



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



# THE FIRST 25 YEARS

As we reflect on the first 25 years of the Kazickas Family Foundation, I am reminded of the profound vision and generosity of my father, Joseph P. Kazickas. It was in 1998, following the sale of Omnitel, a pioneering venture in Lithuania's telecommunications landscape, that my father expressed his commitment to giving back to the country he held dear. He embarked on a journey to support Lithuania's transition to democracy and nurture its growth in the 21st century.

My father once said: "Life only has meaning when one is sharing good fortune with others and contributing to a better life for everyone".

Education emerged as a cornerstone of our efforts. Recognizing the transformative power of knowledge, we equipped schools with over 1000 computers and provided training to ensure their effective use. Scholarships and partnerships with institutions like Kaunas University of Technology have empowered students to pursue innovation and excellence. Moreover, we established initiatives like "Youth Can" to engage and inspire Lithuania's youth, fostering resilience and opportunity, particularly in rural communities.

In celebrating our heritage and fostering cultural vitality, we have supported numerous endeavors, from restoring historical landmarks like the "Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania" to promoting the rich tradition of music and song. Through scholarships, fellowships, and educational programs, we have nurtured connections between Lithuania and the global community, ensuring that our cultural legacy endures.

In April I was honored to receive the "Order for Merits to Lithuania" Award from President and First Lady Nausėda. It inspires me and the next generation of the family to continue to uphold our mission with passion and purpose.



Together, we remain committed to building a brighter future for Lithuania, guided by the enduring values instilled by my parents, Joseph and Alexandra Kazickas.

**Jurate Kazickas**  
KFF President

# 2023 in Numbers



**94**  
organizations  
supported



Over  
**\$760,000**  
distributed

## Geographic Breakdown

- Lithuania - **\$432,000**
- Lithuanian Diaspora - **\$142,000**
- United States - **\$118,000**
- Zimbabwe - **\$50,000**
- Ukraine - **\$18,000**

## Breakdown by Causes

- Youth empowerment - **48%**
- Education - **36%**
- Social welfare - **9%**
- Culture - **4%**
- Other - **3%**





# YOUTH CAN

The program initiated by KFF 10 years ago stands as one of our flagship initiatives dedicated to youth empowerment through sports and social activities.

## **Milestones in 2023:**

- 650 organized activities
- A summer camp for 40 young people
- A youth festival "We Play Together" for 5000 people

In June Youth Can became an independent NGO. It will continue creating opportunities and enhancing the lives of Lithuanian youth.





# BRING TOGETHER LITHUANIA

The program, founded by KFF in 2018, is a six week summer internship which provides diaspora youth with opportunities to acquire professional skills, meet global Lithuanians, and explore the modern Lithuania.

## Milestones in 2023:

- 15 participants from USA, Brazil, Canada, Argentina and New Zealand
- 4 alumni volunteers
- 6 weeks packed with official events, site visits, day trips and cultural activities
- Supported by: Lithuanian Foundation (US), Ministry of Economy and Innovation, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs



# UNCOMMON LT

This pilot program, launched in Lithuania in 2022 is a free technology and life skills development program for young adults through IT training. It targets youth living in remote regions and experiencing social exclusion.

## Milestones in 2023:

- 25 students
- 6 events
- 22 volunteers and mentors
- “Education and Science Network Creator of the Year” Award



# Lithuanian Grantee Stories (1)

## Youth Empowerment / MO Museum

Since 2022, KFF has been supporting a MO Museum's educational program dedicated to socially underprivileged youth from remote areas of Lithuania (youth 13-18).



## Social Welfare / After-School Programs

KFF supports day-to-day operations of three after-school centers in Ariogala, Raguvele and Lentvaris. The centers engage over 200 children and their families creating a safe space for them to develop social and housework skills as well as learn to cook, join cultural, sports and educational activities.





# Lithuanian Grantee Stories (2)

## Culture / Kazickas Family Sacred Music Hours

The Sacred Music Hours is a series of free summer concerts of organ music in Lithuania which started in 2003. They give an opportunity to the public to listen to some of the best classical music performers from Lithuania and abroad. In over 20 years these concerts have become a cherished tradition dedicated to celebrating the lives and values of Alexandra and Joseph Kazickas.





