One of the most important parts of an RIT Croatia education is the opportunity to gain real world employment experience at international companies that are leaders in their industries. Students Jelena Ćenan and Samanta Kosina are currently completing extended internships at the Broadmoor Hotel and Resort, a five-star luxury resort in Colorado Springs, USA. They recently wrote to us about their new lives, full of exciting professional knowledge, challenges, travel and new friends.

Jelena Ćenan
International Hospitality and Service Management

My position here is as Amenities Agent. Yes, yes I know what you are thinking: ‘What on Earth is that?’ In amenities we deliver special gifts when a guest has an anniversary or birthday, if something did not go quite right, or when someone...

(continues on page 3)

RIT Croatia Celebrates 20 Years of Educational Excellence

The year 2017 marks 20 years since Rochester Institute of Technology first opened its doors in Croatia. The college, known back then as the American College of Management and Technology, was the first private American institution of higher education in Croatia. It was founded by RIT in 1997, in partnership with the Croatian Ministry of Education and the Dubrovnik Polytechnic. Back then, the college was housed on the campus of today’s University of Dubrovnik in Lapad. Since then, the college has grown and expanded. Major milestones include moving to our own beautifully renovated historic building just outside the Old Town of Dubrovnik in 2005, adding a Master’s degree program, opening our Information Technology degree program in 2009, and opening our Zagreb campus and International Business degree program in 2011. Over the years, RIT Croatia has graduated nearly 2000 students, who are now enjoying successful careers around the world.

A series of special events are planned throughout the academic year 2016-2017, to bring together current and former students, faculty, staff, alumni, and our business and community partners in a spirit of celebration.

“We are proud of our tradition, our relationships with industry and the successful careers that our graduates enjoy,” said RIT Croatia President and Dean, Don Hudspeth. “We are looking forward to celebrating our 20th anniversary with all our alumni, friends, industry partners and the Dubrovnik and Zagreb communities.”

Stay tuned to find out more!
Peer mentors offer first-year students a helping hand

What is peer mentoring? It’s a way for first year and transfer students to hear tips, and get insider advice for success at RIT Croatia from the people who really know best - older students.

“The peer program is about facilitating social integration for new students, providing resources to promote students’ academic success and overall to help foster a positive, welcoming environment,” explained Professor Ana Maria Šimundžić, who directs the program.

Peer mentors are successful sophomore, junior or senior students who volunteer their time to encourage, guide, and help first-year students in their first semester get adjusted to life at RIT Croatia. They participate in an initial training session where they are provided with a clear understanding of their role. The total number of mentors at both campuses has grown from 42 last year, to 57 this year.

As a part of the YearOne orientation course, first-year students are assigned mentors, with an average 1 to 4 ratio. The initial session is where the ice is broken and the bonds between mentors and mentees start to form. Through this social contact, mentees get an insider view of what it takes to be a successful student at RIT Croatia, and immediately start to feel a real sense of community. These are voluntary relationships, built on trust and confidentiality, which both sides are responsible for maintaining.

Of course, professors and staff are always available and happy to help, but many students, especially in their first semester, feel more comfortable talking to their more experienced peers than approaching a professor. Peer mentors can help with anything from studying tips, to information about getting settled in Dubrovnik or Zagreb for students from other towns, to recommendations for enjoying student life and activities.

“From my first moment at RIT Croatia I felt at home, and one thing that definitely helped was my peer mentor program. I really appreciated the help I got from my peer mentor when I was a freshman, so of course, I was looking forward to becoming a peer mentor myself in my second year,” said Dubrovnik student Lovro Kolanović. “While talking with new students I learned something new too. Getting to know new people from different parts of the world and hearing their stories was interesting.

New students learn about our college system, get to know older generation of students and other mentees in their group. As a mentor I get to know new students and help them in transition to RIT. It helps both sides by getting to know each other and different culture and it helps keep the family feeling this college can be proud of.”

“I love being a peer mentor,” said student Josipa Bubli. “Our job is to help freshmen in new college experience especially in first month because they are all confused with a lot of information. Through peer mentoring I gained new friendships and learned a lot about different cultures of my mentees. The most important thing is that students will be more comfortable to ask other students (instead of professors) about college life and how everything works around here.”

“The greatest benefit is that first-year students are not isolated at the start of their studies, which is a critical period during which they are building the foundation for their college careers. This program works in our unique college environment in which students truly care and take a vested interest in cultivating a spirit of respect and regard for each other,” said Professor Šimundžić.

Puttin’ on the RITz
Event Planning Course Connects Dubrovnik and Rochester Students

This spring, 20 students in the IHSM program in Dubrovnik will have a unique opportunity to work with their colleagues at the Rochester, NY, campus to plan the annual Puttin’ on the RITz black-tie charity banquet, which will be held in Dubrovnik for the first time in April 2017, in celebration of the 20th anniversary of RIT Croatia, and the 30th anniversary of the RIT dinner.

Each year, IHSM students plan every aspect of this banquet event, from the menu, to the décor, to ticket sales and public relations. In past years, one student from the Dubrovnik campus has been selected to attend the event in Rochester, and spend a week getting to know colleagues there.
RIT Croatia Alumni at the top of their fields

Developing scanning technology used in US elections

Alumnus Izet Ždraković, ’03, co-founder of MicroBlink technology company, confirmed that the company’s BlinkID was used in the US Presidential elections. BlinkID enables users to scan and process identification documents such as passports, ID cards and drivers licenses, in just 3 seconds using a mobile phone.

