

Croatian Women of Influence & Future Leaders Awards Gala

Svečana večera za dobitnice
nagrade Utjecajne hrvatske žene
i Buduće liderice

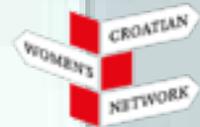
March 8, 2017 8. ožujak, 2017.
Zagreb, Republika Hrvatska

“Solidarity between women can be a powerful force of change, and can influence future development in ways favourable to all humanity” - Nawal El-Saadawi

The Inaugural Croatian Women of Influence and Inaugural Future Leaders Award Winners extend their heartfelt congratulations to their fellow 2017 winners.

Welcome to the club!





CWN

WELCOME MESSAGE

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM CAROLINE SPIVAK

On behalf of the Croatian Women's Network, it is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to Zagreb on the occasion of our second annual Croatian Women of Influence and Future Leader Awards gala. We appreciate your being with us to celebrate the achievements of this year's extraordinary and inspirational women.

Tonight - as we celebrate International Women's Day - we honour talented women of Croatian heritage from as far away as Argentina, Australia, Israel, Mexico and the United States and more closely Austria, Belgium, Bosna & Hercegovina, Croatia, Italy and Germany.

Their diverse accomplishments, are world-leading shining lights drawn from academia, arts and culture, business, leadership and innovation, philanthropy, sports and science and technology. Congratulations to our 26 accomplished winners!

Our vision at the Croatian Women's Network is to contribute to the dialogue and help to provide leadership around the advancement of women by connecting women of Croatian ancestry. As daughters of Croatia, we love our homeland, and we know it will achieve a glorious future because all of us: women, men, native-born Croatians, and those from the diaspora, are working together to build it.



Caroline Spivak
Founder, Croatian Women's Network

None of this would have been possible without a lot of hard work from a great many individuals. My sincere thank the judges, the organizing committee and all of our incredible volunteers for a job well done. To our sponsors, we are grateful for your support. I hope you have the opportunity to generate long-lasting and rewarding connections, friendships and productive business results.

The power to create change and innovate is within each and every one of us and it requires bravery to do something no one else around you is doing. My hope is that our exceptional award-winners and our remarkable inaugural winners will inspire courage and bravery in all of us. I invite us all to go out and be courageous. Be brave. Be loud. Be heard. Succeed and make your mark. After all, we're here to celebrate, champion and connect our way to our collective success. In this way, we can all be women and men of influence.

We look forward to celebrating with you in the future.

Caroline Spivak
Founder,
Croatian Women's Network



Caroline Spivak Representative for Canada | Predstavnik za Kanadu
Council for the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Croatians Abroad
Savjet Vlade Republike Hrvatske za Hrvate Izvan Republike Hrvatske



REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA
PREDSJEDNICA

KLASA: 055-02/17-03/93
URBRÓJ: 71-05-04/4-17-02
Zagreb, 17. veljače 2017.

**Croatian Women's Network/
Mreža hrvatskih žena
gospođa Caroline Spivak**

Poštovana gospođo Spivak,

Srdačno Vam zahvaljujem na pozivu i zamolbi za pokroviteljstvom nad konferencijom „Napredak žena. Napredak ekonomije. Ostvari potencijal!“ i svečanom dodjelom nagrada „Utjecajne hrvatske žene“ i „Buduće liderice“ koje će biti održane 8. ožujka 2017. u Zagrebu.

Zahvaljujem na pismu i koristim prigodu izvijestiti da sam prihvatila pokroviteljstvo, želeći time istaknuti važnost manifestacije koja ukazuje na položaj i utjecaj žena, predstavlja uspješna iskustva i pridonosi jačanju društvenog i poslovnog položaja žena.

Uz srdačne pozdrave, želim Vam uspjeh u pripremi i održavanju najavljenog skupa.

S poštovanjem,





SREBRSNI DRŽAVNI URED ZA HRVATU IZVAN REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE

Zagreb, 8. rujna 2017.

Poštovani,

iznimno mi je čast i radost pozdraviti vas u ime Srednjeg državnog ureda za Hrvate izvan Republike Hrvatske, pokrovitelja konferencije „Uspjehje Hrvatske žene“.

Posebno mi je zadovoljstvo što ova konferencija postaje tradicionalna i što Srednji državni ured namovo ima priliku sudjelovati u njeznoj uspješnoj realizaciji.

Otvorene i uspjeh svakog čovjeka nalazi korjenje u svojoj obitelji. Svoje žene, i njima otvora i profesionalna postignuća znače sretniji obitelj, sigurnije i stabilnije društvo i potencijal netačasnih mogućnosti. Na gostima vaše jedinstvene večere domaćima je ženskog roda – majka, hrabritelica, upraviteljica, ona koja čini uspjehe. Svoje želim predstaviti kao Hrvaticu, gdje god živjela i koji god životni putovi odabrala, da nikada ne postane u održavanju i njegovanju samostalnost, svoje porijeklo i radove pripadajući hrvatskom nacionalnom biću.

Na ovogodišnjoj Konferenciji istaknuli smo postignuća i željebe žene svih generacija, različitim interesu, žene koje žive u različitim društvenim dijelom svijeta i radnje one što smo se najviše okupili u zajedničkoj nam domovini – svijetu nam Hrvatskoj.

Jedna od osnovnih zadaća Srednjeg državnog ureda je očuvanje hrvatske kulture, tradicije i bratstva, jačanje našeg identiteta i analize naših međuvrskih veza. Među naša projekti realizirani su upravo zahvaljujući trudu i predanosti žena naše hrvatske zajednice diljem svijeta jer najveće počivanje na poljoprivrednici Hrvatska koje nezanimljivo ljubavna žrtva i prava hrvatske uspješnosti.

