Exploit Studio Team Takes Second Place in Cybersecurity Competition

Last year, the Şermin Savaşçı Education Fund was established at Bilkent to provide support for students in the Faculty of Engineering. During a ceremony held online on Friday, February 5, nine students were presented with scholarships for the spring semester of the 2020–2021 academic year.

Exploit Studio, a hacking society based at Bilkent University, took second place in the event. The team, consisting of Yaman Yağız Taşbağ and second place in the event. The team consisted of Yaman Yağız Taşbağ and Mustafa Kemal Can, a Computer Science student at Bahçeşehir University, and Arslan Masood, a Mathematics student at Istanbul University.

In the cybersecurity field, capture-the-flag competitions require participants to solve security-related problems and exploit vulnerable systems. The problems involve various areas such as cryptography, web application hacking, mobile application hacking, forensics, reverse engineering and malware analysis.

While Exploit Studio is based at Bilkent, individuals active in the society range from high school students to cybersecurity professionals and include university students from other schools as well as Bilkent. Studio members meet regularly and share their knowledge about different information security topics.

IAED Graduate Student Chosen to Receive CIRE Grant

Beyza Yazıcı, a PhD student in the Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design, has received a grant from the Committee on International Research and Education (CIRE) of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA). She was selected to receive the grant on the basis of her academic record, activities and achievements as a graduate student.

As part of its mission to enhance the role of the ASA in international research and education in acoustics, the committee provides grants to students enrolled in acoustic research programs at universities or technical institutes, in particular those in developing countries. The purpose of the CIRE award is to encourage students to continue their graduate studies in acoustics in their home countries.

Fatih İnci Named One of Turkey’s 10 Outstanding Young Persons

Ass't. Prof. Fatih İnci of the National Nanotechnology Research Center (UNAM) and the Institute of Materials Science and Nanotechnology at Bilkent University has been named one of this year’s “Ten Outstanding Young Persons” by Junior Chamber International (JCI) Turkey. He was selected for the honor based on his achievements in the area of medical diagnostics.

TOYP Turkey is part of JCI’s “Ten Outstanding Young Persons of the World” (TOYP) program, which serves to recognize individuals who excel in their chosen fields and exemplify the best attributes of the world’s young people.

An international nonprofit organization, JCI has more than 200,000 members worldwide. Each year, at both the national and international levels, the organization nominates individuals age 18 to 40 “who are engaged and committed to creating an impact in their communities” for the TOYP award, which is given to 10 recipients, one in each of 10 categories ranging from scientific leadership to forwarding human rights and world peace.

Dr. İnci received his award in the category of medical innovation. His research is concentrated in the emergent fields of biosensing, micro/nanoscale technology, lab-on-a-chip and biomedical engineering, where he works to develop ultrasensitive sensors and microfluidic platforms that are able to diagnose maladies such as infectious diseases and cancer and thus also have the potential, by means of their advanced technology, to minimize health disparities even in resource-constrained settings.

Müge Dursusu-Tannröver Receives Archaeological Institute of America Grant

Asst. Prof. Müge Dursusu-Tannröver of the Department of Urban Design and Landscape Architecture has won this year’s Richard C. MacDonald Iliad Endowment for Archaeological Research, offered by the Archaeological Institute of America, for her project titled “Conflict, Domination and Resistance in Late Bronze Age Anatolia.”

The MacDonald Iliad Endowment is awarded annually to an archaeological project that contributes to the understanding of the Trojan War and its influence on the ancient Mediterranean civilizations. Dr. Dursusu-Tannröver’s project explores the Late Bronze Age (17th–12th centuries BCE), when the Hittite Empire politically controlled most of the Anatolian peninsula. Texts from the Hittite central archives attest to long-term conflict between the Hittites and mainland Greece, which may have eventually boiled down to a constructed collective memory of the Trojan War.
The Sporting Life

Name: Ali Mertcan Kılıçlı
Department: Law
How often do you exercise? I try to go to the gym three times a week, but I stay active throughout the week. I play pickup basketball, and before the pandemic I played soccer with friends every two weeks.
How has regular exercise affected your life? It simply elevates all parts of my life. I feel better, my mood is better. I've made good friends and met a lot of good people thanks to sports
What do you suggest to those who are just taking up a sport or starting to exercise? I would say don’t rush into things. An injury demotivates you and makes it harder to work out consistently. Do your research from credible sources and don’t be afraid to ask for help.

