BY REBECCA CHARRY

Starting next fall, ACMT will be operating in two locations: sunny Dubrovnik and exciting Zagreb. The new Zagreb campus will offer Information Technology and International Business degree programs, while current programs in service management and information technology will continue in Dubrovnik.

“This is a great step forward for the college,” said ACMT President and Dean Don Hudspeth. “As the capital of Croatia, Zagreb is an exciting and important location, and we are looking forward to taking advantage of the business connections and energy there.”

Both campuses will offer curricula from Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York. All classes will be taught in English and graduates will receive both American and Croatian diplomas.

The International Business degree program will be taught by professors from RIT’s Saunders College of Business. The curriculum is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the most prestigious organization of business schools in the United States. The Saunders program was recently rated among the top 5 percent of all business schools in the US by the US News and World Report magazine.

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DR. LARISA BUHIN LONČAR
ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

BY REBECCA CHARRY

Dr. Larisa Buhin Lončar joined ACMT in February as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. As part of the ACMT leadership team, Dr. Buhin Loncar will lead a review and update of the curriculum, and work with faculty to improve students’ classroom experiences, and help ACMT pursue academic excellence so that our students are prepared for successful careers in today’s fast changing world.

Born in Croatia but educated in the US, Dr. Buhin Lončar has a deep understanding of both Croatian and American cultures and is fluent in both languages. Her professional accomplishments include a doctorate in counseling psychology from Loyola University Chicago, many years of professional practice in adolescent counseling, and university teaching experience around the world.

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CAREER EDUCATION DAYS 2011
Interviews, presentations, bows and arrows, and more.

“WELCOME TO MY LIFE”
Freshmen tell their stories in Basic Writing portfolios

ALUMNI NEWS
Career updates and more
“WELCOME TO MY LIFE”
FRESHMEN TELL THEIR STORIES IN WRITING PORTFOLIOS

BY TEA STOJANOVIĆ

Have you ever wanted to have a life resume -- a few pages where you could tell the story of the important people, places and events that shaped you as a person? At ACMT, during freshman year every student gets that chance. At the end of Basic Writing class, every student creates a portfolio of at least three essays, adds photos and illustrations, designs a cover, and publishes a personal mini-magazine of thoughts, feelings, opinions and ideas.

Whether they approach this assignment with joy, fear, despair, most freshmen discover that they really do have something interesting to say, and that they enjoy figuring out how to say it in their own ways.

“It might sound surprising, but writing my portfolio was actually fun,” said student Mihaela Ćališ. “My essays tell the story of my first three months at this college and in this city -- how I survived and what I learned. On the last page I put a picture of myself with my arms spread wide, because that was how I felt at the end of my first quarter -- on the top of the world! I believe I will keep this little book to show my children someday.”

“The portfolio helped me see how I’ve grown as a writer,” said Freshman Ana Tokic. It was great that we were allowed a lot of creative freedom to bring our writing to life. Personally, I was used to writing in a very formal academic style, which I realized wasn’t really me. This class helped me find my own writing style.”

“The portfolio gives students a chance to write about the things that mean the most to them in their daily lives, and they end up writing some beautiful, funny and genuine work,” explained Prof. Rebecca Charry.

“The portfolio also helps students learn about the writing process -- how to get from a first draft (the random thoughts that fall out of your head the first time you sit down to write) to a final version that often ends up dramatically different from the first draft,” Prof. Charry continued. “Some students are surprised that they have to revise their texts three times or more -- fixing mistakes, adding details, getting rid of useless clutter -- before they get it right. But they are amazed when they see the improvement they can make. It’s even more impressive when you consider that most of our students are not writing in their native language.”

Layout and design are also important parts of the portfolio project. Students get to show their artistic talents in photography, illustration and color, as well as in the written word.

Viktor Zimmermann used black and white photos of Dubrovnik to create an elegant magazine of his writing, “Thoughts of a Freshman,” including essays called “Experiencing Myself” and “Feel Free to Fail.”

Iva Vicelic included in her portfolio a description of a magical visit to the Adriatic islands, her thoughts on the dangers of too much teamwork, and a reflection of how much she has grown up since enrolling at ACMT.

“In this class I learned that to be a better writer, I need to really feel my words,” she said. “Good writing comes from inside.”
A CHAT WITH VISITING IT PROFESSOR T.J. BORRELLI

BY KRISTIJAN GRUBIŠIĆ

One of the newest faces at ACMT in winter quarter was RIT Professor T.J. Borrelli, who joined the college in to teach programming, computer systems fundamentals, and Cyber Self Defense. Near the end of the quarter, he shared some of his experiences with us, and explained why he’s looking forward to teaching three new classes in the spring.