Želim zahvaliti jednoj odvoj predatelj ženi – organizatorici ove vrijedne Konferencije, gospođi Gordini Spisak, od srca joj čestitam čest i svim dobrih osnova uspjeha jer sve se to – ljepše naše! Vjerujem da ćete se i nadalje sretno raditi, poslovati i živjeti, i biti na prvoj svojoj obitelji, prijateljima i svojoj domovini.

S poštovanjem,

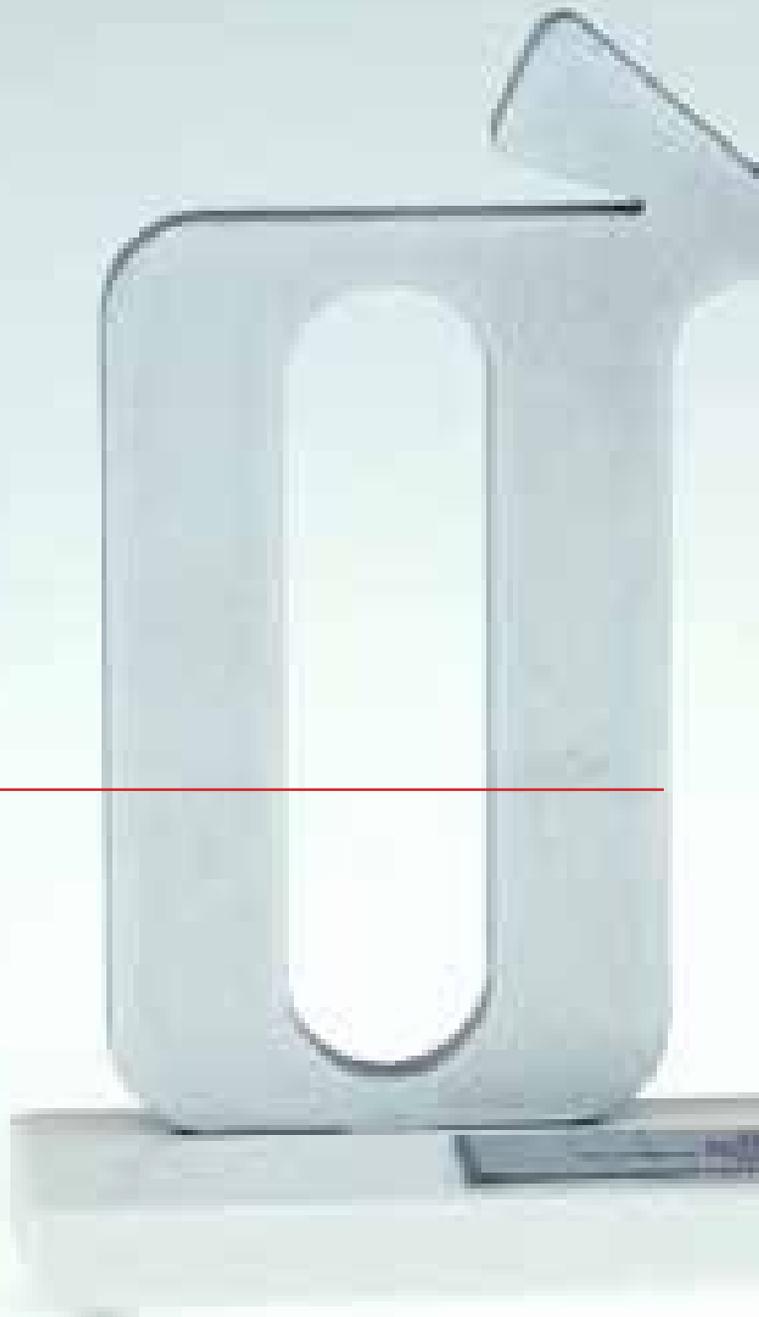




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AWARD

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BAŠĆANSKA PLOČA

KRALJA ZVONIMIRA

Baška tablet is one of the first monuments containing an inscription in the Croatian recension of the Church Slavonic language, dating from c. 1100.

Throughout Croatia's history, courageous and strong women have played an integral role in inspiring action, preserving culture, religion and heritage and even bravely protecting our borders – just as they do today. In creating the award, our goal was to honor the heritage that binds us and to recognize the strength and tenacity of our Croatian Women of Influence.

The Croatian word for woman is žena. The symbol for the first letter “ž” in the ancient and original Croatian Glagolitic alphabet that played an important role in Croatian history is in fact the symbol that shapes the form of the award. It was made in Canada of aluminium and stone.

 The Glagolitic alphabet (known as Glagolitsa) is the oldest known Slavic alphabet. It was created in the 9th century by Saint Cyril, a Byzantine monk from Thessaloniki. He and his brother, Saint Methodius, were sent by the Byzantine Emperor Michael III in 863 to Great Moravia to spread Christianity among the Slavs in the area. The brothers decided to translate liturgical books into the Old Slavic language that was understandable to the general population, but as the words of that language could not be easily written by using either the Greek or Latin alphabets, Cyril decided to invent a new script, Glagolitic, which he based on the language of the Macedonian Slavs from the Thessaloniki region.



