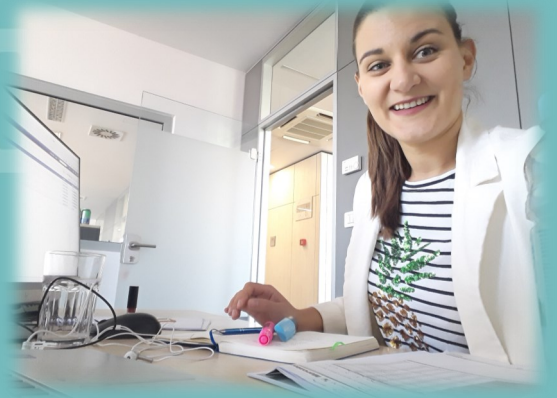


SANJA ŽIVIĆ, mag. math

Hello Sanja, introduce yourself briefly .. What did your childhood look like and where did your love for science and mathematics come from?

Sanja: I grew up in the countryside, so most of my memories are related to running in the woods and making various houses that we called bases. I only remember one situation before school where it turned out that numbers were ringing somewhere in me. There was some local summer party and my parents sent me and my little sister to go buy popcorn. We chose what we wanted, she took hers and ran to them again while I stayed to argue with the seller because he didn't return the exact amount to us. That mathematics is in me came to the only in the upper grades of primary school. In the lower grades I had problems with reading so I didn't really like word assignments (easy to calculate, but it should be read :-D). Sometime near the end of primary school, the teacher I went to for extra looked at me and said you would finish math, and I laughed and said no way ;-).



Who were your role models and inspiration? Is there anyone in your life who has especially encouraged you?

I generally don't have any great role models. I mostly admire 'little' humble people who create what they have imagined and don't accept obstacles. I think that effort, work, will and a positive attitude are often enough to reach the goal. However, I think that the high school teacher Đurđica is most responsible for my mathematical progress, as she spent Friday afternoons with us, overwhelmed with assignments from various competitions. She is a teacher who collected all the tasks that appeared at one of the competitions for years and patiently went through them with us to expand the picture of mathematics from the class. While everyone was rushing home after the last class, a few of us students from 1st to 4th grade would sit in one classroom, take their homework sheet and start trying. There were days when we failed to solve anything, but that didn't stop us, in fact there was an even greater motivation to solve more next Friday.

What do you do today and what does your work day look like?

Today I work as a specialist in the BI (business intelligence) department of an IT company. I work in a team that deals with data analysis. We produce a variety of fixed and dynamic reports on a daily basis to help companies make business decisions. Since we work for a large number of companies there are reports from finance, sales, procurement and many other smaller areas.

Aside from math, what are your hobbies?

I'm a little creative, so in my free time I like to make various personalized little things for gifts. I like to sew, renovate old furniture, come up with themed events, take photos, cook and travel a lot.

What is your message to children and young people?

My message to everyone would be not to give up on realizing your dreams. If it doesn't go one way, find another. If you are interested in something, ask. If you don't know something, you will learn. Fill the day with what makes you happy and why you will one day be satisfied with yourself. Be persistent, smiling and curious. Live your own way!

They say that adults and teachers are the ones who guide us ... what would you say to teachers?

I agree that teachers and professors are great motivators for young students and I want to thank them first. I wish all teachers and professors enough strength and will to constantly share their knowledge. All these invested hours little by little lead to new intellectuals, engineers and various excellent workers. I wish each of them at least a few students a year who will discover the expanses for the first glance in the direction they have been shown. I wish them students who will one day know even more than them thanks to the fact that they were just their students.

Being a teacher is not a profession, but a calling and enjoy it!