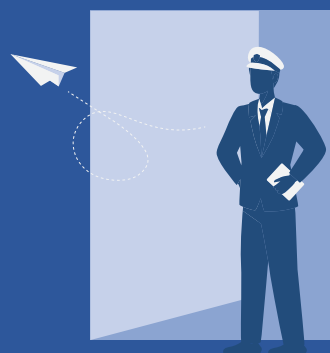
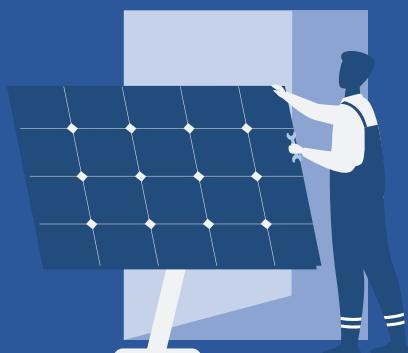




Sapere Aude



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ear readers,

Creativity drives the world forward – every day it compels us to seek new opportunities, to rethink established truths, and, most importantly, to make extraordinary decisions for the future that yesterday may have seemed impossible.

Creativity accompanies each of us in various life situations – in our personal lives, professional activities, in developing ourselves as mature individuals, in science, in the arts, and in cultural endeavors.

The theme of this new magazine issue – creativity – was not chosen by chance. I believe you'll agree that creativity and creativity-based solutions have become a necessity in today's world. The rapid advancement of technology, along with global, social, and economic challenges arising worldwide, requires not only specific knowledge but also the ability to see the world from a different perspective.

Autumn, which brings us back to studies and work after sunny days, is for many like a blank page in life. And September – a new beginning, inviting us to realize long-nurtured ideas, start new projects, or boldly dive into the exploration of new fields.

The stories featured in the pages of this magazine invite you to look at creativity from different angles. They speak about the paths one must take to discover the unknown parts in the world of science, the role creativity plays in the business sector, where to find inspiration, and more.

Although creative solutions often arise spontaneously, their implementation often requires much patience and courage. Even the smallest ideas are born from a desire to discover what has yet to be discovered. Every attempt, no matter how small, becomes an opportunity to grow. Therefore, it's important to understand that by trying and sharing ideas, we can gather like-minded people around us, with whom the ideas get even better.

I would like to sincerely apologize to all our readers for the confusion in the previous issue regarding the names of community members depicted in the photographs. Together with the team, we continuously strive to ensure that each issue of "Sapere Aude" is of high quality and that the stories are more engaging each time.

I hope that this autumn issue becomes a source of inspiration and encourages you to open a new page in your life – one filled with more creativity, courage, and a desire to take action.

Wishing you inspiring stories!
Editor-in-Chief Neda Cerniauskaite

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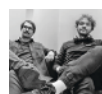
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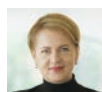
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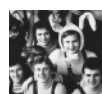
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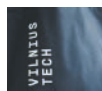
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Rector Prof. Dr. Romualdas Kliukas: “One of the greatest treasures in the world is intellectual power, innovation, and creativity”

Today's technical university is unimaginable without creativity and an interdisciplinary approach – they are the conditions and driving forces of innovation. This was our goal when we set out to create new competence centers working in fields relevant to both Lithuania and the world.

The competence centers have become spaces for collaboration among researchers from various disciplines, attracting new sci-

entists, implementing creative ideas, and renewing infrastructure. A number of competence centers have already started operating successfully at the university: the Civil Engineer-

ing Science Center, the Digital and Information Modeling Technologies Center for Buildings, the Creativity and Innovation Center “LinkMenu fabrikas,” the Sustainability Center,

the Transport and Logistics Competence Center, the Smart and Climate-Neutral Manufacturing Processes, Materials, and Technologies Competence Center, and the Digital Defense Competence Center. Together with our partners, we are also creating the Autonomous Systems Competence Center and the International Semiconductor Competence Center. Plans for the near future include the Artificial Intelligence Competence and Technology Center as well as the Off-shore Wind Engineering Competence Center.

For creativity to thrive, an appropriate environment and modern equipment are essential. We have acquired additive manufacturing systems (3D printers), an inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometer, an X-ray diffractometer, an X-ray photoelectron spectroscope, a gas chromatograph, biogenic material analyzers, internal combustion engine test benches, climate chambers, structural testing systems, and many others. Now it's time to collaborate, let creativity flourish, and pursue interdisciplinary projects.

I strongly encourage everyone to these competence centers to bring atypical, complex problems—whether their own or those of business partners—that a single team, department, or faculty could not solve alone. We are developing a laboratory equipment reservation platform to make it easier to share resources and ensure access for all who wish to create and solve challenges.

The competence centers have already developed products such as a hydrogen supply system for conventional internal combustion engine vehicles, climate-neutral asphalt mixtures with reduced rolling

resistance, artificial lightweight aggregate for concrete, recycled plastic inserts for concrete and reinforced concrete structures, cement-free lightweight concrete mixes for construction elements, a multifunctional mat made from recycled tire textile fibers, a noise-reducing barrier from recycled plastic and tire rubber, and wastewater treatment and sludge processing optimization solutions. The competence centers are an opportunity to rediscover co-creation.



I strongly encourage everyone to these competence centers to bring atypical, complex problems—whether their own or those of business partners—that a single team, department, or faculty could not solve alone.

Rector Prof. Dr. Romualdas Kliukas



The Smart and Climate-Neutral Manufacturing Processes, Materials, and Technologies Competence Center and the Digital Defense Competence Center have demonstrated that combining scientific research expertise with modern infrastructure stimulates innovation and generates new ideas as well as projects.

For example, after acquiring an advanced AI and high-performance computing platform, a digital forensics lab, and SOC infrastructure solutions, we created opportunities not only to continue ongoing projects but also to launch new ones. Collaborations with international partners have drawn attention from ministries, which now view these centers as reliable partners. The infrastructure and expertise have been applied to a spinoff company project, and the available equipment

made it possible to establish a Security Operations Center and assemble a professional team of experts.

Currently, specialists working in the competence centers focus on startups, unique products, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity prototypes that expand the university community's innovation potential.

The university's Creativity and Innovation Center "LinkMenų fabrikas" has been fostering collaboration among students, entrepre-

neurs, artists, and creators for ten years. Its doors are open to everyone – modest inventors, ambitious startups, and dreamers who believe their products can one day change the world. The synergy between business and academia within this creative space allows freedom to imagine and realize even the boldest ideas.

Over the past year, 17 percent of VILNIUS TECH students worked independently in the digital and prototype laboratories of "LinkMenų fabrikas." The most popular piece of equipment was the laser, but the 3D printing, wood, sound, video, and photography workshops were also frequently used.

The center has also hosted impressive creative projects: "Apple TV" and "Sony Pictures Television" filmed episodes of the series Star

City in its virtual production studio, and commercial clips were made for “Pulsar Vision” night vision devices. The prototype laboratory produced tactile and sound-based museum exhibit models for visually impaired visitors and an interactive “Niche of Peace” for the Vilnius Bastion Museum.

Another important direction of “LinkMenų fabrikas” is work with school students. More than 300 students visited during the year, taking part in tours and educational electronics workshops. For the third year in a row, the center has contributed to the remote education program “Future Engineering,” under the topic “Digital Manufacturing,” where students come to the lab to create prototypes of their own designs.

The center is also actively developing international relations: VILNIUS TECH students participated in Aalto University’s (Finland) PdP program, during which they created a demining drone prototype. Many innovative ideas are also born in international hackathons hosted by “LinkMenų fabrikas,” such as “Hack4Vilnius” and “European Defense Tech,” where more than 130 participants tackle real challenges.

portant for our researchers, especially early-career scientists. This year, we became a partner in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) program, whose “Global Seed Funds” mechanism provides exceptional opportunities for collaboration with MIT and other world-leading research institutions.

Currently, the Horizon Europe projects “SustainLivWork” and MERIT allow participation in international networks shaping new directions in AI, sustainability, and industrial digitalization. The “EDIH Vilnius” initiative helps Lithuanian businesses and the public sector adopt advanced digital technologies by involving university researchers in real innovation implementation processes. The recently awarded “InoMokymai” project enables VILNIUS TECH scientists to provide companies with essential skills and competencies to enhance their capabilities in various fields.

This entire project ecosystem serves as a powerful catalyst that helps young researchers find their path, strengthen their competencies, achieve scientific success, and join international partnership networks.

students collaborate on projects that reduce energy consumption, develop innovative materials, conduct research on future transport systems, and work with businesses to address challenges using creative approaches. This proves that solving global problems requires more than just technical skills – it also demands a broader understanding of society and its needs.

Equally important is that our teaching methods themselves foster creativity: students learn through the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach, where real challenges become projects that develop critical thinking, teamwork, and the courage to experiment. This method also builds qualities highly valued in today’s job market – responsibility, independence, critical thinking, interdisciplinary perspective, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities. The PBL method is used by world-renowned universities such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, McMaster University in Canada, and many institutions in Denmark and the Netherlands, across various study programs. This shows that our students learn according to the highest international standards and become professionals capable of competing globally.

This autumn, we began the academic year with hundreds of young creators: some are just starting their journey, while others continue it. I believe that among them are those who have not yet discovered the field in which they can realize their ideas – but that’s exactly why we are here: to help them learn, encourage them to try again and again, and give them confidence. Together with the entire academic community, we are building an environment that inspires constant curiosity and experimentation.



We pay special attention to scientific and innovation project activities, which are becoming increasingly important for our researchers, especially early-career scientists.

Rector Prof. Dr. Romualdas Kliukas



We pay special attention to scientific and innovation project activities, which are becoming increasingly im-

Members of the VILNIUS TECH community implement creative solutions in many ways. Faculty and

Vice-Rector for Studies, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zivile Sedereviciute-Paciauskiene: “At the university, we are implementing a problem-based learning strategy”

Today's trends in higher education show that traditional learning methods based on theoretical knowledge no longer match the learning styles of the modern generation or the rapidly changing needs of the job market. Representatives of the business sector expect future employees to have more than just academic knowledge - the ability to solve problems, collaborate with professionals from different fields, make independent decisions, and continuously learn and improve - is what's required.



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or this reason, VILNIUS TECH is implementing a problem-based learning strategy (PBL). The

PBL method was first introduced by Canadian medical professionals in the 1960s, who aimed to develop practical problem-solving and critical thinking skills. By solving real-life problems, students were required to use interdisciplinary knowledge, search for information and solutions themselves, form hypotheses, and critically assess them. This method eliminated the strict division of knowledge into subjects and better prepared students for real-world work. Many technical universities around the world have adopted this method as a learning strategy; for example, Aalborg University in Denmark has been using it for nearly 60 years. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology also uses this method in its teaching.

In today's world, where we face an overload of information, this is a particularly effective way to develop a sense of responsibility when making decisions, quickly absorb essential information, and apply it immediately. Most importantly, this method makes learning engaging, as the lecturer acts as a facilitator in the learning process rather than the sole source of truth.

"The essence of PBL is to apply theoretical knowledge to solving real or simulated problems. Perhaps the most important aspect is that, according to this strategy, students are not just passive recipients of knowledge but rather they actively search for solutions to existing problems. The learning process usually consists of several stages. First, students identify a specific problem, generate possible solutions, then implement a

practical solution, and finally present the result. This method allows students not only to deepen their theoretical knowledge but also to develop critical and creative thinking skills, teamwork abilities, and a sense of responsibility for their decisions," explains Vice-Rector for Studies, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zivile Sedereviciute-Paciauskiene.

According to the Vice-Rector, this learning strategy was chosen for a reason – VILNIUS TECH aims not only to modernize the study process but also to increase its competitiveness in the international arena. Equally important is that the implementation of PBL is one way to reduce student dropout rates. It has been observed that students who engage in real problem-solving and collaborative activities in their first year of studies are much more motivated to continue their studies.

"We are making every effort to ensure the smooth implementation of this strategy. We constantly encourage members of the academic community to participate in educational seminars, where they can learn about innovative teaching methods. In addition, we offer lecturers special training courses on how to apply PBL in their teaching," notes the Vice-Rector for Studies.

According to her, the PBL methodology is highly flexible – it can be applied across various disciplines, whether for theoretical work, student scientific experiments or simulations, and of course, practical tasks involving the creation of specific prototypes.

"At the university, we have already gained significant experience in applying the PBL method. For some time now, architects, sustainability technology engineers, and event engineers have been trained based on this principle. The method is used in

complex projects across many study programs. One such example is the first-year integrated project combining disciplines of chemistry, mathematics, and mechatronics. These kinds of student-led projects help reveal how different fields of science interconnect, and how their integration contributes to solving real-world problems," says Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zivile Sedereviciute-Paciauskiene.

