

## Introduction

Dear Members and Friends:

As the American Hellenic Institute commences its 42<sup>nd</sup> year as the Greek American think-tank and public policy center, it affords me great pleasure to present the Institute's 2015 Annual Report.

All of AHI's policy-based programs and initiatives that advance the best interests of the United States on issues of importance to Greek Americans are encapsulated in this report.

In 2015, AHI issued 64 press releases detailing our numerous policy activities and events. These activities included: the 40th Annual Hellenic Heritage Achievement and National Public Service Awards Dinner; the 14<sup>th</sup> annual "Future of Hellenism in America" conference; the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Dinner in Athens; our annual "Congressional Salute to Greek Independence Day" on Capitol Hill; our annual trips to Greece and Cyprus, including our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Study Abroad Program; and our numerous public policy conferences and forums.

The majority of AHI's efforts focus on advancing U.S. relations with Greece and Cyprus as in the best interests of the U.S., and to support the Greek American community. In this regard, AHI engaged policymakers in the administration and Congress through numerous action alerts, letters, testimony, and face-to-face meetings with high-ranking administration officials and a significant number of members of Congress and their staffs. Specifically, AHI attended a White House discussion on Greece's economic crisis in August where our representative, Legal Counsel Nicholas G. Karambelas, was able to convey to administration officials, including Vice President Joe Biden, AHI's expertise on commerce, trade and overseas investment policy ideas that the Institute recommended for implementation. Where appropriate, AHI showcased commentaries, letters, and op-ed pieces that praised Greece's security cooperation amid crises and critical of Turkey's foreign policy positions. AHI also crafts its own letters to the editor to mainstream and Greek American media outlets; some of which received placement. Furthermore, AHI continued to keep its audience informed with its Policy Statements, Capital Report, and foreign policy forums. On the policy front, the AHI Foundation published the sixth volume of its Online Policy Journal that provides expert policy analysis and commentary. Finally, I had the opportunity to discuss U.S.-Greece relations one-on-one with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras on three occasions.

In 2015, AHI was the "go-to" resource for media outlets seeking the Greek American perspective on Greece's economic crisis and pivotal political developments during the year. AHI representatives appeared on *NPR* and international broadcast news outlets and were published in *Politico*, *Ekathimerini*, and other domestic and international publications. Also during the course of the year, several of our AHI Foundation Study Abroad Program alumni had their works published.

In addition, AHI hosted timely policy forums and conferences on Greece's tourism industry and on Greece moving forward amid two crises, economic and refugee. In May, AHI achieved an organizational "first" during its annual leadership trip to Greece when the delegation visited Thrace on a fact-finding mission. Furthermore, in June, I am especially proud AHI organized a second-annual "Greek Heritage Night" with the Philadelphia Phillies that provided tremendous public exposure for Greece and our Greek heritage.

AHI accomplished all of these initiatives thanks to the dedication of AHI's Board of Directors and Policy Fellows, with the assistance from our staff, and support from our members.

Finally, we were all especially proud that AHI Founder Eugene Rossides received several well-deserved honors from various Diaspora organizations as he continued with his book tour in 2015. On a somber note, we mourned the passing of a major AHI benefactor, George Spyropoulos. May his memory be eternal.

## 2016: A Year of Change?

AHI aspires to build upon the programs and initiatives that were offered in 2015. The Institute always looks for innovative ways to engage in opportunities that positively influence U.S. relations with Greece and Cyprus. But will 2016 be a year of change?

The eastern Mediterranean remains a region of immense importance to U.S. interests, and we must advance and promote policies that embrace the rule of law in the region. Greece endured a turbulent year and still faces economic hurdles as it deals with a tremendous and overwhelming influx of refugees. Despite these crises, Greece continues to be a reliable, steady, and trusted NATO ally. On the other hand, Turkey's troublesome foreign policy direction, which includes Turkish aggression in the Aegean, is ongoing and has left some in policy circles questioning its role in NATO. Turkey's continued occupation of Cyprus, an EU-member nation; its intransigent stance

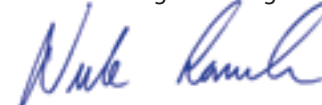
toward solving the Cyprus problem, its refusal to recognize the Republic of Cyprus and its veto to the accession of Cyprus to international organizations, all prevent stability in the region and harm U.S. interests. Little, if any, progress with respect to religious freedom in Turkey, including the plight of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, has been realized despite calls from entities such as the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom to address it. The FYROM name-recognition issue remains at a stalemate as Skopje continues to press for NATO membership. All of these issues require our collective attention and action.

Lest anyone needs a reminder, 2016 is an election year. Before we know it, we will be working with a new administration and congress. Together, as advocates for the rule of law, we must advance our public policy agenda on to the agendas of presidential and congressional candidates. This is critical. However, in the meantime, we must continue our work with the current administration and congress to ensure our policy priorities remain at the forefront in Washington. We must also remind policymakers that Greece and Cyprus remain loyal allies and contribute greatly to U.S. security and economic interests in the eastern Mediterranean despite their respective challenges.

Finally, AHI looks to continue the momentum generated by uplifting programs such as the AHIF study abroad initiative for college students and AHI's "Greek Heritage Night" at the ballpark. Already in 2016, I am proud AHI participated on the second Leadership Mission with AHEPA and American Jewish community leaders to evaluate the critical and developing relationship between Greece, Cyprus, and Israel in the security, energy, economics and political sectors.

In closing, I am deeply grateful and appreciative of the members, officers and staff for their dedication. Everyone worked together to make 2015 another productive year. Alongside our own activities in Washington, AHI's strength relies on the many significant contributions and generous support of our members. We also look to you to communicate your suggestions, share your knowledge, provide your insights, and help us to grow so that AHI can continue to fulfill the needs of our most valuable asset—our members. Thank you.

With warm regards and gratitude,



Nick Larigakis  
President

## PUBLIC POLICY: AN OVERVIEW

### 2015 Policy Statements on Greek American Issues

The American Hellenic Institute released its 2015 Policy Statements in April. The statements present issues affecting the Greek American community as they pertain to United States relations with Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey. In essence, the statements set the course for AHI's policy direction for the year. The policy statements are distributed to government officials and policymakers from the executive and legislative branches. They also serve as a guide when communicating positions to U.S. policy makers and the media. The positions are based on the best interests of the United States and advocate for the rule of law.

The 2015 policy statements included an updated AHI Fact Sheet detailing Greece's contributions to United States interests in the eastern Mediterranean and to NATO. Also included for the first time is AHI's policy position that urges the United States government to lift its arms embargo on Cyprus. This policy position served as the impetus to Congress passing a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that aimed to assess the security relationship between the United States and the Republic of Cyprus via a report that will include an analysis of the effect of the United States' arms embargo on Cyprus upon the security relationship.

