



THE OPPORTUNITY THAT CHANGED THEIR LIFE ”

22 INSPIRING STORIES

EXHIBITION



Have you ever dreamt about going to America to intern with a world-recognized company? Have you considered giving your all to study at a prestigious U.S. university? This is what the “Baltic-American Freedom Foundation” has offered for the past five years.

The exhibition reveals 22 stories of BAFF alumni, whose dream of the USA has come true. See how it changed their lives and opened up new career and personal opportunities. No matter how varied the location or industry sector, their experience was unforgettable, and they will never regret the choice. Who knows, maybe you can be one of them.

Created in 2010 as a legacy foundation of the Baltic-American Enterprise Fund, the mission of the Baltic-American Freedom Foundation (BAFF) is to enrich the ties between the United States and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania through programs of education and exchange centering on economic growth and democratic processes.

www.balticamericanfreedomfoundation.org

“Eye-opener”

If you want to become a great scientist, you have to **STEP OUT OF YOUR IMAGINARY BOX, RISK EVERYTHING AND NEVER GIVE UP.**

Some people said I was very brave to pack up my family, leave everything behind and head halfway round the world for a research project. But doing just that is **ONE OF THE BEST THINGS I HAVE EVER DONE** so far.

I had a chance to experience a research environment and to access technologies at Stanford University, which is **ONE OF THE BEST UNIVERSITIES IN THE WORLD.**

Throughout the year, I worked at an international laboratory with researchers who have knowledge in fields from materials science and cell biology to mathematical modelling, infectious diseases and in vivo animal models.

I am planning to use my knowledge to become a leading researcher, to combine different research fields and to **TAKE IDEAS FROM BENCH TO BEDSIDE.**

While it is always easier to follow a familiar path, **YOU CAN ACHIEVE A LOT MORE IF YOU JUMP INTO SOMETHING YOU HAVE NEVER DONE BEFORE.**

Participation in the **BAFF RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM WAS A BIG EYE-OPENER FOR ME AND MY FAMILY.** We can always do more and better, we just have to want it.



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



ARITA DUBNIKA (LV)

Research Scholar Program

City, State:
Palo Alto, CA

Host Organization:
Biomaterials and Advanced Drug Delivery Laboratory, Stanford University

Return Date:
2016

Currently:
Rudolfs Cimdinis Riga Biomaterials Innovation and Development Centre, Researcher



I really got what I was looking for, and even more! My professional internship took place at KALW Public Radio station in San Francisco, California. This experience allowed me to learn in practice what public radio renaissance really means. **Now I'm helping to make it happen in Latvia.**

My internship with BAFF allowed me to see that **public radio is not dead**, contrary to what many Europeans often think. Quite the opposite: it has huge potential because **people will always want to hear stories.** In San Francisco I developed the professional tools I needed to improve my own journalistic work and make it more appealing to the audience, all while making valuable professional contacts.

Currently I'm working for the Public Broadcasting Company "Latvijas Radio" as a senior foreign correspondent in Brussels, covering important news events in **Brussels, Paris and elsewhere in Europe** for the Latvian and Russian speaking audiences of my home country.

“Stretching my comfort zone”



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**ARTJOMS
KONOHOVS
(LV)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
San Francisco, CA

Host Organization:
KALW Public Radio
Station

Return Date:
2013

Currently:
Public Broadcasting
Company "Latvijas
Radio",
Senior Foreign
Correspondent

As part of the BAFF Professional Internship Program in 2014, I spent eight months at the Manhattan Mediation Center at the New York Peace Institute. During my internship, **I WAS GIVEN AN OUTSTANDING INTRODUCTION TO MEDIATION** by taking part in mediation sessions at civil courts in Manhattan and the EEOC together with highly experienced mediators.

The BAFF program provided me with a much deeper understanding of mediation as an alternative method of dispute resolution that is suitable for commercial disputes in order to protect the interests of businesses as much as possible.

