Learn about our new Lithuanian instructor, Eglė Vaisėtaitė!

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Another one of our many new faces for 2019 is Lithuanian instructor Eglė Vaisėtaitė

Tell us a little about yourself: where is home, what is your field of study/expertise, what is your background, etc.

I was born in a little heart shape country Lithuania. As a kid, I was dreaming to become a teacher one day. But later my intention has changed, I didn't want to be a teacher anymore. After graduation, I didn't know what I want to do next. Although I had an idea of becoming a text editor, I was not sure if I am interested in staring at text on a computer screen all the time.

One day I was sitting in a Turkish language class, watching teacher interacting with students and then I realized – this is what I want to do. I want to be with those who are stepping into Lithuanian – my native language. I want to guide them into this terra incognita. So here I am – teaching my most beautiful language. This journey rewards me with amazing people from all over the world and amazing places in all over the world.

What are you currently working on? Research? Writing?

Besides being a teacher I am also a PhD student. My current research is on Lithuanian language in diaspora. There are many Lithuanians living abroad making bigger or smaller communities in different countries of the world. While living abroad one has to speak a different language than his / her own, and the question of what happens to person's native language arises. Although there is much research on language maintaining, language attrition etc. it is still a new field with Lithuanian language.

How does UW compare to your home institution?

I am proud to work at Vilnius University (Lithuania) which is one of the oldest establishments of higher education in Eastern and Central Europe, founded in 1579. It also rates as one of the best universities in Lithuania. But not less than that I am happy and proud of having a possibility to become a part of UW this year. UW is almost three times bigger than my home university; also study system here is slightly different as well as the way of teaching and learning. I find it a little bit challenging but absolutely worth trying. I believe, after my work here I will become a more experienced lecturer in my field.
What is the thing you like the most about Seattle or the US?

This is my first time living in US so everything is new here to me. I like the contrast between the downtown and other areas in Seattle: skyscrapers and small wooden houses. I enjoy the view of Lake Washington on my way to the university. Almost every morning the view is different: sunny or rainy, colorful or foggy - it's always surprisingly beautiful. Although the weather is quite rainy in Seattle, autumn has brought so many colors that days became brighter.

I must admit that I enjoy nature more than cities, that's why I try to get out of the city when I can. So far, I've been in a few hikes and I loved that. Now it is winter and I miss snow - I guess it's about time to go to the mountains.