The policy statements were endorsed by several membership-based organizations including: American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), American Hellenic Council of California, Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), Cyprus Federation of America, Evrytarian 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, and United Chios Societies of America and Canada.

### Greece-Turkey Relations

AHI closely monitors Greece-Turkey relations to keep key U.S. government officials apprised of developments that affect U.S. interests in the eastern Mediterranean. AHI supports a policy that encourages a normalization of relations between the two countries that is firmly based on international law and a reversal of aggression. AHI also believes that it is in the best interest of the U.S. to support stable relations between these two countries by proactively promoting the rule of law.

In particular, AHI notes the following areas as the fundamental causes of problems between Greece and Turkey:

- Turkey's unilateral claims against sovereign Greek territory in the Aegean in violation of international law, and its refusal to refer its unilateral claims to binding international arbitration;

- Turkey's aggression against Cyprus which includes its continuing illegal occupation of 37.3 percent of Cyprus, and from October 2014 to April 2015, included incursions into Cyprus' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ);
- Turkey's continuing violations of Greece's territorial waters and airspace (2,244 incursions in 2014); and
- Illegal immigration via Turkey that threatens Greek democracy.

In sum, the threat of *casus belli* still stands and a considerable number of formal complaints were made by Greece over continued violations by Turkey of the Greek airspace and territorial waters.

### The Cyprus Problem

In 2015, the community observed the somber 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. The resumption of settlement negotiations also occurred in 2015.

AHI supports a settlement of the Cyprus problem through negotiations based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation in a state with a single sovereignty and international personality, incorporating the norms of a constitutional democracy embracing key American principles, the EU *acquis communautaire* and EU Founding Treaty, UN resolutions on Cyprus, the pertinent decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and of other European Courts—as is the best interests of the United States.

One of AHI's primary objectives is to keep the Cyprus issue, the basis for a solution, and the religious freedom and destruction of cultural heritage in Turkish-occupied Cyprus at the forefront of the policy debate in Washington. Fundamental to this approach are AHI meetings with U.S. government officials and their staffs and government representatives from Greece and Cyprus. These meetings are important tactics to help forge closer cooperation, foster greater understanding, and stimulate new ideas as all parties work toward a Cyprus resolution.

- AHI held a high-profile briefing on Capitol Hill to mark the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the invasion where 13 members of Congress spoke about the issue.

Additionally, AHI continues to push for greater public and governmental awareness of the issue. AHI accomplishes this task by submitting numerous letters to the editors of prominent print media outlets, sending policy letters to government officials, producing op-ed pieces, and the dissemination of action alerts. In previous years, AHI's series of "Town Hall Screenings" of the one-hour documentary "Cyprus Still Divided: A U.S. Foreign Policy Failure" helped to keep the Cyprus issue in the public eye. In 2014, the AHI Foundation published *Kissinger & Cyprus: A Study in Lawlessness* by AHI Founder Gene Rossides, and in 2015, a book tour organized by AHI continued which helped to keep the Cyprus issue in the public discourse. Furthermore, AHI's commitment to Cyprus is demonstrated by two annual visits to Cyprus. Finally, AHIF continues to introduce a younger generation of Greek Americans to Cyprus and Greece with its annual Foreign Policy Study Abroad Program.

## FYROM Name-Recognition

The FYROM name-recognition issue is included in the AHI Policy Statements, which call on the U.S. “to consider withdrawing its 2004 recognition of FYROM as the ‘Republic of Macedonia’ if FYROM refuses to cooperate in negotiations. The statements also advocate for a position that FYROM will not join NATO and the European Union until the name dispute is resolved.

Throughout 2015, AHI embarked on initiatives to raise awareness to help end the misappropriation of the name “Macedonia” by the Former Yugoslav Republic of “Macedonia” (FYROM). For example, AHI submitted written testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations that opposed U.S. aid to FYROM. In all of AHI’s meetings with government officials, the FYROM name-recognition issue is also raised. Finally, AHI continues to monitor and track that actions of certain U.S. representatives who advocate for FYROM’s inclusion into NATO.

## The Ecumenical Patriarchate

AHI reiterated its unequivocal position on what actions the U.S. government should take to secure religious freedom for the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey in the 2015 Policy Statements. AHI urges the U.S. government to use its influence with the Turkish government to safeguard the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its personnel, and its property; and to reopen the Halki Patriarchal School of Theology. AHI underscores that, “Under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, the President is obligated to oppose violations of religious freedom in any country whose government ‘engages in or tolerates violations of religious freedom and promote the right to religious freedom in that country.’” Furthermore, the Act obligates the President to take one or more of 15 enumerated actions with respect to any such country.

In 2015, AHI continued to raise awareness of religious restrictions in Turkey, including in statements such as the one in response to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom’s (USCIRF) annual report on Turkey or when the USCIRF called for Halki Seminary’s reopening. Moreover, when it comes to recognition of the Armenian Genocide, AHI publically commended Pope Francis’ recognition of the Armenian Genocide in April when the pope called it the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Public Policy in Action

### Letters, Statements & Action Alerts

AHI sent letters to government officials and issued a number of public statements presenting positions on current events and policy decisions important to the organization’s membership. Moreover, action alerts notified members to respond to these issues.

### Letters

- **November 19:** AHI sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry as the secretary prepared for his visit to Cyprus and Greece in December. In the letter, AHI President Nick Larigakis raised several policy issues.

### Statements

- **February 27:** AHI announces it has released an update to its 2013 fact sheet that details Greece’s contributions to United States interests in the eastern Mediterranean and to NATO. The fact sheet is titled, “Greece: Valued Ally. Strategic Partner.”
- **March 1:** AHI welcomes an opinion piece published February 23 in *The Wall Street Journal* titled, “*When Islamic State Starts Hitting Ships.*” Seth Cropsey, director, Center for American Seapower, Hudson Institute, and former deputy undersecretary of the Navy, authored the piece which raises concern about greater access to the Mediterranean by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and the increased risk of military conflict it poses in central and eastern Mediterranean.
- **March 25:** AHI thanks President Barack Obama for issuing a Presidential Proclamation for Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy, 2015 and congratulates the president for acknowledging the historical bonds between the United States and Greece.
- **March 27:** AHI is pleased that U.S. Sen. Dan Coats (R-IN) lifted his hold on S.Res.105, a resolution recognizing the 194th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States. AHI also commends the Greek American community for coming together to advance the resolution.
- **April 16:** AHI commends Pope Francis for calling the slaughter of Armenians by Ottoman Turks the first genocide of the 20th century during Mass held April 12.
- **April 28:** AHI welcomes a monograph published by the Hudson Institute titled, “U.S. Policy and the Strategic Relationship of Greece, Cyprus, and Israel: Power Shifts in the Eastern Mediterranean” by Seth Cropsey, director, Center for American Seapower. “The monograph must be distributed broadly as it confirms and reinforces just how important the eastern Mediterranean region has become for United States interests,” said President Larigakis.
- **May 7:** AHI welcomes a report published April 2015 by the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Turkey Task Force titled, “*Turkey: An Increasingly Undependable Ally.*”
- **May 22:** AHI applauds passage of H.R.1735, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, by the U.S. House of Representatives, May 15, that includes an amendment aimed to assess the military capability of the Republic of Cyprus. U.S. Rep. Dave Cicilline (D-RI) and U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) sponsored the amendment, which the House approved by voice vote.
- **July 10:** AHI applauds the Obama Administration’s effort to address Greece’s debt crisis, but the Institute stated it would welcome more tangible actions.
- **July 16:** AHI condemns the egregious violation of Greek airspace by six Turkish fighter jets on July 15. According to *Kathimerini*, the formation carried out a total of 20 transgressions which led to one dogfight as two of the aircraft were armed. Greek aircraft chased off the Turkish jets.



