



AHI HONORS COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE AT 38TH AWARDS GALA



Hellenic Heritage and National Public Service Award recipients from left: Phil Christopher, Dr. Anthony Limberakis, Ambassador Gianna Angelopoulos, Congressman Mike Grimm.

The American Hellenic Institute (AHI) hosted its 38th Anniversary Hellenic Heritage Achievement and Public Service Awards Dinner, March 9, 2013, 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 to the Greek American community or community at-

Continued on page 2

AHI FORUM EXAMINES CYPRUS'S BANKING CRISIS

AHI hosted a noon forum discussion on the topic of "Cyprus Banking Crisis: Facts and Implications for the Future," featuring Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., partner, Sfikas and Karambelas, and AHI Legal Counsel. The forum was held March 28, 2013 at AHI's Hellenic House.

"The banking crisis in Cyprus has dominated headlines around the world and impacted financial markets," said AHI President Nick Larigakis. "We felt it timely to host a forum to explain what transpired, the ramifications of the crisis, and where Cyprus goes from here, including potential steps it can take to remedy the situation."

Karambelas's presentation began with providing a brief background of the Turkish invasion and ongoing occupation of the island as well as Cyprus's history within the Eurozone. He then went on to present the context for the current banking crisis and the details and implications of the agreed upon deal between Cyprus and the European Union. Following Karambelas's presentation, President Larigakis offered closing remarks, and he moderated a Q&A session with the audience. ■

AHI HOSTS ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL SALUTE TO GREEK INDEPENDENCE



Return To Origins dancers with Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, Chargé d'affaires Olympia Neocleous, Rena Papapostolou, Nick Larigakis, Congressman Frank Pallone and Congresswoman Dina Titus.

AHI celebrated the 192nd anniversary of Greek Independence Day by hosting its annual "Congressional Salute to Greek Independence Day," on March 20, 2013. The common democratic 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 recep-

Continued on page 12

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
AHI General News	2
AHI in the News	6
Visitors to Hellenic House	6
Statements and Announcements	7
Letters to Government Officials	8
Action Alerts	8
Members in the News	9
Member Spotlight	9

AHI GENERAL NEWS

HONORS COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE 38TH AWARDS GALA

Continued from page 1



Master of Ceremonies, Alexis Christoforous.

large. They were U.S. Rep. Michael Grimm, Eleventh Congressional District of New York; Philip Christopher, president, International Coordinating Committee—Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA) and president, Pancyprian Association of America; Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and Gianna Angelopoulos, ambassador of the Hellenic Republic.

Alexis Christoforous, news correspondent, *CBS News*, was the evening's emcee. American Hellenic Institute Secretary of the Board of Directors Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq. introduced Christoforous.

The Marines of Headquarters Battalion presented the colors and the American and Greek national anthems were performed by Elena Stavrakas. Rev. Konstantinos A. Pavlakos, Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church, offered the invocation. Apollonia Band 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. In addition, they reviewed the initiatives and programs that AHI and AHIF provide the community.

Honorees Humbled, Moved by Accolades



From Left: James Lagos, Congressman Mike Grimm, Dr. Maria Limberakis, Dr. Anthony Limberakis, Nick Larigakis.

U.S. Congressman Michael Grimm, a champion of the Greek American community, accepted the AHI Hellenic Heritage National Public Service Award for his commitment to public service and his unwavering support in strengthening United States relations with Greece and Cyprus. In acceptance, the congressman affirmed that being an advocate for Hellenic issues is akin to advocating for the best interest of the United States.

He stated, "It really is just me being a good American to so strongly advocate and support the Hellenic issues and ideals. I want to thank the institute for recognizing me, and I want to thank my friend Nick Larigakis, who from day one as I came to this new job as a brand new freshman in congress was there for me and helped me."

In acceptance of the AHI Hellenic Heritage Achievement and National Public Service Award, Philip Christopher, president, International Coordinating Committee—Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA) and president, Pancyprian Association of America, acknowledged the sacrifice of AHI Founder Eugene Rossides following the invasion of Cyprus in 1974.



Gene Rossides holding up the AHI Lifetime Achievement Award for George Spyropoulos.

"I want to congratulate the American Hellenic Institute, its founder, Eugene Rossides, who from 1974 not only taught us how to lobby and how to work out here in this capital, Washington DC, but who himself sacrificed his own brilliant legal career to carry the torch for Cyprus. I want to thank Nick Larigakis, the AHI board of directors, and Dr. Spireas for this honor."

He also touched upon the Cyprus issue and the hard work of individuals to the cause of Cyprus. "39 years ago—almost 39 years ago—we all embarked together on a journey. That journey was a journey for freedom. We saw an injustice that took place. We saw a tragedy that took place, and we as Americans embarked on that journey for freedom for Cyprus. Each and every one of you in this room has contributed in many ways. Some of you have donated for fund raisers, some of you participated in demonstrations, and some of you attended events like this. But make no doubt about it each and every one of you has made a difference by supporting the American Hellenic Institute."

