

CAREERS IN TRAVEL & TOURISM

TAKE YOUR SKILLS ON THE ROAD

VIRTUAL Q&A WITH 8 INCREDIBLE USF GLOBAL ALUMNI



KRISTJÁN JÓNSSON - FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, ICELAND DISCOVERY

Kristján Jónsson is from Reykjavík, Iceland. After graduating from USF in 1984 he had a short career in the advertising business as a copy writer and a creative director, after which he studied artistic painting in Barcelona, Spain. Since returning from Spain in 1993, Kristján has deviated his work between painting, advertising, consulting, and guiding and leading Highland tours in Iceland. In 2010, Kristján established his boutique travel agency, Iceland Discovery.



ELIZABETH HEATH - TRAVEL & LIFESTYLE WRITER & EDITOR, ELIZABETHHEATH.COM

Elizabeth Heath is a travel and lifestyle writer, editor and guidebook author based in central Italy. Liz earned her MA in Humanities from USF Tampa, and later returned for PhD studies in Applied Anthropology and Archaeology. She also taught Composition, Professional Writing and Humanities at USF, FGCU and Ringling College of Art & Design. Summers spent in Italy on archaeological digs led to a permanent move in 2009, from where she established herself as a travel writer. A longtime freelance writer and editor, her work has appeared in The Washington Post, HuffPost, TripSavvy, Travel + Leisure, Frommers.com and many other outlets.



KELLY PREDMESKY - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, CELESTYAL CRUISES

Kelly has spent the last 15 years working in various segments of the travel industry. She graduated from USF in 2005 with a BA in Art History, a minor in Business, and Certificate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. She currently works on the North American sales team for Celestyal Cruises, a Greek-owned cruise line operating in-depth itineraries of the Eastern Mediterranean. She kicked off her career in travel right in the Marshall Center where STA Travel, the student travel company, was located.



JULIANNE FARRICKER - FOUNDER & CEO, THE ITALIAN TOUR

After graduating with her master's degree from USF in 2007, Julie embarked on her first trip to Italy and never turned back. From 2007-2019 she traveled to her ancestral homeland at least 20 times, traversing all 20 regions and learning the beautiful Italian language. With a friend, Julie decided to launch The Italian Tour and share the magic of Italy with others. This year, she studied to obtain her Italian Wine Scholar diploma and the company has now also expanded into The Italian Cellar. While not planning trips to Italy or promoting Italian wines, she continues to teach high school English and Social Studies, as she has done for the past 17 years.



NADIM HAJJE - VICE PRESIDENT OF IT & DATA ANALYTICS, OMEGA WORLD TRAVEL

Nadim has been in the travel industry for over 15 years with experience ranging from leisure to corporate and government travel. Currently, Nadim manages technology stack and product offering to Omega's customers, such as Omegalytics, their proprietary reporting platform. Omegalytics was a finalist for 2015 Most Innovative Product of Year by Business Travel News and was featured in Business Travel News, The Company Dime, Phocuswire, and Travel Weekly. As part of Omegalytics, Nadim developed Amazon Alexa skills that give travel managers rapid access to critical data, including traveler location and service level performance. Recently, Nadim launched Omega Go, an itinerary management app, and Omega Go+, an online booking tool. Those products elevate traveler experience by providing them a better shopping experience as well as much needed information while they are on the go - all in the palm of their hands!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH – MICROSOFT TEAMS – 12:00 EST

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[JEANIE FUNDORA](#) - AFRICA SAFARI EXPERT, [EXETER SAFARI COMPANY](#)

Jeanie's passion for travel ignited over 20 years ago when she participated as an exchange student in a study abroad program to Northern Italy and the fire has not been quelled since. Her passion for wildlife, culture, local communities and conservation have been the cornerstone of her 20 years in the travel industry. Jeanie often refers to Africa as her second home as she has traveled to the continent more than anywhere else on the planet. A few highlights of her travels throughout the years include meeting the iconic Masai and Samburu people of Kenya; seeing the great migration and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania; visiting the Orthodox churches and the famous fossils of Lucy in the National Museum of Ethiopia and spending time with the mountain gorillas of the Virunga massif in Rwanda and the mountain gorillas in Bwindi National park. Her experience in Southern Africa is no less impressive with countless trips to such iconic destinations as South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia. When planning a safari, she's who you want in your corner!



[DIANE DANIEL](#) - FREELANCE JOURNALIST, [BYDIANEDANIEL.COM](#)

Diane ('82) is a freelance journalist based in the Netherlands, who is also lucky enough to spend some cold months in Indian Rocks Beach, FL. Her first published article appeared in the Oracle in 1980. Initially she worked as a staff writer, copy editor and section editor at several daily papers in Florida and Massachusetts. Her last staff job was at the Boston Globe. As a full-time freelancer (since 2002), her topics include travel (especially outdoors), design and craft, sustainability and the environment, cycling, and really good beer. Her work has appeared in publications such as the New York Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe, and National Geographic Travel, as well as nonprofit outlets including the American Heart Association news service and American Craft magazine.

[ALBERTO SÁNCHEZ URÍEN](#) - FOUNDER & CEO, [RIDING SPAIN](#)

EL ATAZAR
MADRID, SPAIN

ALBERTO SÁNCHEZ URÍEN

- Hometown: Madrid, Spain
- USF Class: 1993
- Degree: BA Mass Communications, Minor in Italian

CURRENT POSITION:

- **RIDINGSPAIN** (Madrid, Spain): Founder
Start-up incoming travel agency focused primarily on the world's amateur cycling market, but also offering tours of Spain for bikers and regular travelers

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Amadeus IT Group (world's leading provider of technology solutions for the travel&tourism industry):
Marketing director of Amadeus Brazil and Amadeus Mexico, corporate marketing manager LATAM (Madrid, Spain)
- Ogilvy Public Relations (Chicago, IL): Account manager
- San Jose Advertising (Chicago, IL): Assistant creative director
- Unimar Advertising (Chicago, IL): Account executive
- St. Petersburg Times (Tampa, FL): Sports correspondent
- The Oracle Newspaper (USF, FL): Assistant sports editor

www.ridingspain.com alberto@ridingspain.com [@ridingspain](https://www.instagram.com/ridingspain) +34.644.31.8001