- **July 20:** AHI issues a statement in remembrance of the 41st anniversary of Turkey's invasion of the Republic of Cyprus in 1974. In addition to the tragic results of the Turkish invasion, which included the deaths of innocent civilians, forced removal of 170,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes, and mass destruction of Cyprus' cultural and religious heritage, AHI's statement also cited Turkey's recent threats to Cyprus' efforts to explore within its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and Cyprus' contributions as a friend of the U.S. on issues of counterterrorism and security in the region.
- **October 28:** AHI commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Oxi Day. "On the 75th anniversary of Oxi Day, we remember the heroism of the Greeks, led by Greece's Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas, who issued a defiant call against fascism," AHI President Nick Larigakis said. "In a watershed moment, the Greeks demonstrated bravery, defeating Mussolini's army and thereby altering the outcome of World War Two by forcing Hitler to change his strategy. World leaders from FDR to Churchill took notice, and the Greeks reinvigorated the will of others to fight the Axis powers."
- **November 3:** AHI applauds U.S. Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), a senior member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, for his Congressional Report on Hellenic issues.
- **November 4:** AHI applauds the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, led by Co-chairs U.S. Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), for taking the initiative to urge assistance for Greece as it endures the brunt of the refugee crisis.
- **December 2:** AHI applauds the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, which President Obama signed into law on November 25.
- **December 10:** AHI applauds the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's call for the Turkish government to reopen the Greek Orthodox Theological School of Halki in a statement the Commission released November 24.

## Action Alerts

- **March 25:** AHI Members and Friends and particularly the Greek American community of Indiana were urged to contact U.S. Senator Dan Coats and urge him to remove his hold on S.Res.105.

## LEGISLATIVE & POLICY INITIATIVES

### Congressional Salute to Greek Independence Day

AHI celebrated the 194th anniversary of Greek Independence Day by hosting its annual "Congressional Salute to Greek Independence Day," on April 15. 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



*Amb. Christos Panagopoulos, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Amb. George Chacalli, Reps. Dina Titus, & Carolyn Maloney, and the students of the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Katherine, Falls Church, VA.*

Caucus on Hellenic Issues, U.S. Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY).

Members of Congress who addressed the audience included: U.S. Reps. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R FL), former chairman and current member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Dina Titus (D-NV), Maloney, Bilirakis, Tim Ryan (D-OH), Ed Royce (R-CA), chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Brad Sherman (D-CA), member, Committee on Foreign Affairs. U.S. Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY), who is the ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, stopped by.

Special guest speakers were: Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos, Ambassador of Cyprus to the U.S. George Chacalli, and AHEPA Supreme President Phillip Frangos. 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. The Greek School students of Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church, Falls Church, Va., sang the American and Greek National Anthems.

### Meetings with Members of Congress, State Department Officials Held



*Nick Larigakis, co-chair of the Congressional Hellenic Caucus Rep. Carolyn Maloney, ranking member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Rep. Eliot Engel.*

AHI President Larigakis and Legislative Director Georgea Polizos met with members of Congress and State Department officials to review AHI's policy agenda and to provide updates on the latest developments in the eastern Mediterranean.

The legislators they met with were: Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Rep.

Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV), Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD), Rep. Nikki Tsongas (D-MA), Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Rep. Grace Meng (D-NY), Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL), Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT). They also met with legislative staff at the following congressional offices: Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA), Rep. Mike



From left: Ambassador George Chacalli, Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, Congressman Ed Royce, Congressman Gus Bilirakis, Nick Larigakis.

Fitzpatrick, (R-PA), Rep. David Trott (R-MI), Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY), Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ), Rep. Ander Crenshaw (R-FL), Rep. Brendan Boyle (D-PA) and Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT).

Meetings with Executive Branch and State Department included: Dan Lawton, Deputy Director, Office of Southern European Affairs, US Department of State; Nicole Lima Nucelli, Greece desk officer; Amy Dove, Cyprus desk officer; Deputy Assistant Secretary for Southern Europe, Dr. Amanda Sloat; Dr. Michael Carpenter, special advisor for Europe and Eurasia, Office of the Vice President; Vice President Joe Biden and Diana Doukas, Director of the White House Business Council (WHBC); Larina Konold, new Cyprus desk officer; Amy Reichert, new Greece desk officer; and Ana Duque-Higgins, Public Diplomacy Officer for the office of Southern European Affairs.

## AHI Submits Testimony to House Appropriations Subcommittee on FY2016 Foreign Aid to Southeastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean

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 FY2016 on March 23. 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, AHI's testimony presented the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) that were proposed by the Republic of Cyprus prior to the suspension of settlement talks in the fall of 2014 as an example of where United States foreign assistance could be helpful should the talks resume in 2015.

## AHI Marks 41<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Turkish Invasion of Cyprus with Congressional Briefing

AHI marked the 41st anniversary of Turkey's illegal invasion of the Republic of Cyprus by hosting a congressional briefing to discuss the current state of affairs on the island

at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill, July 22. The briefing's forum allowed members of Congress to share their perspectives on the Cyprus issue, prospects for a solution amid the current settlement talks, and how Cyprus can be advanced on the policy agenda of Capitol Hill.

The briefing, held in cooperation with the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, featured: U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), co-chair, Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues; U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), co-chair, Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues; U.S. Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY),



Event attendees with Amb. Chacalli, Reps. Ros-Lehtinen & Maloney, Nick Larigakis and Greek defense attaché Colonel Papadopoulos.

ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), former chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; U.S. Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL), member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs and co-chair, Congressional Hellenic Israeli Alliance; U.S. Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; U.S. Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI), member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; U.S. Rep. Albio Sires (D-NJ), member, Committee on Foreign Affairs; U.S. Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), ranking member, House Committee on Budget; U.S. Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD), U.S. Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV), U.S. Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-MA), U.S. Rep. Joe Crowley (D-NY), as speakers. Also making presentations were Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the U.S. George Chacalli and Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos. AHI President Larigakis moderated the briefing.

