

Preface

On 26 July 2019, the University of Udine conferred the honorary degree in Civil Engineering on Ezio Bortolussi for the levels of excellence and innovation achieved in the field of reinforced concrete construction of tall buildings.

With this solemn gesture, the awarding of the highest academic honorary title, the Friulian University recognised Ezio Bortolussi as an exemplary case of success, capable of distinguishing himself through his acclaimed expertise in a specific field of knowledge.

The University of Udine is a young university, founded by the people's will to foster the civil, cultural, economic and social growth of the territory through its ability to generate and disseminate knowledge. Its activities are permeated by essential principles such as the universality and value of knowledge, and founding values such as pride and a sense of belonging, trust in people and their own means, courage and determination.

On the other hand, it is the university's task to recognise and value those who, outside the academic sphere, represent and share the same principles and contribute to expanding knowledge, working beyond their usual field of expertise or drawing on their personal experience and talent.

This is the starting point for any initiative to confer an honorary degree, a complex process that involves a shared and convinced choice by the teaching staff of a department, a detailed analysis of the candidate's curriculum vitae by eminent experts, and a resolution by the Academic Senate with which the awarding of the title is proposed to the Minister.

A path that Ezio Bortolussi has, once again, successfully accomplished.

As can be seen from his story, he has displayed uncommon qualities that have led him to distinguish himself professionally, building (it has to be said!), even without a solid curriculum, a formidable engineering expertise, supported by a constant search for innovation or, as he himself emphasises, a “new way” in construction.

He has always shown that, in order to face the most important challenges, it is necessary to draw on experience and apply oneself to the study of the most complex cases, but at the same time possess the courage and determination to support one’s own ideas and follow one’s own aptitudes.

A typical researcher’s approach, which has certainly benefited his entrepreneurial initiatives. Ezio Bortolussi was also able to grasp the value of relationships with others, be they collaborators or anonymous beneficiaries of his spirit of solidarity.

These are typical characteristics of a man who can be considered a true example of those who have made Friuli great in the world.

An honorary degree does not only reward the successes of a career, but also the enthusiasm and passion that people have dedicated to their work. This is a value that must be communicated, and serves as an example and guide for young people. An honorary degree does not only reward the past but also what it represents for the future.

I am certain that a strong message of confidence and hope will be conveyed to our students through Ezio Bortolussi’s story, with his way of looking ahead and facing life with his head held high, and through his own words: “I believe that the future is made up of ideas”.

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