



# REPORT



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## AHI HOSTS 39TH ANNIVERSARY HELLENIC HERITAGE ACHIEVEMENT AND NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS DINNER



Hellenic Heritage and National Public Service Award recipients from left: Constantine Triantafilou, Congresswoman Dina Titus, Tim Maniatis, Paulette Poulos and Jerry Couvaras.

The American Hellenic Institute (AHI) hosted its 39th Anniversary Hellenic Heritage Achievement and Public Service Awards Dinner, March 8, 2014 at the Capital Hilton in Washington, D.C.

AHI honored a distinguished set of awardees based upon their important career or institutional achievements and contributions

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## AHI HOSTS ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL SALUTE TO GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY



Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, Congressman Gus Bilirakis, Congressman Ed Royce, Ambassador George Chacalli, Nick Larigakis and the students of the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Katherine, Falls Church, VA.

AHI celebrated the 193rd anniversary of Greek Independence Day by hosting its annual “Congressional Salute to Greek Independence Day,” on March 26, 2014. The common democratic

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## AHI PARTICIPATES IN HISTORIC THREE-COUNTRY LEADERSHIP MISSION



The joint delegation presenting Greek Prime Minister, Antonis Samaras, with a commemorative gift.

AHI participated in a historic three-country mission to Israel, Cyprus and Greece, together with a 15-member delegation of community leaders from two American Jewish organizations, B’nai B’rith International and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations as well as representatives from the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA). The leadership mission explored the major political, economic, and security developments underway in the eastern Mediterranean and aimed to advance United States interests in the region. Meetings were held with 20-plus high-ranking government, military, and religious officials, in addition to

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# AHI GENERAL NEWS

## AHI HOSTS 39TH ANNIVERSARY HELLENIC HERITAGE

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to the Greek American community or community at-large. The honorees were U.S. Rep. Dina Titus, First Congressional District of Nevada; International Orthodox Christian Charities; Paulette Poulos, Executive Director, Leadership 100; Timothy J. Maniatis, President, Maniatis Associates, Inc.; and Jerry Couvaras, President and CEO, Atlanta Bread and Bake One.



*Master of Ceremonies, Larry Michael.*

Larry Michael, senior vice president and executive producer of Media, Washington Redskins, was the evening's emcee. Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq, treasurer of AHI's Board of Directors, introduced Michael.

The Marines of Headquarters Battalion presented the colors and the American and Greek

national anthems were performed by Maria Pierce. Rev. Dimitrios J. Antokas, Saint George Greek Orthodox Church, Bethesda, Md., offered the invocation. REVMA provided the musical entertainment.

Opening the evening's program were AHI President Nick Larigakis and AHI Foundation President Dr. Spiro Spireas, both of whom offered greetings and welcomed a special guest for the evening, His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey.

## Honorees Humbled, Moved by Accolades



*From left: James Lagos, Congresswoman Dina Titus, and Aleco Haralambides.*

U.S. Congresswoman Dina Titus, a champion of the Greek American community, and the only female member of Congress of Greek heritage, accepted the AHI Hellenic Heritage National Public Service Award for her commitment to public service and her unwavering support in strengthening United States relations with Greece and Cyprus. Congresswoman Titus was also recognized for her distinguished career in higher education.

In acceptance, the congresswoman pledged her ongoing support to issues of importance to the Greek American communi-

ty and stated she is proud of her membership and work in the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues and the Congressional Hellenic Israel Alliance. She commended AHI for its continued presence on Capitol Hill, especially in light of recent developments in the eastern Mediterranean. Congresswoman Titus offered that the community "must stay united" on these issues in order to ensure the community remains effective in its advocacy efforts.



*Mr. and Mrs. Paul Kotrotsios and Dr. and Mrs. Spiro Spireas and their families.*

Accepting the AHI Hellenic Heritage National Public Service Award on behalf of International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) was IOCC's Executive Director **Constantine M. Triantafilou**. AHI recognized IOCC for its extraordinary and generous response to the needs of a suffering world.

In acceptance, Triantafilou stated, *"Tonight we are here to recognize the work of the honorees and the hundreds of thousands of lives they have collectively touched. Bringing to them life, bringing to them strength, love and hope... We are especially here to celebrate the life and work of the American Hellenic Institute. We are here to celebrate the millions of Greeks and Cypriots whose lives have been touched by AHI bringing them strength, love and hope. We are here to celebrate the life and hard work of Nick Larigakis and his team."*



*From left: Ambassador George Chacalli of Cyprus, His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey, and Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos of Greece.*

He also commended the visionary founders of IOCC, its current board, and thanked all the partner organizations with

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which IOCC works to address humanitarian needs worldwide.

In acceptance of the AHI Hellenic Heritage National Public Service Award for her exemplary service to God and Church and decades of leadership for Hellenism, **Paulette Poulos**, remarked, *“It is with great humility that I join the outstanding recipients of the Hellenic Heritage & National Public Service Award, which carries special meaning for me. The AHI stands as a sentinel for Hellenism in America, Greece, Cyprus and around the world, always having alerted us to the challenges we face and actions to be pursued as good citizens involved in public affairs, true to our Hellenic Heritage, since its founding in a year of crisis with the invasion of Cyprus in 1974. However, that alertness has defined who we are as Hellenes from the dawn of our great civilization.”*

The Leadership 100 executive director also paid homage to the late Archbishop Iakovos, whom she said was “...a great American leader as well as a leader of world Hellenism” who “...fought for Greece, Cyprus and all humanitarian causes and never accepted defeat. He was a visionary and a man of great faith and courage.”

