

We help businesses connect with each other.

## From Surviving to Thriving

Djenita Pasic and her family were visiting Louisville from Bosnia to celebrate the Kentucky Derby with friends when Sarajevo was taken over by Serbian forces on Derby Day 1992. "We never planned on living here permanently," she says. "When we realized we couldn't return, we decided to do the best that we could. It was very difficult in the beginning. We came with a suitcase and a bag, but we were in a place we knew," she says. Djenita and her family were familiar with Louisville, since they'd lived here for a couple years in the late 1980s when her husband studied medicine.

While the war was going on in Bosnia she started rebuilding her new life in Louisville. Her husband became re-certified as a doctor and her daughter went back to school while Djenita went to work for an international business firm. She enrolled at the Brandeis School of Law in 1995 after a lawyer friend encouraged her to pursue a legal career. Djenita was inspired to pursue a law degree after seeing how much her husband had studied to reach his goal of becoming a doctor. She also realized that in the U.S. you are not limited to one career and making a career change was looked upon favorably. After graduating from law school, she went to work for Frost Brown Todd LLC as a senior associate in the international business department. She worked there for eight years until the department split up and she decided it was time to do something different.

She was at a point in her life where she did not feel the need to keep doing as much as she had while working as a full-time corporate attorney. "I worked with the best of the best and paid my dues. It was time to do my own thing and find my own way." She decided to join her sister who owned a business development consulting company in Vienna, Austria called Brainswork. Her sister's company deals with the marketing side of business. "We help companies expand

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their business in terms of re-branding and re-positioning. We help businesses connect with each other." She started Brainswork U.S.A., LLC in 2006 handling the legal aspects of setting up companies in the U.S. and abroad.

Besides being the chief networking officer for Brainswork U.S.A., LLC, Djenita's other passions are teaching and non-profit work. She is an adjunct professor at Brandeis School of Law. She also **travels to France and Lebanon to teach international**

**commercial contract at the Bordeaux Business School and Notre Dame University School of Business.** She sits on the board of several local organizations and works with Bosnian refugees. "We generally tend to be absorbed with ourselves and focused on what is happening to us. We need to get out of ourselves and focus on others and the world around us," she says. "Once you are able to truly open up in that way, you become much happier with yourself."