Accepting the AHI Religious Freedom Award on behalf of The Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Archons of the Ecumenical

AHI GENERAL NEWS

Patriarchate was the Order's National Commander, Dr. Anthony Limberakis. In acceptance, Dr. Limberakis stated, "The Order of St. Andrew is the only organization in the United States whose exclusive mission is to defend the Mother Church of Constantinople, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. We consistently and systematically bring the issue of religious freedom of the Mother Church and other religious minorities in Turkey to the European Union and its rotating presidency nations, to the largest human rights meetings in Europe in Warsaw, Poland, the OSCE human dimension meetings, European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, and to the White House...We travel to Ankara, and together with our ambassador of the United States, meet with the government leaders with the simple message: reopen Halki, return our properties, stop interfering in the election of the Ecumenical Patriarch, respect the title of 'Ecumenical,' and recognize the world center of Orthodoxy for what it is—the center of spiritual salvation and a corporate entity with legal personality. In the eyes of the Turkish government the Ecumenical Patriarchate does not exist and that must end."

Dr. Limberakis added, "I am compelled to pay tribute to the American Hellenic Institute for its herculean efforts to promote religious freedom of the Mother Church under the leadership of its founder, Archon Eugene Rossides, and its president, Archon Nick Larigakis, and together with Archon Dr. Spiros Spireas. AHI has been impactful and consequential." He concluded by noting that although as individuals we may have different agendas but "we are all united by one Mother Church, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and one spiritual father, His All Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch."

Gianna Angelopoulos, ambassador of the Hellenic Republic and former head of the 2004 Athens Organizing Committee, accepted the Hellenic Heritage National Public Service Award. In her opening remarks, she acknowledged the leadership of AHI, including founder Eugene Rossides, who she called "a legend" and the work of AHI.

She said, "I know there is something special hidden in this award, something to be treasured. It is one bond; one very powerful bond that ties all of us here together. It's a bond that one little girl became aware of when she was just five years old in a tiny village of Crete in Greece."

Ambassador Angelopoulos recalled a conversation she had with her grandfather when she was five years old, "Grandpa, tell me again about the story why your hands are like this, why your hands are so smooth and hairless?" Her grandfather spoke of the opportunities America provided him as a young man, working in a steel mill in Indiana and how the heat from the furnaces of the mill made his skin smooth. But that opportunity afforded him to support his poor family, a wife and three children, back in his Cretan village. She spoke of her admiration for the Greek American community, its values of hard work and commitment to community.

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, Chargé d'affaires, Embassy of Cyprus to the United States, Olympia Neocleous, U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Ted G. Spyropoulos, Theodore & Erika Spyropoulos Foundation; International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus Alternate President Tassos Zambas, Hellenic American National Council President Paul Kotrotsios, and Cyprus Federation of America President Panicos Papanicolaou.

Special guests attending the event included: Ambassador of Greece to the United States Christos Panagopoulos, Ambassador of Cyprus to the United Nations Nicholas Emiliou, Chargé d'affaires, Embassy of Cyprus to the United States, Olympia Neocleous; Counsel General of Cyprus in New York Koula Sophianou, former U.S. Ambassador to Greece Tom Miller, former U.S. Ambassador to Qatar Partick Theros, former U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes, and New York State Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis.

Briefing with top Greek, Cypriot Diplomats Comprise Weekend's Events



From Left: Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, Chargé d'affaires Olympia Neocleous and Nick Larigakis.



Ambassador Gianna Angelopoulos.

As part of the weekend's festivities AHI hosted a breakfast briefing with Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopou-

AHI GENERAL NEWS

los and Chargé d'affaires for the Embassy of Cyprus Olympia Neocleous on March 9. 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.

AHI also hosted a dinner reception featuring Gianna Angelopoulos as the guest speaker at the Daughters of American Revolution (DAR) Continental Hall, March 8. She provided the scoop on her latest book, "My Greek Drama," which has received rave reviews, including President Bill Clinton. The book sheds light on Angelopoulos' life and provides her thoughts for moving Greece forward in the wake of its economic crisis. ■

AHI PRESIDENT CONGRATULATES VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN AT INAUGURAL RECEPTION



AHI President congratulates Vice President Biden at Inaugural Reception.

AHI President Nick Larigakis shared a moment with Vice President Joe Biden when the vice president attended an Inaugural reception in honor of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios on January 20, 2013 at the St. Regis Hotel, Washington. "On behalf of the American Hellenic Institute, I congratulated Vice President Biden on his reelection," said AHI President Nick Larigakis. "We look forward to continuing to work with the Obama administration in its second term." During their brief conversation, Vice President Biden thanked AHI members for their support over the years.

AHI, AHEPA MEET WITH UNITED AIRLINES; GOAL TO ESTABLISH DIRECT ROUTE TO ATHENS

AHI met with Darren Scott, senior analyst, Atlantic Planning and International Network Planning for United Airlines, on January 17, 2013, in Chicago, to explore possibilities of establishing a direct route from a major United hub in the United States to Athens, Greece. AHI is working in collaboration with the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association

(AHEPA) to boost tourism to Greece in the effort to help its economy. One way is to improve upon the annual number of Americans who visit Greece, which is approximately 350,000, by making air travel more convenient through direct routes to Athens from the continental United States.