**Timothy J. Maniatis** received the AHI Hellenic Heritage National Public Service Award for his lifetime of service and leadership to the Hellenic community and for extraordinary achievement in the field of association and special event management. Over his career he has been the executive director of AHEPA and the National Hellenic Society as well as working on behalf of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese to organize special events such as the Clergy-Laity Congress.

He said, *“I’d like to thank the American Hellenic Institute for bestowing this prestigious award to me, and through me, to my family, who has supported me throughout the years.”*

Maniatis recounted how his outreach as AHEPA executive director to his congressman on Cyprus led to his relationship with AHI Founder Gene Rossides, who provided further encouragement to work on behalf of the Greek American community.

*“We have accomplished a great deal; however, we need to respect the goals and objectives of our youth and slowly assimilate them into our community,”* he added.

In conclusion, **Jerry Couvaras** accepted the AHI Hellenic Heritage Achievement Award for innovation in the hospitality industry and commitment to the promotion and preservation of Hellenism.

In acceptance, the President and CEO of Atlanta Bread and Bake One said, *“It was soon after August of 1974 that I first heard of the American Hellenic Institute and Gene Rossides. We were impressed by the fervor and relentless vigor of this organization and how it managed to reach and engage important politicians. My congratulations and gratitude is extended to Gene Rossides for his founding and lifelong dedication to AHI and to Nick Larigakis for his tireless work and passion. I thank the board of AHI and its members for this fine honor. And I salute American Greeks for all they do to enhance the lives and the well-being of Hellenism and Hellenes through-*

*out the world.”*

The honorees’ many accomplishments were celebrated throughout the evening, and highlighted in congratulatory letters submitted to AHI by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Ambassador of Greece to the United States Christos Panagopoulos, Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the United States George Chacalli, Hellenic American National Council President Paul Kotrotsios, and Ted G. Spyropoulos, Theodore & Erika Spyropoulos Foundation.

Special guests attending the event included: Ambassador of Greece to the United States Christos Panagopoulos, Ambassador of Cyprus to the United States George Chacalli, former U.S. Ambassador to Greece Tom Miller, and former U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes.

### **Briefing with Top Greek, Cypriot Diplomats Comprise Weekend’s Events**



From left: Nick Larigakis, Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos of Greece and Ambassador George Chacalli of Cyprus.

As part of the weekend’s festivities AHI hosted a breakfast briefing with Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos and Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the U.S. George Chacalli on March 8. The relevant topics affecting both countries were discussed by the two top diplomats. AHI President Nick Larigakis moderated the discussion. A lively Q&A session followed.



Attendees in the US Chamber of Commerce Hall of Flags.

AHI also hosted a wine-tasting reception featuring Greek wine producers on March 7, at the magnificent Hall of Flags at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

### AHI CELEBRATES GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

AHI celebrated Greek Independence Day at the White House on April 4, 2014. AHI President Nick Larigakis, AHI Board Treasurer and Legal Counsel Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., AHI Board Member Leon Andris, and AHI Foundation Board Vice President Ted G. Spyropoulos attended the ceremony officiated by President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios.

“We thank President Obama for hosting this event to honor Greek Independence,” Larigakis said. “The event served to reaffirm the strong bonds of friendship between Greece and the United States, including Greece as a valued NATO ally; and to bring attention to the fact that this relationship is etched intrinsically by virtue of the noble democratic ideals and principles that guided our Founding Fathers in establishing our own country.”

### CAPITOL HILL BRIEFING RECAPS HISTORIC MISSION



AHI President Larigakis recounts his experiences about the mission with the audience.

AHI President Nick Larigakis participated at a briefing on Capitol Hill, Feb. 25, 2014, that presented the findings from the historic three-country Leadership Mission to Israel, Cyprus, and Greece, which occurred in January.

“We appreciated the opportunity to share our experiences and observations from the historic mission to a very important audience,” President Larigakis said. “The trilateral relationship between Greece, Cyprus, and Israel is critical to stability in the eastern Mediterranean, and it must be supported by the United States. Our findings from the mission reaffirmed this notion and this message must be emphasized in Washington.”

The briefing, titled “The Israel-Cyprus-Greece Relationship: From Emerging to Sustained Relations & U.S. Role - Findings from Historic Joint Leadership Mission to Israel, Cyprus, and Greece,” also featured mission organizers AHEPA Executive Director Basil Mossaidis and B’nai B’rith International Executive Vice President Daniel Mariaschin as speakers. Andrew Kaffes, a participant on the mission, moderated the briefing.

In attendance were two members of Hellenic Parliament,

Kostas Karagounis and Vasileios Kikilias, both of whom have worked to build the Greece-Israel Friendship Group in the parliament. The briefing was held in cooperation with the Congressional Hellenic Israel Alliance.