She also emphasizes that the PBL strategy brings additional benefits: it strengthens collaboration between lecturers, helps discover connections between different disciplines, increases student motivation and engagement, among many others. Importantly, VILNIUS TECH collaborates closely with Aalborg University in Denmark in implementing the PBL approach, drawing on experience from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Dublin City University. Based on these experiences, it is currently developing training programs for lecturers.

"Problem-based learning is becoming a key strategic direction at VILNIUS TECH – we aim to meet the needs of both students and the labor market. While testing several programs in which PBL becomes the primary learning method, we strive to introduce at least one PBL-based subject in each study program. This helps students develop real-world problem-solving skills that are essential in today's job market, provides space to foster creativity, critical thinking, and a sense of responsibility. Our goal is for VILNIUS TECH to become a place where learning is a meaningful activity, with active student engagement at its center and from the very beginning establishing connection to their future careers," emphasizes Vice-Rector for Studies, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zivile Sedereviciute-Paciauskiene.

Interest in studies grows every year: some programs received twice as many applicants

TODAY AND TOMORROW'S VISION

This academic year, VILNIUS TECH opened their doors to future creators to study – a total of 1,597 applicants received offers, which is almost 10 percent more than last year. The majority – 1,225 (77 percent) – of future first-year students put VILNIUS TECH as their first choice.

According to the Director of the Admissions and Information Center, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Juste Rozene, it is especially promising to see that the number of applicants to the Civil Engineering, Artificial Intelligence Systems, Electronics Engineering, Electrical Power Engineering, and Information Systems Engineering programs has doubled. It is also a great success that the Fire Safety program has attracted much more attention this year. About 30 percent

more applicants chose to study Aviation Mechanics, Event Engineering, Transport Engineering, Data Analysis Technologies, Modern Technology Mathematics, and Information Technologies.

"Engineering and computer science fields dominate at VILNIUS TECH, and some programs within these areas remain consistently popular. Others trade places in popularity depending on the year. It is still unfortunate that the fields of mathematics and technological

sciences attract fewer applicants. Although students are genuinely interested in sustainability ideas, they still tend to avoid choosing these studies," emphasizes Assoc. Prof. Dr. J. Rozene.

Every year, VILNIUS TECH eagerly awaits the arrival of international students – this year, 700 new international students joined (a total of 1,550 are currently studying), and the number of applications increased by 32 percent. Most of them came from India, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Turkey, and Kazakhstan.

According to Dovile Jodenyte, Director of the International Studies Center, this year international students most often chose Information Technology, Computer Engineering, Artificial Intelligence Systems, Business Management, International Business, and Applied Arti-



“It is still unfortunate that the fields of mathematics and technological sciences attract fewer applicants.”

J. Rožėnė



ficial Intelligence programs.

"We make every effort to help international students integrate more quickly into the academic and social community. For example, we organize mentorship programs in which Lithuanian students help international students get acquainted with the study process, academic culture, and everyday life in Lithuania.

During the first weeks, we organize orientation activities that introduce the university's structure, available services, the city of Vilnius, and the country's culture. We believe this helps students adapt more quickly in a foreign country. It is equally important to teach international students the Lithuanian language and invite them to intercultural events that encourage interaction between local and international students. We continue the civic education lecture series 'Unlock Lithuania,' inviting notable guests and lecturers to talk about our history, foreign policy, and external threats. International students are also encouraged to join student unions, sports, and other activities. This helps them build connections and feel part of the community. We also make sure to provide psychological and academic support when needed – the university has counseling centers offering psychological help, career advice, and academic assistance to ensure a smooth integration," says D. Jodenyte.



“

We make every effort to help international students integrate more quickly into the academic and social community.

D. Jodenytė

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1225

freshmen listed
VILNIUS TECH as their
number one choice in
their applications

700

students arrived from
abroad this year

Study type	State-funded	Non-state-funded	Non-state-funded / target (VNF/ST)	Total
Bachelor's studies	1165	263	0	1428
Master's studies	631	22	68	721
Bridging studies	0	101	0	101
College-level studies	85	21	0	106
Additional studies	0	49	0	49

Ideas born from creative solutions: how students are shaping the future

At VILNIUS TECH, the gained theoretical knowledge is just the beginning – the true power of creativity unfolds when knowledge is complemented by innovative solutions, and when ideas turn into real projects.

The enthusiasm and achievements of students prove that young creators boldly tackle challenges and global problems – from detecting landmines in war zones to revitalizing city streets or implementing innovations through space research.

Here is a closer look at each of their stories.

STUDENTS CREATED AN AUTONOMOUS DRONE FOR LANDMINE DETECTION

Students from VILNIUS TECH and Aalto University (Finland) solved a challenge set by the global aviation and defense company Saab – to accurately and safely identify plastic landmines by developing a drone designed specifically for their detection.

In earlier military conflicts, landmines were mostly made of metal and could be found using metal detectors. However, this technology soon became ineffective – today, many landmines are made of plastic, making their detection extremely difficult and dangerous. The situation in Ukraine is further com-

plicated by the fact that metal detectors are still widely used there, which prevents the precise identification of all explosive devices.

Responding to the urgent need for accurate and safe detection of such mines, the student team developed DOLYA – an advanced solution for mine detection.

The drone uses RGB cameras combined with a thermal imaging camera, ensuring precise and safe mine detection, thus contributing to more efficient and casualty-free demining operations.

In Lithuania, the VILNIUS TECH team was coordinated by the VILNIUS TECH Creativity and Innovation Center “LinkMenu fabrikas”, which served as the space where students of the “PdP” program tested their product idea and used various manufacturing technologies. Participants also received mentoring sessions, as well as technical and creative support.

The “PdP” program is an international initiative with a history of more than two decades, organized by Aalto University in Finland. It offers students the opportunity to participate in real product development processes in collaboration with industrial partners. The program is based on the principle of “passion-based learning,” which promotes creative problem-solving.

A STUDENT WILL REPRESENT LITHUANIA AT THE ESRI USER CONFERENCE IN SAN DIEGO

The winner of the 2025 Esri Young Scholars competition in

Lithuania is Ugne Butrimaviciute, a graduate of the Architecture program at VILNIUS TECH.

Her research project “Living Streets” (team: Ugne Butrimaviciute, Aleksandra Kapyrina, Dovydas Ruskys; supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Matas Cirtautas and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Inesa Alistratovaitė-Kurtinaitienė) won first place in Lithuania, and she will represent the country at the Esri User Conference in the United States.

In the research, streets became the main focus, as they are among the most important urban spaces, even though, they are often perceived only as transport corridors.

The authors created an atlas of Vilnius streets, highlighting the distinctiveness of each district's streets and identifying prevalent types as well as urban issues. This helped them determine each area's shortcomings and suggest suitable interventions for positive change.

Students developed a tool that shows what types and intensity levels of tactical urbanism interventions are needed in order to achieve improvements in each district. They were looking at real indicators of safety, greenery, and vitality.

The Esri Young Scholars Award is an annual global competition organized by Esri Inc. (USA), a world leader in GIS technology. In Lithuania, the competition is held by UAB “Hnit-Baltic,” Esri's authorized representative in the Baltic States.

AN ALUMNA WON AN INTERNSHIP AT NASA

Paulina Draugelyte, an alumna in the field of Aerospace Engineer-

ing, completed an internship at NASA's Ames Research Center in the Aviation Operations Management Division. This division is responsible for aviation operations analysis, planning, and safety optimization, developing advanced Air Traffic Management (ATM) solutions.

The main research areas include the integration of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) into the National Airspace System (NAS), improving the safety of both piloted and autonomous flights, as well as supporting real-time decision-making. Some of the activities take place at the Moffett Federal Airfield, owned by NASA.

Paulina's main task was to contribute to transforming existing NASA infrastructure into modern UAS research and flight training bases. Working closely with NASA scientists, engineers, pilots, and project managers, she helped develop standardized operating procedures, new systems and integration processes, as well as requirements for flight preparation and execution.

She also took part in scientific mission planning and operations, observing the full project cycle from initial idea to real mission implementation. This experience provided valuable insights into how advanced UAS research initiatives are created, coordinated, and conducted – such as Smart Mobility, Fire Sense, ACERO, UTM, ATM-X, PAAV, and others.

According to the alumna, NASA gave her the opportunity not only to deepen her knowledge in the chosen field but also to challenge herself in complex, multidisciplinary environments. The internship focused on both professional growth and personal development.

The full story of the alumna will be featured in the next issue.



VILNIUS TECH and Aalto (Finland) University students created a drone intended for mine detection



The winner of the 2025 Esri Young Scholars Award in Lithuania is U. Butrimavičiūtė, a 5th-year graduate of the VILNIUS TECH Architecture study program



P. Draugelytė, an alumna in the field of Aerospace Engineering, completed an internship at NASA

A man with short brown hair, wearing a blue checkered suit jacket over a white shirt, stands with his arms crossed in front of a large, circular jet engine. The engine's fan blades are visible, creating a radial pattern around him. The background is dark, and the engine's metallic structure is prominent.

Alumnus A. Norusas: “Success in aviation is based on curiosity, discipline and perseverance”

ALUMNI VOICE

VILNIUS TECH Antanas Gustaitis Aviation Institute graduate and Alumni Club chairman Algirdas Norusas is a great example of how curiosity and determination can lead to a successful career in international company.



From an early age, A. Norusas was interested in physics and mathematics along with fascination for building or taking apart devices. This naturally contributed to his choice to study engineering. He currently works as the Head of Base Maintenance Development at “FL Technics,” a leading aircraft maintenance and repair company.

“Living near an airport, I constantly saw airplanes, and that probably fascinated me as well as directed toward aviation. I completed the Automation and Control (Aviation Electrical Equipment) study program. Looking back now, I think it’s an excellent program both for those who want to continue in engineering and for those choosing other professional paths. The knowledge gained can be applied not only in aviation but also in other fields requiring precision, systematic thinking, and engineering solutions,” says the VILNIUS TECH alumnus.

A. Norusas recalls that, during his studies at the university, the course that left the deepest impression on him was Electrical Machines. What made it memorable was not only the subject itself but also the lecturer—strict, but able to present the topic in a way that made a lasting impact.

“Although I don’t directly use this information in my current job, the logical thinking and skills I acquired still serve me today. At first, the lecturer’s strictness seemed like a huge challenge, but over time I realized that it helped build discipline and the ability to strive for the best results even in the most hostile situations,” he shares.

According to the VILNIUS TECH alumnus, his studies at the university provided not only knowledge of aviation engineering but also the ability to keep learning and filter information. Today, his work requires

him to balance technical solutions with business needs and strict aviation regulations. Without the ability to learn systematically and apply theory in practice, it would be hard to maintain this balance.

“My days at work are rarely the same. One day I find myself at the computer reviewing technical documents or communicating with colleagues to solve issues and the next I’m at a construction site in the Dominican Republic, where a new maintenance base for our company is being built. I coordinate matters with aviation authorities from the United States, Europe, and other regions, which can be done in person and remotely. I negotiate with suppliers, attend international aviation exhibitions, and sometimes give lectures at foreign educational institutions. It’s this diversity that inspires me most—it’s a job that never lets you stand still and constantly pushes you to see the bigger picture,” says A. Norusas.

He also notes that work brings many challenges, although, with experience he has learned to see them as opportunities for growth. The biggest help in overcoming difficult situations is focusing on the task, having a strong team, and maintaining clear communication. When everyone knows their role and shares information, even complex issues become manageable. For the VILNIUS TECH alumnus, it’s important that decisions are made collaboratively and based on facts as well as team insights.

“To all graduates seeking to establish themselves in the job market, I advise focusing on your studies and believing in yourself—that will be your solid foundation. Stay interested in what’s happening in the aviation sector today and what new trends are emerging. This will help you see the bigger picture and understand where opportunities lie. The aviation field in Lithuania is expanding rapidly, so there’s always a need for good specialists. If you put in the effort, there will definitely be a place for you in aviation,” says A. Norusas.

A man with a beard and short brown hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt and a dark velvet blazer, holds a silver crane trophy. The trophy is a stylized crane standing on a black base. The background is a solid, vibrant red. The lighting is dramatic, with a strong shadow cast across the man's face and the trophy.

Creativity rewarded with wings:

V. Puidokas'
triumph at the
“Silver Crane”

CREATORS' CHALLENGE

Vytautas Puidokas, a lecturer at VILNIUS TECH and head of the Creative Technologies Laboratory, is a great example of how creativity and dedication to a beloved activity can lead to tangible results. He was awarded the national Lithuanian film award, the “Silver Crane,” for his feature-length documentary film *Murmuring Hearts*. This award highlights not only exceptional achievements in the film industry, but also shows that academic and creative work can go hand in hand.