AHI Board Member Kostas Alexakis accompanied AHI President Larigakis to the meeting. AHEPA Executive Director Basil Mossaidis also participated via conference call.

AHI HOSTS WELCOME DINNER FOR GREECE'S OPPOSITION LEADER



Nick Larigakis, AHI President, addressing the attendees at a dinner honoring Alexis Tsipras, the main Greek opposition leader.

AHI hosted a dinner for Mr. Alexis Tsipras, the leader of Greece's main opposition party Syriza, who visited Washington, DC for the first time. The dinner, which was co-sponsored by Greek Dream, Inc., was held at the Capital Hilton on January 22, 2013. During his two-day visit, Mr. Tsipras made a speech at the Brookings Institution and met with U.S. State Department officials and members of Congress.



From left—Nick Karambelas, Kostas Alexakis, Alexis Tsipras, Ambassador Georgios Ayfantis (Diplomatic Advisor), Nick Larigakis, Rena Dourou (SYRIZA MP and Foreign Affairs Advisor), Jim Marketos, George Mermelas.

In his remarks, Mr. Tsipras provided his perspective of the current state Greece finds itself as the people of Greece endure austerity measures.

"After five years of recession, Greece has lost 25 percent of its GDP," Tsipras said. "Unemployment is very high and there are

very few opportunities for young people. I am close to the generation that now finds themselves without hope in Greece.” According to Tsipras, the party’s main priority is to help Greece in this difficult situation and to help people invest in Greece.

Accompanying Mr. Tsipras to the dinner were: Ambassador Georgios Ayfantis, diplomatic Advisor to Mr. Tsipras; Member of Parliament Rena Dourou, who is a foreign affairs advisor to Mr. Tsipras; Nick Pappas, chief of staff; and Yannis Milios, economic affairs advisor.

Also in attendance at the dinner were: Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos, Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the U.S. Pavlos Anastasiades, U.S. Representative Frank Pallone (D-NJ), former U.S. Ambassadors to Greece Tom Miller and Daniel Speckhard, former U.S. ambassador to Qatar Patrick Theros, Col. Evangelos Papadopoulos, defense and military attaché, Embassy of Greece; among many other dignitaries.

Tsipras, Advisors Meet with AHI

While in Washington, Mr. Tsipras also met with representatives of AHI, including President Nick Larigakis, Board of Directors Secretary Nick Karambelas, and Board Members Kostas Alexakis and James Marketos at AHI’s Hellenic House on January 24, 2013. Ambassador Georgios Ayfantis, diplomatic Advisor to Mr. Tsipras and Member of Parliament Rena Dourou also attended.

AHI SUBMITS TESTIMONY TO HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON FY2014 FOREIGN AID

AHI submitted testimony to the House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs on foreign aid proposals for FY2014 on March 20, 2013. 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 in 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 strongly opposed any reduction of Economic Support Fund (ESF) funding for Cyprus. However, AHI testified that it supports continued ESF funding for Cyprus as long as it is tied exclusively to bi-communal projects of the island as mandated by U.S. law. The law states U.S. funds are to support only “measures aimed at reunification.”

AHI RELEASES FACT SHEET DETAILING GREECE’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS, NATO

AHI announced the release of a fact sheet on April 4, 2013 that details Greece’s contributions to United States interests in the eastern Mediterranean and to NATO.

“When it comes down to it, Greece is a proven, reliable, and invaluable ally of the United States and an integral contributor

to NATO, taking its obligations to the Alliance seriously despite the well-chronicled economic crisis it has endured,” said AHI President Nick Larigakis. “Our fact sheet presents data, provides testimonials from current and former U.S. government officials, and highlights examples of how Greece has contributed to United States security interests and international peacekeeping operations over many decades. We strongly urge everyone to utilize the fact sheet as an educational tool when speaking or meeting with policymakers or even our peers in the community.”

HOUSTON HOSTS SCREENING OF CYPRUS DOCUMENTARY

AHI took its series of “Town Hall Screenings” of the one-hour documentary “Cyprus Still Divided: A U.S. Foreign Policy Failure” to Houston, Texas at the Upper Kirby Building, March 31, 2013. Houston became the 25th major metropolitan area in North America to host a town hall screening.

The event was held in cooperation with the Hellenic Professional Society of Texas. Dimitrios Varvarezos introduced AHI President Nick Larigakis who gave a presentation on the documentary. Author George Blytas moderated the discussion that followed.

“The documentary sheds light and scrutinizes U.S. foreign policy toward Cyprus surrounding the 1974 Turkish invasion,” said Larigakis. “We are deeply grateful to the outstanding support provided by the Greek American community of Houston. It was a pleasure to work in cooperation with community leaders, and we thank the individuals who attended and expressed a commitment to raising awareness about the Cyprus issue in the community. Our goal is to encourage communities to urge their PBS affiliates to air the documentary here in Houston.”

Larigakis reiterated the overarching goal to encourage communities to urge their PBS affiliates to air the documentary. It has aired on Maryland Public Television (October 17, 2011) and Detroit Public Television (September 13, 2010). The documentary was made possible by the support of the American Hellenic Institute Foundation.