We students joke among ourselves that the American professors must be sent here for punishment. But obviously you did not think that. What kind of opportunities did you hope to gain here?

When I heard about this opportunity to teach in Croatia, I was definitely interested. I think it is a great experience to teach outside the United States. I like the US, but I wanted to have a different cultural experience, a different life experience. Now I can say that I have taught classes in Europe, and that says something about what kind of person I am.

What are the major differences between US and Croatian students in terms of study habits?

There are not as many differences as I expected. Students here are actually quite similar to my students at RIT. In both countries, some students come to class prepared to do the work, they do the homework, and ask questions, and those students tend to do very well. Of course there are also students who don’t come to class, don’t do the work and don’t ask questions. And they don’t do so well. A lot of it comes down to personal maturity and responsibility. But the issue is the same, whether it is in the US or Croatia.

Are the class materials, and pace study the same here as in the US, or there is a difference?

It’s very, very close. We work at the same pace and we cover same material. Most of the time, it is fine. Sometimes, like in Programming II, which I am teaching right now, I noticed that students just need more practice, so I am going to have more hands-on practice exercises.

You are now teaching IT classes to freshmen. How are they doing?

Programming classes are very challenging and some students are not prepared for how much work is actually involved. They end up getting themselves in little bit of trouble if they don’t think ahead about how much work is required. In the classroom, I noticed that a lot of students want share or help each other. This is good sometimes, but on an individual assignment, it is not allowed, because the student who is being “helped” isn’t learning anything in the process.

What were your first surprises here in Croatia?

Things are a bit smaller, of course -- the facilities, classrooms, the college itself. RIT has many, many different big buildings, but I think that I have not been too surprised with differences. I’ve been surprised with similarities more often. The town is very European, and that is different for sure, but the experience of teaching is very much like at home.

What are your hobbies?

Besides having fun writing computer programs, I like kayaking, hiking, and mountain climbing. When the weather gets a little bit nicer, I will practice them here.

What is your favorite place in Dubrovnik?

I really like the Old Town. I like just walking down to Stradun and looking at the shops during the day, or even at night when the lights are on. It’s very pretty. St. Blaise day celebration was great. It was exciting to be part of such a historic, public event. I actually got a chance to get up on the roof of the Sponza palace to take some pictures.

My colleagues here have been very friendly. There is a close atmosphere. I actually enjoyed Career Education Days. I liked giving my workshop on Facebook privacy, and I was glad that a lot of HSM students showed up, even if they didn’t quite understand the technical parts. They seemed really interested in my topic anyway.
CAREER EDUCATION DAYS 2011

A HANDS-ON TASTE OF THE BUSINESS WORLD

BY KRISTIJAN GRUBIŠIĆ

Education at ACMT doesn’t happen only in the classroom. One of the most important parts of an ACMT education is face to face contact with business leaders and industry professionals. In January the annual Career Education Days event opened the doors of the business world to students.

Some students were selected for job interviews with renowned companies such as Coca-Cola beverages, Procter and Gamble, Phillip Morris tobacco, and Radisson Blu hotels. Other students got career advice and inside views from company representatives, and attended workshops with professors on all kinds of topics, from presentation skills to planning for retirement.

ACMT President and Dean Don Hudspeth welcomed students by reminding them that the focus of the event is on education. Anyone who keeps their eyes and ears open during this busy two day event can find useful advice for the future.

“During these difficult economic conditions, competition for jobs is even more fierce,” he said. “The skills and knowledge that you learn at ACMT is what will set you apart from the competition.”

Dr. Jeffrey Lasky, chair of the IST department at RIT, welcomed students on behalf of our “mother” institution.

“ACMT Dubrovnik and soon, ACMT Zagreb, are essential elements of RIT’s global vision. RIT’s star is rising, and you will be the beneficiaries.”

But perhaps the real stars of the opening were our student presenters, who showed what student life at ACMT is really all about, with a live skit and video. Ivana Ercegović, Edin Herić, Dana Laterzza, Ljerka Skelin, Jaquelin Turwitt, Jasenka Vučetić, Stanko Lusić, and Brigita Weinberger made the opening ceremony one to remember.

“The video hit in bulls eye when speaking of student life,” said student Daniel Dedo.

Over the two days that followed, company presentations and interviews were the main event. Some well known companies, like Philip Morris, have long relationships with ACMT. In fact, 15 percent of current Phillip Morris employees in the Central Europe region are ACMT graduates, said Distribution Executive Tana Zimmermann, who graduated from ACMT in 2009.