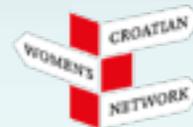
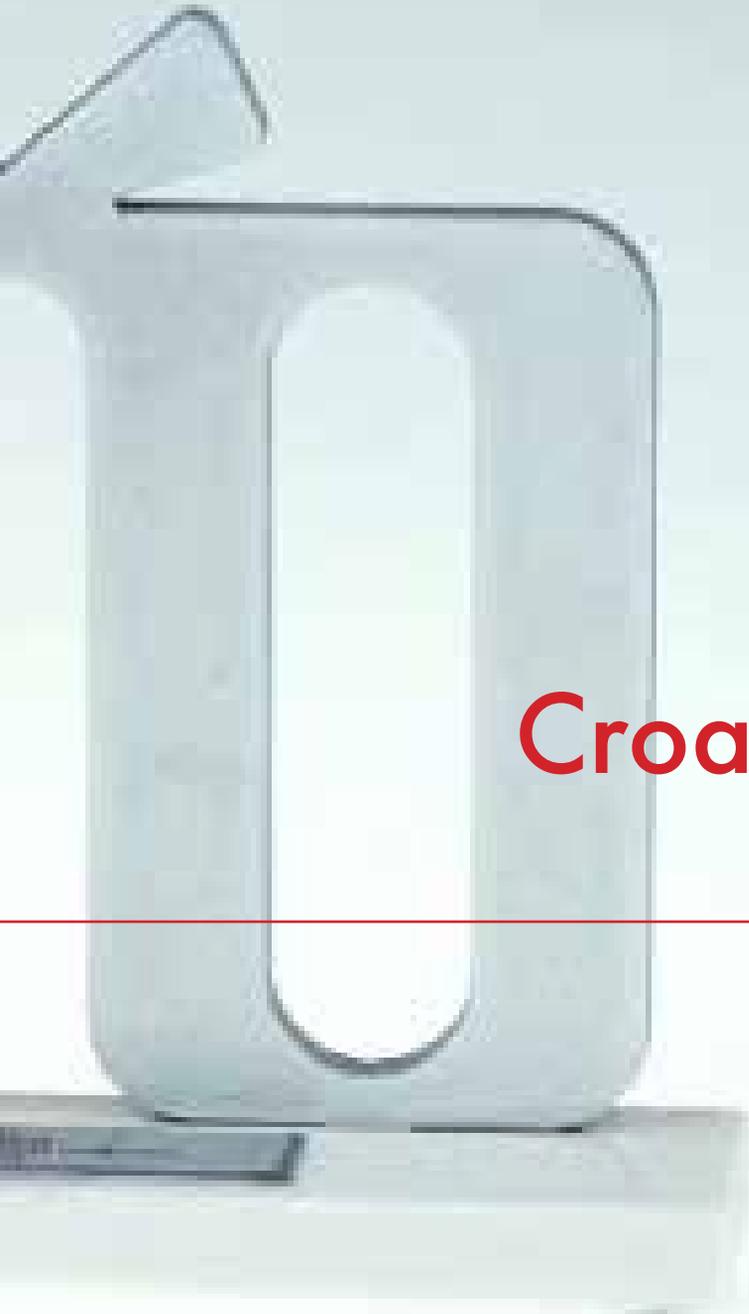
Honoring the Past.
Celebrating the Present.
Advancing into the Future.



After the deaths of Cyril and Methodius, the Glagolitic alphabet ceased to be used in Moravia, but their students continued to propagate it in the west and south. The Glagolitic alphabet was preserved only by the Croats, using it from the 12th to the 20th century, mostly in liturgy.

The name was not coined until many centuries after its creation, and comes from the Old Church Slavonic glagol "utterance" (also the origin of the Slavic name for the letter G). The verb glagoliti means "to speak". It has been conjectured that the name glagolitsa developed in Croatia around the 14th century and was derived from the word glagolity, applied to adherents of the liturgy in Slavonic.

Croats using the Glagolitic alphabet were the only nation in Europe who was given a special permission by Pope Innocent IV (in 1248) to use their own language and this script in liturgy. More precisely, this permission had formally been given to the bishop Philip of Senj. However, special care accorded by the Vatican to the Glagolitic liturgy in subsequent centuries (even by publishing several Glagolitic missals in Rome), shows that this privilege applied to all Croatian lands using the Glagolitic liturgy, mostly along the coast. As is well known, the Latin had been the privileged language in religious ceremonies in the Catholic Church until the 2nd Vatican Synod held in 1962-1965, when it was decided to allow vernacular national languages to be used in the Catholic liturgy instead of Latin. It is interesting that even today the Glagolitic liturgy is used in some Croatian churches.



Croatian Women of Influence

JUDGES

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JUDGES



IVANA PERKUŠIĆ

Special Advisor with Expertise for Croatian Diaspora, Office of the Government Council for Croatians Living in the Diaspora

A lawyer by profession, Ms. Perkušić has played a significant role in the establishment and development of the work of the Office of the Government Council for Croatians Living in the Diaspora. Previously she held senior positions in the Ministries of Infrastructure and Justice and Public Administration. She was a Consul at the General Consulate of the Republic of Croatia in Sydney , Australia. She holds a law degree from the University of Zagreb.



MIRJANA ANA-MARIA PISKULIĆ

Director, Croatian Heritage Foundation

Mirjana Ana-Maria Piskulić was born to Croatian immigrants in the Republic of South Africa. She has been working at the Croatian Heritage Foundation since 1991 having previously served as First Secretary at the Croatian Embassy in Canberra then as the Croatian Consul General in Sydney, Australia.



dr. sc. VIKTOR ŠEGRT

Director, Regional Development Agency of Karlovac County "Karla"

As the Director of the Regional Development Agency of Karlovac County "Karla", Dr. Šegrt is responsible for the attraction and management of EU funding and investment related business in Croatia's City of Parks. Previously he served as head of the EU office in the City of Karlovac. In 2016 he completed his PhD from the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Osijek.



DR. ŽELJKO TANJIĆ

Rektor, Croatian Catholic University

Prof. Željko Tanjić, PhD, has served as Rector of the Catholic University of Croatia since October 2011. From 2009 until 2011 he was the CEO of Kršćanska Sadašnjost, the publishing house of the Archdiocese of Zagreb. Previously he was Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Fundamental Theology at the Catholic Faculty of Theology of the University of Zagreb. Dr. Tanjić is a member of the International Theological Commission. He is the author of one book, editor of four and has published several scientific and professional papers in theology and philosophy and has participated in numerous national and international scientific and professional conferences.