2013 POLICY STATEMENTS RELEASED; ADVOCATE FOR RULE OF LAW

AHI released its 2013 Policy Statements on April 15, 2013. The policy statements discuss issues affecting the Greek American community as they pertain to United States relations with Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey. This year, the statements also include AHI’s recently released 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 greater community at-large,” said AHI President Nick Larigakis. “The positions presented in the document advocate for the application of the rule of law and are in

AHI GENERAL NEWS

the best interests of the United States. We also sincerely thank the large number of organizations that have endorsed the policy statements.” The policy statements are approved by several membership-based organizations including:

- American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA)
- American Hellenic Council of California
- Armenian National Committee of America
- Cyprus Federation of America
- Evrytalian Association of America “Velouchi”
- Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC)
- Hellenic American National Council (HANC)
- International Coordination Committee-Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA)
- Pancretan Association of America
- Pan-Pontian Federation of U.S.A and Canada
- Panepirotic Federation of America
- United Chios Societies of America and Canada

Download the Policy Statements at www.aheworld.org.

AHI BEGINS POSTING NEWS ARTICLES AS MEMBER BENEFIT

In an effort to share in the discourse on topics of concern to AHI’s audience, AHI began posting links to articles from major media outlets, including *The Guardian*, *The New York Times*, and the *Economist Intelligence Unit*. The articles have addressed Cyprus’ financial crisis and Greece’s debt forgiveness toward Germany after WWII. Links to the articles can be found under Press Releases on the AHI website.

AHI IN THE NEWS

Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., AHI’s legal counsel, appeared on National Public Radio’s “The Diane Rehm Show” on March 21, 2013, to discuss the “Cyprus and EU Bailouts.” Tom Gjelton guest hosted the show which aired on WAMU 88.5 FM in Washington, DC. Nicholas Schrifin, correspondent, *ABC News*; Sheila Bair, senior adviser, The Pew Charitable Trusts and former chair of Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; and Jacob Kirkegaard, research fellow, Peterson Institute and senior associate at Rhodium Group, a New York-based research firm, joined Karambelas on the panel.

Letters to the Editor

AHI released a letter to the editor it submitted to the *New York Times* in response to a Feb. 4, 2013 column titled, “European Union’s Leverage Over Cyprus is Ephemeral” by Paul Taylor. The columnist suggested the European Union utilize the Republic of Cyprus’s current economic condition as leverage for a solution to the republic’s 38-year division. In his letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis states this notion is unacceptable and identifies flawed points made by Taylor. Among them, Taylor regrets the failure of the Annan Plan, placing blame on the Greek Cypriots. Larigakis corrects the record on the Annan

Plan, citing the inclusion of last-minute demands in the Plan by Turkey. Taylor also laments the absence of the United States in the Cyprus peace process. Larigakis rebutted Taylor, stating what the United States’ role should be to exert its influence on Turkey to play a supportive and not detrimental role in the peace process. Larigakis concluded, “Clearly, Turkey is the obstacle to peace and its own progress toward EU accession.”

Also, AHI released a letter to the editor it submitted to the *New York Times* in response to a March 27, 2013 article titled, “For Cyprus, A Sudden Need to Play Nice with Turkey,” by James Kanter. The article suggests Cyprus may need to “brush up” its relations with Turkey in the wake of its banking crisis, the challenge of bringing natural gas reserves to market, and Israel’s apology to Turkey over the Gaza flotilla incident three years ago. In his letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis rebutted this notion stating, “...it is Turkey that continues a policy of non-recognition of Cyprus and pursues an aggressive and provocative stance toward Cyprus and its right to explore for natural resources within its exclusive economic zone.” Larigakis concluded, “If Turkey yearns to become an energy hub, then it is the one that must normalize relations with Cyprus.”

VISITORS TO HELLENIC HOUSE

AHI Welcomes Hellenic Navy Chief to Hellenic House



From left—Nick Karambelas, Lieutenant Commander Nikolaos Petrakos, Naval Attache Captain George Mataragas, Vice Admiral Kosmas Christidis, Nick Larigakis, Commodore Dimitrios Yourazelis, Captain Fragkiskos Leloudas.

Greece’s Chief of the Hellenic Navy, Vice Admiral Kosmas Christidis, and delegation of Hellenic Navy officers, visited AHI’s Hellenic House on January 25, 2013.

“We were honored to welcome Vice Admiral Christidis and his colleagues to Hellenic House,” AHI President Nick Larigakis said. “We held a substantive discussion about various aspects of Greece’s naval cooperation with its allies, its geostrategic importance and its significance as a regional power. The vice admiral and his delegation provided a clear picture of Greece’s contributions as a NATO ally from the standpoint of the Hellenic Navy, which includes the Hellenic Navy’s support to bases at Souda Bay, Crete.”

AHI GENERAL NEWS

Captain George Mataragas, naval attaché, Embassy of Greece; Lieutenant Commander Nikolaos Petrakos, Commodore Dimitrios Vourazelis, and Captain Fragkiskos Leloudas accompanied Vice Admiral Christidis to the meeting. Joining AHI President Larigakis at the meeting were AHI Board Secretary Nick Karambelas and Legislative Assistant Georgea Polizos.