When I found out that I was nominated for the Silver Crane, I was really happy — both for myself and for the whole team that was involved in the creation of the film. This is already the third feature-length film I've made that's been nominated for national awards. My earlier documentary *El Padre Medico* (2019) received three nominations, and *Border Birds* (2021) received one. I secretly believed that the third time would be the one. Also, even before the nominations were announced, *Murmuring Hearts* had already been recognized at the A-class Tallinn Black Nights Festival and won an award at the prestigious French documentary festival Fipadoc. Having international recognition made competing for a national award feel a little easier,” says Puidokas.

According to the head of the Creative Technologies Laboratory, documentary filmmaking is often driven by love for cinema, characters, and stories. Awards are not the main goal or motivation — sometimes it's simply important to feel that a certain story must be told to society. One of the main goals and meanings of documentary film and art in general

is to raise questions and address socially relevant topics. One of the core themes in *Murmuring Hearts* is healing from addiction — a topic that, in one way or another, touches everyone and needs to be talked about.

Murmuring Hearts is my most personal film, shot just a few kilometers from where I was born. It might even reflect parts of my own childhood and personal memories. My parents led me to the film's characters — they're part of the same religious community — so in a way, it felt like a return to the past and home,” shares Puidokas.

Speaking about the challenges he faced during the creative process, Puidokas says that every film has its own difficulties, which can be technical, creative, or logistical. The core of this film is human relationships. The filming took place in a small community of people struggling with addiction and placed in a confined space. The subjects were going through difficult times. Communicating with them and building relationships required complete dedication.

Although the film was shot in a single location in Lithuania, the

post-production work involved many people from around the world — co-producers from Norway and France, the German and French channel ARTE, editing in Paris, and sound post-production in Bergen. A lot of effort was also required to clearly communicate creative ideas.

"I started moving toward the world of film fairly early, while still in school. In my final years in school in my hometown I created a TV show for students. Later, I studied media in the UK. After graduating, I returned to Lithuania, worked in television, then as a director and producer in advertising, and eventually began to want something more. That's how film came into my life. But I haven't limited myself to film — I also work on commercial projects, contemporary art, and music projects," says Puidokas.

In his opinion, creative people are hardworking individuals who per-

ceive time differently — they don't divide it into work and rest. In documentary film, creative cycles are

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The best inspiration comes from within, when I feel something that resonates so strongly, I simply have to create.

V. Puidokas

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quite long — it often takes several years to complete one feature-length film — so it's possible to break the process into stages and manage

it that way. Working with students helps him remember the fundamentals of the profession, encourages improvement, and motivates him to raise his qualifications. And although creative work requires more freedom, space, and time, for now, he feels warmly welcomed at the Faculty of Creative Industries and hopes to continue successfully balancing his different activities.

"Everything inspires me to create — people, places, landscapes, travel, books, other films and artwork. However, the best inspiration comes from within, when I feel something that resonates so strongly, I simply have to create. To myself, and to others seeking recognition in the film industry, I want to wish the thing that has helped me endure even during the moments when I feel out of place, when it seems like everyone else is succeeding and I'm not — perseverance."



A still from the film *Murmuring Hearts*.



Vaclave Stankevičius (kairėje) ir dr. Justas Žaglinskis.

When rules and creativity go hand in hand: A conversation with the head of the Lithuanian Maritime Academy, Dr. Justas Zaglinskis

NEW EXPERIENCE

As of August 1st, Dr. Justas Zaglinskis has taken on the role of head of the VILNIUS TECH Lithuanian Maritime Academy (LMA). He takes over from Vaclav Stankevic, whose term had ended.

The new LMA director shares his insights and goals in order to better familiarize the public with the academy's activities as well as to demonstrate the maritime sector's reliance on creative solutions.

– What were the first tasks you undertook as a director of LMA?

One of the first tasks was a meeting with the academic community of VILNIUS TECH LMA, which aimed to share my expectations for the upcoming 12-month term.

As associate dean, I helped initiate—and initiated—many activities. One major project, though complex, is still successfully ongoing: the construction of a Competence Center, along with related developments in studies and infrastructure. Another key direction we are currently focusing on is the establishment of a Competence Center for Surface and Underwater Robotics.

We must not forget the daily but no less important tasks: improving the quality of studies, increasing

LMA's competitiveness, attracting students, and other essential undertakings.

– What strategic changes are you planning for the academy?

Perhaps the most significant strategic change was LMA becoming part of VILNIUS TECH and becoming the university's 11th faculty. In order to foster closer ties within the academic community, it's important to renew the academy's personnel.

Attracting seafarers to the educational process is challenging due to high salary disparities and demanding work schedules. One possible solution could be training a new generation at LMA, but this requires qualified leaders capable of guiding students through all three higher education levels. Another priority is forming an active research group.

To achieve this, we are inviting researchers from abroad to join LMA. Encouraged by the VILNIUS TECH leadership, this year we have already had three foreign researchers join us.

Another important goal is encouraging staff to apply their personal competencies toward improving and expanding LMA activities.

– How is creativity, innovation, and openness to new ideas promoted at the academy?

LMA has always encouraged new ideas and creativity. It's a place where every well-grounded idea is taken seriously, and ways are sought to implement it. I'm glad that all academy staff understand this.

To develop creativity and implement new ideas, we encourage using the academy's infrastructure and other available resources. We promote collaboration with partners and taking internships abroad.



“The global shortage of seafarers, maritime energy, and industrial specialists is enormous. Jobs are guaranteed, and the pay is relatively high.”

dr. J. Žaglinskis

Currently, there are two clear development directions where innovation, creativity, and implementation of new ideas intersect: the construction and activation of the new Competence Center building and water robotics.

In my opinion, one still untapped area is initiating joint, relevant projects between lecturers and students to promote academic life. As more young lecturers and specialists join LMA, I hope to see more joint ideas and projects coming to life that involve students.

– How is the demand for maritime education changing in today's world?

To answer this, one might start by saying: “The sea is a provider.”

It holds countless aspects related to work and challenges. The global shortage of seafarers, maritime energy, and industrial specialists is enormous. Jobs are guaranteed, and the pay is relatively high.

In highly developed regions like North America, specialists often choose to work on land—family, home, entertainment, and life's pleasures are all nearby. Lithuania is no exception and is even more affected by unfavorable demographic trends.

The algorithm and mechanism by which the academy can adapt to a changing environment is fairly straightforward: active R&D (research and experimental development), project-based funding, intense work in non-formal adult ed-

ucation, attracting international students, collaboration with Lithuanian state forces, and the implementation of innovations.

– How can a creative approach contribute to improving the studies at the academy?

A creative approach used by each lecturer can easily motivate students, and working with motivated students leads to better academic results. I believe that in the near future, we will promote learning through real-life scenarios, where lectures will apply creativity and knowledge to solve specific problems.

I also believe creativity can be expressed through new technologies and tools, which are crucial to improving the quality and appeal of studies for current and prospective students.

At the academy, there is—and will continue to be—room for new ideas and initiatives, especially those related to studies, research, and information dissemination.

Can a culture of uniforms be compatible with fostering creativity?

Wearing a uniform, in my opinion, has two sides. I myself recently wore the navy uniform. On one hand, a uniform symbolizes strict order, following commands and regulations as well as formal communication. All of this may seem at odds with creativity.

But I also see another side, contrary to the prevailing public belief. We're talking about people—seafarers, doctors, police officers, firefighters, military officers—whose creativity is not restricted by their job.

During their studies, not only future seafarers but also representatives of these professions wear uniforms or standardized clothing. When it comes to responsible and

disciplined roles, I believe a uniform should not symbolize stifled creativity, but rather discipline and confidence, a badge not everyone is ready to wear.

Ship captains and marine engineers must be disciplined, because safe and successful shipping depends on their performance. The sooner discipline is instilled, the better the outcomes are in their professional careers. There's nothing better than creativity that comes from a disciplined specialist.

– What inspires you in your leadership?

I've never really had any role models. We are all ordinary people, learning from both our own and others' success and failure stories. My source of inspiration is inner motivation and ambition—but occasionally, external motivation is needed too.

A key component of inspiration for me is relationships with professionally like-minded people, their attitude towards my work and its results. Right now, LMA has a strong team, with whom we can work effectively and make progress.

– What would you wish not only for yourself as a leader but also

for the whole community?

I'd wish for myself not to forget a simple fact—we work with people whose outlooks, work pace, and ambitions can greatly differ from my own.

To the community, I wish for a positive attitude towards work—it shapes each of us, gives us valuable experience, which is sometimes hard to appreciate right away. I also wish for everyone to go the extra mile for the academy and not to forget that the most valuable things in professional life are free: respect, punctuality, honesty, selflessness, and other similar values.

Progress—and its speed—depends on the people working here, their willingness to change and grow, and whether they're ready to go that extra mile for LMA.

Today, LMA has changed, and further changes continue. More young professionals are joining the staff, and they're being given opportunities to act and strive for excellence.

Equally important is that we feel a strong interest in the academy's activities from outside. This obliges us to respond responsibly to the intentions of those interested and to continue cooperation.

Today, LMA is open to new ideas.



I also believe creativity can be expressed through new technologies and tools, which are crucial to improving the quality and appeal of studies for current and prospective students.

dr. J. Žaglinskis





Associate Professor of the Department of Creative Communication Dr. Saulius Keturakis is awarded the medal of the Order of the Grand Duke Gediminas of Lithuania

On the occasion of the Day of the Coronation of King Mindaugas and the National Anthem Day, the President of the Republic of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda, awarded state orders and medals to 71 citizens of the Republic of Lithuania and those from foreign countries for their merits to Lithuania and its name in the world. Among them was VILNIUS TECH Associate Professor of the Department of Creative Communication Dr. Saulius Keturakis.

For his work focused on the cultural transformations driven by digital technologies, Dr.

Keturakis was awarded the Medal of the Order of the Grand Duke Gediminas of Lithuania. This medal, initiated by the President, is awarded to

individuals who diligently and honestly fulfill their public and civic duties.

"There is a widespread notion in society that scientific research is only interesting to the scientists who conduct it. So receiving this medal is a great recognition and a pleasant surprise, proving that someone is paying attention to the research and holds a great appreciation for it. In my opinion, all members of the Lithuanian academic community deserve such recognition for continuing to work and not abandoning their field, despite the decades-long reforms in higher education," says the VILNIUS TECH representative.

Speaking about his work related to the cultural transformations caused by digital technologies, Dr. Keturakis notes that this is currently the area undergoing the most change as a new type of culture is emerging. He also recalls the thoughts of communication philosopher Luciano Floridi, who stated that in electronic communication, the weakest link is the human being, who cannot match information processing volume or transmission speed reached by computers. This creates the risk that humans will become mere observers of communication processes.

"Recently, a study conducted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States showed that artificial intelligence sped up communication by about 60 percent, however, participants could not remember what they had generated and communicated via ChatGPT. It's possible that future communication will look like this: there will be intense information exchange between devices, but humans will have no idea what is being discussed," highlights the associate professor of the Department of Creative Communication.

According to Dr. Keturakis, today's consumer of creative content feels overwhelmed by digital technologies and finds it particularly important to hear what a human — not a machine — has to say about the world. There is also a growing call for creative work generated with the help of artificial intelligence to be labeled with special markers.

"I wouldn't be surprised if one day various creative works come with certificates proving that the creators did everything by hand — meaning that everything said or shown was personally experienced by them. In

today's culture, there is a growing tension between rapidly advancing technology and the user's feeling that we need to take a step back toward handwriting, taking photos with vintage cameras, and listening to vinyl records," notes the VILNIUS TECH associate professor.

est smartphone. This spring, students from the same study program were fascinated by a classmate's Nokia 3310 phone, which has no internet or mobile apps.

"On one hand, working with students made me realize that for them, it's much easier to create a computer game that expresses their ideas rather than to write them down. On the other hand, I see that books have become fashionable again," says the VILNIUS TECH representative.

Speaking about sources of inspiration, the associate professor smiles and notes that something once common — boredom — has practically disappeared, as every seemingly free moment is filled with checking a phone or computer.

"I'm trying very hard to bring back moments of boredom. I sit on a bench near the MO Museum and

“ I wouldn't be surprised if one day various creative works come with certificates proving that the creators did everything by hand — meaning that everything said or shown was personally experienced by them.