It also gave me an outstanding opportunity to call New York City my second home and **PROVIDED ME WITH A GREAT POOL OF PROFESSIONAL CONTACTS FOR FUTURE COOPERATION**, both here in the Baltics and back in the States.

BAFF provides young interns with opportunities not just to learn but also to become familiar with the best American know-how in their professional field and inspires them to implement US knowledge back in Latvia.

Having returned home, **I CAN SEE THAT THE KNOWLEDGE I GAINED CAN BE OF BENEFIT FOR LATVIA**, where commercial mediation is just starting to develop. After recently passing the Certified Mediator Exam, I began pursuing PhD studies in the field of mediation and developing a mediation practice at the law firm where I work.



**BAIBA ORBIDĀNE
(LV)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
New York, NY

Host Organization:
Manhattan
Mediation Center,
New York Peace
Institute

Return Date:
2014

Currently:
Klavins Ellex
Law Firm,
Associate,
Certified Mediator



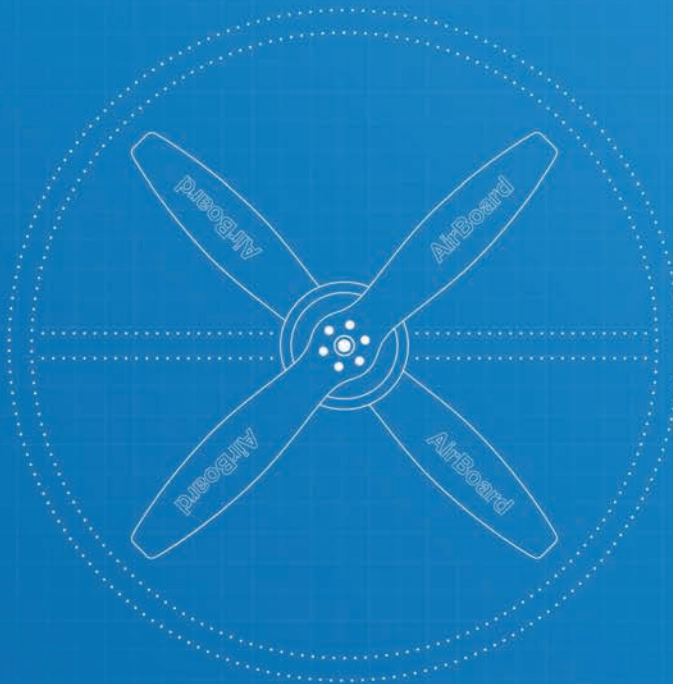
“**INSPIRING**”



Breathtaking

BAFF gives you an opportunity to learn entrepreneurship, **TO SEE THE WORLD FROM A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW**

and to create a network of skilful and talented international friends who you might cross paths with again in your future ventures.



After the programme, my biggest achievement has been assembling a great team of **PASSIONATE PEOPLE FOR MY BUSINESS** and getting AirBoard airborne.

Through the BAFF programme, I gained a

VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO PRACTISE AND UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONAL ASPECTS OF LEADERSHIP –

in terms of theoretical knowledge and practical hands-on entrepreneurship experience.

Even though I was experienced in working with people,

I didn't know how to work on very tight schedules,

which teaches you **HOW TO PRIORITISE LIKE NEVER BEFORE.**



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



ELVIŠS STRAUPENIEKS (LV)

Leadership Academy

City, State:
Portland, ME

Host Organization:
CIEE & Southern Maine Community College

Return Date:
2015

Currently:
AirBoard, Founder and CEO

“

ENLIGHTENMENT”

My work is all about **having the right mindset and the right materials.**
I always believe the best is yet to come, because that gives me the inspiration to work harder and move towards better things.