“We have signed contracts with a number of partners in the US, which are private companies or NGOs for the use of this technology” explained Ždraković.

Ana Pepić named among top 50 most influential women in Croatian ICT

RIT Croatia alumnus Ana Pepić, ’03, was chosen by a jury of 16 editors from various media and organizations as the best media person of the year. Pepić was recognized for her work in Information and Communication Technology. She is currently employed as Regional Manager at IDC Adriatics, a regional research and consulting firm. Ana Pepić is currently employed as Regional Manager at IDC Adriatics, a regional research and consulting firm. Considering the great results of women in IT, this recognition is aimed to serve as a motivation for continuous excellence, and as a tool for changing the perception of the IT industry as predominantly male one. These recognized women, Ms. Pepić included, can serve as role models to young women who are interested in pursuing careers in the field of IT.

Andrea Čordaš earns fellowship in Chicago

Andrea (Brekalo) Čordaš, ’01, was chosen by a jury of 16 editors from various media and organizations as the best media person of the year. Pepić was recognized for her work in Information and Communication Technology. She is currently employed as Regional Manager at IDC Adriatics, a regional research and consulting firm. Considering the great results of women in IT, this recognition is aimed to serve as a motivation for continuous excellence, and as a tool for changing the perception of the IT industry as predominantly male one. These recognized women, Ms. Pepić included, can serve as role models to young women who are interested in pursuing careers in the field of IT.

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The best way to find out what RIT Croatia is really like, is to visit us! RIT Croatia welcomes students in their third and fourth years of high school to come see our campuses, meet our professors and students, listen to lectures, and get to know the people and places that make our college special.

It’s a great way to experience our friendly learning community and the open, engaged relationship between students and professors.

When prospective students visit classes, they are introduced to professors and current students, who include them in the lecture and make them feel at home. Sometimes they stay after class to chat, or even go have coffee with someone they met.

It’s one thing to read a brochure, or watch a video, but something else completely to be there in person.

“I remember when I was considering enrolling at RIT Croatia, and was told that I could attend an actual class to see how it works. I was shocked by the fact that was even possible, so of course I arranged a date to try it,” recalled second year student Vicko Lazo. “I attended classes with Prof. Kevin Walker and Prof. Besim Agulaj. I was amazed by the fact that the groups were fairly small, which allowed professors to interact with the students on a friendly, personal level. I loved the fact everything was in English. The classes were interesting, and the professors were very professional. While I was in the classroom, I noticed that the equipment was up to date, and that these people actually care about their students. Now I’m a sophomore at RIT Croatia and I know I made the right decision.”

“I can remember the first time I came to RIT Croatia,” said student Ivan Vujanić. “Entering the Zagreb campus, I thought that I went to another planet. I’ve been before to colleges in Croatia, and to me, almost all of them looked somehow monotonous. I knew it will be different at RIT but I didn’t even imagine it would be like that. Ms. Katarina Zupanjac from the Enrollment office showed me the campus, labs, library and lounges. That well organized, and up-to-date approach continued at my lecture at Financial Accounting class. Small group and individualized approach by professor Schmidt triggered some small voice inside of me that said: ‘Hey, studying here could actually be interesting!’ And until this day, there wasn’t a moment I doubted my decision to choose RIT.”

To try being an RIT Croatia student for a day, the process is very simple. Potential students just need to contact the Admissions Office directly or by filling out the Become a Student for a Day form on our website.
RIT Croatia is now accepting early admissions applications

Apply by February 15, 2017 for the best chance at over 350,000 Euros in scholarships and financial aid

If you want to join a top American university while studying in Croatia, study in English, and earn two diplomas (American and Croatian) that bring employment opportunities around the globe, then RIT Croatia is the place for you.

Enrollment is now even easier, with more than 350,000 Euros available for scholarships and financial aid. Each year over 65% of incoming first year students receive financial aid to help cover the cost of tuition.

- International students are eligible for scholarships
- Candidates who apply by February 15th, 2017 will be given priority consideration for need-based financial aid.
- Additional discounts are available for tuition payments made by January 20, 2017
- All excellent students (A students) are automatically eligible to apply for a scholarship of 4000 €

"Financing my tuition at RIT Croatia became possible for me thanks to the financial aid provided upon early admission, and thanks to additional scholarships I’ve earned during my studies,” recalled Danijel Bešlić, who graduated in 2016 from the Information Technology program in Zagreb. “The learning atmosphere at RIT Croatia inspired me to strive for academic excellence and to participate in different extracurricular activities.”

“I always wanted to study at RIT Croatia. Thanks to the financial support that the college offers, my wish came true,” said Josip Šuta, who graduated in 2015 from the International Hospitality and Service Management program in Dubrovnik.

“The application process was very simple. I completed the online application form, wrote a motivational essay and submitted my high school transcripts. Then I completed a pleasant motivational interview with the college staff. I was so happy when I found out that I had met all requirements and received a scholarship. Shortly after, I was awarded additional financial support, which meant a lot to me as I’m financing college with student loans.”

FIND OUT MORE about our degree programs in Information Technology / Web and Mobile Computing, International Business and International Hospitality and Service Management, at http://www.croatia.rit.edu

Then fill out an application at:
http://www.croatia.rit.edu/applicationform/