Dr. Saulius Keturakis



Dr. Keturakis has been part of the VILNIUS TECH community for several years, and there is a clear link between his work with students and his research in the field of digital culture. According to him, students help identify emerging trends while they are still forming. For example, five years ago, students admired a classmate who had the lat-

est smartphone. This spring, students from the same study program were fascinated by a classmate's Nokia 3310 phone, which has no internet or mobile apps. do nothing for 10 minutes. There's a rope hammock in the renovated Reformatų Garden, where I lie down between lectures and think about nothing. I feel a bit guilty for not working during those moments. But it's very refreshing," shares Dr. Saulius Keturakis, Associate Professor at the VILNIUS TECH Department of Creative Communication.



Curiosity turns into discoveries: University experts recognized by the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences

TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS

Exceptional ideas from young VILNIUS TECH researchers are already shaping the technologies of the future and, hence, earning national recognition. Scientists from the Faculty of Transport Engineering, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mykola Karpenko and Juras Skardzius, have received awards from the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (LMA) for their significant work in the fields of mechanical and transport engineering.

This recognition not only confirms the young researchers' contribution to science but also demonstrates that members of the university community, through un-

conventional thinking and creative solutions, consistently contribute to improving transport efficiency, safety, comfort and global progress.

Juras Skardzius received the award for his paper "Investigation

of Progressive Tool Quality Parameters in Automotive Parts Production," submitted to the 2024 Lithuanian Academy of Sciences competition for student scientific works in higher education.



J. Skardzius

Mykola Karpenko was awarded for his research in transport and mechanical engineering, where he analyzed vibrations and frequencies using advanced modeling techniques so that to improve the efficiency, stability, and safety of transport systems.

By applying the finite element method (FEM), he explored composite materials used in vehicles, examined vibration damping possibilities in frequency ranges important for unmanned aerial vehicles, and analyzed the dynamics of vehicle tires.

Another stage of Karpenko's research cycle involved studying the dynamics of hydraulic drives in both civilian and military machinery, with the focus on reducing fluid flow and pressure pulsations while increasing efficiency. Recently, he has been particularly focused on micromobility research, evaluating how vi-

brations from different road surfaces in Vilnius affect driver comfort and safety.

Achievements, research, and future plans—straight from the experts at VILNIUS TECH.

– What does this recognition mean to you?

Juras Skardzius: I must admit, it feels good when your research is recognized and acknowledged. It provides motivation to move forward. And there is definitely room to grow—my future plans are closely tied to continuing this topic in my doctoral studies.

However, I can't take all the credit myself—I must say, I've been and still am strongly supported by my lecturers, colleagues, and especially my family. For me, the greatest reward is being able to show that their belief in me wasn't in vain and that their support turned into real

results. That motivates me more than any other recognition.

Mykola Karpenko: This award is both a professional achievement and a personal confirmation that the direction I've taken in my scientific work is the right one.

The LMA award encourages me to continue developing innovative solutions to improve transport safety, efficiency, and sustainability. It also highlights the importance of new research areas, such as micromobility, whose findings can directly contribute to the planning of infrastructure and improvement of driver comfort.

– How does your research promote science?

Juras Skardzius: I believe that solving problems that previously lacked the time or were too expensive to research contributes the most to popularizing science.



M. Karpenko



My personal motivation is not only based on self-improvement but also on wanting to set an example for my children.

J. Skardžius



My research is relatively specific and targeted at a particular sector, but the general principles can be applied across many industries.

Mykola Karpenko: My research contributes to the popularization of science by addressing topics that directly impact everyday life—from the safety and comfort of urban mobility to the efficiency of large-scale transport systems.

By studying vibrations, the dynamics of hydraulic drives, as well as the behavior of composite materials, I can translate complex engineering concepts into practical insights relevant to policymakers, urban planners, industry partners, and the general public.

Micromobility research shows how the quality of urban infrastructure affects driver comfort and safety in Vilnius.

This creates opportunities to share research results in public discussions, media, and local infrastructure development projects, making science more accessible and understandable.

Moreover, by presenting research results at various conferences and collaborating with students and

young researchers, we foster interest in the fields of mechanical and transport engineering and demonstrate how advanced analysis tools like FEM can be applied to solve real-world problems.

– Where do you find motivation?

Juras Skardžius: My personal motivation is not only based on self-improvement but also on wanting to set an example for my children.

Mykola Karpenko: In science, I'm most motivated by the opportunity to turn curiosity into real solutions that improve the safety, efficiency, and sustainability of transport systems.

I'm also driven by the challenge of understanding complex, dynamic processes. As a user of transport and micromobility systems myself, this work is especially meaningful—I can directly connect my research to real-life experiences. Seeing that my research insights can enhance driver comfort, optimize vehicle performance, and contribute to creating safer as well as more sustainable cities gives great purpose to my work.

Recognition like the LMA award and the support of the Faculty of Transport Engineering community further inspire me to expand the scope of my research—exploring new areas and continuing to meaningfully contribute to the scientific community and the popularization of its work.

– What advice would you give to young researchers?

Juras Skardžius: From experience, I can say it's important to choose a field that is close to your heart and not to pursue any work solely in hopes of being awarded for it. Awards and recognition from colleagues will come in time. I'm con-

vinced that motivation shouldn't be based on trying to surpass someone else. Instead, think about how you can help or complement someone else's research.

Mykola Karpenko: My advice to young researchers seeking recognition is to focus first on the problems and challenges that truly interest them. When you concentrate on the task, strive to understand it, and look for effective solutions, motivation comes naturally, and your scientific work becomes meaningful.

It's important not to seek awards or recognition as the main goal—these are often the result of dedication, curiosity, and consistency in tackling real-world challenges. By exploring topics that inspire you and committing to solving complex problems, you not only grow as a researcher but also increase the impact of your work. This ultimately leads to recognition and opens up new opportunities in the scientific field.



It's important not to seek awards or recognition as the main goal—these are often the result of dedication, curiosity, and consistency in tackling real-world challenges.

M. Karpenko



The best VILNIUS TECH lecturers: when knowledge becomes an inspiration to create

For the third consecutive year, the VILNIUS TECH Academic Support Center has awarded the university's best lecturers—those whose work, dedication, and sincerity leave a lasting mark on students' academic journey and their personal growth.

Winners were selected in ten categories across various areas of university life by announcing nominations and votes from colleagues, department heads, as well as evaluations from a commission and students.

This year's honorees are those whose lectures become not only a source of knowledge but also a space where exceptional ideas take shape.



“LECTURER CREATING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY” – PROFESSOR DR. ARTURAS JUKNA, DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

“The Best Lecturer Award is a

great responsibility. Those who receive it must not lower their standards or take preparation for lectures lightly.

I believe that a slight nervousness before a lecture helps me focus and decide what's most important—what topic deserves more time and which one doesn't.

What I enjoy most about my work is the feeling of discovery.

We all experience it when we learn something new or when an idea shared by you is new to someone else.

What motivates me to keep improving is the chance to surprise my audience.

I see amazement on their faces when I explain very simple but not obvious things about how natural laws work.

We observe the results of various processes every day, but rarely ask ourselves: why are the results like this, what causes them, and how could we change them for better or worse?”



“START-UP LECTURER” – LECTURER MANTAS MAKULAVICIUS, DEPARTMENT OF MECHATRONICS, ROBOTICS, AND DIGITAL DEFENSE

“To be honest, I didn't expect to receive this award, so it was a pleasant surprise. This recognition means not only personal acknowledgment but also responsibility. It shows that my efforts are noticed and valued by both students and colleagues. It inspires me to keep improving, explore new teaching methods, and be someone who not only imparts knowledge but also motivates students to strive for more.

What I like most about my work is the constant opportunity to grow and learn together with students.

Teaching is not just about transferring knowledge—it's a dynamic process of discovering new ideas and perspectives. I really value our supportive and friendly department team—it's a place where you can always get advice, encouragement, and inspiration. Such an environment boosts confidence, encourages initiative, and motivates greater dedication.

It's important to me not only to teach theory but also to help students understand how to apply it in practice. We live in the age of artificial intelligence, so students can easily find information online. As a lecturer, I see it as my responsibility to check whether they choose the right information and truly understand it.

During my master's studies, I spent a year studying in Germany, where I experienced a different teaching culture and methods. That experience enriched me, and I want to share it with my students so that I could help them broaden their horizons. I also work alongside professionals in my field whom I admire and learn from—this motivates me even more to keep improving and make my work meaningful as well as useful to students."



"MOODLE CREATOR"
– ASSISTANT DR.
VILMA NEKRASAITE-
LIEGE, DEPARTMENT OF
MATHEMATICAL STATISTICS

"This award means a lot to me.

It's confirmation that my work bears fruit and is appreciated. When I say that I teach mathematics, I usually get one of two reactions: either 'Oh, I love math,' or 'I never liked math, I don't understand it.' My goal is to make sure that after my course as few students as possible remain in the second group. I try to show that mathematics—especially statistics—is everywhere, from everyday information to decision-making at work or in research. This award represents not only recognition but also greater responsibility to continue inspiring students.

What brings me the most joy is interacting with students and witnessing their discoveries. It's very important to me that my lectures are not only theoretical but also practical. I try to relate assignments to real-life situations so that students can see how knowledge is applied in practice. The best moments are when a student comes after class and says they finally understood something. I've received emails from former students asking for help solving problems at work or in their theses. That makes me realize—even if they don't remember everything I taught, they know they can reach out for advice. That creates a bond that lasts beyond the classroom.

What motivates me most is students' curiosity and feedback. Seeing them open their eyes to mathematics and find meaning in it gives me energy.

It's especially inspiring when they later apply what they've learned in practice—their achievements prove my work was worthwhile. That's the greatest motivation to keep improving, finding new ways to teach, and showing that math can be interesting and useful rather than intimidating."



"LEADER OF EDUCATIONAL
EXCELLENCE" – PROFESSOR
DR. DARIUS PLONIS,
DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONIC
SYSTEMS

"This award means that my efforts to present material effectively to students have been recognized. It encourages me to keep improving and testing new teaching methods. What I enjoy most is seeing students' eyes light up when they understand a difficult topic. In other words, inspiring students, talking with them, answering their questions, and watching them think critically.

Teaching pushes me to deepen my knowledge and stay intellectually active. I like hearing students' ideas, learning their perspectives, watching their growth and progress.

What motivates me is students' curiosity and development. Knowing that my answers can help them grasp difficult topics, overcome challenges, or even influence career choices gives me responsibility and motivation.

Every question from a student or colleague is an opportunity to learn and grow.

It's an intellectual dialogue that never ends. I believe that knowledge can change lives. If I can help a student understand, discover,

or achieve something meaningful, that's my greatest motivation."



"LEADER OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE" – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. ZANETA KARAZIENE, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS ENGINEERING

"Receiving the Best Lecturer of the Year award is the highest form of recognition in the academic community. It acknowledges not only professional competence but also the ability to inspire students and encourage critical thinking. It drives me to continue improving, seeking innovative teaching methods, and strengthening the connection with students. It's also a responsibility to maintain high quality and set an example in academia.

What I value most about teaching is the opportunity to contribute to students' academic growth and critical thinking. I aim to create a learning environment that promotes active participation, discussion, and practical application of knowledge. I find great satisfaction in constantly updating course material, integrating new research, and applying innovative teaching methods.

I'm motivated by students' curiosity, their desire to learn and their academic progress. Teaching allows me to see how knowledge trans-

forms students' thinking, enhances their skills, and opens new opportunities. I'm also driven by the responsibility to ensure the relevance and quality of studies, keeping the content research-based and applicable in practice. Continuous feedback from students encourages me to reflect on and improve my teaching."



"LECTURER FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES" – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. VYTAUTAS ABROMAVICIUS, VICE-DEAN FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, FACULTY OF ELECTRONICS

"Receiving this award means my efforts were noticed and appreciated. It's great to be recognized.

In my work, I value several things: community, colleagues I work with, the support of leadership, and student feedback. I'm motivated when students acknowledge my efforts—either by writing positive reviews or visiting my office to ask where to leave a recommendation.

My motivation comes from within. A lecture has no clear quality limit, so I aim for a level where I would gladly attend my own class. Of course, motivated students inspire me in turn. When I see their

enthusiasm for learning, I also try to make the material more interesting, more engaging, and sometimes go beyond what's included in the program."



"LEADER IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES" – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. OLGA CHABAROVA, DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED MECHANICS

"Receiving this award is both an honor and a responsibility. It shows that students and colleagues appreciate my work, but it also motivates me to keep improving. It proves that the effort I put into student development does not go unnoticed.

What I like most about my job is communicating and discussing with students—their questions often make me see a topic from a new perspective. I love the moment when the 'light bulb' goes off in a student's mind—when they find an answer themselves or apply knowledge in practice. I'm happy to contribute to the education and personal development of young people.

What motivates me is students' curiosity and willingness to learn—it pushes me to constantly find new, engaging ways to teach. I know that today's students are tomorrow's professionals. My motivation al-

so comes from the academic environment itself—the constant updatel of knowledge and the need to keep up with scientific and technological progress.”