### AHI SUBMITS FY2015 FOREIGN AID TESTIMONY TO HOUSE APPROPRIATORS

AHI submitted testimony to the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs on the Obama Administration’s foreign aid proposals for FY2015 on April 4, 2014.

In the best interests of the United States, AHI’s testimony opposed any military assistance the administration will request for Turkey until Turkey removes its troops and illegal Turkish settlers from Cyprus; aid the administration will request for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM); and any reduction that might be introduced in the aid levels for the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. In addition, the testimony stated United States foreign assistance will be helpful if appropriated toward the implementation of some of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) proposed by the Republic of Cyprus, for example, the Famagusta CBM package, which are vital to sustain and uphold the positive momentum created by the resumption of the peace negotiations on the island aimed at its reunification.

### AHI IN THE NEWS

#### [The Hill Publishes AHI President’s Commentary on FYROM](#)

*The Hill*, a newspaper with a focus on the U.S. Congress, published on its website a guest commentary authored by AHI President Nick Larigakis titled, “Congress should back ally Greece on ‘Macedonia’ name issue.” The commentary appeared on the website’s Global Affairs blog, which is *The Hill*’s international relations blog, January 6, 2014. AHI President Larigakis wrote the commentary in response to a Dec. 6 guest commentary for the Global Affairs blog written by United Macedonian Diaspora President Metodija Koloski.

“We believe Congress can right a wrong on U.S. policy toward Greece and the FYROM,” Larigakis wrote. “We have long called on Congress to adopt legislation urging the FYROM to cease its use of propaganda that violates provisions of the United Nations-brokered Interim Agreement between Greece and the FYROM and that further urges the FYROM to work with Greece to find a mutually acceptable official name under U.N. auspices. In the recent past, such legislation has had strong bipartisan support in both chambers of Congress.”

In his guest commentary, UMD President Koloski asserted that Greece somehow is obstructing and destabilizing “Macedonia” from making progress as a country. Larigakis rebuts his assertions by demonstrating how FYROM’s provocative actions have demonstrated an unwillingness to find a solution and how

Greece has demonstrated compromise to find a solution. Larigakis concluded, "...it is time for the U.S. Congress to take sides in the name-recognition issue—not in favor of Greece or FYROM, but in the best interests of the United States."

### ***The National Herald Publishes AHI Foundation Student Essays***

AHI is pleased to announce that three essays authored by participants of the fifth annual American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF) College Student Foreign Policy Trip to Greece and Cyprus were published by *The National Herald* in December 2013. The three essays that were published by the newspaper are: "A Call to Live Up to American Values in the Eastern Mediterranean," by George Gabriel and published on Dec. 13, 2013; "Hellenic Armed Forces: An Important International Ally," by Despina Vastakis and published on Dec. 16, 2013; and "The Greek Crisis and Foreign Policy: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," by Elissa Bowling and published on Dec. 19, 2013. The students' insightful essays describe their personal experiences from the trip to Greece and Cyprus held June 19 to July 6.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ***The Washington Times Publishes AHI's Letter on Cyprus***

The *Washington Times* published the American Hellenic Institute's letter to the editor, "Turkey not committed to Cyprus peace," March 6, 2014. AHI President Nick Larigakis wrote the letter in response to a February 25, 2014 letter to the editor submitted by Mr. Ahemet Erdengiz.

President Larigakis rebuts Mr. Erdengiz's letter by identifying two key points where the latter was off-base on Cyprus. The first point pertained to Turkey's invasion of the Republic of Cyprus and the second point identified the flaws of the failed Annan Plan.

### ***AHI's Letter to The Washington Post Welcomes Critique of Turkey***

AHI released a letter to the editor it submitted to *The Washington Post* in response to a January 23, 2014 opinion piece titled "The United States needs to tell Turkey to change course," by Morton Abramowitz and Eric Edelman, two former U.S. ambassadors to Turkey; and Blaise Misztal, acting director of foreign policy, Bipartisan Policy Center's Turkey Initiative.

The authors of the opinion piece assert that Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan is "destroying his country's parlous democracy" which is creating "a pressing dilemma for the United States." They argue for the United States to make it clear that the prime minister's actions are endangering the U.S.-Turkey relationship.

In his letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis applauds their critique of the prime minister's actions writing, "It was refreshing to read that former State Department officials stationed in Turkey are calling for the U.S. government to get tough with Turkey...For far too long U.S. policy toward Turkey has been

one of appeasement and double standard." Larigakis also provides examples of how Turkey ignores democratic ideals, specifically the rule of law, especially as it pertains to Turkey's neighbors, including Greece, Cyprus, and Israel. Larigakis concludes, "The Obama Administration must change the United States' long-standing policy of appeasement with Turkey and demand it respect democratic values, institutions, and the rule of law or else there will be strong consequences. This approach will serve the best interests of Turkey and the U.S."

### ***Halki Seminary Not Bilateral Issue AHI Says to The Washington Post***

AHI released a letter to the editor it submitted to *The Washington Post* in response to a March 5, 2014 *Associated Press* article titled "Orthodox seminary in Turkey awaiting reopening," by Ayse Wieting.

