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**MIDYEAR  
UPDATES**  
HOUSING IS THE  
WILD CARD

# YOU DO WHAT?

# 9 JOBS YOU WON'T BELIEVE

# WORLD OF FLAVOR OC'S THRIVING ETHNIC MARKETS

# HOME SWEET WORKPLACE



REBECCA KRAUS  
GAMES COPYWRITER FOR MATTEL



## GAME MAKER Rebecca Kraus

If you're planning a game night – some friendly competition among friends – don't invite Rebecca Kraus. She'll win, hands down. Kraus, 36, is a senior writer in the games and youth electronics design group at Mattel, Inc. in El Segundo. Chances are, those questions you're trying to stump Uncle Ernie with, she's written herself.

"Say this out loud: Ace Lip Puff That Hung," Kraus pulls a card

from Mad Gab, a silly word-play game acquired by Mattel that she helped update. "It's 'A Slip Of The Tongue.'" Get it?

Yes, work is fun and games for Kraus. But don't be fooled. She and her colleagues aren't sitting around all day playing Clue. They really do work. "Games copywriters develop the name, tagline, content, package and rules. Any words you see on a game go through writers."

The fun-loving Kraus grew up in Encino playing games with her sisters. "I LOVED Mystery Date!" She started with Mattel seven years ago as a temp in the then-obscure games division. "We were this teeny department that hadn't proven itself yet." Her first assignment was the Disney Trivia game. Bingo! "It put the games team on the map."

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### SNAPSHOT

**PROFESSION:** Senior Project Copywriter

**AGE:** 36

**NAME/PLACE OF BUSINESS:** Mattel, Inc. in El Segundo

**HOW LONG IN THIS BUSINESS:** 7 years

**SALARY RANGE:** "More than I made as a managing editor."

**WHAT SHE LIKES BEST ABOUT HER JOB:** "It's profound to me that my work is play because I highly value play in society. It keeps people's perspective in place."

Anointed the first copywriter in her group, Kraus now works on 20-plus games a year. Her prized projects: Blurt, Bladerdash, Scene It, Name Dropper (a name she created) and Outburst, a pop-culture hit that she refreshed "in record speed" (it took just three weeks to re-write).

But can board games really compete in a world of Xboxes and iPods? "Nothing replaces the old-fashioned, wholesome experience of sitting down with people you care about, or don't even know . . . games are an instant connection-maker." Kraus witnessed this first-hand at the recent Bonnaroo music festival in Tennessee, where Mattel sponsored a game-playing tent. "People missed the Allman Brothers to play our Scene-It tournament!"

Kraus, an adventurous traveler and "huge proponent of play," has tried to UNO-fy the world, one game at a time. For several summers, she volunteered as a counselor for Global Children's Organization, a reconciliation camp for kids in war-torn countries. "While I played UNO in the green, misty fields near Belfast with kids who may have grown up to be enemies, I got a taste of the way games can truly bring people together. This was more than fast, family fun. It was an avenue for togetherness."