ApCom (Apple Computer distributor) representative Željko Milić encouraged current IT students pursue application development, in other words, developing new “apps.” This relatively new field has tremendous possibilities and opportunities for IT experts, he said.

Representatives from the Radisson Blu-Dubrovnik hotel and resort (which many ACMT students recently visited on a tour for the Hotel Operations class) explained their corporate training program, which helps even seasonal workers become part of the positive team atmosphere in the hotel, ready to solve problems and ensure customer satisfaction.

The company regularly looks to hire ACMT graduates because they have the skills and attitude that make them employable right after graduation, said Zdenko Leko, Executive Director. Proof of that is Maja Demonjić, who graduated from ACMT in 2002 and is now HR Manager at the hotel.

Katarina Skugor was one of several students selected for an interview with Radisson Blu.

“The company representatives asked me a lot about my past work experience, and how I reacted when customers complained. I simply answered that it’s important to understand the customers, stay polite, and do your best to fix the situation. I remembered to smile, be confident, and be myself,” said Katarina.

“CED is very useful,” said senior Ana Vuin, after her interview with Hotel Meridian Lav in Split. “I gained a lot of experience interviews. Whether I get the job or not, I see it as a positive thing that we have opportunity to see how the real business world works.”
Some of the most interesting and unusual presentations at Career Education Days 2011 came from ACMT’s own professors and staff. They drew on their own professional skills and interesting life experiences to present students with advice and information on a broad range of topics --- from the importance of privacy settings on Facebook, to how to dress appropriately for a business meeting, to how to make a weapon with spiritual power. Here are highlights from just a few workshops, in case you missed them.

Protect Your Privacy on Facebook

How much information can other people find out about you on Facebook? Do you keep your privacy settings updated? Do you even know what your privacy settings are?

Privacy on Facebook is not guaranteed; it’s up to you to protect yourself, said IT Professor TJ Borrelli. To illustrate how vulnerable Facebook security is, Prof. Borelli demonstrated an application that he wrote, which, if you download it, gives him access not only to your information but also to all your friends’ data. In other words, if your Facebook friends install an application, that application can find and distribute all your information too.

“This application is somewhat evil,” Prof. Borrelli said. “In the hands of the wrong people this can be scary.” Prof. Borelli offered the following recommendations for safeguarding your privacy on Facebook: make sure you are aware “of what applications you download and who it comes from. If you have never heard of the company or group and can’t find out anything about them, don’t install it. In general, don’t download applications that are not essential. Most applications, like games and quizzes, are created for the sole purpose of collecting information about users and their friends. The companies then use that information for their own purposes, and we really don’t know what those are.

Students really enjoyed this presentation, since it was directly related to their daily lives. They were all surprised at how easy it is to gather private information, even things that they thought they had “deleted.” Facebook can be very useful in terms of connectivity and business opportunities, and there’s no need to abandon it, he said. Just be careful what you put there.

Building a Weapon with Spiritual Powers

Always something different from Prof. Staša Puškarić, who brought Career Education Days to a totally unexpected conclusion with a demonstration of the compound bow and arrow that he built himself.

Prof. Puškarić amazed the audience with a (completely safe!) demonstration of his invention. As the arrow whizzed through the air to the target, everyone in the room could feel its power.

“The bow and arrows are just a means to get to the real message I wanted to say,” he explained. “I created this bow because it interests me, but the real point is that we should not forget our personal interests, feelings, emotions and powers. To be balanced people in this unbalanced world, we need to develop and cherish and nurture our interests, so we have something to hold on to which can give us joy and satisfaction.”

“Whatever your personal interests are -- making music, reading, writing, arts or sports – develop them. We are all born with something special that belongs to us and no one else. Our society tries to tell us what we should do, what we shouldn’t do, what we can and can’t do. This will kill you inside. Don’t let that happen. Develop yourself and what you love to do.”

Managers Need Foreign Language Skills

It’s no secret that Google Translate is a big temptation when studying a foreign language, especially for panicked students looking for an easy way out at the last minute. But it can never be as good as a real human mind, explained Professor of Italian Zrinka Friganović-Sain.

Each word is important, and no computer is smart enough to know exactly the right word for the right moment. Only an experienced human, with sensitivity to feelings, can do that. For example, today in business, instead of “crisis,” the more optimistic word “challenge” is preferred, said Prof. Milena Kuznin.