## AHI Welcomes White House Discussion on Greece

AHI participated at a White House-hosted discussion on Greece at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on August 6. AHI Legal Counsel Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., who is a partner in Sfikas & Karambelas LLP, represented AHI.

"We thank the Obama Administration for organizing this important and timely discussion on Greece's current situation," AHI President Larigakis said. "By all accounts, it was a productive discussion. We look forward to participating at future meetings and contributing our expertise to help the administration and the Greek American community reach its mutual goals in support of our longstanding ally and friend, Greece."

Karambelas, who is an international trade expert, brought up items such as the need for a bilateral investment treaty between Greece and the United States. "We don't have one," he said in a post-discussion interview with *The National Herald*. Karambelas added that the current tax treaty is obsolete.



# Awards Dinner

## AHI Hosts 41st Annual Hellenic Heritage Achievement and Public Service Awards Dinner

The American Hellenic Institute (AHI) hosted its 40th Anniversary Hellenic Heritage Achievement and Public Service Awards Dinner, March 14, at the Capital Hilton, Washington, D.C.

AHI honored a distinguished set of awardees based upon their important career achievements and contributions to the Greek American community or community at-large. They were: Gene Rossides, AHI Founder, with the first-ever "AHI Hellenic Heritage Lifetime Achievement Award;" Ted G. Spyropoulos (posthumously), businessman, philanthropist, and champion of Hellenism; George Lois, art director, designer, and author; and Aris Melissaratos, businessman and philanthropist. In addition, a special award presentation was made on the 100th Anniversary of his birth and on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the movie, "Zorba the Greek," posthumously, to actor Anthony Quinn.

Larry Michael, "Voice of the Redskins," and senior vice president and executive producer of Media,



Honorees from left: Aris Melissaratos, Katherine Quinn, Erika Spyropoulos, Gene Rossides, Mariyana Spyropoulos, George Lois.



From left: Dr. Spiro Spireas, Erika Spyropoulos, Mariyana Spyropoulos, Nick Larigakis.



From left: Dr. Spiro Spireas, Gene Rossides, and Nick Larigakis.



From left: Marilyn Rouvelas, Cong. Chris Van Hollen, & Katherine Van Hollen.



*Dinner attendees.*

Washington Redskins, was the evening's emcee. AHI Legal Counsel Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., introduced Michael. The Marines of Headquarters Battalion presented the colors and the American and Greek national anthems were performed by Maria Pierce. Rev. Konstantinos Pavlakos, Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church, Falls Church, Va., offered the invocation. Apollonia provided the musical entertainment. Opening the evening's program were AHI President Larigakis and AHI Foundation President Dr. Spiro Spireas.

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 14. The relevant topics affecting both countries were discussed by the two top diplomats.



*From left: Amb. Panagopoulos, Nick Larigakis, and Amb. Chacalli at the breakfast policy briefing.*



*From left: Tom and Tina Lagos, Katerina Papathanassiou, Katherine Quinn, Jim Lagos, Argeri Lagos.*



*From left: Luke Lois, George Lois, Mariyana Spyropoulos, Leon Andris.*



*Attendees at the Embassy of Cyprus on Friday evening.*



## LEADERSHIP VISITS TO GREECE AND CYPRUS



*Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras with AHI President Larigakis.*

### AHI President Larigakis, Prime Minister Tsipras Meet in Athens

AHI President Nick Larigakis completed a three-day visit to Athens, Greece where he met with top officials of the Greek government, including Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, on April 4. "I thank Prime Minister Tsipras for taking the time from his busy agenda, especially over the weekend, for a substantive discussion on issues of importance to the relationship between longtime allies, the United States and Greece," Larigakis said. "Greece continues to face many challenges domestically and abroad. AHI looks forward to working with the Greek government to help address these challenges from the perspective of meeting our mission of strengthening relations between the United States and Greece."

The 45-minute Saturday meeting between Prime Minister Tsipras and President Larigakis included detailed discussion on a number of issues impacting the relationship between the United States and Greece, including Greece's economic crisis and the potential for Greece to foster an environment friendly to attracting investment. For the latter, Larigakis presented the prime minister with an AHI memo titled, "U.S. Government Programs to Assist Greece." It presented ideas on how Greece can advance business and commerce between the United States and Greece through existing U.S. government programs that have the potential to assist Greece. Other areas discussed were the tourism sector and Larigakis emphasized the need for more direct international flights into Greece from the United States. Larigakis shared with the prime minister that during the past two years, AHI and partnering organizations have engaged with United Airlines to request that a direct (non-stop) airline route be established between Washington, DC and Athens, Greece.

In addition to Prime Minister Tsipras, Larigakis had meetings on April 7 with Minister of Defense Panos Kammenos;

General of the Hellenic Army Michail Kostarakos, who is the chief of staff for the Hellenic National Defense; Lt. General Christos Vaitis, chief, Hellenic Air Force General Staff; and Vice Admiral Evangelos Apostolakis, chief, Hellenic Navy General Staff to receive briefings about Greece's latest military developments. Larigakis also met with Michali Kokkinou, general director, General Secretary Greeks Abroad.

"Undoubtedly, Greece is a proven, reliable, and invaluable ally of the United States, an integral contributor to NATO, and an crucial player to ensure the security of the region," Larigakis said. Larigakis also met with U.S. Ambassador to Greece David Pearce.

### AHI Conducts Annual Trip to Greece, Cyprus

A delegation from AHI successfully held the organization's annual leadership trip to Greece and Cyprus where it held substantive meetings with high-ranking government, religious, and political officials with the purpose of



*President of the House of Representatives, Yiannakis Omirou, with the delegation.*

strengthening relations and addressing issues of mutual concern. The 10-day trip occurred May 18 to 28.

"We had a very productive series of high-visibility meetings in Greece and Cyprus," President Nick Larigakis said. "We accomplished the objectives we set out to achieve, and the briefings we received on issues of importance to the Greek American community were insightful and informative. We thank all of the leaders who took the time to meet with us



*Negotiator of the Greek Cypriot community, Ambassador Andreas Mavroyiannis during a discussion with the delegation.*



to discuss these very important issues.”

In Cyprus, the AHI delegation received multiple briefings from Cypriot and American officials on the resumption of settlement talks for Cyprus under UN auspices; Cyprus’



*Meeting with President of Greece, Prokopis Pavlopoulos*

efforts to explore for hydrocarbon reserves in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and the lingering impact of Cyprus’ banking crisis. All throughout the delegation’s meetings in Cyprus, AHI was commended for its past advocacy and current steadfast efforts to keep the Cyprus issue highly visible with key policymakers in the Obama administration and in the U.S. Congress. Meetings with Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic Alexis Tsipras and President of the Hellenic Republic Prokopis Pavlopoulos and extensive briefings with foreign ministry and military officials were highlights of the delegation’s itinerary in Greece. The itinerary also included a day trip to Thessaloniki and the 11th Annual AHI Athens Hellenic Heritage Achievement and National Public Service Awards Dinner at the Grand Bretagne Hotel.