AHI Welcomes Former Greek Interior Minister to Hellenic House



From left: Nick Karambelas, Maria Spanos, Ioannis Ragkousis, Nick Larigakis.

Greece's former minister of Interior, Decentralization and E-Governance, Ioannis Ragkousis, visited the American Hellenic Institute's Hellenic House on March 27, 2013. His visit to the United States was under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. "We were pleased to welcome former Minister Ragkousis to Hellenic House," AHI President Nick Larigakis said. "We appreciated learning about his visit and the State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program." In addition to Larigakis, AHI Board Secretary Nicholas G. Karambelas attended the meeting. Ms. Maria Spanos, a Greek language interpreter, accompanied Mr. Ragkousis.

STATEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AHI Foundation Publishes Winter 2012-2013 Online Policy Journal

The American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF) announced the third volume release of its Winter 2012-13 Online Policy Journal. "Our policy journal offers an annual review of political issues challenging Greece, Cyprus, and Greek America," said Dan Georgakas, editor of the Online Policy journal and Director of the Greek American Studies Project, Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, Queens College (CUNY). "Some of our essays have a near-term focus while others offer longer-term perspectives. Still others take on broader, cultural issues. We are particularly pleased that this issue features a number of essays written by younger Greek Americans just now becoming politically engaged."

AHI Releases 2012 Annual Report

On March 12, 2013 AHI released its 2012 Annual Report. "All of AHI's policy-based programs and initiatives for 2012 that advance the best interests of the United States on issues of importance to the Greek American community are encapsulated in this report," said President Nick Larigakis. "We are proud to highlight the series of Town Hall-style screenings of the documentary 'Cyprus Still Divided: A U.S. Foreign Policy Failure' that took place worldwide, AHI's second visit to Israel, and successful annual programs including our 'Future of Hellenism in America' conference and foreign policy trip abroad for college students, among others."

AHI Opposes Passage of Legislation Authorizing Naval Vessel Transfer to Turkey

AHI released a statement on January 2, 2013 stating its strong opposition to the passage of H.R.6649, Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2012 in the U.S. House of Representatives, which occurred by voice vote on December 31, 2012. The legislation includes a provision authorizing the transfer of two naval vessels (guided missile frigates) to Turkey. As a result of the bill's passage, AHI President Nick Larigakis issued a statement, which read in part:

"The American Hellenic Institute is strongly opposed to legislation that passed in the final hours of the 112th Congress to authorize the transfer of two naval vessels, guided missile frigates, to Turkey.

"We disagree with the rationales presented in favor of the legislation by Foreign Affairs Chairman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, which included anti-piracy efforts in Somalia and to level the balance of power in the region, citing the transfer of three Osprey naval vessels to Greece in 2010. The frigates that will be transferred free of charge to Turkey can only serve but one purpose as they have in the past: to cause provocation in the eastern Mediterranean against U.S. allies Greece, Cyprus and Israel."

AHI Assesses Findings of European Commission's "Turkey 2012 Progress Report"

AHI released its assessment of the European Commission's 2012 report on progress made by Turkey in preparing for European Union membership. The 94-page report covers on the period from October 2011 to September 2012.

"Overall, the American Hellenic Institute agrees with the findings in the 2012 Progress Report on Turkey," AHI President Nick Larigakis said. "However, the report contained omissions where we felt analysis was needed."

The European Commission's Progress Report presents Turkey's progress in several issue areas, including: human rights and the protection of minorities, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion; and regional issues and international obligations of which Cyprus and peaceful settlement border disputes with Greece are included.

AHI Welcomes UN Report on Freedom of Religion in Cyprus

AHI welcomed a report issued by UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Mr. Heiner Bielefeldt, that reaf-

firms religious freedom violations in Turkish-occupied Cyprus.

“We commend the UN report for identifying religious freedom violations in Turkish-occupied Cyprus and documenting them for the record,” said AHI President Nick Larigakis. “We applaud Mr. Bielefeldt for performing a thorough analysis, even taking time to visit the enclaved to assess the restrictions of religion freedom placed upon them. Unfortunately, the UN report reaffirms that suppression of religious freedom continues to exist in Turkish-occupied Cyprus which has resulted in the wanton destruction of Cyprus’ cultural and religious heritage as documented by other leading expert groups, including the Law Library of Congress and the U.S. Helsinki Commission.”

The UN special rapporteur’s report cites the existence of vandalism to religious monuments and cemeteries, the limited presence of priests, the intimidation provoked by “police officers” of the illegal Turkish Cypriot regime by taking photographs during religious services and the “restrictive and unfair handling of claims.” In addition, the UN special rapporteur also reaffirms all religious groups in Turkish-occupied Cyprus are under the “close surveillance” of “police officers” of the illegal Turkish Cypriot regime, and furthermore, he notes the effect upon the religious identity of Turkish Cypriots as a result of Turkey’s illegal colonization policy.