Wandering in SoHo – this is where I worked and spent a lot of my free time. Most importantly, it's where I observed a lot of fashion, style and culture, and where I **was inspired on a daily basis.**

My heart and mind were opened fully to fashion – I experienced a new side of my passion and **got assurance for how I want to continue my career.**



GERLI PESOR (EST)

Professional Internship Program

City, State:
New York, NY

Host Organization:
Alexander Wang

Return Date:
2015

Currently:
Freelance Leather Designer



I was awarded a Baltic-American Freedom Foundation scholarship and spent a year in New York City interning with "Rag & Bone" and "Vida Shoes" companies, where I worked in the footwear and accessories departments.

Besides work, I collaborated with other artists representing different fields, and took part in **VARIOUS ART PROJECTS**. Together with a NYC-based jewellery artist, we produced an outfit for a contemporary dance programme during a dance festival; later I designed costumes for five plays performed during the Manhattan Theatre Festival. I also took part in the "Bushwick Open Studios" project, where **I PRESENTED MY COLLECTION** of clothes and footwear.

I am happy I had the opportunity to become a part of BAFF. It wasn't just a professional, but **ALSO A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**, that helped me **TO UNDERSTAND MY POSSIBILITIES** in the design field on a worldwide scale. It was a great cultural experience and a chance to **MEET CONGENIAL SPIRITS**.

After a year in New York, I started my Master's degree in Product Design and opened my fashion studio together with a friend. The object of my MA degree work at the Vilnius Academy of Art was conceptual footwear. The main goal of my project was to analyse the combination of old crafts and techniques, and the innovation in footwear design. The collection of shoes I designed for my Master's degree project includes two pairs of **3D-PRINTED SHOES** and three pairs of **HANDMADE SHOES**.



JULIJA FRODINA (LT)

Professional Internship Program

City, State:
New York, NY

Host Organization:
Rag & Bone

Return Date:
2013

Currently:
Design Studio
"Loom",
Co-Owner and Designer



**MEET
CONGENIAL
SPIRITS**



“SPLENDID!”

They say that magic happens when you move outside your comfort zone. **BAFF WAS MAGICAL** and has made me feel much more comfortable when out of my comfort zone!



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**JURIS
BALDUNČIKS
(LV)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
Boston, MA

Host Organization:
IXL Center – Center
for Innovation,
Excellence and
Leadership

Return Date:
2013

Currently:
Samsung,
Mobile Key Account
Manager

“In today's knowledge-based economy, what you earn depends on what you learn” – Bill Clinton.

That's how I started my BAFF application. Reading this brings a smile to my face, because one of the most **AWESOME EXPERIENCES** I had in the US with my company was **BEING A PART OF THE TEAM** that made a case study for the Clinton Foundation Social Enterprise challenge – Food Security in Urban Slums by 2018.

To: Bill Clinton

Being copied into emails that Bill and his team were reading and replying to them throughout the project **ALWAYS MADE MY DAY** in the US.

There was no better feeling than when finishing my book on innovations in healthcare, which I started and project-managed back in the USA: Healthovate! Innovating to Live Longer, Feel Better.

“Unique”

BAFF made it possible for me to complete studies and get a Master's degree at the Juilliard School in New York, which in March of 2016 was announced as **Number One Performing Arts School in the World.**

During my studies I was given a gift of having an opportunity to meet and collaborate with people who, apart from being outstanding musicians, were extraordinary personalities. **Being part of this unique community of artists was one of the greatest blessings I have ever received, a joyous adventure not to be forgotten.**



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**JUSTINA
AUSKELYTE
(LT)**

**Graduate
Scholarship
Program**

City, State:
New York, NY

Host Organization:
The Juilliard School

Return Date:
2015

Currently:
Recording the CD
of Balys Dvarionas,
Violinist

In February 2016, I recorded for Naxos record label, which is considered **one of the top record labels in the world of classical music.**

“ OPPORTUNITIES”

BAFF helped me to **FULFIL MY AMBITION TO WORK IN ONE OF THE WORLD'S TOP UNIVERSITIES** on the subject of hydrogen energy.