In his letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis criticizes Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's position that the reopening of the Theological School of Halki depends on reciprocal measures from Greece, stating the prime minister is incorrect. "The Turkish government's illegal closure of the seminary is not a bilateral issue to be resolved between the two countries; but rather, it is a universal issue of fundamental religious freedom and human rights that Turkey continues to suppress," Larigakis wrote.

### ***AHI's Letter to Forbes Corrects Inaccuracies with Cyprus Op-Ed***

AHI sent a letter to the editor to *Forbes* to correct inaccuracies written about Cyprus in a March 17, 2014 op-ed titled "Obama's Secret Weapon Against Putin's Crimea Vote?" by Richard Minter.

In his letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis criticizes Mr. Minter for inaccurately identifying Mr. Ozdil Nami as the "foreign minister of Cyprus." Larigakis wrote: "[Minter] should have done his homework and referenced Mr. Nami as the self-styled 'foreign minister' of an illegal entity, the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus,' which is only recognized by one country—Turkey."

Larigakis sets the record straight with regard to the correct and legal description of the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, the nature of the Turkish invasion and subsequent occupation of Cyprus, and what the potential implications are for energy finds in the eastern Mediterranean. Although Mr. Minter revised his op-ed, he still gets it wrong, referring to Mr. Nami as "the foreign minister of Northern Cyprus." He also locates Cyprus as being "between Turkey and Greece is the Eastern Mediterranean," which is not accurate.

### ***AHI Sets Record Straight on Cyprus to Washington Times***

AHI submitted a letter to the *Washington Times* in response to an April 8, 2014 article titled "Negotiator says U.S. was wrong to back U.N. plan for Cyprus in 2004," by Ashish Kumar Sen. In his letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis expresses dismay that

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the journalist inaccurately reported Mr. Ozdil Nami as the “the foreign minister of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.”

“Such inaccuracies only embolden the “TRNC’s” separatist policy and hamper negotiations,” Larigakis wrote.

Larigakis also sets the record straight about Turkey’s two-phase invasion of the Republic of Cyprus and the Turkish Cypriot leadership’s declared establishment of the “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” as an illegal and invalid act by the international community.



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### VISITORS TO HELLENIC HOUSE



From left: Stelios Kirimlis (Governor of the Pan-Macedonian Association of USA), Dionysios Paschalis (President of the International Foundation of Alexander the Great) and AHI president Nick Larigakis at the Hellenic House.

### President of International Foundation of Alexander the Great Hosted

AHI welcomed Mr. Dionysios Paschalis, president, International Foundation of Alexander the Great, to AHI’s Hellenic House in February.

Mr. Paschalis came to the United States at the invitation of the Executive Council of the International Foundation of Alexander the Great, which honored him at their meeting in New York for his work in restoring and upgrading the Foundation’s Greek facilities to a fully functional cultural center which has already hosted several cultural concerts, educational exhibits, and international conferences and seminars.

President Larigakis, AHI Legislative Director Georgea Polizos, and Mr. Stelios Kirimlis, governor, Pan-Macedonian Association of the USA; accompanied Mr. Paschalis to meetings with legislators on Capitol Hill. The group met with: U.S. Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Carolyn Maloney (D-MD), co-chairs, Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues; and U.S. Reps. John Sarbanes (D-MD), Dina Titus (D-NV), and Niki Tsongas (D-MA).

### NOON FORUM

#### Forum Examines Religious Liberty in Middle East, Turkey

AHI hosted a noon forum titled, “Pogrom Against Christians Sweeps Middle East: What is the State of Religious Minorities in Turkey?” featuring Doug Bandow, senior fellow, Cato Institute, on February 3, 2014, at AHI’s Hellenic House.

“The topic we are examining today unfortunately does not get much play in the American mainstream media,” AHI President Nick Larigakis said. “With regard to Turkey, we are all aware of the plight of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, however, a broad spectrum of religious minorities in Turkey, including some sects of Islam, also struggle there. We appreciate Doug Bandow’s research and work in this field and for his time to provide us with his thoughts and expertise on the topic today.”

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Doug Bandow, Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute.

Bandow's presentation provided background about the continued persecution facing Christian minorities living in the Middle East prior to drawing comparisons with the current treatment of minorities in Turkey and areas where Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's government needs to improve. According to Bandow, Turkish persecution reaches beyond their Christian citizens and continues to be increasingly anti-Semitic as well. If Turkey wants a bigger role on the international stage, they need to allow people to exert their religious rights, Bandow asserted.

Bandow added that today, persecution around the world can technically fall into two categories: secular extremism (such as that in a communist regime) or a state or group which uses religion to suppress any other religious groups (such as Islamic extremism). For the better part of its modern history, Turkey always had adapted Kemalist secularism. Bandow pointed out that even if its leadership decides to take the country in a more Islamist direction, it does not mean that the religious minorities within the country need to be suppressed.

Although religious liberty does tend to get "short-shrived" in Washington, Bandow reminded attendees that "this is a matter of human rights...of what a decent society is." Following Bandow's presentation, President Larigakis offered closing remarks, and he moderated a Q&A session with the audience.

### STATEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **AHIF Online Policy Journal Spring 2014 Issue Published**

The American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF) announced the third volume release of its Spring 2014 Online Policy Journal. "The policy journal has the dual purpose of looking at various problems that confront Greek, Cypriot, and American foreign policy makers and the role Greek Americans can play in shaping positive solutions for all concerned," said Dan Georgakas, editor, Online Policy journal and director, Greek American Studies Project, Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, Queens College (CUNY). "To that end, we present work from authors of various nations and have a special interest in promoting discourse in the Hellenic Diaspora and hearing from emerging as well as established scholars and activists."

#### **2013 AHI Annual Report Released**

On March 10, 2014 AHI announced the release of its 2013 Annual Report. "All of AHI's policy-based programs and initiatives for 2013 that advance the best interests of the United States on issues of importance to the Greek American community are encapsulated in this report," President Nick Larigakis said. "We are proud to highlight our successful programming, which includes our 'Future of Hellenism in America' conference, foreign policy trip abroad for college students, and several policy forums, among other initiatives and events."

#### **Senate Committee's Passage of Armenian Genocide Resolution Applauded**

AHI applauds passage of S. Res. 410 an Armenian Genocide Resolution by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on April 10, 2014 that remembers and observes the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2014.

Senate Resolution 410 expresses the sense of the Senate: (1) in remembrance of the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2014; (2) that the President should work toward an Armenian-Turkish relationship that includes Turkey's full acknowledgment of the facts about the Armenian Genocide; and (3) that the President should ensure that U.S. foreign policy reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the U.S. record relating to the Armenian Genocide.

AHI has long called for an end to America's denial of the Armenian Genocide and include the recognition of the Assyrian, Pontian and Anatolian Greek Genocides as defined by the U.N. Genocide Convention as stated in AHI's Annual Policy Statement.

#### **AHI Disappointed with Pro-FYROM Congressional Action on NATO**

AHI issued the following statement in response to congressional action to support membership for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's (FYROM) in NATO at the 2014 NATO Summit, which is hosted by the United Kingdom.

The statement read, in part, "The American Hellenic Institute is profoundly disappointed with a congressional letter to Secretary of State John Kerry signed by 40 U.S. representatives that backs FYROM's membership in NATO. In particular, we are disappointed that the letter has the support of U.S. Representative Eliot Engel, who is the ranking member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and U.S. Representative William Keating, ranking member, House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats; and U.S. Representatives Albio Sires and Grace Meng, members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. All four legislators are members of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues and have been big supporters on issues of concern to the Greek American community in the past. Under the administration of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, FYROM follows a long-term policy of extreme nationalism and provocation against Greece in conflict

with NATO and European values of good neighborly relations.”

### **[AHIF Announces Its Newest Publication: Kissinger & Cyprus: A Study in Lawlessness](#)**

AHIF is pleased to announce its newest publication, *Kissinger & Cyprus: A Study in Lawlessness* by Gene Rossides and a Foreword by Professor Louis Galambos, Johns Hopkins University, and Editor of *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*. This book explores four themes. The first is Kissinger’s illegal actions and responsibility for the Cyprus tragedy of 1974 and its aftermath. The second is Cyprus’s importance as a strategic, economic, and political asset to Europe and the United States. The third theme is Turkey’s actions as a rogue state, its violations of United States and international laws, its history of unreliability as an ally and its moves towards Islamic fundamentalism. The fourth theme is the vital importance to the United States of absolute allegiance to the rule of law. The concluding chapter discusses the need for the United States to redress the situation in Cyprus by pressuring Turkey to withdraw its troops and settlers from Cyprus.

The author hopes that this volume will generate renewed interest in the Cyprus problem, the importance of the rule of law in U.S. foreign policy and the responsibility of the United States to redress the situation in Cyprus.

### **[AHI Welcomes U.S.-Greece-Israel Military Exercise](#)**

AHI welcomes the start of the two-week trilateral naval exercise “Noble Dina 2014” between the United States, Greece, and Israel. The multinational exercise is held in the eastern Mediterranean off of the Greek island of Crete.

“We welcome the continued trilateral military cooperation exhibited between the United States, Greece, and Israel,” AHI President Nick Larigakis said. “Clearly it demonstrates the significant value of Greece as a pivotal ally to the United States that lends stability and security in the eastern Mediterranean through NSA Souda Bay, Crete as well as a reliable ally to Israel in the region. Noble Dina enhances the cooperation between the navies of the three countries.” Noble Dina is the fourth exercise conducted by the United States, Greece, and Israel.

### **[AHI Releases Annual Policy Statements](#)**

AHI announced the release of its annual Policy Statements. The policy statements discuss issues affecting the Greek American community as they pertain to United States relations with Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey. In addition, the statements include AHI’s fact sheet detailing Greece’s contributions to United States interests in the eastern Mediterranean and to NATO.

“We strongly urge everyone to utilize the policy statements to their full potential, educating policymakers and creating awareness of the issues to the community at-large,” AHI President Nick Larigakis said. “The positions presented advocate for the application of the rule of law and are in the best interests of the United States. We also sincerely thank the large number of organizations that have endorsed the policy statements.”

