

SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

# Adventure

continued from page 1

bia wanted to make Bosnia and Serbia into one unified country, but Bosnia had different ideas.

This caused a rift and started a war that lasted for four years. Haznadar's hometown of Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, was the center of all of the action.

"My dad wasn't there at all because he was fighting. My mom worried about food, water and electricity. They were killing civilians all the time," said Haznadar solemnly.

Issues such as these were consistent every day for four years of Haznadar's young life. Looking back on it now, Haznadar feels very lucky with the way things turned out.

"I was one of the rare people from back home that didn't lose a family member. My dad was wounded, but nobody died. There were so many [scenarios] that could have happened. We were lucky."

The Bosnian War ultimately was resolved in December 1995 with the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

The war that ravaged her hometown ultimately sparked her interest in psychology.

"The war made me want to study psychology because I really wanted to see what makes people do things like that."

After the war, Haznadar and her sister got bit by the travel bug.

Their older sister, Majda, did an exchange program in the U.S., and ended up finishing her last two years of high school here. She now lives and works in Washington D.C.

"My older sister is an over-achiever. My twin and I always had to keep it up," Haznadar joked.

After watching their older sister succeed in the U.S., Adisa and Harisa decided it was something they wanted to do as well. Both ended up being accepted to an exchange program. Harisa spent 10 months in Arizona, while Adisa split her 10 months in Wisconsin and Hawaii.

After their exchange experience, both headed back to Sarajevo where they finished off high school. Once high school was over, both sisters entered college in Sarajevo.

"When I was getting ready

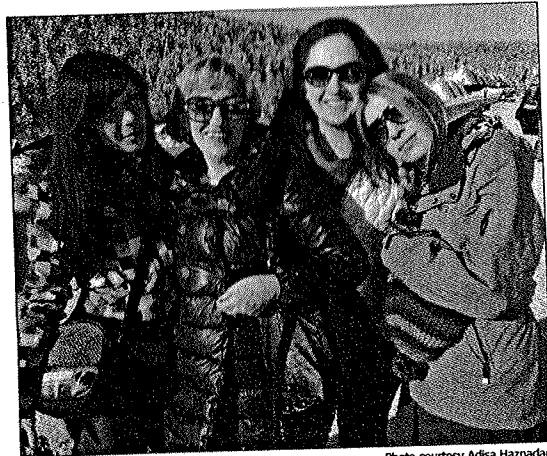


Photo courtesy Adisa Haznadar

Adisa poses with her mom, older sister, Majda, and twin sister, Harisa on Mt. Bjelasnica near her hometown of Sarajevo, Bosnia.

to go to college I was interested in many things like French and photography," Haznadar said. "The system is different [in Bosnia]. In Bosnia you have to know exactly what you're going to do before you enter university. So I went into psychology. All four years it's all about psychology."

While nearing the end of her university education, Haznadar wanted more. She wanted to travel and she wanted to educate herself more. Towards the end of her and her twin's college careers, both received scholarships to work on their Master's degrees in the Czech Republic. Harisa was to go to work on her Master's in art history, while Adisa was slated for a program in clinical psychology.

"We both got accepted, but at the time I was still doing my research thesis and my mentor wasn't really there for me," explained Haznadar. "Instead of finishing in the beginning of September, I finished at the end of October, so I didn't get to go to the Czech Republic because of the timing."

At first, Haznadar was heartbroken. Not only was her sister going to study in the Czech Republic, but so was her best friend. She was stuck at home.

This motivated her to find something else. After working at home for a while, Haznadar found a program that was right up her alley. It happened to be located in Greece.

"I came across this program

that was called European Master's in Sports and Exercise Psychology. They had people from 20 different countries. It was in Greece, Finland and Sweden."

"When I got accepted to that program, I realized why I didn't go to [the] Czech [Republic]. My sister hated [it]. When she came to Greece [she was so jealous]. These past two years were amazing."

The world traveler got just what she wanted.

Within the final year of working towards her Master's, Haznadar began to consider whether it would be worth it or not get her doctorate in applied psychology.

"When I started my Master's I was like, 'I'm done after this. I can't do it any more,'" Haznadar said with a sigh.

In the midst of her program, a group of leading scholars from the U.S., Australia and Europe visited and lectured in Haznadar's class.

That is when Haznadar met Judy Van Raalte, professor of psychology at SC, and one of the experts on the practice of self-talk, something Haznadar was very interested in.

"She was one of the reasons I wanted to come," explained Haznadar.

Upon meeting Van Raalte, Haznadar's mind was set on wanting to work on her doctorate in applied psychology.

After months of paperwork and enduring the grueling Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), Haznadar finally

made it to Springfield College and immediately started making an impact.

When the director of the International Center, Deb Alm, discovered that Springfield College would be welcoming 20 broken-English speaking students from Saudi Arabia, she knew she needed help.

"One of the things that we were concerned about was having a graduate assistant for [the Saudi Arabian students]. [We needed] someone to help us with that group. [We needed someone] to be the advocate for them, help them take care of the little details of living here, help coordinate trips and be the liaison for their teachers who are not Springfield College faculty," said Alm.

Haznadar also was in desperate need of some financial help.

"If it wasn't for [the International Center] and this position, I wouldn't be here because it is really expensive."

When Alm found out that Haznadar needed some financial help to come here, she was instantly captured by Haznadar's rich background.

"Many of our international students have come from their own country, where they may have only been exposed to their own culture, but she in fact has done her studies in a foreign country and she comes from a country with different cultures."

After a Skype interview, with Alm in Springfield and Haznadar in Sarajevo, Haznadar was hired.

So far Haznadar has connected very well with the group and is having a lot of fun with them.

"She was very eager to help out and she seems to have a sensitive side to her that understands the challenges of being in a different culture and having to overcome that," Alm said. "Culturally she understands them well."

In her short 27 years Haznadar has seen and experienced a lot, but nothing from her past is stopping her from accomplishing great things in her future.

"Whatever you do, you just have to strive for more," Haznadar said.

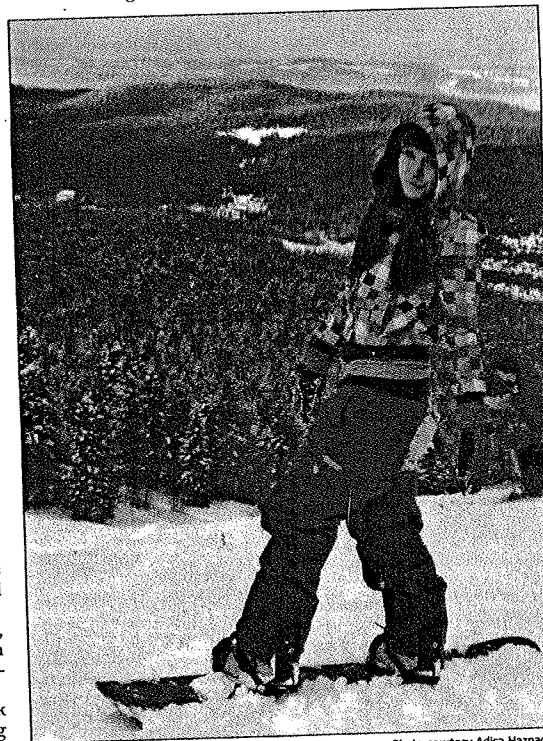


Photo courtesy Adisa Haznadar

Haznadar stands tall as she snowboards on Mt. Bjelasnica.