That’s why great managers today need to learn foreign languages themselves, not rely on paid translators and interpreters. So much feeling and style gets “lost in translation” (especially if the translator is a computer!) that the customer, client or employee really doesn’t fully get the message. Good managers don’t rely on translators; they learn the language themselves.
Seven years after graduating from ACMT, Irena Deretic is returning to her alma mater as Marketing and Enrollment Specialist at the new Zagreb Campus. Armed with a master’s degree in Human Resources Development from RIT, and a wealth of international work, study, and life experience, Irena will help show a new generation of students what an ACMT education is all about.

“It’s great to return to my ACMT/RIT family,” she said. “My education at ACMT and RIT made me the person I am today, and showed me that it is possible to have fun while working hard. Now my task is to bring that experience to all prospective students and show them what kind of future awaits them in an ACMT/RIT education.”

After graduating from ACMT in 2004, Irena spent three years in the travel industry before she decided to continue her education at ACMT’s parent institution, Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York.

“When I started graduate school, I was in the fast lane and 24 hours just wasn’t enough time in the day,” she recalls. “Not only was I a full time student and graduate teaching assistant, I also had a part time job in a campus restaurant and an unpaid HR internship at the RIT Inn & Conference Center. It was crazy, but it made me realize that I perform the best under the pressure and when I have lots of things to juggle. All the hard work paid off and I was recognized by the board of HR professionals, who awarded me the Cutting Edge HR Showcase award.”

“It may seem that all I did in Rochester was work, work, work, but I had time for fun too. Coffees and dinners with friends, games of racquetball and workout in RIT’s terrific gym were part of my daily routine. I also traveled as much as I could, including to Washington, DC, New York City, Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia. At RIT I met people from all over the world and now I have lifelong friends from India, Mongolia, China and America.”

After graduating from RIT in 2009, I stayed in the US for a year of optional practical training. In the meantime, I kept a close relationship with ACMT and I represented the college at the annual RIT Imagine Festival in Rochester.

Now I am thrilled that ACMT is expanding to Zagreb market, the business and technology center of Croatia, and I am looking forward to being part of it.”

Nikica Janković ’08 enrolled in a Master of Arts in Economics and Communication program at the Università della Svizzera Italiana, (University of Lugano), Switzerland. She is majoring in International Tourism and expects to graduate this fall.

Konstantin Kurtović ’08 was recently promoted to Key Account Manager at Procter & Gamble in Zagreb.

Ankica Tomić-Obrdalj ’07 was hired as Assistant Human Resource Manager at the Sharjah Rotana Hotel in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. “I am head of a 5-person HR department, responsible for 104 employees,” she said. “Sharjah is very quiet and family oriented, but I’m just 25km from Dubai so that makes up for social activities!”

Irina Tomić ’02 was hired as Sales Manager, for Corporate & Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (MICE) at The Regent Esplanade Hotel in Zagreb.

Ivan Kraljević ’07 was hired as Marketing Director for the HNK Hajduk professional soccer team in Split. “Naprid bili!”

Jasmina Garbin ’05 was hired as Management Assistant at the US Embassy in Zagreb.

Ana (Šimundić) Perić ‘07 was hired as Office Manager for Savills Montenegro, project consulting company in Podgorica.

Vladan Perić ‘06, started his own business in Podgorica, Montenegro. He is the owner of Magnus Moto Company, specializing in the sale and distribution of several motorcycle brands.

Darija Bulić ’09 was hired as Assistant Director at the Matica ship services company in Split.

To submit an update for our next issue, email Rebecca@acmt.hr
NEW ASSOCIATE DEAN

She has published numerous professional articles on social justice, ethnic minorities, cultural diversity and racism prevention. Most recently, she has been developing a comprehensive student counseling center for the University of Zagreb, and co-administered a large EU grant.

Now, she’s looking forward to working in a much smaller ACMT community, where students, faculty and staff know each other well, and work together in teams to solve problems.

In a recent conversation, Dr. Buhin Loncar told us more about her experience and plans for ACMT.

In your impressions of ACMT so far, what do you think are our greatest strengths?

Ever since my first visit, I have been consistently impressed by the warmth and positive atmosphere at ACMT. There is a climate of caring and respect for each other and enthusiasm for our work here. Our small size is also a strength because smaller communities have fewer difficulties with change. Finally, the diverse composition of students, staff, and faculty allows for a dynamic exchange of ideas and worldviews.

How do you plan to help ACMT become even stronger in the future?

I am dedicated to our continuing an upward trend in attaining excellence in academic standards and student-oriented teaching. Also, as a maturing institution, we have opportunities to pursue more research. For example, our faculty members know the type of information industry executives or city officials need, and how to present it. I would like to see us take advantage of these opportunities.