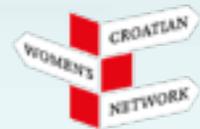
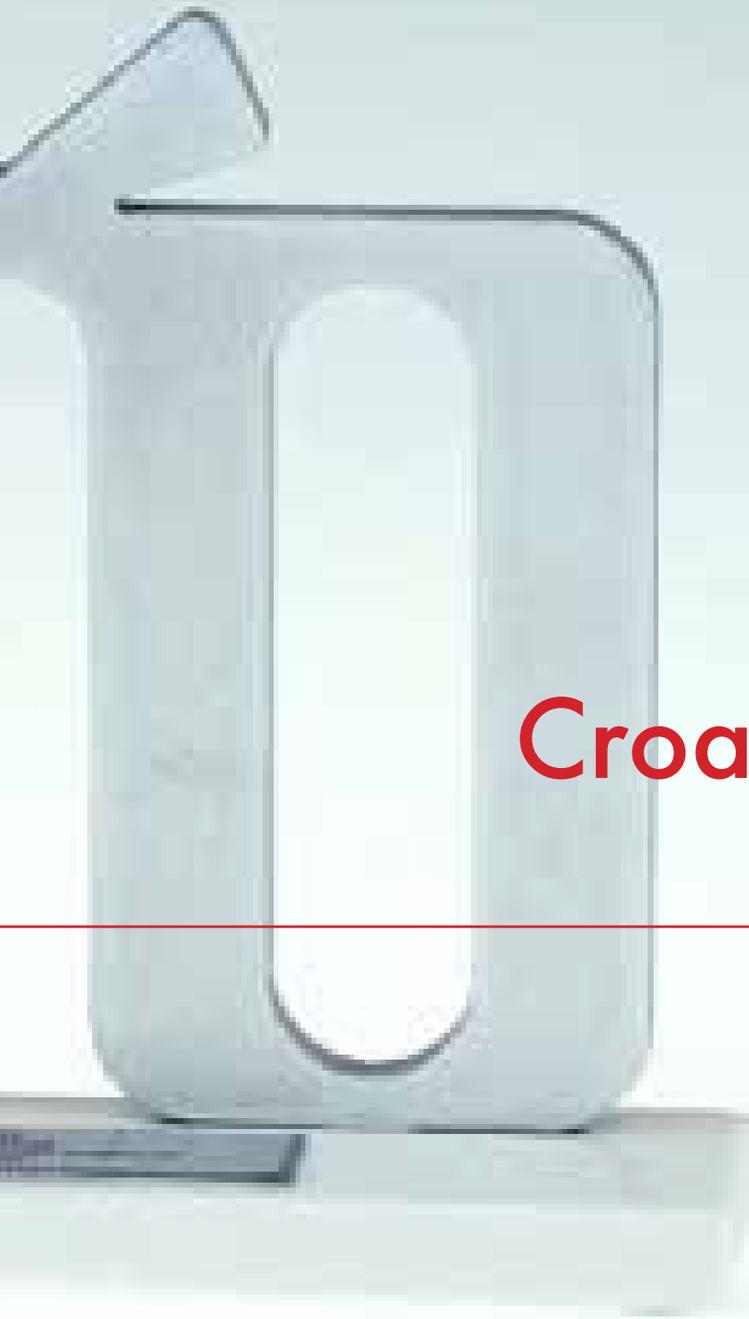


DR. IVANA ZEREC

Ministry of Economy, Republic of Croatia

Dr. Ivana Zerec is a professional diplomat and Head of European and International Relations in the Ministry of Economy, Republic of Croatia. Previously, she was a Focal point for Sanctions and Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons (CBRN) in the Department for International Security of the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, during the crises in Libya and Syria from 2011 to 2013. She was Croatian Focal Point for the Belgian EU Presidency, in the second half of 2010. Her first diplomatic mandate, she served in Bruxelles from 2006 to 2010, as a Head of Political and Economic Affairs in the Croatian Embassy to Belgium and Luxembourg.

From 2004 to 2006 she was as Deputy Head of Department for Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in the Directorate for Multilateral Affairs. She is a member of Executive Board of the Association of Croatian Diplomats.



Croatian Women of Influence

WINNERS

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HONORARY FRIEND OF CROATIA



Honorary Friend of Croatia,
Croatian Women of Influence
Israel/USA

Dr Esther Gitman is a Jewish American historian who is an expert on Jewish history in the former Yugoslavia specifically focusing on the Independent State of Croatia. She is the author of *When Courage Prevailed: The Rescue and Survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia 1941–1945* (Paragon House, 2011, USA). The book examines the rescue and survival of Jews in the Independent State of Croatia during World War II and the role of then Archbishop of Zagreb, now Blessed Alojzije Stepinac, during that time. The book was made into a documentary film, by the same name authored by Jadranka Jurško-Kero, which was released in June 2011 and premiered in Croatia.

**“Stepinac is a holy man who
saved many Jews”**

Dr. Esther Gitman

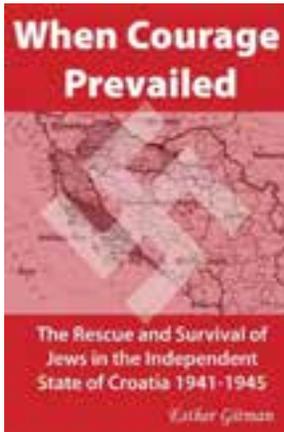
In 1999 Dr. Gitman embarked upon scientific research for her PhD dissertation dedicating her work exclusively to the courageous Croatians who saved Jews in the Independent State of Croatia and to Blessed Stepinac. Gitman had not heard about Blessed Stepinac and his contributions to saving the Jews until her dissertation work took her to the Croatian national archives in Zagreb where she uncovered numerous mislaid boxes that contained tens of thousands of unprocessed documents that pointed to



his brave and daring activities during the war. Her work has attracted significant Croatian and world-wide attention.

Dr. Gitman was born to a Jewish family in Sarajevo from which she fled with her mother during 1941. After living in Israel and Montreal, Quebec, Canada she and her husband have lived in New York, USA since 1972.