AHI Applauds Bilirakis’ Statement on Turkish Prime Minister’s Offensive Remark

AHI applauded a statement issued by U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), who serves as co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues and Congressional Hellenic-Israel Alliance, which condemns a statement made by Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who compared Zionism to Fascism, calling it “a crime against humanity.”

In his statement, Congressman Bilirakis said, “Prime Minister Erdogan’s statement is yet another example of the ongoing campaign to delegitimize Israel, the only continuously democratic nation in the region. False comparisons, such as this, only perpetuate extremism across the globe. Prime Minister Erdogan should immediately retract his statements.”

“We commend Congressman Bilirakis for his swift condemnation of the Turkish prime minister’s appalling statement,” said AHI President Nick Larigakis. “It is further evidence of Prime Minister Erdogan’s ongoing hostility toward Israel. We call on Congress to express its strong disapproval of the prime minister’s statement.”

AHI Disappointed in Obama Administration’s Recent Actions regarding Policy in the Eastern Mediterranean

On March 26, 2013 AHI issued a statement expressing disappointment with recent Obama administration statements regarding Turkey and Israel which the Institute believes are detrimental to the best interests of the United States in the eastern Mediterranean. The AHI statement begins:

“The Obama administration views Friday’s apology by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Turkish Prime

Minister Tayyip Erdogan for the Gaza flotilla raid in 2010 as a positive step forward in the region. In his March 22 statement on the development, President Obama said, ‘...we attach great importance to the restoration of positive relations between them in order to advance regional peace and security. Whatever diplomatic benefits may flow from the apology, the fact remains that Turkey: (1) continues to occupy 37 percent of Cyprus with 43,000 illegal troops and over 180,000 illegal settlers now in its 39th year; (2) has expressed and continues to express hostility toward any effort by Cyprus to extract energy reserves from its EEZ in coordination with the efforts of Israel to likewise extract energy reserves from its EEZ; all with the aid of the U.S.-based Noble Energy firm. Addressing the diplomatic issues between Turkey and Israel without addressing Turkey’s aggression against Cyprus and the Turkish provocations on the energy extraction issue is both unconstructive and unwise.” The full statement can be read at www.ahi-world.org.

AHI Saddened by Passing of Andrew Athens

AHI mourned the passing of Mr. Andrew A. Athens on March 14, 2013, in Chicago.

“Andrew Athens was an exceptional American and tremendous Hellenic,” said AHI Founder Gene Rossides. “I admired his passion for Hellenism and his unselfish work on behalf of Hellenic causes and the Hellenic community worldwide. Our deepest sympathies, thoughts and prayers are with his family.”

“Andrew Athens was a tremendous American who fought and sacrificed during World War Two for the values that make America a great nation,” said AHI President Nick Larigakis. “It was with this same spirit and fervor that Andy fought for Greece, Cyprus, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and for all things important to Hellenism and Hellenic causes. May his memory be eternal.”

LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

On March 26, 2013 AHI and the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) sent a joint letter to the acting head of the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Demetrios Marantis, to encourage the Obama Administration to ensure that any future trade measures involving the Republic of Turkey, including both bilateral and European Union-related agreements, require, as a statutory precondition, that Turkey end its illegal economic blockade of Armenia and its unlawful military occupation of Cyprus.

ACTION ALERTS

April 19, 2013

AHI chapter presidents, congressional contact team leaders, members, and friends were urged to contact their U.S. Representatives to urge them to co-sponsor H.Res.136, a resolution urging Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

AHI MEMBER NEWS

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Design Cuisine, a full-service catering company providing fine dining for political, corporate, and social events throughout the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, co-owned by AHI Member Steve Veletsis, catered the prestigious 2013 Presidential Inaugural Luncheon at the U.S. Capitol on January 21, 2013. Design Cuisine was selected out of six DC-area catering companies. As a result, Design Cuisine's preparations for the luncheon were featured on *The Today Show* and *CBS This Morning* and several other prominent media outlets.

George Tsetsekos, Ph.D., dean emeritus of Drexel University's LeBow College of Business, assumed the reins as chair of Global Interdependence Center's Board of Directors in January 2013. Dr. Tsetsekos is the fourth individual to hold this position in GIC's 37-year history. GIC is a Philadelphia-based non-profit organization that holds conferences and programming to increase global dialogue and promote free trade, in order to improve cooperation and understanding among nation states, with the goal of reducing international conflicts and improving worldwide living standards.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

"A LITTLE CORNER OF GREECE IN ALABAMA"

By Georgea Polizos



Jim and Elmore Inscoc, of Montgomery, Alabama.

"We just love so much of Greece," Elmore Inscoc said. "Quite a few people have even suggested that I might have been switched at birth," added her husband, Jim.

Jim and Elmore Inscoc, of Montgomery, Ala., have supported and operated the Jasmine Hill Gardens and Outdoor Museum in Montgomery since 1971. The gardens are referred to as "a little corner of Greece in the United States." In addition to its beautiful flowers, fountains, hidden stairways, and secret courtyards, it is also home to a collection of more than 40 pieces of Greek and Roman statuary (originals and replicas), the only full-scale reproduction of the ruins of the Temple of Hera in the world, and a separate administrative building built as the Temple would have looked in 6th century BC. Furthermore, the

Victor G. Polizos Library, a collection of more than 2,000 books, magazines, and videos on topics related to Hellenism, is housed in the library within the new temple building.