# Grantee Stories from the Lithuanian Diaspora

## Alexandra Kazickas Grant Program

Since 2012 KFF has supported the work of Lithuanian Heritage schools with grants totaling more than \$1,500,000. These schools help preserve Lithuanian language and culture for the benefit of individuals, communities and society.

Currently there are 40 such schools in the US with 2,000 students, 300 teachers and 100 substitute teachers. In 2023, 24 schools with 1,000 students applied and received AKGP grants.

## Alexandra Kazickas Lithuanian Saturday School

Since its founding in 2006, more than 100 students from 55 families of the Lithuanian community of the East End of Long Island have gone to AKLS to learned Lithuanian language, literature, culture, and history.

In 2023, 20 students ages 3 to 15 attend AKLS. Six of its teachers have been with AKLS since its founding. One of them is its current principal. School's graduates have been long praised for their exceptionally high level of Lithuanian language proficiency.



# Community Engagement

The Foundation believes in the power of community and holds a view that its role as a unifying force in Lithuania is integral to the organization's mission.

In the past year KFF attended numerous events that helped foster partnerships and establish new contacts. Some of the most memorable moments of connecting with the community:

## Literacy Award Ceremony



## Blue Yellow Gratitude Event



## Social Business Accelerator



## Global Lithuania Awards





# 25th Anniversary Gala

On October 19, KFF celebrated its 25 years with a Gala and Award Ceremony in Vilnius Town Hall. Ten family members attended along with more than 250 people from all around Lithuania. Youth Can alumni volunteered their services as ushers and greeters.

The event's host was an actor Vytautas Rumsas Jr. The program featured several musical performances by Youth Can alumna - vocalist Gabija Jareckaite and jazz pianist Jefim Romančik, ensemble "Lietuva", musicians Elvina Milkintaite, Laura Budreckyte, Richardas Banys, Gediminas Stankevicius and Ernestas Germanovicius.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of awards to our partners acknowledging their service to Lithuania.



# 25th Anniversary Gala Awards

**These were the categories and award recipients:**

- “Long-standing Partnership”  
Sacred Music Hours
- “Rapid Response to Crises”  
Blue/Yellow
- “Youth Empowerment”  
Alternative Training Center for Youth
- “Social Welfare”  
Center Against Human Trafficking and Exploitation

**IN MEMORIAM  
Albinas Kentra  
(1929 - 2023)**

Albinas Kentra was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his 60 years of video documentation of Lithuania's struggle for freedom.





# Reflections from the Gala

Thank you very much to KFF. It was a truly wonderful celebration of goodness, and I think there is still a halo of kindness and generosity in the Town Hall now.

Good luck in your good deeds!

--

Jurate Vaicenaite on behalf of  
Albinas Kentra

A celebration of goodness against a backdrop of terrible events. I realized how much I needed this - hope that as long as we are not indifferent to each other, we will be all right. I feel infinite gratitude to the many organizations and bright people who keep on doing fantastic things for Lithuania. They don't get tired because this Foundation believes in them.

--

Jurgita Murauskiene  
"Christopher Festival"

Family values were reflected in one of the nominations - "For Lifetime Achievement" to Albinas Kentra. Several other nominations were also presented, reflecting the activities of KFF.

--

Vidmantas Valiusaitis  
Philologist, journalist, publicist

Thank you for this opportunity to be where goodness shines through. It was very sweet, very sensitive.

--

Jorune Juodzbalyte  
"EIKA Group"

I would like to thank you sincerely on behalf of our whole team for the appreciation, the celebration, and for inspiring us to help even more and to work with all our hearts.

--

Kristina Misiniene  
"Center Against Human Trafficking and Exploitation"

My father (Prof. V. Landsbergis) and I would like to thank you for inviting us - the event was very noble, cosy, emotional and meaningful. Thank you for letting us be a small part of this beautiful gathering.

--

V. V. Landsbergis  
Writer, journalist, director

# Acknowledgements

## **The Board of Directors:**

Jurate Kazickas, President

Joseph M. Kazickas

Michael V. Kazickas

John A. Kazickas

Alex Kazickas

Annalina Kazickas

Kiki Kazickas

## **Family Members:**

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Sophie Kazickas

Augie Kazickas

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Kristina Nealis

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Alexandra Altman-Sherman

Nicholas Altman

## **KFF Management:**

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