During my BAFF program I took the opportunity to work in the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), where

I met experts representing various enterprises in the hydrogen energy industry, government agencies and educational institutions. From the very first time I entered UCLA **I FELT NOTHING BUT VERY WELCOME.**

I am indeed satisfied with the scientific work I did there, and I also **BROADENED MY PROFESSIONAL VIEW** during my time in UCLA and LA.

Living in LA **WAS AN ADVENTURE.** Every morning was sunny and warm, and **PEOPLE WERE AS WARM AS THE WEATHER** – very friendly and responsive.

H₂



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



JUSTUS DIMANTS (LV)

Research Scholar Program

City, State:
Los Angeles, CA

Host Organization:
University of California

Return Date:
2016

Currently:
University of Latvia,
Marketing
Researcher

I went to visit the Lincoln Memorial with a friend from BAFF. I use a wheelchair, so the sight of all those steps made me sigh. But my friend insisted on carrying me up. Our guide rushed towards us and tried to stop us, saying that there's a separate access point for disabled people. Immediately, my friend replied "Nah, it's alright", and we found ourselves next to the statue of Mr Lincoln before we knew it. **Friends like these are hard to find.**



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**KAREL NAPPUS
(EST)**

**Leadership
Academy**

City, State:
Portland, ME

Host Organization:
Southern Maine
Community College

Return Date:
2015

Currently:
Levon,
Co-founder and
Chief of Operations

“**AWE-INSPIRING**”

The BAFF program gave me an **amazing educational experience and helped me to establish close relationships with people all over the Baltics**, some of whom have become my closest friends.

After I returned home I received a special prize in a pitching competition at "Silicon Valley Comes to the Baltics" in Riga. Two of my BAFF friends were there to accompany me.

My duty during the BAFF Research Scholar Program (2011–2012) was to build the transatlantic collaboration bridge, connecting the East Coast of the USA (Virginia Commonwealth University/VCU) and Lithuania (Vilnius University), to ensure the transfer of know-how between the two institutions in the area of advanced semiconductor research.

I was encouraged in my efforts by a motto of General R.E. Lee, a patriot of the state of Virginia during the American Civil War, who stated that **“Duty is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things.”**

The collaboration bridge was constructed and enabled advanced research between the host institution and home university. Young researchers at VCU (doctoral and master's students) were involved in the joint research with VCU and US industrial high-tech companies “Veeco Inc.” and “Kyma Technologies Inc.”.

The joint research activities lasted for **5 years** and resulted in publication of **10 scientific articles in international journals and 8 presentations at international conferences.**

The young researchers involved from the home institution went on to become the winners of the Lithuanian Science Academy awards for best dissertation in Physics (2013), best student work (2014), and best young researcher (2015).



**KĘSTUTIS
JARAŠIŪNAS
(LT)**

**Research Scholar
Program**

City, State:
Richmond, VA

Host Organization:
Virginia
Commonwealth
University

Return Date:
2012

Currently:
Vilnius University,
Professor Emeritus

“ DO YOUR DUTY ”



**LEENI LINNA
(EST)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
New York, NY

Host Organization:
Vice Media

Return Date:
2016

Currently:
Film industry,
Freelancer

It was **THE BEST YEAR
OF MY LIFE** so far, and it
**MADE ME HUNGRY
FOR MUCH MORE!**

“ YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE ”

Thanks to BAFF, I was able to **WORK AT MY DREAM JOB** at Vice Media for six months. I will always remember one video reportage I produced for Vice News about Estonian National Militia and the fear of Russia. I learned in the process that I have a huge responsibility of representing my country to the world, as well as **THE POWER TO MAKE HONEST JOURNALISM.**

After only a few weeks back home, I started working for Estonia's best VFX studio as a director and producer of animated commercials and movie projects. I have **SEVERAL DOCUMENTARY PROJECTS** in development, and **I'M WRITING MY FIRST FEATURE FILM** in my spare time.

There is no doubt that Washington, DC, is **the place to be for a young diplomacy professional**. I was lucky to have the **remarkable opportunity** to spend a year in the capital of the United States, where I interned at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA), one of the leading think tanks in Washington.