Temple of Hera.

Jasmine Hill was founded in 1928 when its original owners, Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpatrick, moved to the 24-acre property. Mr. Fitzpatrick had fallen in love with Greek history and mythology when he was a student at Yale. It had always been their dream to build Greek-inspired gardens around their home. In pursuit of this dream, the pair travelled to Greece multiple times before and after World War II. They happened to be visiting Ancient Olympia when German archeologists were excavating the Temple of Hera and decided that a reproduction of the Temple might be a nice focal point for their garden. In addition to the Temple replica, the Fitzpatricks hired a sculptor each year to replicate a different Greek or Roman statue. On their trips to Greece, the Fitzpatricks visited archeological sites and participated in some of the digs and even spent time studying at the American Classical School in Athens. Over the years, they slowly developed their 20-plus acre gardens with a full reproduction of the Temple of Hera as well as numerous statues, benches, fountains and cobblestone paths.

The Inscocs became involved with Jasmine Hill in 1971 and developed a close friendship and 15-year partnership with Mrs. Fitzpatrick, who spent hours providing them with an in-depth understanding of the history of the property. She also shared the Fitzpatricks' experiences and their love of Hellenism, the significance of each statue and replica, the story behind each stone on the walkways and the walls, and the care and cultivation of the plants and flowers that bloomed on the grounds from season to season, especially those transplanted from the Greek countryside.

As the Inscocs embraced their new role, their initiatives helped take Jasmine Hill to the next level. In 1976, they hosted a group of Greek cultural performers travelling as part of the cultural exchange during the United States' Bicentennial celebration sponsored by the Smithsonian Institute. The performances drew more than 2,000 people. The Smithsonian Institute

AHI MEMBER NEWS

was so delighted that it helped provide the funding for the construction of an outdoor amphitheater at the Gardens and continued to send cultural performers for the next two years.

Another dream of the Inscoes was for the Olympic flame, which is lit at the Temple of Hera in Ancient Olympia, Greece, to travel to Jasmine Hill.

“It was actually Elmore’s dream that the flame come to Jasmine Hill,” said Jim.

When they realized Atlanta would be hosting the Centennial Olympic Games in 1996, they knew it was their opportunity. The Inscoes started by meeting with the local AHEPA chapter in Montgomery and then attended statewide AHEPA conventions in an effort to further raise awareness. AHEPA members started a letter-writing campaign to Billy Payne, the head of the Atlanta Olympic committee and letters started flooding into Atlanta from all over the United States.

“Everyone we met said, ‘Let’s make this happen,’” Elmore says.

Finally, Jim and Elmore were able to set up a meeting with the Atlanta Organizing Committee.

“It was the fastest meeting that I’d ever been a part of,” Jim recalled. “When we first sat down, Billy Payne said to us, ‘Now before we start, let me ask you a question. If we tell you right now that the Olympic flame will come to Jasmine Hill Gardens on its way to Atlanta, can you stop all those letters that we’ve been getting daily from the Greek-American community?’”

With the promise that the flame would be coming to Jasmine Hill Gardens, Jim and Elmore launched the first large-scale expansion project of the Gardens in years. New pieces of statuary were acquired and an administrative visitors’ center was created with the façade of the building being an exact scale replica of the original Temple of Hera as it looked when it was built in the 6th century BC.

“This allows you to see the Temple in its original state and in its present excavated state in one place,” Jim says. “We also have the only reproduction of the acrotorian (a roof decoration typical of ancient buildings) in the world.”

After plans for the expansion were underway, Jim Inscoe, along with good friend and Olympic enthusiast Victor Polizos, travelled to Ancient Olympia on a mission to learn as much as possible about the torch-lighting. They stayed at the Olympic Academy and met with local Greeks, trying to learn about how the flame lighting happens. The Greeks were suspicious and kept asking why they wanted to know.

As Jim said, “over a three-day period of coffee in the morning and ouzo in the evening,” they finally began to open up. A deep friendship grew with the city of Ancient Olympia and with its citizens. The morning of their departure, one resident, Apostolos Apostolopoulos, brought them beautiful enlarged photos of the flame lighting ceremony as a gift. It was the first time anyone outside of Ancient Olympia was given these photos.

“On June 1, 1996, the Olympic torch travelled from the ancient Temple of Hera to the Temple of Hera at Jasmine Hill,” Elmore says. “And it meant so much more to us because our son, Turner, was the one given the privilege of running with the

torch and lighting the cauldron within the Temple. More than 5,000 people attended the standing-room only event. It was remarkable.”

The level of respect Jim and Elmore have for Hellenism rivals that of many Hellenes. It is this spirit of sharing and giving that propels their ongoing efforts to provide tours and restoration efforts.

“We really want this place to be a small corner of Greece in the United States,” said Jim. “That included making sure the Temple of Hera is as close as possible to the actual ruins. Did you know that we obtained the stone from an Indiana limestone company in order for the columns to have the same shell stone look that the originals have in Ancient Olympia?”