“LONGTIME PROMOTER OF TEACHING CULTURE” – CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR JOLANTA CIUPRINSKIENE, FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

“The Best Lecturer Award is a very meaningful recognition. The university has many passionate and knowledgeable lecturers, so it’s especially rewarding to be noticed and appreciated by colleagues who hold academic titles.

What I value most in my work is direct interaction with students, staying in touch with the pulse of the profession, deepening knowledge through research, and attending professional seminars.

Students reflect our society: every year they are different, with their own perspectives, values, and expectations. That’s why it’s crucial to find the best ways to share knowledge and foster independent and creative thinking. A creative student not only applies theory in practice but also proposes new, unconventional solutions that enrich the entire learning process. My goal

is not to impose ready-made answers but to create an environment where students feel free to ask questions, experiment, and discover their own path.

My main motivation is knowing that students will soon become my colleagues. My biggest goal is to help them become not only competent professionals but also curious individuals who can share knowledge, discuss, create, and contribute to the growth of their professional community.”



“LONGTIME PROMOTER OF TEACHING CULTURE” – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. ZITA SAVICKIENE, VICE-DEAN FOR STUDIES, FACULTY OF ELECTRONICS

“I no longer teach, but I taught for 34 years. Receiving the Longtime Promoter of Teaching Culture award is a great honor, and I’m very happy about it.

It’s wonderful that there are many young lecturers in the faculty whom I once taught—they’re continuing their teaching careers successfully and already receiving Best Lecturer awards themselves.

What I enjoyed most about teaching was communicating with students—having discussions, solving problems, and helping them

overcome challenges. I learned and grew alongside them.

What motivated me was not only the opportunity to pass on knowledge and experience but also to encourage students to grow as individuals and achieve their goals. After all, they are the creators of our future.”



“GUIDE FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION” – LABORATORY HEAD DR. DONATAS LUKSYS, DEPARTMENT OF BIOMECHANICAL ENGINEERING

“It’s always pleasant to be recognized. The award gives me even more motivation to improve and make sure every student receives the newest information and gets to experience interesting experiments.

Every day brings something new—as science evolves daily it keeps me moving forward too. I’m also motivated by students’ development as they receive the latest scientific knowledge.

What inspires me most is when, after a class or lab session, a student comes up to thank me for the interesting experiments, lectures, for helping them gain new knowledge and experience in designing, understand real devices.”



The university's contribution to a sustainable space ecosystem

INTERDISCIPLINARY ENVIRONMENT

Since the launch of the first satellite six decades ago, space technologies have become an integral part of everyday life – navigation, the internet, weather forecasts, and international bank transfers depend on space infrastructure. It is evident that its importance will only continue to grow in the future.

It is estimated that within a few years, the space sector will account for 1% of the country's gross domestic product. Trans-

port, supply, defense, digital communication, and other industries will generate more than 60% of space economy growth by 2035.

Over time, the space environment

undergoes a rapid change. Already, more than 11,000 satellites are orbiting the Earth, and it is predicted that by 2030 their number will increase at least fivefold. For some, space is associated with scientific discovery, for others – with unexplored economic opportunities, national security, or enhanced influence. However, it is important to understand that without satellites in space, everyday life would simply come to a halt: there would be no mobile communication, navigation systems would fail, and fi-

nancial systems, aviation, and maritime sectors would be disrupted.

One of the directions in space is manufacturing in microgravity. In space, it is possible to grow extremely pure crystals, develop new optical fibers or medicines, and print tissues using 3D technologies. Products made in orbit have unique properties and can be highly valuable on Earth.

Another direction is ISAM (In-Space Assembly and Manufacturing), which involves assembly and production in space. It allows for satellite repair, refueling, and the creation of large structures directly in orbit. Such technologies reduce resource waste and promote a more sustainable space infrastructure.

An important player in Lithuania's space ecosystem is the VILNIUS TECH Antanas Gustaitis Aviation Institute (AGAI), which has acquired space mission simulation software worth more than 114,000 euros – the "Mission Design Simulator" ("MDS Solaris"). It enables

students to model and analyze satellite missions – from the first design steps to launch preparation.

"Students will learn to make engineering decisions in a realistic simulated environment, conduct mission analysis, and evaluate technological trade-offs. It's like a simulation space where virtual satellites can be created from scratch all the way to being ready to launch. We plan for students to actively use the program both in study modules and while conducting research, course projects, or final theses," emphasizes AGAI Vice-Dean Laurynas Sisovas.

The software was developed by the Lithuanian space and defense technology company "Blackswan Space."

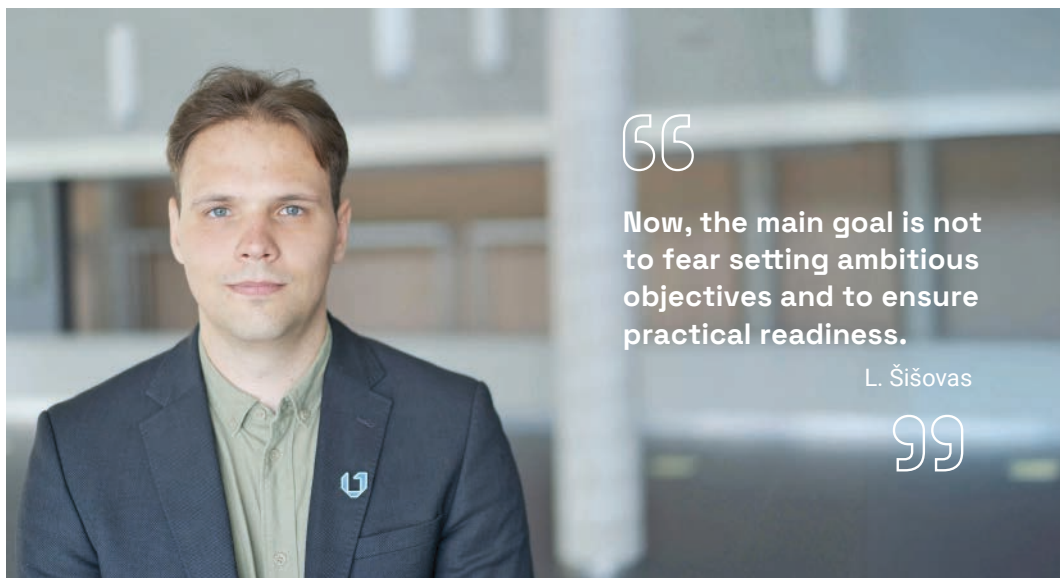
"During the simulation, we can change parameters and immediately see the results. We can also control swarms or individual satellites from different computers at the same time – this feature works as a kind of multiplayer functionality," says the company's Commer-

cial Director Tomas Malinauskas.

The software will be used in both bachelor's and master's studies, as well as in international projects, which include PEGASUS network partners from France, Italy, and Sweden. It will help students prepare for global engineering challenges.

AGAI acquired the space mission simulation software under an EU-funded initiative aimed at strengthening public sector innovation. According to Egle Elena Saitė, Head of the Space Hub group at the Innovation Agency implementing Lithuania's space policy, this project is directly linked to the goals of developing Lithuania's space ecosystem.

"In the Lithuanian space sector development concept adopted a few years ago, one challenge identified was the proper preparation of specialists capable of working in the space industry. By involving educational institutions in such projects, we not only address the strategic objectives of the space sector



“

Now, the main goal is not to fear setting ambitious objectives and to ensure practical readiness.

L. Šišovas

”

“

By involving educational institutions in such projects, we not only address the strategic objectives of the space sector but also contribute to the growth of this relatively new yet exceptionally promising field.

E. E. Šataitė

”



“

During the simulation, we can change parameters and immediately see the results.

T. Malinauskas

”

but also contribute to the growth of this relatively new yet exceptionally promising field,” notes E. E. Šataitė.

VILNIUS TECH has also joined the Space Technology Cluster as a partner. The university is uniting its efforts to nurture talent, shape the future of this promising industry, promote space research, improve training programs in space and data transmission, as well as combine expertise in creating new products.

Equally important, VILNIUS TECH has acquired a thermo-vacuum chamber worth up to 150,000 euros. It enables testing of satellites and their subsystems under realistic low Earth orbit temperature conditions. Using this chamber and the vibration stand at the Institute of Mechanics, university researchers can conduct all necessary tests for components destined for space. Lithuanian space companies such as “Astrolight,” “Integrated Optics,” and others are already successfully using these services.

Despite rapid technological progress, it is crucial not to forget sus-

tainability – space debris continues to increase, posing a growing threat. For this reason, it is necessary to adopt international agreements and employ innovative technologies to reduce space debris.

Strengthening Lithuania’s space sector, investing in education, and fostering international cooperation are paths that not only contribute to global solutions but also create added value for the entire country.

“Lithuanian satellites are orbiting space, and young specialists are successfully joining the activities of the European Space Agency and private companies. Our goal is for the university to be the place where not only ideas are born but also engineering solutions.

We have strong foundations: we attract creative students, develop international relations, and possess important technological resources. Now, the main goal is not to fear setting ambitious objectives and to ensure practical readiness – something this software will help achieve,” says AGAI Vice-Dean L. Sisovas.

“Siupinys”: a 50-year story of creativity, humor and togetherness

The first student performance took place in the spring of 1975 in the assembly hall of the 16-story dormitory at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (formerly known as Vilnius Institute of Civil Engineering, VISI). The audience was entertained by humorists Algis Urbonavicius (“The Boss”) and Algimantas Dapkunas (who at that time played “Cleopatra”).

That same October, auditions were held in the VISI dormitory hall in Saulėtekis for a newly forming student theater of stage miniatures that were initiated by Viktor Vytautas Krusinskas, Dean of the Faculty of Construction (SF), and Vice-Dean Vida Montviliene. The audition committee included Youth Theatre actors Rimgaudas Karvelis and Ferdinandas Jaksys, who were looking at students singing, dancing, and reciting.

A large troupe was formed from the selected auditionees: Vaclovas

Kontrauskas, Vytautas Kupliauskas, Nerijus Zukas, Nijolė Cerniauskaitė, Romas Savickas, Pranute Andrekute, Loreta Bastirenkova, Mindaugas Mikaila, Albinas Arkauskas, Leta Melamedaitė, Gediminas Simniskis, Vidmantas Striaukas, Vida Putnaite, Antanas Ruginis, musicians Algis Bajoras, Igoris Berinas (later a member of the band “Hiperbole”), Vladas Jarmalavicius, Vladimiras Petruninas, Robertas Griskevicius, and Sikstas Bitaris.

This was the beginning of the SF student stage miniature theater “Siupinys.” Its director was the

well-known artist R. Karvelis, and its manager and administrator was Vice-Dean Vida Montviliene.

The troupe performed extensively across Lithuania—in Kaunas, Siuliai, Panevezys, Kelme, Taurage, Anyksciai, Jurbarkas, Palanga, Mažeikiai, Moletai, Lazdijai, Visaginas (then Snieckus), and elsewhere.

“Siupinys” also performed abroad—in Kyiv, Donetsk, Odesa, Tartu, Riga, Tbilisi, Yerevan, Tashkent, Rostov-on-Don, then Leningrad, Voronezh, Izhevsk, Moscow, and Ufa.

Every year on April 1, Lithuanian Television broadcasted popular va-



“Siupinys” 40th anniversary

A.Jauniaus photo



Premiere of "Šiupinis" (1978)

riety miniature performances that, using humor and grotesque, mocked aspects of everyday life that could not be openly criticized. "Siupinys" was widely covered in national newspapers and magazines.

Scripts for the performances were written by Juozas Montvila, Vida Montviliene, Kazys Bagdonavicius, Alma Karosaite, Dalia Teiserskyte, Leticija Rakauskiene, Gediminas Astrauskas, Petras and Apoloniya Steponavicius, as well as works by comedians Arkady Raikin, Mikhail Zhvanetsky, and Mikhail Zadornov. All translations were done by Vida Montviliene.

Among the most active supporters and admirers of "Siupinys" were VISI Rector Aleksandras Cyras and Vice-Rector Bronius Sidauga. The university's Art Council also supported the troupe—Algirdas Gaizutis, Irena Aleksaite, Halina Kobeckaitė, Algirdas Cizas, and Juozas Sigitas Mureika.

Although the troupe eventually disbanded, it reunited several times after graduation: in 2005 for the LRT show "Vakaro autografas," in

2006 for VGTU's 50th anniversary, and in 2010 at the VGTU alumni congress.

In 2015, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University opened a new space—"Tete-a-tete" square—with a commemorative plaque dedicated to "Siupinys." The square features a rowan tree and mountain pines planted

by former members. This marked the 40th anniversary of the student stage miniature theater "Siupinys."