Sixty one years after fleeing Sarajevo, Dr. Gitman came to Zagreb in 2002 as an American research scientist where, with a Fulbright Scholarship in hand, she spent a year studying the rescue of Jews out of the Independent State of Croatia. Such research had previously been politically unsuitable or had been deemed to be 'forbidden' or 'uninteresting' to historians of that era.



Through the lens of scientific research, proof and arguments, Gitman highlights the courageous and honourable Croatians who placed their own lives at risk in order to help the Jews of the World War II escape unspeakable horrors and outright oppose the laws of the day.

Dr. Gitman's enduring message is that there is always hope to conquer evil if there are good and decisive people who love a human being as a human being and not for his or her racial or religious belonging.

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FUTURE LEADERS



GABRIJELA JURIĆ

Category: Future Leader

Country: Belgium

Digital muse girl tech fest was the true global coming out of Gabrijela Jurić. At the 2016 international women in IT day this young programming phenom caught the eye of Microsoft with her MIT App Inventor 2 which is used at MIT and her Virtual DJ 8 program which stores high volumes of techno beats.

So impressed was the world's leading software maker that Gabrijela was extended an invitation to present her creations at an EU conference where she was brought in to speak with executives of Amazon, Google, IBM and YouTube to high acclaim.

Gabrijela's future as a programming wonderkid is assured and we expect to hear much more from her in the future.



KAJA PAVLINIĆ

Category: Future Leader

Country: Republic of Croatia

Kaja Pavlinić is currently pursuing her BA in Computer Science at the University of Zagreb, where her interests extend to international relations and diplomacy. She has competed in numerous computer science competitions. Kaja is an US Department of State Exchange Alumni and actively participates in many conferences and managing her own projects. She is founder of the Tinja. Tinja is an online platform for simple and efficient matching of solar panel installers and interested users who want to install solar panels at their property. The aim of the platform is to encourage exploitation of renewable sources of energy, primarily solar energy, since by the 2020, Croatia will be forced to pay high penalties for not having implemented sufficient infrastructure that uses renewable sources of energy. The start up was recently awarded the SEUA award.



ANITA VIDIĆ

Category: Future Leader

Country: Republic of Croatia

At the age of 16, Anita became the award-winning designer of the invisible solar plane. She credits her innovation and early success to the inspiration she found in her education and extra-curricular activities. Anita's desire to be part of something meaningful and that lead to the exploration and experimentation that resulted in the creation of her solar product. With such early innovation, we're sure to hear more from this future leader.

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WINNERS



BRANKA ĆUBELIĆ

CEO, Dreamtime Events Croatia

Category: Business

Country: Australia/Republic of Croatia

A highly successful business woman from Perth Australia, some four years ago Branka Ćubelić decided to return to her homeland where she'd lived more than 50 years of her life. In addition to her business achievements, Branka was active in the local Croatian cultural and folklore community contributing to the maintenance and cultivation of Croatian customs and traditions. Today she lives in Split and spends her time investing in projects that help to advance Croatia. Branka's demonstrated heart-felt passion for all that she does as she lives out her dreams makes her an inspiration to us all.



IVONA ČULO

CEO, Adria Media Zagreb

Category: Leadership & Innovation

Country: Republic of Croatia

Ivona Čulo is a leader with more than 20 years of publishing experience. Following a 10-year stint at Croatian daily newspapers, she moved to extend her career at Adria Media Zagreb, the leading magazine company in Croatia, with a respectable portfolio of local and international brands, such as National Geographic, Elle, Elle Decoration, Cosmopolitan and NS Men's Health among others. Ivona has gone on to hone her business management and organizational expertise in her advancement to Chief Executive Officer transforming Adria Media Zagreb into a multimedia platform and content development business. Moreover, Adria Media Zagreb is continuously initiating and developing new socially responsible projects and events such as Story Green Day (activities for saving our planet), Pink Ribbon initiatives and numerous health programs. She is currently a PhD candidate in the „Publishing and Media“ program at the University of Rijeka and she teaches journalism at University North and personal PR at Edward Bernays First College of Communication Management in Croatia.



DELFA KOSIĆ PAPIĆ

Director, ÖVP (Austrian People's Party)

Women in Salzburg City Hall

Category: Leadership & Innovation

Country: Austria

Delfa Papić, was born in Osijek and lives in Salzburg. is the first Croatian woman to stand as a candidate for the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). Delfa studied communications at the Faculty for Culture and Social Sciences in Salzburg, Austria. She is the former president of the Croatian Media Association "Lijepa naša" and was a spokesperson for the Croatian Cultural and Artistic Association "Croatian Dream" from Salzburg. In 2010, Delfa was nominated for the prestigious award *Večernjakova domovnica* in the entertainment category. In 2009 she was named one of the top three High Potential emerging talents by the daily *Kurir*. Until 2014 she was the director of the largest private Institute of Education in Austria. after which she entered politics where she leads the committee for women's affairs where she advocates for the advancement of women in society.



MARIJANA DOKOZA

Author, Poet and Editor Fenix Magazine
Category: Leadership & Innovation
Country: Germany

Author, journalist and poet Marijana Dokoza was born in Zadar, and has lived in Mainz, Germany since 2006. She is the editor of the monthly Croatian-German Fenix Magazine and portal dedicated to Croatians living in the diaspora published in Austria, Germany, Luxemburg and Switzerland. Marijana writes regularly for the Croatian daily newspaper, Večernji List and contributes to numerous Croatian media publications including the women's weekly Gloria and other daily newspapers. Marijana is the author of multiple poetic publications, Sjene prošlosti, Dvorac tajni three romance novels Izgubljeni u ljudskim mislima, Naranyjin plač i Grijesi with the latter being nominated for the literary award Kiklop. She has been included in the anthology of 90 contemporary writers of the Zadar writer's circle. In 2016, the organization Casa del Sol in association with the City of Mainz named Marijana to the list of top 25 immigrant women in recognition of her shining example of success and the strength of her network.