After just a couple of months at CEPA, I was entrusted with sole oversight of the CEPA Forum, the institute's annual flagship conference. **This opportunity really pushed me to do more than I thought I could and gave me the confidence to take on any challenges that might come my way in the future.**



**LĪNA KĀRKLĪŅA
(LV)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
Washington, DC

Host Organization:
Center for European
Policy Analysis

Return Date:
2015

Currently:
American Chamber
of Commerce
in Latvia,
Executive Director

My BAFF internship provided me with my **biggest professional challenge** to date, which **allowed me to discover my real capacity and potential**.

I recently took up the Executive Director position at the American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia (AmCham), which would not have been possible without the **invaluable experience gained in the United States**.

Challenging

MY CHOICE OF RESEARCH TOPIC, AND A GREAT DEAL OF SUCCESS, IS DOWN TO A BRILLIANT BUSINESSMAN AND A VERY CREATIVE INDIVIDUAL – BOB FRANK. WHEN HE READ MY MASTER’S DISSERTATION, HE LIKED IT SO MUCH THAT HE OFFERED TO HELP WITH MY PHD RESEARCH. A STRANGER ON ANOTHER CONTINENT HAD TAKEN THE TIME TO READ MY WORK AND FOUND IT USEFUL!

REALISING THE POWER OF SCIENCE WAS AN EYE-OPENING MOMENT FOR ME AND MOTIVATED ME TO WORK ON MY DOCTORATE RESEARCH EVEN HARDER. AFTER ALL, ANYONE COULD READ IT AND WHO KNOWS WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE YET TO COME!

CURRENTLY I AM A RESEARCHER AT LATVIAN STATE ROADS WORKING ON IMPROVING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION QUALITY OF LATVIAN ROADS.



**MĀRTIŅŠ
ZAUMANIS
(LV)**

**Graduate
Scholarship
Program**

City, State:
Worcester, MA

Host Organization:
Worcester
Polytechnic Institute

Return Date:
2014

Currently:
Latvian State Roads,
Project Manager

“
REWARDING”



THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY IN THE US HAS OPENED THE GATES OF THE LATVIAN POND TO THE RESEARCH OCEANS WHERE THE BEST SCIENTISTS IN THE WORLD SWIM.

Over the last two years I was involved in a research project on wind turbine bearings at the University of Latvia. I proposed a new hypothesis about the electromagnetic impact on premature bearing failure mode, also known in the wind-turbine world as white etching crack failures. This hypothesis claimed to explain why lubricants and their additive packages seem to shorten the lifespan of wind-turbine gearbox bearings.

With the support of BAFF, I went to the Argonne National Laboratory (Lemont, IL) to carry out an experiment to verify my hypothesis. The laboratory is located near Chicago, one of the windiest cities in the US.

I found myself in a region where **nature inspired me to apply my knowledge to find sustainable solutions for wind energy.** As a result of my experimental study at Argonne, I experimentally demonstrated the self-generation of electricity in tribocontact. Moreover, the magnitude of the effect is the subject of lubricants and their additive packages, which may explain the mysterious behaviour of bearings in field and tests.

Carrying out research in Argonne National Laboratory **gave me the chance to support my theory** with a unique experiment. Meanwhile, windy **Chicago inspired me to start doing research on wind turbines.**



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**MIHAILS
ŠČEPANSKIS
(LV)**

**Research Scholar
Program**

City, State:
Lemont, IL

Host Organization:
Argonne National
Laboratory

Return Date:
2016

Currently:
University of Latvia,
Physics Researcher



MIND-BLOWING ”

“LIFE-CHANGING!”



ONE YEAR as a BAFF Professional Internship Program participant really broadened my horizons professionally, culturally and personally.

The BAFF internship at Skanska in the BIM department gave me invaluable experience in my specific field of interest, which **BECAME THE PASSION** that now guides my career and life.