On October 18, 2025, "Siupinys" celebrates its 50th anniversary. To mark the occasion, a historical book about "Siupinys" is being published, and its most active members and guests are being awarded the "Siupinys Order."

VYTAUTAS KUPLIAUSKAS:

"When I joined 'Siupinys,' it became a form of self-expression, creativity, laughter, fun, beautiful chorus dancers, camaraderie, an artists' community, pride, meaningful leisure, and popularity. Now it is a fond memory of a cheerful, carefree youth.

As I recall, my story with 'Siupinys' began when my classmate Vaciuškas approached me at the end of our first year and said: 'I can see you like to perform, come to a 'Siupinys' rehearsal. It's fun there—you might get a chance to show yourself.'

I came, and maestro R. Karve-



"Šiupinys" in Tashkent, Uzbekistan (1979)

lis looked at me and said: ‘Good, you’re tall and slim—you’ll play the positive hero.’

‘Siupinys’ devoted much attention to preparing for the competition that culminated on April 1. I realized I would be delivering slogans. Once, when the Boss got sick, I replaced him in a miniature where the Professor had to box the Student.

The maestro, watching the performance, decided I could handle character roles and started assigning them, most often pairing me with Vaclovas.

I liked that during rehearsals he encouraged us to improvise until we found the right persona and conveyed the miniature’s idea. The troupe often rehearsed late into the night, but the mood was always cheerful—even when the university’s artistic committee suggested major changes on the evening of a show.

I could talk endlessly about the wonderful performances, tours, and festivals of ‘Siupinys.’

We performed across nearly ev-



Program “Na palauk”

ery region of Lithuania and beyond. Each city visit was worth its own story.

I remember a funny episode in

Yerevan: in one sketch, Pranute, a curvy girl, finished her song by taking off her clothes and remaining in a swimsuit. Male troupe members

1976	1977	1978	1979
The first program earned 2nd place in Vilnius and 3rd place nationally.	With a program based on humorist Kazys Bagdonavicius’ script “Adom ir Badom,” the troupe won 3rd place nationally and 2nd place in Vilnius.	With the program “Na, palauk” (script by Juozas Montvila), the students were recognized as the best in Vilnius and shared the national stage with the already famous Kaunas Medical satire and humor group. The troupe was joined by Valdas Arbaciauskas, Alfredas Narkevicius, Algis Lunskis, Vilius Krisciunas, Raimondas Kyburys, and Arunas Zabulenas.	With the program “Student Pimezonas and the Fountains” (script by satirist Gediminas Astrauskas), the troupe became laureates. They won the grand prize at an international festival in Yerevan and were laureates at the Tashkent International Student Festival, competing among 36 troupes. New members included Remigijus Kazlauskas, Arunas Grazelelinas, Raimonda Petrenaite, Regina Piksilingyte, Rima Cegyte, dancers Rasa Kazakeviciute, Eityvyde Liaskute, Irena Labuckaite, musicians Arvydas Tyla and Silverijus Nevardauskas.

had to guard the stage from over-enthusiastic spectators. After the show, a caravan of cars would line up outside inviting our girls to dinner, and we, acting as their brothers and cousins, went along to protect them.

Since we often won April Fools'

Day competitions, we became well known and popular, invited to perform both short and long programs throughout the country. Every year we created a new performance, so over time we built up a large repertoire.

'Siupinys' gave me greater self-con-

fidence and cured my fear of speaking before large audiences, which helped in my career. It also inspired ambition and a sense of belonging. Whenever I meet a fellow 'Siupinys' member, I feel like I'm meeting a close relative."

VACLOVAS KONTRAUSKAS:

"I joined 'Siupinys' almost by accident. In 1975 I graduated from Sventezers Secondary School in Lazdijai District and entered the Vilnius Institute of Civil Engineering. That same October, auditions organized by maestro R. Karvelis and actor F. Jaksys were held.

I learned about them from my classmate Lina Vaskelyte, who urged me to participate because I had acted in comic roles at school during New Year performances and other events.

Since I lived with my aunt instead of in the dormitory, I didn't know the exact time and arrived late. The hall was packed—no seats left. Someone pointed to an empty chair, I tried to sit, and it collapsed, crushing my



"Siupinys" in Voronezh (1979)

1980

Premiere of "VISI Fashion – 80," written by English lecturer Leticija Rakauskiene. The troupe won both the Vilnius and national artistic brigade competitions. New members joined from various faculties.

1981

Program "Siupinys – 81," written by Leticija Rakauskiene and Alma Karosaite. The troupe performed at festivals in Odesa and Novovoronezh.

1982

Program "Siupinys – 82," written by Vida Montviliene. That year, the troupe was granted the honorary title of People's Theater, and members Vaclovas Kontrauskas and Vytautas Kupliauskas were recognized as Distinguished Amateur Artists.

fingers. Everyone burst out laughing—I hadn't noticed it was broken.

I thought, 'Why did I even come here—they're laughing at me,' but maestro Karvelis immediately asked what else I could do. I hadn't finished my piece when Karvelis and Jaksys clapped their hands: 'That's enough—you're in.'

“

Through characters and allegory, we could express much more than was officially allowed.

V. Kontrauskas

”

He gathered about twenty-five of us, and that was the beginning of the stage miniature theater.

Maestro Karvelis and Vida Mont-

viliene believed in addressing not only student life but also broader social issues. In other words, to share important ideas in a way that people could understand the hidden meaning and the authorities couldn't object. Through characters and allegory, we could ex-

press much more than was officially allowed.

There were moments of improvisation during performances. Sometimes a spontaneous line would slip out. I especially remember one incident with Vytautas Kupliauskas, whom I had brought into 'Siupinys.'



"Siupinis" convention in Laibgalia (2008)

1983–1984

The troupe was led by Youth Theatre actor Gerardas Zalenas and Panevezys Drama Theatre director Julius Dautartas. They created the program "Gintareliai," written by Juozas Montvila.

1984

New director Romualdas Viksraitis, lecturer at the Lithuanian State Conservatory, staged "We Think What We Shouldn't."

1985

The troupe was led by theater and film actor Petras Steponavičius and his wife Apolonija. Lilija Anusiene became the theater's director.

On stage, we became main partners, studied in the same group, earned engineering diplomas, and to this day remain close friends—we were even born on the same day.

One evening, when I was to play a forgetful old man, I brought a small bag with three lemons. During the act, without Vytautas knowing, I paused, took out a lemon, and started eating it like an apple, peel and all. He stared at me, not understanding what I was doing. I told him, ‘Eat.’ Though he hated lemons, he bit into one, and we both continued eating them, totally off-script. The entire front row, including party officials, began swallowing hard—it triggered an instinctive reaction. Of course, we got scolded later, but our directors got it worse.

I have one photo of the three of us—me, Vytautas Kupliauskas, and maestro Karvelis—taken the day we said goodbye to ‘Šiupinys.’ That year, my life changed—I married Henrieta and could no longer devote so much time to the theater. Vytautas

and maestro Karvelis left around the same time.

Of course, ‘Šiupinys’ continued for many more years under new leaders—Romas Vikšraitis, Julius Dautartas, Gerardas Žalėnas, Petras Steponavičius, and Lilija Anusienė—but its golden era had ended.

Changing times and the spirit of the national revival also played a role: people began to speak openly, call things by their names, and allegory slowly disappeared. The story of the student stage miniature theater ‘Šiupinys’ came to an end in 1995.”



“Šiupinys” Alumni Congress (2010)

1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Program “Doctors.”	Program “I Think, Therefore I Am.”	A program composed of separate miniatures without a title.	Leadership was taken over by long-time Youth Theatre actress Valerija Marcinkevičiute-Karaliene, who replaced the Steponavičius couple during their stay in the United States.	Directed by Dalia Kilimonyte, who staged the play “Gediminas’ Dream.”

New head of “Future Engineering” Gintare Orlaviciene: “Courage comes through action”



Soon it will be a decade since the “Future Engineering” program was initiated, which has opened up opportunities for students in Lithuanian schools to carry out practical project-based work in engineering and other STEAM fields. Students participate in the program together with their teachers, who become main project supervisors, along with VILNIUS TECH university lecturers acting as student mentors throughout the entire process.

For anyone seeking inspiration in everyday life, it's essential to become familiar with the inventions created by students. The ideas of seventh-graders and slightly older students revolve around smart transport systems, sustainable energy solutions, robotics projects, and more. This shows that young people are capable of combining imagination with theoretical knowledge as well as implementing creative solutions.

The importance and value of the

distance learning platform is also demonstrated by the fact that in 2024, “Future Engineering” was nominated among the top three STEAM providers in the field of non-formal education.

“In my opinion, this project is especially interesting, and the students who join it get to try themselves out in practice, not just listen to theoretical knowledge. The distance learning platform offers an opportunity to tackle real problems, create innovations, and, ultimately, to try out a profession-

al field and assess whether they would like to connect their future with it,” says G. Orlaviciene.

According to G. Orlaviciene, the role of head of “Future Engineering” is meaningful and full of responsibilities, providing an opportunity to help raise the younger generation. Although managing the project poses challenges such as not falling under the constantly rising bar of quality and increasing expectations, she is determined to meet all of them and to fully engage in the project's activities.

"Over time, I see the distance learning platform initiative as a national-level project, bringing together the strongest students in the country – those who aim not only to learn but also to change the world. We, too, are adapting to rapidly changing technologies and labor market needs: we constantly update the project topics and methodological materials. We also integrate tools used in today's job market into the project topics – such as artificial intelligence, programming, and others. These allow students to create autonomous car models, facial recognition technologies, virtual reality films, smart plant-growing systems, medical engineering solutions, or other smart devices," the head of "Future Engineering" notes.

According to G. Orlaviciene, the distinctiveness of the distance learning platform's activities lies in the freedom to create. There is no single correct path – quite the opposite, there are many paths that students can choose, allowing them to create their own products.

She also points out that the platform's topics are continuously updated and improved, taking into account the needs of young creators, among other things.

This year, a new topic is also being introduced – "Microorganisms in Biotechnology," with its advisor being Associate Professor Dr. Dovile Vasiliauskiene from the Depart-

“

Courage comes through action. To grow, you need to take the first step. Maybe this step will help you discover an activity you're passionate about – one you might want to connect your future with

G. Orlaviciene

”

ment of Chemistry and Bioengineering. To improve the quality of project results, this year each topic will have a maximum number of project works – no more than 30 projects per topic will be developed.

G. Orlaviciene is glad that members of the VILNIUS TECH community are also getting involved in the distance learning platform's activities – lecturers consult students and evaluate their projects. Some of them help students prepare for the final event, which gathers around 800 participants. Advisors also promote the "Future Engineering" project at various events, whose focus

group is students. While one person is responsible for coordinating the project, the main project events – such as the opening, workshops, and final event – involve the entire team of the Admissions and Information Center. It must be acknowledged that one person alone is not a warrior.

The new head of the distance learning platform wishes the students who want to try their hand at "Future Engineering" but are hesitant to think less and act more.

"Courage comes through action. To grow, you need to take the first step. Maybe this step will help you discover an activity you're passionate about – one you might want to connect your future with."



800

participants gather for the final "Future Engineering" event.





Wear VILNIUS TECH merchandise – become part of the community

“Welcome to the university community” – these words are silently expressed through VILNIUS TECH merchandise. These are not just items – they’re a key unlocking a small and cozy story.

Perhaps most importantly, behind all of this lies one very important thing – identity. For first-year students, university merchan-

dise can become a distinguishing mark: when you see someone wearing a VILNIUS TECH hoodie in the library or a café, you immediately know they’re part of your community, something you share. A reusable cup placed on the table during lectures becomes a quiet message saying that your place is here.

Clothing from the company “Audimas” – hoodies and t-shirts – is designed with sustainability and long-term use in mind. This is not fast fashion, but a long-lasting choice: by wearing such clothing, you not only stand out but also show others that you are environmentally re-

sponsible and someone, who appreciates quality.

A cotton tote bag, also available in the online store, replaces dozens of plastic ones. Every time you carry it, you contribute to preserving a cleaner world.

VILNIUS TECH merchandise is not just high-quality and attractive items. It is part of the story you are beginning to create.





Past experiences turn into inspiring stories about today

Innovation, creativity, community, and openness – all that features in the new VILNIUS TECH video. Combining professional experience with personal connection, it was created by none other than university alumni, the co-founders of the video agency TURBO – Airidas Janusauskas and Evaldas Arlauskas.



This is not only a visual journey through the university's spaces but also an expression of gratitude to their Alma Mater, where their professional path began.