DR. IVANČICA DVORŽAK SCHRUNK

Senior Adjunct Faculty, Department of History
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota
Category: Arts & Culture
Country: Republic of Croatia/U.S.A.

Dr. Ivančica Dvoržak Schrunk, born in Zagreb, teaches ancient history and archaeology at the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota. She has published numerous articles and co-authored or co-edited several books, most of which focus on Croatian archaeological heritage. She is past president of the Minnesota Society of the Archaeological Institute of America and is currently vice-president of the Croatian Cultural Society of Minnesota. Ivančica is a dedicated volunteer in the Croatian community and is actively engaged in promoting cultural and educational exchanges. She teaches Croatian language and interprets and translates for immigrants and refugees. She is organizational Chair for the Croatian exhibit at the annual Festival of Nations in St. Paul. She has lead study abroad courses in Croatia and has involved her students and international volunteers in a collaborative archaeological project on the island of Sveti Klement near Hvar.



dr. sc. TAMARA GAZDIĆ-ALERIĆ

Professor, Faculty of Teacher Education,
University of Zagreb & Head of Croatian
Language and Literature, Stage and Media
Culture Department

Category: Social Science

Country: Republic of Croatia/U.S.A.

Prof. Tamara Gazdić-Alerić, PhD, graduated from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb. She holds a PhD in humanities (linguistics). She worked at the Croatian Radiotelevision in the newsroom covering important news and political events, Education and Youth Department as well as in Culture, Science and Religion Department. She currently works at the Department of Croatian Language and Literature, Stage and Media Culture at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb. She served as a Vice-Dean for Science, Art and International Relations at the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb and is a member of Matica Hrvatska (Matrix Croatica) and Croatian Philological Association, *International Association of Applied Linguistics* and the *American Educational Research Association*.



PETRA GREGORITZ

Marketing Research Consultant, PGM Research

Category: Business

Country: Austria

The first meeting of Croatian Women in Business in Vienna was hosted at the Croatian Embassy in 2015 garnered significant interest in development of economic opportunities with Croatia. The conference emphasized the promotion of mutual empowerment and knowledge exchange among while establishing a system of mentoring and championing women to support each other in building a professional career. The initiative was supported by the Vienna Chamber of Commerce committee of Woman in Business. President of the group, Petra Gregoritz, astonished the gathering with some surprising facts including the fact that in 2016 women in Austria were responsible for starting 43.5% of new companies. In particular she champions issues such as the need for flexibility in the labor market for women and advocates for concrete support systems such as availability of early years child care to help women in achieving success.



MARA LETICA-SAAD

Executive Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary, Letica Corporation

Category: Business

Country: U.S.A.

Mara Letica Saad's experiences are unique, remarkable and in many ways, reflect her wonderful family's success story. Mara was born in Germany as the family journeyed toward America and settled in Greenville, Michigan where her father began to work toward his vision for Letica Corporation. Mara earned a bachelors degree in history from The University of Michigan and then traveled west to Seattle University to study law remaining in Washington for several years working as a prosecutor and a commercial litigator. She returned to join the family business and after 20 years Mara continues to successfully balance many roles in the company. Throughout her life she has had a strong interest in her family's birthplace, Croatia, and was actively involved in Croatia's independence movement. With her father, she organized a group of attorneys in the U.S. to aid and supervise the 1990 elections. Her efforts were recognized by President George H.W. Bush with a nomination to be Ambassador to Croatia.



DR. MAJA LUKAČ-STIER

Professor of Anthropological Philosophy, Catholic University, Santa Maria de los Buenos Aires

Category: Social Science

Country: Argentina

Professor Maja Lukač-Stier was born in Buenos Aires to Croatian parents and is tenured at the Catholic University of Santa Maria de los Buenos Aires. Her life-long contributions to the advancement and maintenance of Croatian cultural traditions in Argentina are well known and recognized. In 1995 she became the first Croatian – and only the third women in history - to be named to the prestigious Papal Academy of St. Tomas Aquinas since its establishment in 1879. She and the current Pope Francis are personal friends.



ANA MATULIĆ

Co-Founder, Family-Run Farm Matulić, Pašman, Croatia, Professor of French and Italian Language and Literature
Category: Entrepreneurship
Country: Republic of Croatia

Ana Matulić, a professor of Italian and French Languages and Literature, decided to live on the Island of Pašman where, together with her husband, she founded the family-run Farm Matulić. Today, they are well known across Europe, Ana for her cosmetic products and her husband for his gastronomic delicacies, the best known of which is pašmanero. Ana set off to France where she spent a month in Paris attending the prestigious school of French aromatherapy based on the principles of the Slow cosmétique movement. Conceived in 2012, this movement was initiated by Julien Kaibeck, Belgian journalist, publicist, social worker and aroma therapist. Upon returning from France, she started to invite many French national tourists to the Island of Pašman. Thanks to her engagement, the island of Pašman and the Gothic wooden cross from the Benedictine monastery at Čokovac was awarded a star in Michelin's 2016 Green Guide. Moreover, it is to Ana's credit that the Island of Pašman and Île-aux-Moines, Brittany have established a strong friendship.



ANDREA NOVAK NEUMANN

President, Croatian Cultural Society of Minnesota, IT Manager, Merrill Corporation
Category: Leadership & Innovation
Country: U.S.A.

Andrea Novak Neumann is a proud Croatian, dedicated volunteer and devoted mother from Minneapolis, Minnesota. When not working as an IT Manager for Merrill Corporation, Andrea devotes much of her time to preserving and promoting Croatian culture and heritage. She is president of the Croatian Cultural Society of Minnesota, an executive board member for the National Federation of Croatian Americans Cultural Foundation and a board member and former officer for the University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center. She has taken the Croatian Cultural Society into the digital age with online newsletters, Twitter feeds and other social media engagement. Her life-long volunteerism is motivated in part by the hard work of her father with many of these organizations and she carries on her family's legacy by instilling the same pride and dedication in her three teenage children, who join her in volunteering at many cultural events.