I AM CURRENTLY LEADING BIM implementation in one of the biggest construction companies in Estonia, and, as a side project, I am organising a BIM conference to introduce the practical aspects of BIM with the help of my former colleagues from the USA and the BAFF Dialogue Program.



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**MIINA KARAFIN
(EST)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
Boston, MA

Host Organization:
Skanska USA

Return Date:
2014

Currently:
Nordecon AS,
BIM Project
Manager

“ SERIOUSLY? ”

**JUST JUMP! YOU'LL BE FINE!
PROBABLY...**

My colleague Gatis wanted to go on a trip to Hawaii alone. Naturally I could not allow such nonsense and decided to piggyback on his planning.

As we landed on Maui, we did not yet know where we would spend the night. Luckily (actually skillfully) we managed to find a great couch to surf on, grouped up with some Lithuanian travel buddies and had a blast.

The BAFF experience gave me a great line on my CV, as well as **THE WILLINGNESS TO GET OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE AND EXPLOIT THAT VERY LINE AND ALL RELATED SKILLS.**

After BAFF I returned to school and earned a degree in Power Engineering. While studying, I entered the Prysman Graduate Program.



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**SIIM ILMAR
NOPRI
(EST)**

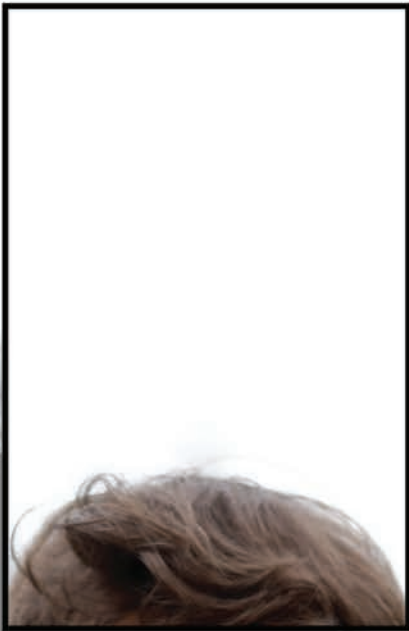
**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
Sunnyvale, CA

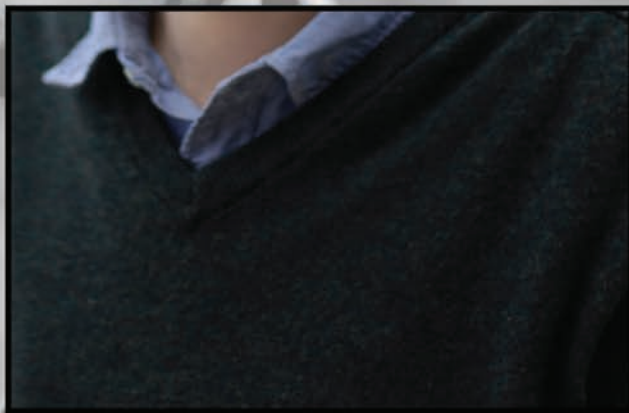
Host Organization:
Alta Devices

Return Date:
2014

Currently:
AS Draka Keila
Cables,
Quality Engineer



"STRIKE ANYWHERE" was an exhibition of ICP alumni work devoted to the extraordinary rise of popular pro-democracy movements across the globe in recent years, including the Arab Spring, the uprisings in Libya and Syria, as well as here in the United States, most notably the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations. The alumni work provided a powerful premise for generating conversation about dramatic and evolving popular movements.



We need to see what is going on in our field and build relationships. **THAT'S THE WAY THE WORLD WORKS.** All business works this way. Artists need to learn to work this way, too.

NETWORKING SHOULD BE WHAT GUIDES YOUR CAREER from the business side of things. Lecturing at Vilnius Art Academy and Vilnius Design College gives me this opportunity.

EVERY TIME YOU START A NEW PROJECT, YOU FEEL LIKE AN ABSOLUTE BEGINNER.
This is the beauty of my profession.