Research Grant to Fund Cihan Okay’s Work on the Topology of Quantum Resources

(Continued from Page 1) and quantum information theory using methods from topology. Quantum resources, note the researchers, “are responsible both for computational speed-up (e.g., the famous Shor’s algorithm), and for securing cryptographic schemes based on quantum correlations. Key distribution and randomness generation are among the applications of contextuality that can be applied to enhance the security of communication systems.” The new paradigm is to see physical theories as computational resources that can be utilized for building powerful devices. Our approach brings in the abstract and effective tools of algebraic topology, a branch of mathematics studying algebraic approximations of spaces, to better characterize the quantum features responsible for information-theoretic advantages.”

The team’s topological approach was developed in collaboration with Assoc. Prof. Robert Raussendorf of the University of British Columbia and further refined by the introduction of homotopical concepts that emerged during Dr. Okay’s PhD thesis work.

Müge Durusu-Tanrıöver Receives Archaeological Institute of America Grant

(Continued from Page 1) However, the Hittite texts shed a secondary light only on the regional kingdoms occupying the western Anatolian coast and leave the intervening geography in the dark. As a sample of this area between the Hittite core region within the bend of the Kazımlırmak River and the Aegean coast, the proposed project aims to intensively explore Polatlı (in the western part of Ankara province) through archaeological field survey and archaeometric analyses to offer a bottom-up narrative of the local communities in this region. The fieldwork component of the project will be conducted under the aegis of the Polatlı Landscape Archaeology and Survey Project, directed by Dr. Durusu-Tanrıöver since 2019.

Faces on Campus

BY AYSU YURTER (TRIN/IV)

Name: Elif Çınar (MAN/III)
What’s your favorite quintuple?
What would be your dream job? “Author”
If you were an animal, I would be... “a rabbit”
If I were an animal, I would be... “a shark”
My favorite thing about Ankara: “That it’s a cosmopolitan city”

Name: Efe Kahramaner (IR/II)
What’s your favorite quintuple?
What would be your dream job? “Author”
If you were a superhero, what super power(s) would you have? “Flying and invisibility”
The place on campus where I feel happiest is... “the Starbucks in MA Building”
My favorite thing about Ankara: “The cafes in Bahçeşehir”

Name: Aleyna Öğretmenoğlu (IE/I)
What’s your favorite quintuple?
What would be your dream job? “Author”
If you were a superhero, what super power(s) would you have? “Telepathy”
The place on campus where I feel happiest is... “the area between the library and EA Building”
My favorite thing about Ankara: “That it’s a cosmopolitan city”
If I were an animal, I would be... “a panda”
I have never... “bungee-jumped”
Why Do We “Click”? The Psychology of Instant Connection

Sometimes you meet someone, and you just know that you can communicate. It happens that you say hello to a new coworker or share small talk with a security officer, and you have an instant sense of connectedness. Most probably, you had that feeling with the closest of your friends or your romantic partners from the very first time you met. Here, I’ve gathered some possible reasons for that phenomenon from psychological research on interpersonal relationships.

Language Style Matching

Language style matching (LSM) refers to the idea that people are inclined to match conversation partners in linguistic style. Therefore, people with similar language use tend to have a greater sense of connection at their first interactions. They also tend to stay in contact because they enjoy each other’s way of talking. LSM is a measurable construct, and the rate of matching is determined through the similar usage of function words (like the underlined words in “He placed it on the table”), irrespective of context. So, although two people might have different backgrounds and might use other content words to talk about themselves, research shows that their function words will tend to be similar if they have that instant “click.”

Neural Synchrony

Neurobiological factors may also play a role. In a 2018 study conducted at Dartmouth College, 42 volunteers watched short video clips while scientists measured their brain activity using fMRI. It turns out that people in close social relationships showed similar brain activity, including in the areas involved in emotion processing and selective attention, and even in regions in the inferior parietal lobe that have been linked to discerning others’ mental states. According to Thalia Wheatley of Dartmouth College, people in the same social network also show similar neural activity when processing the narrative content of stories and generally making sense of the world. Neural synchrony found in strangers can predict a desire for future contact in both parties. This characteristic, since they tend to feel that they connect more with them.