NIKA PINTER

Prosecutor

Category: Leadership & Innovation

Country: Republic of Croatia

A believer in true justice, Nika Pinter currently represents Croatian General Slobodan Praljak before the ICTY in The Hague where six Croat political and military leaders were convicted in 2013 of participating in a joint criminal enterprise to establish a Croat state in Bosnia. A Zagreb Prosecutor, The judgment condemns the leaderships of both Herceg-Bosna and Croatia and is contrary to historical facts. The trial was one of the longest and most document heavy cases in the Tribunal's history and is currently at the appeal stage. Ms. Pinter has taken upon herself the immense task of defending the legacy of the HVO in Bosnia Herzegovina which, if left unchallenged, will leave misinterpreted facts as historical consequences. Her commitment to justice is real and her work should be recognized and commended.



dr. sc. ANITA ŠALIĆ

Research Associate / Znanstveni suradnik
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Chemical
Engineering and Technology

Category: Science & Technology

Country: Republic of Croatia

Anita focuses her scientific research on implementation of microreactor technology in different areas, ranging from high-grade compound production to water purification. Her scientific research combines the distinct areas of science, biotechnology, chemical engineering, environment protection and economy impact. The interdisciplinary approach to those topics ensure competitiveness of the research which in return ensures publication in some of the most important and most cited and recognized journals in the fields covered by her research. Anita's ground-breaking work has been acknowledged with several awards and numerous professional recognitions.



S. ANĐELITA ŠOKIĆ

Sisters of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ
Category: Philanthropy
Country: Australia/Republic of Croatia

Sister Anđelita Šokić belongs to the religious community of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, based in Zagreb. She was the Curator of the Museum of the Blessed Aloysius Stepinac until Fall 2016 when she was relocated to Australia. Born in the village of Vidovice, Bosanska Posavina, Bosnia-Herzegovina she felt the call to a service of faith from an early age and entered the monastery when she was only 16. After the renewed of her first vows, s. Anđelita was stationed in Australia where she completed a degree in pedagogy, and then worked at the Catholic school for the next 13 years. She returned to Croatia in the midst of the Homeland War in 1992 where she remained until 2016. During that time, she took on many roles in the Croatian Catholic Centre and the Zagreb Archdiocese in the offices of auxiliary bishops and vicars general (until 2003). In the early 2004 she started working at the museum of the Blessed Aloysius Stepinac where she served with lots of dedication and affection until September 2016.



GABRIELA ELENA SPANIĆ UTRERA

Actress, Singer, Humanitarian and Entrepreneur
Category: Arts & Culture
Country: Mexico

Gabriela Spanić has gained great popularity abroad, and is respected as a hard-working woman, a true humanitarian helping the poor in Mexico and other countries. As a public person she never forgets her Croatian roots; instead, she uses her public position to draw attention to humanitarian projects that take up a lot of her time and effort. Despite becoming well-known, she has remained a simple person with a high level of humanity and honesty.

Gabriela Spanić is a perfect example of inspiration. She has won her place in society & became a successful actress, singer and entrepreneur.



DR. NELA SRŠEN

Medical Doctor, Surgeon & Honorary General –
Consul of the Republic of Croatia in Italy
President, Croatia House
Category: Philanthropy
Country: Italy

Dr. Nela Sršen was born in Metković, attended high school in Split and studied medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in Padua where she completed an accelerated graduation. She began her career in the ER in Treviso and continued in the Padua hospital. Following her specialization in New York, she became the youngest member of the liver transplant team under Prof. David D'Amica, the most highly respected Italian surgeon at the University Hospital of Padua. On the recommendation of then Croatian president Stjepan Mesić, Ms. Sršen was appointed Honorary Consul of the Republic of Croatia in the region of Veneto, Italy in July 2004. As founder and president of the humanitarian organization "Croatian House", she currently leads a project of buying a house in Padua that would accommodate Croatian citizens undergoing difficult and often long-term medical treatments in a foreign country. She was awarded a Gold Heart conferred by the 91. Association of Croatian War Veterans (UHBDR91.), and the Zagreb Fair Association of Croatian War Veterans, in cooperation with other associations of the Homeland War. Moreover, following the recommendation of numerous veterans associations and individuals Nela was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize!



DR. SILVIA ŠUŠNJIĆ, PH.D.

International Development Specialist
QED Grupu, Cairo
Category: Philanthropy
Country: Egypt/Republic of Croatia

Dr. Silvia Sušnjić is an expert in the management and implementation of international development projects and research, with more than 15 years of experience leading a number of peace-building and conflict mitigation program and research initiatives. Most recently, Dr. Sušnjić worked in Afghanistan leading Democracy International's \$50 million Afghanistan Electoral Reform and Civic Advocacy (AERCA) project, as the Chief of Party. Dr. Sušnjić was responsible for overall project management, research programming and administration implementing nationwide programs Afghanistan's highly politically charged and insecure environment. She led her team during Afghanistan's 2014 Presidential Elections in implementing research and civic outreach communities, with a focus on civic outreach to engage Afghan women and youth in the political process.



DR. SUZANA TKALČIĆ, DVM, PHD

Associate Professor, Veterinary Pathology
College of Veterinary Medicine, Western
University of Health Sciences, CA, USA
Category: Science & Technology
Country: U.S.A.

