



2021 Year in Review: Jessica Licalzi Kurzyna, Mojo Stumer Associates

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Name: Jessica Licalzi Kurzyna

Job Title: Lead Interior Designer / Senior Associate

Company Name: Mojo Stumer Associates

What was your greatest professional accomplishment or most notable project, deal, or transaction in 2021?

We were recently given the cover of Florida Design for a Miami Apartment which we have received many accolades from others in the industry and potential new clients calling with similar apartment interior projects looking to meet with interest in our firm.

What is the best advice you received in 2021, and who was it from?

My best advice I've received is from my mentor, Mark Stumer of Mojo Stumer Associates: "Work smarter, not harder. There's always a way to manage...take a deep breath and it will present itself." A bit cliché, but it works.

What was the biggest lesson you learned while working during the pandemic?

The biggest lesson I have learned while working during the pandemic is realizing that specific equipment and resources that I would normally have access to prior to the pandemic, allowed me to minimize the impact imposed by not being able to work as a non-essential worker mandated by the NY State.

How has your working environment changed over the last year?

My working environment has changed over the last year as adding my home office to the equation and can communicate more efficiently now after filling in a few stop gaps not realized until the pandemic. Being able to function remotely with specific tools, allowed me to create design drawings and presentation materials at the same level of quality as the office provided. The separation of team members for calibration and sharing the work load was best overcome from online video conferencing and dropping off and picking up documents and materials keeping socially distant. It's my opinion that most professionals in my industry can and when needed utilize flexible work hours. This did also help balance work and family life not realized prior. When the office is not convenient, when the situation calls for onsite meetings, we have practiced these concepts prior to the pandemic. It almost naturally or indirectly prepared us for it. There are many times as a mother of two young boys and wife, in that order... I'm needed at home or the distractions at the office keep me from meeting design deadlines, working remotely can make all the difference at times.

What are your predictions for your industry in 2022?

My predictions concerning our residential and commercial clients is this, the work load will generally increase very quickly because there has been a lot of down time for developers, real estate organizations, and homeowners that have been sitting idle, waiting to finally break out with new projects or second and third phase of projects held up by the pandemic. I find that even municipalities that have dragged their feet in becoming a part of the 21st century are realizing electronic filing saves time, money and provides for more efficiency with less lines waiting to file projects, something either realized through the pandemic or was just slow to develop. Either way its working and it makes a significant difference in our industry.