The delegation visited Thrace. Over the course of the day, the delegation made stops and attended briefings in Thessaloniki, Kavala, Xanthi, Alexandroupolis and Feres. AHI President Larigakis was accompanied on the trip by AHI Board Members Leon Andris and Gus Andy; AHI Central and South America representatives Costas and Sophia Galanis, and AHI Legislative Director Georgea Polizos.

## AHI President Visits Greece on End of Year Trip to the Region

President Larigakis met with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras on December 1 on the sidelines of the annual conference on the Greek economy hosted by the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. Larigakis also met with Minister of Economy, Development and Tourism Giorgios Stathakis and Minister of State Nikos Pappas on the sidelines of the conference.

Larigakis met with Greek government officials, including Defense Minister Panos Kammenos and Deputy Foreign Minister Dimitris Mardas. In addition, President Larigakis met with officials in the ministry of Foreign Affairs, including Michalis Kokkinos, head of the General Secretariat for Greeks Abroad and Petros Mavroidis, director general for Political Affairs. Mavroidis invited President Larigakis to brief



*Delegation pictured with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras*

the heads of three directorates: Amb. Dimitris Alexandrakis, director of the A7 Directorate for North America; Amb. Dimitrios Chronopoulos, director of the A4 Directorate for Turkey; and Counsellor Ioannis Papameletiou, acting director of the A2 Cyprus Division.

Larigakis also met with senior Greek military officials, including Lt. Gen. Christos Vaitzis, chief, Hellenic Air Force General Staff and Adm. Evangelos Apostolakis, head, Hellenic National Defense General Staff. From the non-governmental side, President Larigakis met with Thanos Dokos, director-general, ELIAMEP and Dr. Fani-Palli Petralia, vice president, International Olympic Truce Foundation. Finally, Vassilis Leventis, leader and founder of the Union of Centrists political party met with President Larigakis.



*Amb. David Pearce, ambassador of the U.S. to Greece.*



*From left: Nick Larigakis, Constantine Galanis, Dr. Stefanos Gialamas, George Economou, and Ilias Malevitis.*

## MEDIA RELATIONS

In 2015 AHI issued 64 press releases that were widely distributed to mainstream, Greek American, and foreign press, the Obama Administration, Congress, and AHI members and friends. AHI also regularly wrote letters to the editors of major national and community newspapers, commenting on articles that appeared in their publications. Moreover, AHI President Nick Larigakis and AHI Legal Counsel Nicholas Karambelas made several appearances on broadcast (TV and Radio) media outlets.

### Letters to the Editor

In 2015, AHI wrote six letters to the editor of various publications of which one was published.

*The Washington Times* published AHI's letter to the editor, "Turkey's Cyprus incursion nothing new," January 20 and in its print version, January 21. AHI President Larigakis wrote the letter in response to a January 11 "Newsmaker Interview" by Guy Taylor titled, "Cypriot union threatened by dispute over oil and gas rights." Larigakis calls the interview with Turkish Cypriot negotiator Mr. Ergun Olgun a public relations ploy to avert attention away from Turkey's latest violation of international law—its "gunboat diplomacy" in the eastern Mediterranean and incursion into Cyprus' Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ). Larigakis sets the record straight on Cyprus' sovereign rights, especially with regard to exploring for energy resources within its EE, and on the position of the Cypriot government with regard to potential sharing of revenue from energy finds.

AHI President Larigakis submitted a letter to the editor of *The Economist*, March 2 rebutting a February 28, 2105 article, "A semi-guided missile," that cast doubt on Greece's important role as a NATO ally. Larigakis wrote, "To be clear, despite Greece's economic woes, Greece is only one of four NATO countries to maintain the 2% minimum standard for military expenditures at 2.3%." He added the invaluable role of NSA Souda Bay, Crete, in facilitating NATO and U.S. missions in addition to the importance of NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (NMIOTC) and NATO Missile Firing Installation (NAMFI), which are both located on Crete. Furthermore, Larigakis cites Greece's value to security interests in the Mediterranean due to emerging threats caused by greater access to the Mediterranean by ISIS, which presence eerily was felt recently on Libya's Mediterranean coast.

AHI released a letter to the editor that it submitted to *The Wall Street Journal*. The first letter was a response to a September 20 article titled, "Kissinger the Freedom Fighter" by Niall Ferguson. In his letter, Larigakis rebuts the author's claim that Kissinger's idealistic analysis to foreign policy still applies today. Instead, Larigakis points out, it was Kissinger's realpolitik approach to foreign policy that still lingers painfully today.

In a letter to the editor to *The Washington Times* in response to an October 6 article titled, "In Cyprus, hopes for a thaw in a long-frozen conflict" by David R. Sands Larigakis expresses dismay at two inaccuracies in the article. First, Sands references the Turkish-occupied area of the Republic

of Cyprus as the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC). Secondly, Sands refers to Mrs. Emine Colak 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. He 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.

Larigakis submitted a rebuttal to a guest commentary authored by Mr. Mehmet Mustafaoglu that was published May 1 in the online version of *The Hill*, a newspaper with a focus on the U.S. Congress. Mr. Mustafaoglu's commentary, "Cyprus: The volatile and oddly forgotten frozen conflict" appeared in *The Hill's* Congress Blog, a forum for lawmakers and policy professionals. In response to the op-ed, Larigakis set the record straight on Turkey's illegal invasion of Cyprus on July 20, 1974, the recent suspension of settlement talks due to Turkey's incursion of the Republic of Cyprus' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and Mr. Mustafaoglu's ludicrous assertion that Turkish troops are needed on Cyprus. For the latter, Larigakis cites statements made by the former chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) and the committee's current chairman, U.S. Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA) that call for the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus. Although Larigakis' submission was not published, a submission titled, "Turkey is the bad actor on Cyprus," by Hellenic Caucus Co-chair U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis' (R-FL) was published on May 6.

### New Greek TV Features AHI President

New Greek TV featured Larigakis as its "Greek of the Week." The profile interview by Maria Athens, titled, "AHI President Nick Larigakis: 'Take Pride & Have Passion In What You Do'" ran in the January 30 edition. In the interview, Larigakis discusses his roots and career path, his drive to become an advocate, and his vision for the American Hellenic Institute. A large portion of the interview is dedicated to AHI's evolution since its founding and the challenges Larigakis faces of attracting young Greek Americans and Philhellenes as members to the organization.