What is your vision of our special Croatian-American cultural blend?

This cultural blend is a unique feature of ACMT and a great advantage. To make education meaningful, we need a deep knowledge of cultures in which we live and work. Sometimes that knowledge comes from being born in a particular culture or from having lived in a culture for a long time. But sometimes that knowledge comes from profound (maybe even unpleasant) misunderstandings. Cultural differences can require us to rethink what we know, how we think and feel, and how we teach and learn.

Please tell us about your teaching approach and what students can expect in your psychology classes.

My goal is to inspire students’ curiosity about psychology and to motivate them to think about how what we learn in class can be applied in other fields. I believe that learning is a shared responsibility between a professor and students. I take my part of that responsibility seriously and I expect the same of my students.

My teaching style is interactive. I try to create a classroom environment that is relaxed and respectful of differences and where each student can show his or her strengths.

What would you like the ACMT community to know about you, both professionally and personally?

Professionally: The most significant aspects of my professional identity are being a counseling psychologist and a unique worldview that is a result of that training. Besides teaching, my professional passions include promoting multiculturalism and social justice.

Personally: I grew up in Croatia, but received my higher education almost entirely in the United States. Chicago is my U.S. home, although I spent two wonderful years in Honolulu. Most exciting random life moment: realizing that President Obama (then Illinois Senator Obama) and I are neighbors! I am a granddaughter, a daughter, a sister, an aunt, a step-mom, a partner, a friend, and a proud owner of a rescued Doberman dog named Dylan. I am always contemplating another cup of coffee and my favorite color is purple.

ZAGREB CAMPUS OPENING FALL 2011

Students in this program will study international laws and policies, with a focus on emerging markets, forging international partnerships, and understanding cultural customs around the world. The program prepares students for careers in international financial analysis, import/export trade, international product management and related fields.

Like the IT program currently in its second year at ACMT Dubrovnik, the Zagreb IT program prepares students for careers in information technology with an emphasis on understanding how people use technology to make their lives and businesses function better.

ACMT Zagreb will be located on the campus of Croatian Catholic University, on Illica Street in western Zagreb. Classes will be held in a rented facility for the first year while renovations are completed on the new ACMT Zagreb building. When renovations are complete, the new ACMT building will have more than 1500 square meters of classrooms, offices, cutting edge computer labs, student lounges and other facilities.

Plans are also underway for expanding degree offerings in future years. RIT’s renowned degree programs in photography, business communications, environmental science, as well as specialty masters degrees are among the potential areas for growth.

“In our 14 years in Dubrovnik, we’ve earned a reputation for a dynamic and creative learning environment,” Dean Hudspeth said. “We’re very excited about building on this foundation with our expansion to Zagreb.”
ACMT to Host European Tourism Educators Conference
BY REBECCA CHARRY

What in the world is EUROChrie?

It’s the European Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education – and its 29th annual conference is coming to ACMT Dubrovnik in October 2011.

ACMT/RIT will host a 4-day conference of the leading hospitality educators in Europe. Hundreds of educators and industry professionals from around the world are expected to attend this prestigious conference, to exchange ideas, present research, and network with colleagues.

ACMT students will play a key role in the conference, as organizers, planners, and liaisons with conference delegates, while ACMT professors will present papers to their international colleagues.

“This is an amazing opportunity for ACMT students and faculty,” said ACMT President and Dean Don Hudspeth. “This kind of hands-on, real-life learning experience is what ACMT and RIT are all about. It’s a chance for our students to put what they have learned in the classroom into practice, and get informed firsthand about what’s happening in the industry.”

“Our faculty are also glad to network with colleagues and present their own research in various fields. Finally, we’re also pleased to be able to help promote our hometown, the City of Dubrovnik, as a great tourist destination.

Ok, ok, we’ve all heard complaints about the lack of nightlife in Dubrovnik, a town that some students think is more suited to grandparents than young people. But is it really true?

ACMT students shared their secrets of how they keep themselves entertained and relaxed in “The Pearl of the Adriatic.”

“Dubrovnik actually offers great nightlife during fall, considering the size of the town,” said RIT transfer student Scott Lamd. “As long as there are tourists here, night outings in Old Town are a lot of fun. I got to meet people from all over the world in the bars and nightclubs here.”

“It is, in fact, possible to have fun in this town,” said one senior. “All you need is some people and a positive attitude. Don’t complain, don’t whine, get up and do something! Make good use of your college years. Try different places, different people, and if you don’t like any of it, throw a party of your own. There are fun people and fun times in this town. All you have to do is find them.”

- Andrej Bratun