Shared Vulnerability

Sometimes we meet a stranger at a vulnerable point in our lives, or our paths cross as we work toward a goal or solve a problem together. Psychological research has shown that sharing such situations creates a shared sense of vulnerability, and makes us tend to feel understood, more secure, and connected. In “Click: The Magic of Instant Connections,” author Ori Brafman also suggests that we can arbitrarily create such “vulnerable environments” through asking meaning-making questions, like “What’s something meaningful that’s happened to you in the last week?” in order to increase the sense of authenticity and appropriateness.

Shared Sense of Humor

Laughing together can create an illusion for people that they get on well together, but sharing a sense of humor can initially make us feel connected as well. Research by Robin Dunbar of Oxford University reports significant effects of a similar sense of humor on later altruism. Looking at the subject from a different perspective, a study from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, involved having strangers watch videos and recording how much they laughed, or whether they just smiled or stayed neutral. Results showed that across the different videos, the amount of shared laughter had consistent effects with respect to the participants’ sense of similarity to the video partner and tended to make them desire future contact. “For people who are laughing together, shared laughter signals that they see the world in the same way, and it momentarily boosts their sense of connection,” says Sara Algoe, the social psychologist who authored the study.
“Classic Brass”
Bilkent Brass Ensemble
P. Dukas | Fanfare to precede “La Péri”
R. Premru | Five Movements from Divertimento
G. Gershwin | “An American in Paris”
G. Rossini | “Largo al factotum”
G. Gershwin | “Rhapsody in Blue”
G. Bizet | “Carmen” Suite
Recording: November 29, 2020, Bilkent Concert Hall

“Vestiges of the Past”
Bilkent Symphony Orchestra
Ayrton Desimpelaere, conductor
Dritan Gani, double bass
C.P.E. Bach | Symphony in D major, H. 663 (Wq. 183/1)
C.D. von Dittersdorf | Concerto for Double Bass in E major
P.I. Tchaikovsky | “Souvenir de Florence,” Op. 70
Recording: December 10, 2020, Bilkent Concert Hall

“Horn, Horn”
Ayrton Desimpelaere, conductor
Mustafa Kaplan, horn
Hasan Erım Hacat, horn
G.F. Handel | “Messiah” Overture
A. Rossini | Concerto for Two Horns and Orchestra, RWV C60
I. Stravinsky | “Pulcinella” Suite
Recording: December 17, 2020, Bilkent Concert Hall

“Adaptability, a Call to Action,” by Dr. Davis Calas, at 12:30 p.m.
Organized by IAED.

“The Debt Payment Puzzle: An Experimental Investigation,” by Hakan Özyılmaz, at 5 p.m.
Organized by FBA.

“The Rich Marine and Coastal Biodiversity of Turkish Seas,” by Cem Orkun Kıraç, at 6 p.m.
Organized by LAUD.

“The Debt Payment Puzzle: An Experimental Investigation,” by Hakan Özyılmaz (University of California), at 5 p.m.
Organized by LAUD.

Hasan Erım Hacat, horn
G.F. Handel | “Messiah” Overture
A. Rossini | Concerto for Two Horns and Orchestra, RWV C60
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Wednesday, February 17
“Adaptability, a Call to Action,” by Dr. Davis Calas, at 12:30 p.m.
Organized by IAED.

Friday, February 19
“The Debt Payment Puzzle: An Experimental Investigation,” by Hakan Özyılmaz (University of California), at 5 p.m.
Organized by FBA.

Friday, February 19
“The Rich Marine and Coastal Biodiversity of Turkish Seas,” by Cem Orkun Kıraç, at 6 p.m.
Organized by LAUD.

CONFERENCES

Wednesday, February 17
“Gözüklü Kazi ve Araştırma Merkezi Projesi,” by Saadet Sayın, at 5:30 p.m.
Organized by Tazarım ve Mimarlık Topluluğu.

Tuesday, February 23
“Inclusive Design in Urban Environments,” by Prof. Oya Demirbilek (UNSW Built Environment), at 11:30 a.m.
Organized by LAUD.

Classifieds

Bilkent News will print classified ads, space permitting. Ads may be placed only by students, faculty, staff and family members present on the Bilkent campus.
- Ads are limited to 20 words.
- Deadline is at noon Wednesday, one week prior to the edition in which the ad is to be run.
- Classified ads should be emailed to bilnews@bilkent.edu.tr.

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