By 1996, two more columns had been restored to the Temple at Ancient Olympia prompting the Inscoes to do the same. “It’s just another thing that makes this place a living, breathing testament to the glory of Greece. We even have Greek anemones all over the gardens that we brought over here on one of our trips to contribute to the atmosphere here,” said Elmore.

From the moment they became involved with the gardens, the Inscoes truly lived and breathed Hellenism. The beauty and the upkeep of the Gardens and statuary persists as Jim and Elmore continue studying, travelling to Greece and consciously seeking the input and advice of experts around them. In their efforts to represent the glory of Greece at Jasmine Hill, the Inscoes continue to act out of their deep love and respect for a culture into which they were not even born. Travelling to a “corner of Greece,” in Montgomery, Alabama would make any Hellene proud of their ancestry.

For further information about Jasmine Hill Gardens and Outdoor Museum, please visit jasminehill.org.

AHIF HOSTS 11TH ANNUAL FUTURE OF HELLENISM IN AMERICA CONFERENCE



(L-R) Congressman John Sarbanes, Dr. Victor G. Polizos, Karen Stamatiades, Nick Larigakis, Sandy Papadopoulos.

AHIF hosted its Eleventh Annual Conference on the Future of Hellenism in America, keeping the discussion of the promotion

AHI GENERAL NEWS



Panel I—Greek Education in America (L-R) Dr. Nickitas Demos, Presvytera Evi Kaplanis, Michelle Constantinides and Aleco Haralambides.



Conference attendees.



Panel II—The Greek American Community and the Political Process (L-R) Andreas Akaras, Ambassador Patrick Theros and Nick Larigakis.



Panel VI—Looking to the Next Generation of Greek Americans (L-R) Nick Kostopoulos, Melanie Papadopoulou, Georgia Polizos.

and preservation of Hellenism at the forefront of the community. This year's conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation, Thalia N. Carlos Hellenic Community Center, on November 16-17, 2012.

Featuring more than 20 prominent speakers from across the country, conference presentations analyzed key issues including the future of Greek American organizations, the political process and lobbying, religious and ethnic identity, promoting Hellenic values through business, Greek education, and perspectives from young Greek Americans. Speakers also identi-

fied how Hellenism could be promoted in the future through these various channels.

At a dinner hosted the evening before the conference on November 16, AHI President Nick Larigakis opened the conference and welcome remarks followed from Conference Chairman Sandy Papadopoulou. The dinner's Keynote Speaker was U.S. Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD). Atlanta natives Dr. Victor G. Polizos and Karen Stamatides received AHI's Hellenic Heritage and Public Service Award for the Promotion of Hellenism.

The conference covered the following topics:

- Opening and Welcome Remarks
- Greek Education in America
- The Greek American Community and the Political Process
- Luncheon Speaker
- The Cultural Dimension
- The Changing Nature of the Greek American Community
- Current Perspectives on Current Changes
- Looking to the Next Generation of Greek Americans
- Discussion: Where Do We Go From Here?

Sigmapharm Laboratories LLC sponsored the conference which was held in cooperation with the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation. Additional co-sponsors of the conference included: AHEPA Mother Lodge Chapter 1, AHEPA Mother Lodge Chapter 1 Educational Foundation, Lykion ton Ellinidon Atlanta, and a host of individual sponsors. ■



SAVE THE DATE
Monday,
October 21, 2013

BELLE HAVEN
COUNTRY CLUB

6023 Fort Hunt Road,
 Alexandria, VA
www.bellehavenCC.com
 Phone 703.329.1448

AHI GENERAL NEWS

CONGRESSIONAL SALUTE TO GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

Continued from page 1



Return To Origins Hellenic dance troupe.

tion 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. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL),

Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Brad Sherman (D-CA), Dina Titus (D-NV), and Frank Pallone (D-NJ).

Special guest speakers were: Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos, Chargé d'affaires Olympia Neocleous, Embassy of Cyprus to the United States; 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.

Dignitaries in attendance included: Greek Defense Attaché, Col. Evangelos Papadopoulos and several congressional staff persons.

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.



Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos.

AHI ATTENDS GREEK INDEPENDENCE AT WHITE HOUSE

AHI President Nick Larigakis and Board of Directors Secretary and Counsel Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., attended a White House reception to commemorate Greek Independence on April 18, 2013. Remarks were offered by President Barack Obama 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 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." ■

SAVE THE DATE!

12th Anniversary Future of Hellenism Conference



**November 22-23, 2013
Miami, FL**

**Fri., Nov. 22, 2013—Dinner
Sat., Nov. 23, 2013—Conference**

© 2013 AHI Report. All Rights Reserved.
Published by the American Hellenic Institute, Inc.

Membership Information: 1-800-424-9607
Contributing Editors: Nick Larigakis
Georgea Polizos

American Hellenic Institute
1220 16th Street, NW • Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-785-8430 • 800-424-9607
Fax: 202-785-5178 • E-mail: info@aheworld.org
Visit us on the Web at <http://www.aheworld.org>