After completing an undergraduate degree in Biology, Nicole Sallee realized she was looking for a profession that provided more human interaction than she was experiencing while researching in a lab. She also wanted to enter the workforce and begin her career earlier than medical school would allow. Nicole witnessed how the hardwork of her parents, who are both CPAs, provided her family with financial stability even during difficult times like the economic crisis in 2008. Nicole realized that a career in accounting provides financial stability, vast potential for growth, intellectual stimulation, and the opportunity to serve clients while working with a team. For these reasons, Nicole chose a career in accounting and is currently a Staff Tax Accountant at Moss Adams in Spokane. Hear about Nicole’s experience in the MSTax program, in her own words…

**What about the accounting profession attracts you?**

First and foremost, the people. I am surrounded by some of the brightest, hardest-working individuals I’ve ever met. I thrive when I am a contributing member of a team, and I have found a very positive team-oriented environment in public accounting. I also love the intellectual challenge of the accounting profession. Accounting/tax rules are constantly changing, so there is always more to learn.

**Why did you originally choose Gonzaga? If you were to do it all over again, why would you choose Gonzaga now?**

I originally chose Gonzaga because of its stellar reputation within the accounting community. If I were to do it all over again, I would choose Gonzaga because of its top-notch faculty. They are amazing people academically, professionally, and personally. I experienced firsthand how they will go above and beyond to help students achieve their goals. I have taken classes at four colleges throughout my academic career, and Gonzaga’s faculty truly stand out to me as the best of the best.

**What did you appreciate most about your classes in the MSTax program?**

I most appreciated the expertise of the professors and their desire to continuously improve the curriculum behind-the-scenes. The
small class sizes made it easy to get extra help if needed. I not only learned about tax law and theory, but also about how to practically apply it in a work environment. I am very grateful to have completed such a practical program that prepared me for success in my career.

**What career resources did Gonzaga provide to help you find employment?**

Gonzaga connected me directly with the firms I was most interested in. Gonzaga’s Advisors make sure their students stay on top of the recruiting process, which can be completely overwhelming to navigate on your own. Professors are very understanding about the rigorous fall recruiting schedule that many students juggle. Firms think very highly of Gonzaga’s accounting program, and it shows in their willingness to compete for Gonzaga graduate students.

**What options opened up for you due to your Master’s degree?**

I was able to land an internship with a Big 4 accounting firm and two full-time job offers as a result of my MSTax degree from GU. More and more firms are requiring recruits to have a Master’s degree in the tax profession. I expect it won’t be long before it’s considered the standard in the field. In my experience, having a Master’s degree is held in high regard by employers and business connections. A Master’s degree demonstrates a different level of academic perseverance beyond an undergraduate degree. It takes grit to complete a Master’s degree!

**What would you say to someone concerned about the investment in MSTax tuition?**

Investing in yourself and in your future success is the best possible investment you can make, especially at the start of your career. The MSTax program skyrocketed me into a position that will set me up for the rest of my life. The knowledge and connections I gained through the MSTax program will pay dividends for the rest of my life!

For more information about the Master of Science in Taxation program, please contact:

**Haley Topliff**
MBA Programs Director
topliff@gonzaga.edu
509-313-7047