### **[Cato Institute Commentary Applauded; Rossides’ Book Cited](#)**

AHI welcomes a blog commentary published by the Cato Institute titled, “Washington’s Inconsistent Stance on Territorial Integrity” by Dr. Ted Galen Carpenter, a senior fellow for defense and foreign policy studies at Cato. In light of recent events in Ukraine, the April 16, 2014 commentary draws attention to Washington’s inconsistent track record regarding the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries. Dr. Carpenter cites Cyprus as one example, and he furthermore points to AHI Founder Gene Rossides’ new book, *Kissinger and Cyprus: A Study in Lawlessness*, stating it makes a “solid case” that the Nixon administration aided Ankara’s aggression toward Cyprus.

Dr. Carpenter writes: “*The Turkish government certainly has never paid a significant price for invading and partitioning its neighbor. Nor has it done so for later establishing a secessionist entity, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, in the occupied territory and bringing in tens of thousands of settlers from the Turkish mainland.*”

## ACTION ALERTS

### **[February 26, 2014](#)**

AHI Chapter Presidents, Congressional Contact Team Leaders, Members and Friends were urged to contact their U.S. Representatives and urge them to co-sponsor Congressional Resolution H.R.477 on the FYROM name recognition issue.

## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

In August 2013, AHI Member ATHINA BALTA started her own legal practice, Athina Balta Law Group PLLC. The firm focuses on strategic planning. Clients define their desired objectives and the firm accomplishes them through a network of powerful and valuable connections in multiple sectors and fields including immigration, business, litigation, international and space law as well as matters pertinent to Greek Americans with property, tax or inheritance issues in Greece or Greeks seeking to invest or start a business in the United States. Balta is a member of the New York and DC Bars. She has a Law Degree from the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, and an LLM in Litigation and Dispute Resolution from George Washington University. She also has advanced to Candidacy with her Doctoral studies at George Washington University where she pursues a Ph.D. in Public Administration and Policy with a focus on Space, Science and Technology.

CONSTANTINE LARIGAKIS recently joined Sigmapharm Laboratories, LLC as Director of Corporate Affairs. Constantine brings more than 24 years experience in banking/finance and business development. Constantine joins Sigmapharm having recently been employed by TD Bank, NA as Vice President/Credit Officer in their small business division in Cherry Hill, N.J. Constantine’s new role will include managing and



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overseeing the accounting and finance functions amongst other responsibilities. Constantine holds a BS Degree in Economics. Sigmapharm Laboratories, LLC, a privately held specialty pharmaceutical company is engaged in the development, manufacturing and marketing of unique generic and branded products.

The Alpha Omega Council sponsored a Wreath Ceremony for the Boston Marathon at the Massachusetts State House on April 17, 2014. The wreaths were presented to the Boston Athletic Association, and they were used to crown the winners of the Boston Marathon. AHI Member T.C. LIAKOS is the council's president.

With the involvement of NICHOLAS KALIS, an AHI member, the Rotary Club of Aegina and its counterpart in McLean, Virginia successfully raised funds to install computers in the public schools of Aegina. Currently, 712 children attend Aegina's middle and high schools; 392 attend its elementary schools. With the assistance of the Rotary Club of Great Falls, they raised \$ 22,500 to purchase 50 computers.

AHI congratulates longtime member EMANUEL L. "MANNY" ROUVELAS, who was recognized with the most prestigious award conveyed on Maritime industry professionals, the Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award, presented by the United Seaman's Service. He is the only practicing lawyer to date to have received this honor.

Illinois Governor Patrick Quinn appointed AHI Member ERIKA SPYROPOULOS commissioner of the Illinois Arts Council. Council members serve on a non-paid capacity and are charged with developing the state's public art policy. Spyropoulos indicated that one of her top priorities is to promote Hellenic-American art and culture. She is married to AHI Foundation Board Vice President TED G. SPYROPOULOS and the couple is active with many philanthropic endeavors benefiting the Greek community in the U.S. and Greece.

### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

#### Ambassador Recounts Upbringing, Foreign Service Experiences

Ambassador Patrick Theros is an individual many of us are familiar with due to his vast range of experiences internationally, in Washington, DC and within the Greek-American community. The ambassador was born in 1941 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Both of his parents found themselves in the United States having left Greece at different times and in rather unique ways. His father, having served in the Greek Navy during the Balkan Wars, immigrated from Lefkada at the end of 1913 to Sioux City, Iowa. After working there on the railroads for a period of time, he then moved to Detroit to "warm up," as Ambassador Theros quoted him. He ran bars and restaurants and imported Canadian whiskey during Prohibition before moving to Ann Arbor where he was instrumental in creating two institutions: the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Nickolas and The Brown Jug Restaurant (of particular importance to University of Michigan students).



*Ambassador Patrick Theros.*

Ambassador Theros's mother was born on the island of Chios in 1910. She herself was a small child when the Greek Navy liberated Chios in 1912, likely unaware that Theros's father was a sailor aboard one of those Greek marine ships. She went to the University of Athens and was one of only four women who graduated from the University in 1930. Following her graduation, she insisted that she be assigned as a high school teacher in Macedonia at a time when Bulgarian terrorists were killing Greek school teachers. Theros's grandfather, a priest, refused to allow her to do this ensuing in a huge fight between the two of them and as a result, she chose to sneak her way to America. In 1935, Theros's grandfather was on the wrong side of the failed Plastiras coup and also fled to the U.S. He was made the first priest of the new St. Nickolas Church in Ann Arbor.