SILOVAS TITAS (LT)

Professional Internship Program

City, State:
New York, NY

Host Organization:
International Center of Photography

Return Date:
2013

Currently:
Vilnius Academy of Arts and Vilnius College of Design, Lecturer



SELF-EVALUATION "

I STOPPED MEASURING MYSELF WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S YARDSTICKS

The BAFF experience provided me with an **EXCEPTIONAL FOUNDATION** on which I am **BUILDING MY CAREER** as a professional artist.

Living in Texas and working in a video-game studio was an **AMAZING EXPERIENCE** that is **INFLUENCING THE WAY I APPROACH NEW PROJECTS** even today.



Baltic-American Freedom Foundation



**TOMAS MITKUS
(LT)**

**Professional
Internship
Program**

City, State:
Austin, TX

Host Organization:
Schell Games

Return Date:
2012

Currently:
Vilnius Gediminas
Technical University,
Lecturer

After BAFF, my career took me to work in film, TV and the comic book industry – I have directed one 13-minute animation, published one comic book and a textbook in Lithuanian about the comic book medium, and have been funded to carry out research on the Lithuanian animation industry.



“trailblazing”

I've been a fan of the Portland Trail Blazers forever. During my stay in the US, I gave myself a present for my 25th birthday and visited a Blazers home game. Besides broadening my horizons professionally, **BAFF helped to make my lifelong dreams come true** – I'll never forget applauding the players after a victorious game.

My way of thinking has become more analytical and systematic and I'm a lot better at working with huge amounts of information – **this is extremely valuable** in my day-to-day academic and engineering work.

I was accepted into a PhD programme at Tallinn University of Technology, and my research in Estonia continues the work I did during my internship in Florida.



ÜLAR PALMISTE (EST)

Professional Internship Program

City, State:
Miami, FL

Host Organization:
Florida International University

Return Date:
2014

Currently:
Tallinn University of Technology, PhD student



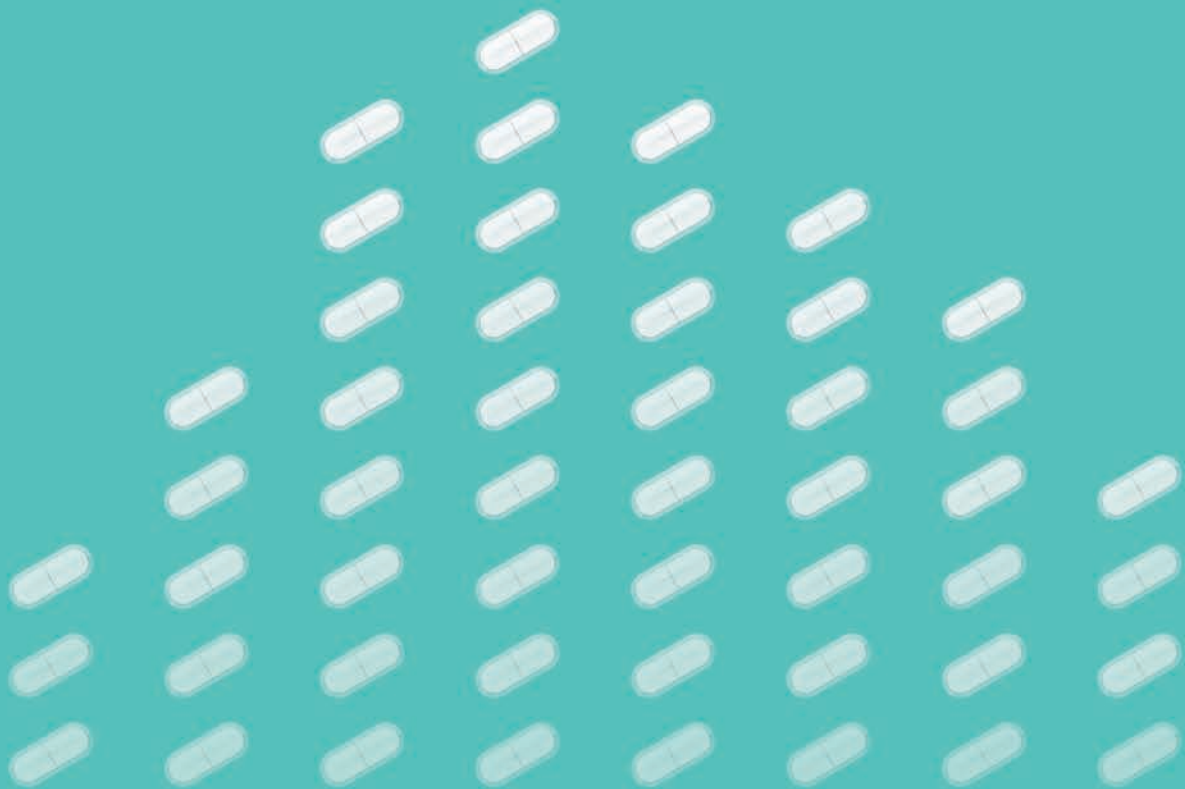
Testing the fifty shades of meldonium ”