### Arise TV Interviews AHI President

Arise TV, an emerging 24-hour news channel with hubs in London and New York, interviewed Larigakis in March 2015 about the new government in Greece and the country's economy. Larigakis made it a point to address why Greece maintains 2.3% of its GDP on military expenditures, a question presented to a previous interviewee who did not see why Greece needed to do so. Larigakis informed the journalist that Greece maintains this level of military spending to defend and safeguard its sovereign territory in the Aegean from Turkey's violation of Greece's airspace and territorial waters.



## Parapolitika: AHI President is “Our Man in Washington”



*Parapolitika* newspaper profiled AHI President Larigakis, calling him “Our Man in Washington” and “an influential figure in the Greek-American community” in an April 25 news report that picked-up on President Larigakis’ visit to Athens in early April. The news report also describes AHI as always having been “one of the most important Greek-American organizations, with great influence on the other side of the Atlantic.” *Parapolitika* filed its report on Larigakis following his brief visit to Athens, Greece, in April 4, where he met with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. The news report recapped the 45-minute meeting between Prime Minister Tsipras and Larigakis as well as other meetings Larigakis held with officials of the new Greek Government. *Parapolitika* also compliments AHI and its leadership for its prompt actions over the years when it comes to defending the interests of the Greek American community, citing letters written to U.S. government officials.

## AHI Legal Counsel’s Commentary in *Ekathimerini* Presents Legal View of Greece’s WWII Occupation Loan to Germany

*Ekathimerini* published a commentary authored by AHI volunteer legal counsel and director Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., titled “A legal view of Germany’s wartime occupation loan,” June 6. During World War II, Germany forced Greece to “lend” money to it supposedly to help with its occupation of Greece otherwise known as an “occupation loan.” Karambelas argues that the remedy for Greece’s occupation loan to Germany is restitution and not reparation because the occupation loan was not a commercial loan, but rather an unlawful taking of property, the legal term of which is “conversion.” “Greece’s legal rights with respect to the occupation loan depend on whether the loan is characterized as a commercial loan or as an unlawful taking of property under the guise of a commercial loan,” Karambelas writes. “To be a commercial loan, it must have the attributes of a commercial loan. There must be a voluntary lender, a voluntary borrower, terms for repayment, and an interest rate.” Karambelas argues the occupation did not have a voluntary lender and

did not carry an interest rate. Karambelas concludes the Greek government’s current efforts to resolve the matter via diplomatic channels is the most practical way for Greece to obtain restitution.

## AHI Legal Counsel Appears on NPR’s “The Diane Rehm Show” to Discuss Greece’s Debt Crisis

Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., appeared on *National Public Radio*’s “The Diane Rehm Show,” June 23, to discuss “The Greek Debt Crisis and the Threat to the Eurozone.” The show aired on WAMU 88.5 FM in Washington, DC. Karambelas explained the impact of the economic crisis on the people of Greece, including how it affects the middle class, and of course, the unemployment rate, which is nearly 50 percent among young persons. He also explained the importance of pensions to Greek families, noting that Greece has one of the most elderly populations in Europe and that entire families often live off a pension and not just an individual. In response to a question about whether he sees the crisis as a Euro crisis or a Greek crisis, Karambelas said, “So Greece is, in a lot of ways, a symptom rather than a cause of the euro crisis.”

On NPR’s “The Diane Rehm Show” segment, “The Economic Crisis in Greece and Implications for the Eurozone,” on July 6 Karambelas provided his analysis of the outcome of the referendum vote, noting that each side, the Europeans and the Greeks has made its point. “...the banks are closed. The Europeans can show what can happen if you don’t negotiate properly. The Greeks have shown their national dignity and defiance,” he said. “And what I hope will happen is, okay, we’ve both made a point. Now, let’s sit down and do serious negotiating,” said Karambelas.

## AHI President Interviewed on Greece’s Debt Crisis, Referendum Vote

AHI President Nick Larigakis participated on a three-person interview panel held by *China Central Television (CCTV) America* to discuss Greece’s debt crisis and the ramifications of the Greek referendum vote. On *CCTV America*’s “The Heat” segment, “The Heat discusses Greece’s Eurozone future,” on July, 6, Larigakis discussed the outcome of Greece’s referendum vote, which took place July 5. “In my



*CCTV America*’s Nathan King with Nick Larigakis; Constance Baroudos, VP, Lexington Institute; and Prof. James Galbraith.

opinion, it was more of an emotional vote...a reactionary vote to the anti-austerity policies of the European Union perpetrated against Greece from the past five years with no end in sight," he said. Larigakis also provided his insight based upon his meetings with Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, who stated to Larigakis that Greece does not want to come out of European Union, or exit the Euro, but that the Greeks were "being squeezed and strangled" by the Europeans.

## AHI Legal Counsel's Article Published in *Politico*

*Politico*, a political journal that covers the issues, ideas and personalities behind politics and policy in the United States and in the global arena, published an article authored by Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq. The article is entitled "Greece's Century-Long Subjugation." It appeared in the September 18 edition of *Politico* magazine. Published before the September 20 elections in Greece, Karambelas writes that Greece has endured economic adversity arising from foreign borrowing going back to its founding in 1830. Karambelas traces the history and reasons for Greece's borrowing in the context of the century old national policy to expand the borders of Greece to include Greeks who lived in the Ottoman Empire, referred to as the Great Idea. He concludes that the way forward is for the European institutions to dispense with punishing Greece and that Greece dispense with viewing every reform as an infringement on national sovereignty.

## SAVE THE DATE



**AHF**  
American Hellenic Institute Foundation

**Presents the 15th Annual Conference on**

**The Future of Hellenism in America**

**Dinner**  
**Friday, November 18, 2016**

**Conference**  
**Saturday, November 19, 2016**

**(City to be determined)**

## CONFERENCES & FORUMS

### AHI Forum Examines Greece's Tourism Industry

AHI hosted a noon forum titled, "The Myths and Realities of Greece as a Tourism and Conference Destination," on April 1, at AHI's Hellenic House. The forum featured Tim Ananiades, area manager, Starwood Hotels and Resorts Greece/Cyprus/Balkans and managing director, Hotels Grande Bretagne and King George. "As the tourism season is upon us, the importance of the industry to Greece cannot be underscored enough, especially as Greece battles through an economic crisis," Larigakis said.

As part of his presentation, Ananiades touched upon Greece's affordability as a tourist destination, the myths of the impact of the civil disobedience upon tourism, and he examined Greece's appeal as a business conference destination, including its ability to accommodate large numbers of delegates. He also discussed ways in which the Greek American community and Greek American organizations can help to increase tourism to Greece.