The result is now visible to the public – a modern, emotional, and inspiring video that tells the story of VILNIUS TECH – a place where

creative solutions give birth to future ideas.

"I believe that a university is a space where we should look beyond the everyday, into the future. So, in this video, our perspective doesn't stop at the present – we encourage to think more broadly, consider what lies ahead, and pro-

voke complex questions about the future. We often tend to focus on the result – in this case, the answer – but the main idea of our video is that asking the right question is just as important. After all, any scientific work begins with a hypothesis, and technology today is developing extremely fast. That brings a lot of uncertainty, which can be frightening or anxiety-inducing. That's why we promote the idea of embracing this uncertainty with courage and in response allowing it help us create the future," says A. Janusauskas about the video.

According to E. Arlauskas, when creating the video, one of the main aims was to reveal certain values – innovation, people, and abundance. After all, the university is a vast place, covering many technological and social fields, with modern infrastructure that offers many opportunities for creation. Of course, behind all of this are the people – students, the academic community,

“After completing a large-scale project, we take a pragmatic look back, discussing the mistakes made and what we can learn from them. Usually, these are minor details, unnoticeable or uninteresting to outsiders, but over time they help us grow and improve. The university's change over eight years is, in a way, a reflection of ourselves. We've come a long way during this time, but the road ahead is even longer.”

A. Janušauskas



and administration – who shape the true face of VILNIUS TECH.

While working on the video, its identity and values were also brought out by exploring VILNIUS TECH's areas of activity, visiting faculties and laboratories, and talking with their representatives. Equally important is the fact that the video was filmed in university spaces where daily lectures and various scientific research take place.

"We wanted to create a real and human-led video, so we chose our filming technique accordingly – the camera was usually handheld, alive, close to the action and people. We also wanted to show as much of the university as possible, so we used fast editing, chose diverse situations covering both science and legendary university activities – for example, the dance ensemble 'Vingis,'" highlights VILNIUS TECH alumnus A. Janusauskas.

A. Janusauskas notes that he and his colleague E. Arlauskas created a similar promotional video eight years ago, so this was a kind of return. Creating the new video almost a decade later, with more experience, they were most inspired by the progress of VILNIUS TECH itself – renewed faculties, laboratories, lecturers, and full of enthusiasm students. This helped them rediscover the university and realize that there was no need to create something entirely new – the most important thing was to show everything from the right angle.

“

Creating this video was an intriguing challenge – to convey such a broad idea and showcase huge infrastructure in a very short video clip. The production took a lot of time and required significant effort as well as logistical coordination, but we are happy with both the process and the final result. And of course, it's always a pleasure to return to our Alma Mater.

E. Arlauskas

”

"The biggest challenge in creating the video was selecting what to film. The clip's duration was a major limitation. We were students more than 12 years ago, so although we knew a big part of the infrastructure well, the university has changed significantly since then. Out of curiosity and analysis, we went on ten tours through all 11 faculties, saw how the university had grown, visited new buildings, and checked out newly acquired equipment. We quickly realized that we couldn't fit even half of what we wanted to show into the video. So, after the tours, when we sat down to write the script, we started the conceptual process – selecting situations that would best reveal the university's full niche. Unfortunately, we had to reduce the number of scenes we wanted to show, and that was the biggest challenge we faced," shares E. Arlauskas.

4 months
filming process

15 people
filming team

11 faculties
visited

ALL
video participants –
members of the
university community

You can watch the VILNIUS TECH
video clip here



Creativity Workshops – where young talents’ ideas become visual stories

Creativity today is no longer just a form of artistic expression – it has become a practical tool that helps to find new ways of applying technology. This is especially evident in the academic community, where students’ ideas meet cutting-edge technologies and evolve into real projects.

The VILNIUS TECH Creativity and Innovation Center “LinkMenu fabrikas” is an excellent example of how creativity can not only be nurtured but also applied in practice. It has become a space which shapes the creators of the future and where music videos, innovative audiovisual solutions, and new experiences are created.

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT WORKS CURATED BY THE TEAM AT THE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION CENTER “LINKMENU FABRIKAS”

1 VILNIUS TECH “LinkMenu fabrikas” creativity scholarship winner Deividas Kryzevičius, a student of the Faculty of Creative Industries, masterfully filmed the music video for the young band “Dargana” and their song “Niekas nesupras.”



2 Every year, Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Program winter/spring schools are organized, during which students from VILNIUS TECH and partner universities create videos for live music performances.

Students have produced videos for groups and artists such as **KETERA, Egle Ancevičiute and her band, DEFEKTAS, P404, IMBIERAS, BLACK SPIKES, SIRUPAS, IAMREY, TIMOHI, EIKTUBAIKTU,**

SACREBLUE, KASETE, and JUODA JUODA.

3 During the most recent winter school, the filming for the bands **KETERA, DEFEKTAS, P404, and Egle Ancevičiute with her band** took place at the VILNIUS TECH virtual production studio “Faux Real studio,” using its LED screen. A unique visual design was created for each band, and students were introduced to the basics of virtual production.



WORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS OF THE CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION CENTER “LINKMENU FABRIKAS”

The VILNIUS TECH “LinkMenu fabrikas” and “Faux Real studio” teams, together with students, created the music video for the band “Raudona sviesa” and their song “Einu miegoti.”

Exceptional in its format, the vertical music video for this young rock band's song combines two very different technologies – the traditional live video projection method and a modern virtual production screen. The creation of the music video “Einu miegoti” was awarded to the band as a special prize by VILNIUS TECH “LinkMenu fabrikas” for their participation in the young band competition “Garazas'24,” organized by the music club “Tamsta.”



Director: Ricardas Matacius

Director of Photography: Dziugas Sema

Producer: Ruta Racaite

Virtual Production Specialists: Leonardas Zilinskas and George Pikalov

Sound Editing: Mantas Tamulionis

Photography: Renatas Venclovas



PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

While filming these music videos, the innovation center served as a filming location – providing access to studio space and technology, offering technical consultations, ensuring technical maintenance, and developing as well as managing the virtual environments used during filming. All other creative decisions were determined by the clients.

G. Vagelis, “Zenklai”



G. Vagelis, “Vienu ritmu”



In the university's virtual production studio, “Free Finga” filmed the projections that were used during his concert (“Compensa” concert hall, 2025 01 23).

Concert preparation video, QR code:



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Upon graduation, receive a
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soft skills.

* Create and edit your account on www.badgecraft.eu
platform or in the Badge Wallet app

Creativity at summer school: from idea to real prototype

Two weeks dedicated solely to prototype development – this is what was done by the participants of “MAKERS 5.0”, which included students from VILNIUS TECH and other European universities that were part of the international Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme (BIP). At the VILNIUS TECH Creativity and Innovation Center’s “Link-Menu fabrikas” summer school, they deepened their knowledge of prototyping – learning and creating prototypes to solve a specific challenge over the course of two weeks. The students worked in areas such as 3D printing, electronics, sustainable design, design thinking, and metal and wood processing. ➔



The program took place in two stages. The first stage was virtual. During this phase, students analyzed design challenges, explored materials and user needs, and took part in interactive workshops led by 'LinkMenu fabrikas' experts and guest lecturers. The goal of the first week was to develop a creative strategy: from shaping the concept to assembling a production plan and finding a technical solution.

In the second week, participants gathered in Vilnius, in the prototype workshop of 'LinkMenu fabrikas'. Here, a four-day intensive prototyping marathon took place. Teams worked with 3D printers, lasers, woodworking equipment, and most importantly – with electronic components that give prototypes their functionality as well as vitality.

"With the summer school, we aim to attract students studying engineering – those in product design, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, or other related fields. We invite both beginners and those who already have some knowledge in product design and prototyping. We also organize another school in the winter, aimed at students from multimedia, creative industries, and related fields. The goal of that school

is to create live performance music videos," says Associate Professor Dr. Jurga Naimaviciene, Deputy Director of 'LinkMenu fabrikas'.

She also notes that this year's theme was once again related to sustainability – students aimed to find ways to build a working product prototype using as few resources and new materials as possible. As in previous years, the main theme was the creation of smart home devices, addressing issues such as indoor air pollution or workplace ergonomics. However, this year there was even more emphasis on creativity, encouraging students to approach problems with a creative mindset.

"Every school is different because participants differ in experience, thinking, abilities, and creativity. This year, we welcomed very dynamic, curious, and talented students – it was a joy and a pleasure to work with them. What also set this school apart was that prototype presentations were moved to the hangar, our virtual production studio Faux Real studio – this added a sense of credibility and professionalism to the pitches," shares the Deputy Director of 'LinkMenu fabrikas'.

Speaking about the added value of the summer school, Rokas Bag-

donas, Head of the Prototyping Lab at 'LinkMenu fabrikas', highlights that students have the opportunity to learn and create in a free, informal environment.

Even though the summer school has set goals and expected outcomes, the team at 'LinkMenu fabrikas' avoids traditional academic constraints and encourages students to freely experiment, play, try, fail, and try again. They emphasize to students that mistakes and failures are part of the process and should not be feared.

"We always tell them – the faster you make a mistake, the sooner you'll do it right. We try to teach them to enjoy the process itself, the journey of creation.

We provide feedback, discuss what they've learned, what they felt, what they experienced while creating the prototype, rather than focusing solely on the final result. It's also important to mention that VILNIUS TECH lecturers and mentors are the foundation of this summer school. We aim for student teams to get all the support they need, so during the summer school, the entire prototype team and its interns work at full capacity," says Bagdonas.

According to the head of the Prototyping Lab, the workshops held at



FIVE STUDENT PROTOTYPE PROJECTS:



„Smart Helper“

A device mounted on a monitor that helps maintain healthy working conditions by monitoring if the user is sitting too close to the screen, measuring room temperature and humidity, and helping ensure optimal work environment conditions

„Growii“

A smart flower pot with integrated sensors that monitor soil moisture and temperature, and remind users when it's time to water the plant

„Sound Totem“

A noise level meter that activates when the environment becomes too loud, encouraging people to remember the health risks of noise

„Helper Kitten“

A wall-mounted mini health checkpoint that can measure body temperature and pulse, designed as a simple and accessible solution for public spaces

„Air Monitor“

An air quality monitor that measures temperature, humidity, and gas concentration. If safety thresholds are exceeded, it triggers alarms – both sound and red light

the Creativity and Innovation Center 'LinkMenu fabrikas' nurture participants' creativity and their ability to find unconventional solutions. The center's team helps students refine their ideas using design thinking methodology, and later provides them with tools to turn those ideas into reality. By encouraging exper-

imentation, play, and risk-taking, they aim to unlock the students' creative thinking.

“We don't draw boundaries, we don't give them one 'correct' path – because such a path simply doesn't exist. We teach them creativity techniques and how to use our equipment, and then we give them the

tools and freedom to create however they want and understand. We've noticed that after the summer school, participants become more confident, they feel freer in our spaces, come up with new ideas, and are eager to share their experiences and plans with others,” notes Bagdonas.



Founder of the Ambassador Project Dr. Juste Rozene: “People who love what they do are able to inspire others with the same passion”

#IAMPARTOFVILNIUSTECH



The Ambassador Project has been running at VILNIUS TECH for two years, bringing together a community of active and empathetic students. It offers a great opportunity for prospective students to explore what the university has to offer and to get to know its community members better.

This project builds connections between students, lecturers, and administrative staff. Together, we visit schools across Lithuania, attend study and career fairs, organize events, learn from each other, and experience many joyful moments. It's rewarding to see how all of this sparks a deeper love for studies, the study environment, and the community. I'm glad that many

student ambassadors, after a year of project activities, go on to work at the university, become the faces of its social media, or gain expertise in admissions processes," emphasizes Dr. Juste Rozene, the founder of the Ambassador Project.

She explains that the idea for the project came directly from school students. It came as a result of their desire to hear from university students who had recently experienced

the same journey — choosing their study direction, getting the feedback about studies and student life, and learning how to apply for higher education.

"While thinking about how to make it happen, I decided to invite student volunteers. Together, step by step, we developed and are still improving this project. It shows that the university is open and genuine, and it offers a simple way to connect with it. The presentations given by student ambassadors are not meant to persuade or advertise. On the contrary, they provide essential information about study programs, the admissions process, career choices, and common mistakes when applying to universities," she shares.

Dr. Rozene says the Ambassador

Project's selection process changes each year. These changes are not only proposed but also implemented by ambassador mentors — students who have already been part of the project for more than one year.

ing the project, she notes that many lack knowledge about the university or other study programs — that's why training sessions organized by the Admissions and Information Center are held.

"Students usually have no idea

semester, after completing their exams," she explains.

According to Dr. Rozene, while nurturing this project, she learned to embrace student differences and see it as a major advantage in delivering information to diverse audiences. She also realized that young people who enjoy their activities can easily inspire others with their passion.