Back in the summer of 2012, when I went to the US for my professional internship at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, nobody there (except for the collaborators, of course) knew about the drug that is known in Latvia as mildronate. Mildronate has been one of Latvia's **major pharmaceutical export products** for years, but it has never been on the radar in that part of the world and the FDA still hasn't approved it there. In contrast, here in Latvia it's well known as an OTC cardio protective drug and is also used by athletes and other high performers.

My goal was to **test the drug for a possible new application** and its potential to help lessen cognitive impairments in patients with Alzheimer's disease. We conducted a preclinical study in mice with transgenic Alzheimer's disease. After six months we had enough data to demonstrate its positive effects on memory, so we wrote an article which **was published in the Journal of Neuroscience Research**.

In 2015 I noticed that mildronate had appeared on the banned list of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and less than a year later it was all over the news – it turns out that some high-level athletes, most notably tennis superstar Maria Sharapova, hadn't followed the news and weren't aware that mildronate had been banned. A side effect of this scandal was that it attracted more interest in our research and sales of mildronate have been soaring ever since.



ULRIKA BEITNERE (LV)

Professional Internship Program

City, State:
Birmingham, AL

Host Organization:
University of Alabama

Return Date:
2013

Currently:
University of Latvia,
Lecturer



With the support of the Baltic-American Dialogue programme it was possible to organise the **first international conference in Neuroscience and Pharmacology in Riga in April 2015**.



During my time in the US I **learned a lot for my work and found great mentors**. By chance, I also **met my husband there**.

“

Valuable”

The BAFF programme allowed me to seek, reach and expand my horizons.

During my stay in the USA, I was invited to speak at the **18th Annual WorldLink Youth Town meeting** on domestic violence issues.

Following that, I was invited by The United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) to share my experience of participating in conference at the **59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59)**, that was held at the UN Headquarters in New York.



After my internship at the Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma (IVAT), **I was inspired to seek a higher academic degree.** I was accepted with full scholarship to seek a doctoral degree in Psychology.



I reached the highest objective I had set for myself – I became a forensic case lead. I was fully responsible for clients' psychological evaluation – starting with administering psychological tests and finishing with a full 20-page comprehensive report expressing my expert opinion and providing recommendations.



When I got back to work I helped to write **a training program for Specialised Help Centres (SHCs) in Lithuania** about providing help and assistance to victims of domestic violence. This programme was accredited by the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour and by the end of 2015 we had trained all the SHC workers. Furthermore, in November 2015 I was invited to speak at the opening session of the 3rd World Conference of Women Shelters in The Hague, where **I had the honour of representing Europe.**

Today I continue my work in combating gender-based violence as a practitioner, a researcher and an academic.



ZUZANA VASILIAUSKAITE (LT)

Professional Internship Program

City, State:
San Diego, CA

Host Organization:
IVAT at Alliant International University

Return Date:
2015

Currently:
Vilnius Women's House,
Consultant and Psychologist