### AHI Forum Explores "Greece Moving Forward"

AHI hosted a forum entitled, "Greece Moving Forward: Implications and Realities" featuring three panels of experts on October 27 at the Capital Hilton, Washington, DC. The forum began with introductory remarks by AHI President Nick Larigakis and a Q&A with Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the U.S. In his remarks Ambassador Panagopoulos thanked AHI for taking the lead and initiative to bring the contemporary issues affecting Greece to the forefront. "This is of great value for us," he said. "It



Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney

is important for Greece's voice to be heard."

The first panel featured U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, co-chair, Congressional Hellenic Caucus; Diana Doukas, director, White House Business Council; and Philip Kosnett, director, Office of Southern European Affairs, U.S. Department of State. Larigakis moderated the



Diana Doukas.



panel. Each of the three panelists brought their unique perspective from the legislative and executive branches of U.S. government.

The second panel featured Lena Argiri, Washington correspondent, *Greek Public TV*; and Katerina Sokou, Washington correspondent, *Kathimerini*. James Marketos, Esq., partner, Berliner, Corcoran & Rowe, LLP and AHI board member, moderated the panel. Argiri addressed the role of the Greek media in covering the events and developments of Greece's debt crisis. Sokou presented on the role of the international media.

The third panel featured Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., partner, Sfikas & Karambelas LLP and AHI legal counsel; Ambassador Patrick Theros, principal, Theros & Theros LLP; Nicholas E. Chimicles, senior partner, Chimicles & Tikellis LLP and AHI board member; and Dr. Harry Dinellas, professor, U.S. Army Command & General Staff College. Serge Hadji, Esq., moderated the panel. Karambelas presented on the topic "The Third Memorandum: Austerity versus Reality." Ambassador Theros addressed the topic "Inches of Reforms in a World that Requires Miles of Reform." Chimicles presented on the topic "Reforms and their Impact on the Greek Citizen." In the panel's final presentation, Dr. Dinella examined the topic "Greece: Linchpin of U.S. and NATO Security in the Eastern Mediterranean."

## Forum Commemorates Battle of Crete

AHI hosted a forum titled "The Significance of the Battle of Crete," featuring Col. Evangelos Papadopoulos, defense attaché, Embassy of Greece, at Hellenic House, June 2. The forum served to commemorate the 74th anniversary of the 1941 battle between the Allies and Axis forces on Crete. "We were pleased to host such an important presentation about a historically significant battle that is often overlooked by many," Larigakis said. Col. Papadopoulos weaved various videos and PowerPoint into his presentation on the Battle of Crete. The battle is historically significant because of the considerable delays it caused on Operation Barbarossa, forcing the Germans to engage the Red Army in the Russian winter and thus contributing to its eventual failure. He also discussed the strategic importance of Crete's airbases and harbors and provided an account of the battle itself.

## AHI Panel Examines Next Steps for Greece in Economic Crisis

AHI hosted a panel discussion titled "The Greek Crisis: What is next for Greece and the Eurozone?," June 10, at the Capital Hilton. Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the U.S., provided opening remarks. The expert panel, moderated by Nicholas E. Chimicles, senior partner, Chimicles & Tikellis LLP, examined various aspects of the timely topic.

The panel included: Dr. Athanasios Orphanides, professor of the Practice of Global Economics and Management, MIT Sloan School of Management; Dr. Michael Papaioannou, deputy division chief, Debt and Capital Markets, Monetary and Capital Markets Department, IMF; and Dr. George

Tsetsekos, Francis Professor of Finance and Dean Emeritus, Drexel University LeBow College of Business.

## AHI Book Presentation Commemorates 93<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of Smyrna Catastrophe



AHI hosted a noon book presentation to commemorate the 93<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Smyrna Catastrophe in Asia Minor that featured Professor Lou Ureneck of Boston University, October 7, at Hellenic House.

Professor Ureneck presented his new book, *The Great Fire: One American's Mission to Rescue Victims of the 20th Century's First Genocide*, published earlier this year by Harper-Collins Publishers. Professor Ureneck

is a Professor of Journalism and directs the Business and Economics Journalism Program at Boston University.

Professor Ureneck explained that Smyrna was the final episode in the 20th century's first genocide, the concerted extermination of Asia Minor's native Christians by Turkish forces, which began with the Armenians and Assyrians and ended with the Greeks. He highlighted the important roles played by three Americans: Mark Bristol, Halsey Powell, and Asa Jennings. Bristol, the U.S.'s High Commissioner for Turkey and highest-ranking naval officer in the region, made the tragedy worse than it needed to be by favoring commercial interests over humanitarian ones and stalling U.S. efforts to aid the refugees trapped in Smyrna before, during, and after the great fire. Powell, a charismatic U.S. Navy Commander, defied orders to overcome Bristol's foot-dragging. Jennings, a humble Y.M.C.A. official, called on audacity and strong religious convictions to organize the flotilla of ships that eventually rescued the hundreds of thousands of survivors of the tragedy.

## SAVE THE DATE



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## AHI Presentation in Athens Features Top PR Executive



Chryssa Zizos.

AHI and its Athens Chapter hosted a presentation and reception featuring Chryssa Zizos, CEO/president, Live Wire Media Relations, LLC on December 3 at the Hotel Grande Bretagne. Zizos presented on the topic, "The Process of Electing a U.S. President and the Role of the Media." Zizos is an entrepreneur who has rocketed to the top of the public relations industry. Her firm serves diverse business organizations, Fortune 100 executives and elected officials, counseling them on a broad range of critical public relations issues. With the 2016 U.S. presidential election on the horizon, Zizos has emerged as the go-to source on how the presidential candidates are using the media and social platforms to persuade and influence the public.

In her presentation on the topic, Zizos creatively paired the major 2016 presidential candidates with their Greek tragedy counterparts to include the fatal flaw that could keep them out of the White House. Zizos went on to explain how an American election works, including the primary process. She also discussed presidential campaign strategy to achieve the necessary 270 Electoral College votes needed to become president. In addition, Zizos explored the role that the media plays in electing a U.S. President.



From left: Former Minister of Public Order Vassilis Kikilias, Nick Larigakis, Admiral Evangelos Apostolakis (Chief of the Hellenic National Defense General Staff), and Lieutenant General Ilias A. Leontaris (commander, C Army Corps and HQ NATO Rapid Deployable Corps-Greece)

## GENERAL NEWS

### AHI Co-Hosts Dinner for Greece's Foreign Minister in Washington

AHI co-hosted a private dinner in honor of Foreign Minister of Greece Nikos Kotzias, with the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), April 21, on the occasion of the foreign minister's visit to Washington, DC. "We thank Foreign Minister Kotzias for taking the time from his busy agenda in Washington, to join us for an in-depth discussion on issues of importance to the relationship between longtime allies, the United States and Greece," Larigakis said. Foreign Minister Kotzias was accompanied by Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Christos Panagopoulos and the foreign minister's staff. Supreme President Phillip Frangos and Chairman of the Board Nicholas Karacostas represented AHEPA.

