



## GETTING TO KNOW JESSICA LAZDINS VUK

Jessica Lazdins Vuk serves Morrison clients in the areas of grant writing, grant administration, and project management. She brings her skills and experience in communication and marketing to effectively serve clients seeking competitive grant funding. Prior to her role at Morrison, Jessica worked for more than a decade in the international nonprofit sector in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, equipping college students with educational and life skills through foreign language courses, seminars, mentoring, leadership development, and community outreach initiatives. As Sarajevo Team Leader, Jessica managed the branch of the organization located in the capital city of Sarajevo. Her duties included overseeing all organizational activities; leading communication and marketing efforts; managing the Sarajevo staff team; executing strategic planning sessions; and developing key partnerships with external stakeholders.

Additionally, Jessica served as Marketing Coordinator at Bon Appetit Sarajevo, a family-owned, fine-dining bistro. She had a supportive role in the business, alongside her spouse who owned and managed the restaurant. Jessica developed Bon Appetit Sarajevo's marketing strategy and all promotional materials; she also managed all social media profiles. Bon Appetit Sarajevo was among Tripadvisor's Top 5 restaurants in the city during Jessica's tenure.

Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in English and Comparative History of Ideas from the University of Washington. She has a master's degree in Global Leadership from Fuller Theological Seminary.



### Q&A WITH JESSICA

#### IF YOU COULD MEET ANY HISTORICAL FIGURE, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE AND WHY?

If I could meet any historical figure, I would choose to meet my great, great grandfather, Karlis Kundzins. Karlis was from Latvia and served most his life as a Lutheran pastor in a town called Smiltene. He used his position to help and advocate for the Latvian people, a small nation of under 2 million, who at that time were trying to find their unique cultural identity despite various occupations and influences from more dominant surrounding countries. Karlis did such a service for the town (and country) that they made a plaque to honor him, which I was able to see when I visited Smiltene years ago. My great, great grandfather and his life of service inspires me and I would love to have the opportunity to meet him.

#### WHAT MAKES YOU LAUGH THE MOST?

One of my favorite TV shows of all time is "Arrested Development," a story of an enormously rich family that went bankrupt. I've watched it all the way through countless times and always find new comedic gems. The show has a very specific sense of humor that is witty, realistic, and extremely random. This is probably why my toddler also cracks me up as well, she shares the same qualities! Her specialty is random and I also find her highly entertaining.

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE IN THE WORLD?

My favorite place in the world is a little coastal village in Croatia called Duba Peljeska. My husband is from Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and grew up spending the summers in neighboring Croatia. The village does not have a single grocery store and there are less than ten people that live there all year round (one of them is related to my husband)! However, it sits right on the breathtakingly gorgeous Adriatic Sea and in the summer fills up with the most amazing people from all over the world. In terms of beauty it is right up with another one of my favorite places, Haines, Alaska. But that is another question entirely!

#### WHAT'S NEW IN 2021?

Out of all the years to try to move internationally, my family and I chose 2020. Talk about bad luck! We were living in Bosnia-Herzegovina and were planning to move back to my native Northern California in March 2020 right when the travel ban commenced. Needless to say, our move has not looked like what we thought it would! In 2021, we hope we will finally have some space to get settled and begin to put down roots here.