"What motivates me to keep this project going is, first of all, the ambassadors themselves — seeing them happily and energetically communicating with each other, sharing moments from their school visits. Second, the faculty representatives who thank us for giving them such young colleagues at study events — and even potential future employees. Third, the students and teachers who ask sincere questions, listen attentively, express gratitude for the meetings and presentations, and then invite us to come again the next year," shares Dr. Juste Rozene.

To future VILNIUS TECH ambassadors, she wishes love for what

“It matters to us when the appreciation for the work of ambassadors is expressed through student smiles, parent reassurance, and teacher trust.”

Dr. J. Rozene

Usually, both undergraduate and graduate students receive an invitation to join. Group meetings are then organized, during which applicants are asked three questions and given time to prepare their responses.

Afterward, they must speak in front of an audience. This process helps assess their personal qualities and the skills needed for future activities. This year, new types of tasks will be introduced.

"What I value most is openness, being respectful, an active attitude, the ability to communicate clearly with people of all ages, and quick thinking in the face of obstacles or uncertainties.

An ambassador doesn't need to know everything, but it's essential that they know how to search for answers together with the applicant — ambassadors are there to share their experience, not to dictate the path. Most importantly, they must be able to ask the right questions in order to give meaningful answers," says Dr. Rozene.

During the discussion about the challenges students face when join-

ing the project, she notes that many lack knowledge about the university or other study programs — that's why training sessions organized by the Admissions and Information Center are held.

“What I value most is openness, being respectful, an active attitude, the ability to communicate clearly with people of all ages, and quick thinking in the face of obstacles or uncertainties.”

Dr. J. Rozene

The most difficult part for ambassadors is finding time to travel to schools, since university studies are demanding and we don't encourage skipping lectures. Often, students plan these activities on lecture-free days or at the end of the

they do, the desire to gather all possible skills, and the wisdom to maintain the connections they build. She also hopes they experience the moment when a student says: "Thank you for coming to my school and helping me decide. Now I'm happy."



ARNAS GECAS,
3rd-year Business Management student

Being an ambassador means a lot to me because I can help young people find their path in a time when career options are endless. Today young people can do almost anything and make a living from it.

It's becoming harder for young people to choose a career that can also be their livelihood — there are so many distractions that it's easy to lose focus, and this makes choosing even harder. Because of that, many end up in a dead-end situation, not knowing what they want to do with their lives.

I'm especially happy that I can help someone avoid major detours, find their passion faster, and save the most valuable asset in life — time, which never comes back.

I decided to become an ambassador because communication and helping others has always been the most enjoyable activity for me, and one I will always make time for.

URTE GALACHVOSCIUTE
3rd-year Air Traffic Management student

Being an ambassador is a chance to meet a lot of future students and help them at an important stage in their lives. That's why I decided to become an ambassador — I needed that extra push and confidence before starting my own university studies.

That, along with my love of connecting with people, motivates me to keep doing this. While balancing ambassador work and studies can be challenging, if you have the passion to pursue it, anything is possible.

It's inspiring when, at the start of a new academic year, you see familiar faces and realize that you may have played a part in their journey to the university.



If you'd like to join the Ambassador Project, please contact Arnas Gečas, Senior Specialist at the Admissions and Information Center:
arnas.gecas@vilniustech.lt

Sports and Art at the University

As September and new academic year commences it brings a fresh start – academically and beyond the classroom. The VILNIUS TECH Sports and Arts Center (SPC) is no exception. For a decade, this center has been taking care of the leisure activities of the entire university community, inviting everyone to join sports, arts, and recreational activities – from the basketball court to the theater stage, from dancing to tennis or tourism.

What makes this season special compared to previous years?

As every year, special attention is given to student initiatives and community spirit. The goal is for everyone to feel welcome and to find an activity that suits their interests.

In November, SPC will co-organize a major international conference – the European Network of Academic Sports Services. It will bring together directors, managers, specialists, experts, and other rep-

resentatives of academic sports from various European countries. The event will focus not only on promoting physical activity in the academic environment but also on broader aspects of human well-being – psychological resilience, emotional health, wellness philosophy, and quality of life improvement. The conference will also aim to foster institutional cooperation, build new professional connections, and share experiences that contribute to creat-

ing a more sustainable, conscious, and healthy academic community across Europe.

What added value do SPC activities create for students?

Participation in the Sports and Arts Center's activities provides students with multifaceted added value – not only improving physical health or offering opportunities for creative expression but also contributing significantly to personal de-



velopment. Such activities foster discipline, responsibility, teamwork skills, and emotional intelligence, all of which are essential in studies and professional life.

Moreover, involvement in active communities promotes social integration, reduces stress, and improves psychological well-being. The experiences, connections, and skills gained contribute to the student's holistic growth. SPC activities also offer opportunities to discover new talents, build friendships, and develop a positive outlook on life.

Participating in the center's activities is not only a way to spend free time but also a long-term investment in personal and professional growth.



NEW ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

1

Virtual reality sessions aimed at increasing physical activity. This is a modern way to move and exercise using contemporary technologies that combine physical activity with an interactive and engaging world.

2

Music field – drum and guitar lessons. Participants will not only learn to play instruments but also gain basic musical knowledge while collaborating with well-known musicians.

SPORTS AND ART ACTIVITIES

1

VILNIUS TECH sports teams: basketball, volleyball, football, wrestling, athletics, table tennis, powerlifting, and other sports.

2

Physical activity options: fitboxing, volleyball, basketball, body balance, mobility & core, tennis, judo/sambo wrestling, TRX, table tennis, gym, and cross training workouts.

3

VILNIUS TECH art groups: theater studio "Palepe," academic choir "Gabija," folk dance ensemble "Vingis," and orchestra.

4

There are also plans to offer more art-related activities, including social dance classes and other creative initiatives.

Creativity Beyond University Walls

People often associate creativity with art. However, in many cases, it manifests far more broadly – in unexpected situations, outside the university, or during leisure time. Among the members of the VILNIUS TECH community, creativity thrives not only through scientific research or engineering solutions but also in their personal lives.

We invite you to take a look at the creativity of scientists from another perspective – through their hobbies, which reveal incredible creativity as well as the ability to maintain the necessary balance between professional and personal life. Members of the VILNIUS TECH community share their stories.

FACULTY OF MECHANICS DEAN, ASSOC. PROF. DR. JUSTINAS GARGASAS

"I have been passionate about growing flowers for more than 30 years. At first, I grew simple plants back in my childhood when I lived in a beautiful little village, surrounded by greenery.

Over time, this hobby – botany – became a significant part of my life. I started ordering various plants from gardening communities in Lithuania and abroad.

In the beginning, before I had enough knowledge, many plants didn't survive for as long as I would have hoped. Of course, my parents had to spend quite a bit of money on this.

Now, looking back, it's funny to think that, as a child, the best gift for me was plant seedlings or tulip bulbs from the Netherlands. The most unusual plants I grew back then were different varieties of wa-

termelons, which, by the way, produced very well.

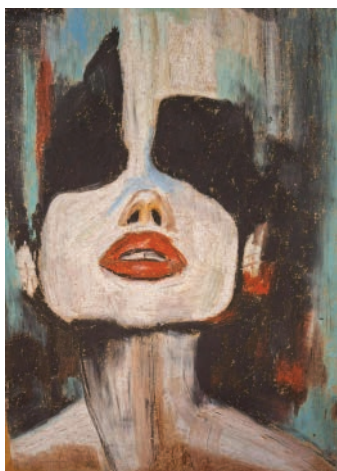
Seeing how much I enjoyed this hobby, my parents built me a large greenhouse where I grew tomatoes of unusual varieties – green, purple, yellow, and even blue.

I won't even start on the number

of plants we had at home...

Over the years, I've grown many exotic and rare plants. One of them, which has been growing for over 25 years, is the *amorphophallus*, also known as the corpse flower. It's now a striking part of my garden due to its unusual form.





I grow many plants both at home and at work. It's hard for me to walk past a store with a plant section without buying something new.

People who visit my office often say that soon there will be no space left, as every windowsill holds several plants – some flowering, others growing in air without soil or any base.

This hobby is my relaxation and peace. They say that a hobby should be the complete opposite of your work – only then can you truly rest and bring joy to your soul."

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES CENTRE, INA GUJIENTE

"My hobby is making cups, but before I discovered it, I tried many

other activities – and they all still remain part of my life.

A long time ago, I used to assemble cardboard puzzles, but I realized they didn't last long and took too much time. I wanted to find something similar – just as detailed and colorful – so I started cross-stitching. I'm currently embroidering a picture of Trakai Castle. I've already completed five or six such works. It usually takes me four to five years to finish one, which I usually do while watching TV series.

Another stage of my life that became a hobby began when I was teaching computer graphics at VILNIUS TECH. The department needed someone to teach the design tool Adobe Illustrator. I enrolled in a

course, which included drawing by hand. I found I enjoyed hand drawing more than digital drawing, so I enrolled in the Justinas Vienozinskis Art School. After three years, I received a diploma and started drawing and painting.

During the coronavirus pandemic, it was hard to find masks, so I sewed a few myself. Then I bought a sewing machine and learned patchwork. Mask sewing turned into an art form. At the same time, I continued embroidering and even learned crochet.

I kept thinking about how I started making cups. I had always wanted to sculpt and had tried working with clay, but clay requires a kiln that reaches high temperatures, which isn't convenient for home

conditions. When looking for alternatives, I discovered polymer clay, which hardens in an oven at just 130 degrees. It's a great material. I learned to sculpt using polymer clay by watching videos on YouTube. I make rings, earrings, bracelets, and, of course, personalized cups.

When I create a cup for a specific person, I think about them a lot, imagine them, even talk to them in my mind. I put my energy into the process. The most valuable and powerful currency I invest in each cup is my time."

**LECTURER AT THE
DEPARTMENT OF
MECHATRONICS, ROBOTICS,
AND DIGITAL DEFENCE,
MANTAS MAKULAVICIUS**

"Making simtalapis (hundred-layer cake) pastries, you could say, runs in my blood, as this recipe has been passed down through generations with Lithuanian Tatar traditions. My mother makes them, both my grandmothers did, and so did their mothers. I don't even know where it all started. Now it's my turn to bake them, although as a child I started with the simplest and most fun part – sprinkling raisins.

Interestingly, simtalapis originates from the same region I come from – Alytus district. I still meet people who don't know what simtalapis is, and it often turns out they're from other parts of Lithuania, like Samogitia.

For me, baking simtalapis means preserving national heritage and traditions. Many traditions disappeared during the Soviet era and continue to fade due to assimilation, but through this dessert, I can share the stories that remain in memory.

I also want to show what a real

simtalapis should be, using the right ingredients – unlike some bakeries that cut costs with cheap substitutes and then sell it at full price.

What fascinates me most about baking simtalapis is the process itself and its complexity. It requires precise ingredient preparation, careful timing for each step, and accuracy when stretching the dough until it becomes almost transparent. Even a small mistake can affect the final result.

When people ask how I find the energy to bake on weekends after a busy university week, I joke: "It's easy – you can balance it! At the university, I mostly work with my head while my body rests, but when baking, my body works and my mind rests."

Of course, I must thank my mother, who helps me – it makes the process easier. Baking gives me time to calmly think through work or academic problems. I've even



gotten used to great ideas coming to me while baking, though I have to wait until I'm done to write them down – you can't just drop everything, even though it's very easy to forget good ideas."

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT PHOTOGRAPHER, ALEKSAS JAUNIUS

"For me, archery is not just a sport but also a beloved pastime I've enjoyed for decades. It allows me to relax and spend time in nature and fresh air while developing precision and focus.

I became interested in archery in my youth, and over time it grew into a true passion. I regularly compete in tournaments both in Lithuania and abroad. I've achieved im-

pressive results – in 2016, I became a world champion, winning a gold medal, and in 2017, I earned the title of European champion, securing my place among the continent's best archers. I've also won many awards in national and international competitions held in Lithuania.

Of course, winning brings joy and motivates me to improve, but I believe the most important thing in this activity is not the awards but the process itself. I also deeply value the community I belong to – the Lithuanian Field Archery Association, which brings together archery enthusiasts.

It's symbolic that archery is connected closely with my work and passion – photography. Just as an archer must learn to see the target,

focus on the moment, and hit precisely, I strive to notice details others overlook and capture the perfect shot. Both fields demand patience.

Archery and photography are hobbies that complement each other. I believe they best reflect my ability to combine athletic skill and creativity.'



If you know colleagues with interesting hobbies or have surprising ones yourself, please write to the editor-in-chief at neda.cerniauskaite@vilniustech.lt