Dr. Tkalcic is the first Croatian female veterinarian with a PhD and pathology residency in the USA. Her scientific expertise includes comparative pathology, international veterinary medicine, food safety, ocean health, One Health, and marine mammal pathology. She collaborates scientifically with many institutions in Croatia and abroad and is a member of MAR3INE, IAAAM, AMEE, ACS, and medical advisor for the Los Angeles Zoo. She has authored many scientific publications, grants, and participated in 40+ scientific meetings and international conferences. She holds Dr. Jurak Award for Comparative Pathology by the Croatian Medical Academy, had initiated "Suzana Tkalcic One Health Award" and in 2016 was inducted into the Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences. She is secretary and Culture Director of the Croatian Cultural Center of Greater Los Angeles, San Pedro, CA (www.croatiala.org); writes poetry (HIL), sings and directs Croatian Vocal Ensemble "IZVOR" and teaches "Scola Croatica" - Croatian children school. She has been recognized for her work by the USA President, Congress, California Senate and City of Los Angeles.



DR. SC. KSENIJA UROIĆ

Laboratory for Antibiotic, Enzyme, Probiotic
and Starter Cultures Technology, Faculty of
Food Technology and Biotechnology,
University of Zagreb
Category: Science & Technology
Country: Republic of Croatia

Ksenija Uroić comes from a biotechnology background. She was born in Varaždin, where she still lives. She works at the Faculty of Food Technology and Biotechnology, University of Zagreb, in the Laboratory for Antibiotic, Enzyme, Probiotic and Starter Cultures Technology under Prof. Jagoda Šušković. Her scientific work deals with "good" probiotic bacteria which, although intensively studied for many years, have not yet revealed all their secrets. The research on probiotic benefits of lactic acid bacteria is extremely topical, particularly in terms of their applicability in faster and more efficient development of new bio-therapeutic products, dietary probiotic products and various functional products containing added probiotics. She has won numerous scholarships and awards for her work. Her husband and a three-year old daughter have been an invaluable motivation in her life.



BLANKA VLAŠIĆ

Athlete and two-time World Champion in the High Jump (2008 Beijing / 2016 Brazil)

Category: Sport

Country: Republic of Croatia

Blanka Vlašić is an inspiration to all of us! She is an athlete and high jump record holder, double world champion and vice-champion, European champion and world indoor champion. She is a two-time Olympic medalist: claiming silver in Beijing in 2008 and bronze in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. The International Association of Athletics Federations named her the World's Athlete of the Year in 2010 and she also won the European Athlete of the Month award as much as six times. Branka was awarded the Split's Athlete of the Year award in 2016. Branka's unshakable faith in God, as well as her perseverance and endurance have led her to the top of her field. Her message is a testament to all that a firm will and faith in yourself and God are a winning combination for success.



dr.sc. DIJANA ZADRAVEC

Deputy Director, Clinical Hospital Center "Sestre Milosrdnice"

Category: Leadership & Innovation

Country: Republic of Croatia

Docent, Doctor of Science and Doctor of Medicine/radiology specialist and sub-specialist in neuroradiology, Deputy Director of the Clinical Hospital Center "Sestre Milosrdnice" in Zagreb. She is the Head of General and Dental Radiology Department at the School of Dental Medicine, University of Zagreb and Acting Principal of the Clinical Institute of Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology (Clinical Hospital Center "Sestre Milosrdnice")



DR. NEDA CAKTAŠ

Journalist, Münchner Pressehaus- Münchner Merkur/ tz-München, Pres., Project Croatian House

Category: Leadership & Innovation

Country: Germany

Dr. Caktaš was born and raised in Zagreb with roots from Dalmatia. For years, she has been very active in the Croatian community of the Bavarian metropolis. Her goal has been to fight assimilation, especially among younger second and third generations of the upcoming intellectuals, children of Croatian settlers, and fighting for their better integration into the local German society, that is, for the cooperation with cultural, economic and political institutions of the host country. Being the Vice President of the Croatian World Congress for Germany, the first woman to hold this function at this honourable institution, Dr. Caktaš fostered the Association of Croatian students in Munich/ UHS to join the HSKNJ membership in 2015, and in collaboration with the students she organized the first **PARADE FOR THE VICTIMS OF VUKOVAR outside Croatia** under the auspices of the Congress. Alongside a variety of activities promoting the Croatian Corpus in the area of the Bavarian metropolis, in 2016 the founding assembly of the project **"CROATIAN HOUSE"- KROATISCHES HAUS**, she was unanimously elected president.



Bernadette M. Luketich-Sikaras



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Franjo Bertovic
National Vice President/
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Congratulations,
Dr. Ivančica Dvoržak Schrunk!
From your History Department
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VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION ZAHVALA VOLONTERIMA

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS...

Putting together an international awards ceremony and conference with finalists and speakers from every corner of the globe is no easy task, and a great many women and men deserve our gratitude for their efforts.

We extend a very special thanks to our fluently bilingual student volunteers who gave their time – and their incredible enthusiasm – to help make these events an honored experience for our guest.

Thanks for being an inspiration to women of Croatian heritage everywhere.

OD SRCA HVALA...

Organizacija Međunarodne konferencije i svečane dodjele nagrada sa sudionicima iz gotovo cijeloga svijeta, nije lagan zadatak. Volonteri, Organizacijski odbor, svi u Hrvatskoj, Australiji, Kanadi i Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama, koji su odradili ogroman posao, zaslužuju našu zahvalnost za sav trud i brigu.

Posebno se zahvaljujemo našim studenticama koje su odvojile svoje vrijeme te iskustvom, znanjem i nevjerojatnim entuzijazmom pridonijele poticajnoj atmosferi i pomogle da se svaki gost naše Konferencije osjeća dobrodošlim.

Vi ste inspiracija ženama hrvatskoga podrijetla diljem svijeta.

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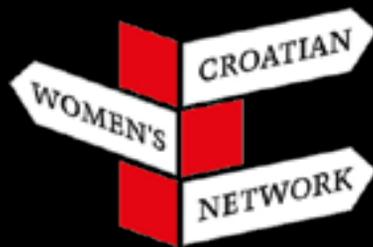


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