"The rest," Theros says, "is history. I belabor these facts because they were an essential part of my version of being Greek and my character."

After graduating from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, Ambassador Theros served as a member of the United States Foreign Service from 1963 until 1999. Fluent in Greek, Spanish and Arabic, Theros worked in Qatar, Jordan, Nicaragua, UAE, Syria, Lebanon and Nicaragua and served as U.S. Ambassador to Qatar from 1995 to 1998. When asked, for what one can only assume is the umpteenth time, which post is his favorite; his answer was both diplomatic and honest.

"Every post was interesting and every post had its frustrations," Ambassador Theros says. "However, I came out of each position happy that I'd been there. More often than not, I'd leave a place saying, 'there's a great country going to hell,'" he laughs. He maintained that in actuality, he learned something new and left behind dear friends in each of his posts, something for which he remains grateful.

Ambassador Theros related how his Greek background helped his professional career immensely, both in unusual and in more conventional ways.

"We don't have the time to fully detail how my Hellenic background played an important and positive role in my life and career. Suffice it to say that Arabs love Greeks and a Greek American diplomat can dine out on it forever," Theros says.

One of his first conversations (of many similar ones) in Saudi Arabia, after about four months of living there, began with a question: “Are you American?” Although he’d say, “Yes, I am an American,” the questions persisted. “You don’t look American,” they’d reply. “Where were you born?” Perplexed to find that the Ambassador was indeed born in Michigan, they would keep at it, finally arriving at the inevitable: “Where was your father from?” Upon learning that Theros’s father was born in Greece the conversant would then nod knowingly and say, “Ah, you’re Eastern like we are!”

Apparently, Italians are not the only ones who hold the “una faccia, una razza” principle close to heart.



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“You have no idea how often Arabs would tell me in great detail how Greeks are culturally native to the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean,” Ambassador Theros says. “Native peoples like the Greeks are not considered a foreign people in that part of the world. The Orthodox Church, for example, is considered by locals to be a native church, not a foreign church.” Greeks are thought to be “with” them, meaning that in the “them against us” perspective that is frequently used amongst local populations, we are part of the “us.” “The fact that I was culturally and genetically Greek,” Theros shares, “meant that I was one of them. Not only that, it made the environment instantly more welcoming and easier in which to have conversations.”

Ambassador Theros went on to say that this made his posts in the Middle East a bit more like home as opposed to his posting in Nicaragua.

“The main reason why I missed Saudi Arabia so much when I was sent to Nicaragua was primarily because Greeks are culturally a thousand years closer to Saudis than they are to Nicaraguans, despite the population being Muslim,” Theros says, adding there are a lot of Greeks and Arab Orthodox Christians in Saudi Arabia and high numbers of local Orthodox Christians living in Syria and Lebanon.

“A phrase that I heard for the first time while living there,” Theros says, “was that Greeks have ‘blue bones.’ This means, essentially, that we were there first. We are more ‘native’ than they are.”

When asked what advice he would give young people interested in pursuing a career in the Foreign Service, Ambassador Theros jokes, “you can’t possibly have as much fun as I had!”

On a more somber note, he relays that the nature of American politics today and improved communications have changed the Foreign Service forever.

“In the past, they couldn’t be in contact with you twenty-four hours a day. But now, that’s completely changed. Before Skype, email, teleconferencing, and the ability to dial obscure villages in the middle of the mountains with little or no problems, (being in the Foreign Service was) a lot more fun,” he recounts. “You were given a responsibility and then expected to carry it out. Furthermore, American political life has become so politicized that American foreign policy is a residual of American domestic politics.”

Ambassador Theros’ multifaceted experiences in the Foreign Service served him well when he chose to pursue other avenues professionally. After his retirement, he remained involved in the private sector, advising governments, private sector corporations and non-governmental organizations in the United States, Europe and the Middle East. The Qatar Foreign Ministry asked Theros to lead the U.S.-Qatar Business Council, the preeminent bilateral trade organization advancing American and Qatari business relations, in 1999, of which he remains the President and Executive Director. Among his accomplishments in this capacity, Theros was instrumental in advising Qatar on the selection and negotiations with two major U.S. universities (Texas A&M and Georgetown University) and their establishment in the world-renowned Education City in Qatar.

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## CONGRESSIONAL SALUTE TO GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

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ideals held by Greece and the United States were reaffirmed by several members of Congress at the event which was held in cooperation with the co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, U.S. Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY).

AHI President Nick Larigakis served as Master of Ceremonies. He welcomed the guests and thanked Representatives Bilirakis and Maloney for their support to organize the reception and for their ongoing efforts to promote Greek American issues in the U.S. Congress.

Members of Congress who addressed the audience included (in order of appearance): U.S. Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), former chairman and current member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Ed Royce (R-CA), who is chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Grace Meng (D-NY), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Brad Schneider (D-IL), a member of

the Committee on Foreign Affairs; Tony Cardenas (D-CA), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), and Eliot Engel (D-NY), who is the ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.



*Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos.*

Special guest speakers were: Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos, Ambassador of Cyprus to the U.S. George Chacalli, and AHEPA Executive Director Basil Mossaidis. The speakers emphasized their admiration for Hellenic culture and for the valiant and inspirational struggle for Greek Independence achieved in 1821. They also

expressed their support for a proper settlement of the Cyprus issue, a proper resolution to the FYROM name-recognition issue, and religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate. During the evening, there was a presentation of traditional Greek dances performed by the Return to Origins Greek Folk Dance Troupe under the direction of Rena Papapostolou.

## HISTORIC THREE-COUNTRY LEADERSHIP MISSION

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*Delegation with Lieutenant General (res.) MK Moshe "Bogie" Ya'alon (Likud), Minister of Defense, following their briefing.*

local community leaders, from the three countries and the United States. AHI President Nick Larigakis, Vice President James Lagos, and Board Members Kostas Alexakis and Peter Bota participated on the mission that ran from Jan. 8 to 15, 2014.

The joint delegation began its mission in Israel, Jan. 8 to 11, holding meetings with: Minister of Defense retired Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon; Minister of Foreign Affairs Avigdor Lieberman; Minister of Strategic Affairs, Intelligence and International Relations Yuval Steinitz; Minister of Economy, Religious Services, Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs Naftali Bennett; Speaker of the Knesset Yuli-Yoel Edelstein; Minister of Tourism Uzi Landau; Deputy National Security Advisor Eran Lerman; and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Zeev Elkin.

In addition, the participants held a round-table discussion with Israeli ambassadors and ambassadors-delegates to Greece and Cyprus as well as several officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and received a briefing from the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). The delegation also visited Yad Vashem - World Center for Holocaust Research, Documentation, Education and Commemoration. Representatives from AHI and AHEPA had an audience with His Beatitude Patriarch of Jerusalem and All Palestine Theophilos III and held a working dinner with Despoina Lourbacou, first counselor, Embassy of Greece in Israel, on Jan. 10.



*Delegation presenting a commemorative gift to His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem and All Palestine. From left: Andrew Kaffes, Kostas Alexakis, Anthony Kouzounis, Patriarch Theophilos III, AHI President Nick Larigakis, Jim Lagos, Peter Bota.*

"Israel afforded us a vital opportunity to raise awareness of our issues as an American Hellenic community as well as to learn more about issues of concern to Israel and Israel's perspective on developments in the region," Larigakis said. "For example, a greater understanding of how significant an issue Iran has become for Israel was presented. However, we also conveyed to our interlocutors how

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unstable Turkey has become for the region, including its close relationship with Iran and support for Hamas.”



*Cypriot Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ioannis Kasoulidis, meets with the Delegation in Nicosia.*

The second leg of the mission was held in Cyprus, Jan. 11 to 13. There, the joint delegation met with: Foreign Minister Ioannis Kasoulides; Ambassador of Cyprus to the United States George Chacalli; and His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos II of Cyprus. In addition, the participants visited Turkish-occupied Cyprus for an all-day outing on Jan. 12 that took them to the ghost town of Varosha and Famagusta. Along the way, they viewed the religious and cultural destruction of Orthodox churches in Turkish-occupied Cyprus. AHEPA District 27, Cyprus, hosted a dinner for the delegation and local dignitaries on Jan. 12.



*Delegation briefing at the Ministry of Defense provided by General Mikhail Kostarakos, Chief, Hellenic National Defense General Staff.*



*Joint delegation at the Presidential Palace with Greek President, Karolos Papoulias.*

“Our visit to Cyprus provided us with tremendous perspective on Cyprus’s geopolitical importance in the region as well as powerful images of the somber remnants of Turkey’s illegal invasion and occu-

pation of an EU-member state, Cyprus,” Larigakis said.

The final leg of the three-country visit was to Greece, Jan. 13 to 15, where the delegation met with: President of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Papoulias; Prime Minister Antonis Samaras; Minister of Defense Dimitris Avramopoulos; Speaker of Hellenic Parliament Evangelos Meimarakis; Minister of Tourism Olga Kefalogianni; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Kyriakos Gerontopoulos; Minister of Culture and Sports Panos Panagiotopoulos; American Ambassador to Greece David Pearce; and Israeli Ambassador to Greece Arye Mekel.



*Briefing with Minister of Defense Dimitris Avramopoulos.*

The participants also received a thorough briefing about Greece’s military and defense capabilities from General of the Hellenic Army Michail Kostarakos, who is the chief of staff for the Hellenic National Defense. General and Mrs. Kostarakos hosted a welcome dinner for the delegation on the evening of its arrival to Athens, Jan. 13.

On the evening of Jan. 14, the participants received a private tour of the New Acropolis Museum, including a greeting from the museum’s president of the board of directors, Professor Dimitrios Pandermanlis. Following the tour, Culture and Sports Minister Panagiotopoulos hosted a dinner for the delegation at the museum.

AHI-Athens Chapter President George Economou also joined the delegation for evening events and AHI Board Member James Lagos graciously hosted a farewell dinner for the delegation at the Grande Bretagne on Jan. 15.

“As in Israel and Cyprus, the meetings afforded the delegation an important opportunity to raise important issues and to exchange views and ideas on how to strengthen the trilateral relations between the countries,” Larigakis said. “Also, Greece clearly demonstrated the country’s geostrategic importance to the region and offered insight on the country’s priorities as head of the EU presidency for the first six months of 2014.”

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