### AHI Co-Sponsors Exhibit on Greek Jewish WWII Resistance

AHI co-sponsored "Synagonistis: Greek Jews in the National Resistance," an exhibit presented by the Embassy of Greece that tells the story of Greek Jewish resistance during World War II. The exhibition officially opened April 21 at the Washington Hebrew Congregation, Washington, DC and ran daily through May 26. "AHI has always looked to highlight Greece's role in World War II and particularly in the resistance against the Nazis," Larigakis said. "The Greek Jews played one of the most active roles in the fight against Nazi occupation and we are proud to highlight the importance of this fight by helping to support this exhibit. Congratulations to Christos Failadis, press counselor and the Embassy of Greece for organizing such a wonderful event." The embassy presented the exhibit jointly with the Jewish Museum of Greece and the Secretariat General for Communication. In addition to AHI, co-sponsors include: AHEPA, B'nai B'rith International, American Friends of the Jewish Museum of Greece, and Athina Balta Law Group LLC.

### AHI Legal Counsel's Firm Establishes Publishing Company; Releases First Publication

Nicholas G. Karambelas, Esq., partner in Sfikas & Karambelas LLP and volunteer legal counsel to AHI, founded Tribonian Publishing LLC. The publishing company's first publication is an e-book titled, "A Guide to the Legal Aspects of Doing Business in the United States for the Foreign Business Person" which provides foreign business persons, attorneys, accountants and business advisors with a starting point towards understanding those business laws of the United States that affect commerce. Commerce between and among nations has become integrated. International commerce is becoming even more integrated as massive free trade agreements such the Transpacific Trade Partnership (TPP) and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) take effect. "The United States is a hugely lucrative market. It has particular



potential for Greek business persons during these trying times,” Karambelas said.

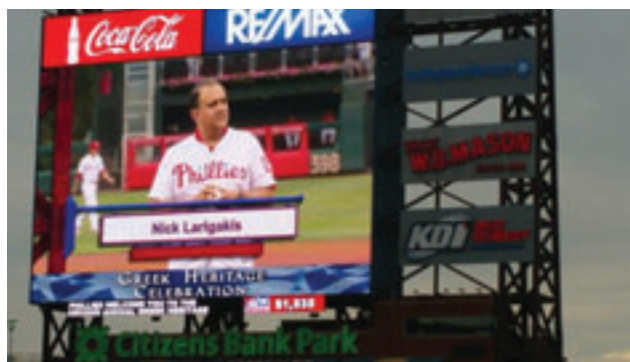
## AHI-sponsored Greek Heritage Night at Phillies Game a Home Run

The AHI-organized Second Annual Greek Heritage Night held in cooperation with Major League Baseball's Philadelphia Phillies, June 17, at Citizens Bank Park, Philadelphia, Pa., was a tremendous success. Approximately 700 persons attended from the Tri-State Philadelphia area and Baltimore to see the Philadelphia Phillies take on the Baltimore Orioles.

At the baseball game, Greek American Elena Stavarakas sang the National Anthem and AHI President Larigakis



*The Olympians dance troupe dancing with the Phillie Phanatic.*



*Nick Larigakis throwing the ceremonial first pitch.*



*Fans celebrating their Greek heritage at the game.*

threw out the ceremonial first pitch. The popular Phillies mascot, The Phillie Phanatic, sported an Evzone costume. During the middle of the fifth inning, The Phanatic led The Olympians, a Greek dance troupe under the direction of Betty Tsarouchis, from Saint Luke's Greek Orthodox Church, Broomall, Pa., in Greek dancing. A promotional video about Greece, made possible by the Press Office of the Embassy of Greece, was played on the ballpark's Jumbotron. Greek Heritage Night also featured a Greek food stand and even a wedding proposal captured on video by CosmosPhilly.

## AHI Holds 12th Annual Golf Classic; Panel Discussion

On October 19, AHI hosted its Twelfth Annual Golf Classic at Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria, Va. Over 60 golfers participated. Celebrity appearances were made by George Wallace, sports director, *WTOP Radio*, Christine Brennan, journalist, *USA Today*, and Tommy Greene, Comcast studio analyst and former pitcher for the Philadelphia Phillies, who appeared at a morning sports panel to discuss current events and issues affecting the sporting world. The Tournament Sponsor was Calamos Investments. Peter Bota served as Tournament Chairman.



*Golf tournament participants.*

The first place team was comprised of: Peter Bota, Mike Gleeson, Dave Riddle, and Mike Matthews. Second place honors went to: Tommy Greene, Alex Sands, Christopher Lipscomb, and Scott Nickel. The third place team included: Peter Marketos, Thomas Pellicane, Brian Valladares, and Brandon VanBuskirk.



*From left: Nick Larigakis, George Wallace, Christine Brennan, Tommy Greene, tournament chairman Peter Bota.*



## AHI FOUNDATION INITIATIVES

### Seventh Annual AHIF Foreign Policy Trip to Greece, Cyprus a Success

The AHIF College Student Foreign Policy Trip to Greece and Cyprus completed its seventh year as ten students from across the United States participated in the two-week program held June 17 to July 3.

"The trip provided a wonderful opportunity to once again lead such an exceptional group of students to Cyprus and Greece," Larigakis said. "It was rewarding to see them gain firsthand experience about the foreign policy issues that concern U.S. relations with Greece and Cyprus. The AHI Foundation looks forward to offering this program annually as support for it has grown and student interest remains at significant levels since the program's inception."



Students meeting with Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), co-chair of the Congressional Hellenic Caucus.

The student participants were: **Zoe Andris**, who is pursuing a BA in Anthropology at Kenyon College; **Corinne Candilis**, a junior at Swarthmore College who is pursuing an Honor's degree in Economics with a minor in Peace and Conflict Studies; **Jerry Christodoulatos**, a recent graduate of Villanova University who received a BA in Political Science, Classical Studies and History; **Kristina Demolli** a senior at the University of California, Santa Cruz, pursuing a double major in Human Biology and Economics; **Orlando Economos**, a junior at Tufts University who is pursuing a BA in International Relations and Film Studies and Production; **Elias Gerasoulis**, who is pursuing a BA double major in government and history at the University of Pennsylvania; **Yanni Metaxas**, a junior at Boston University who is pursuing a BA in Mathematics with distinction in Arts & Sciences and a minor in Modern Greek Studies; **Niko Piperis**, a junior from Omaha, Nebraska pursuing a BA in History and Philosophy at Boston College; **Peter Tsetsekos**, a junior at Drexel's LeBow College of Business pursuing a BS in Business Administration; and **Elizabeth Vasilogambros**, a sophomore at Butler University pursuing her BA double major in Political Science and Strategic Communication with a minor in sociology.



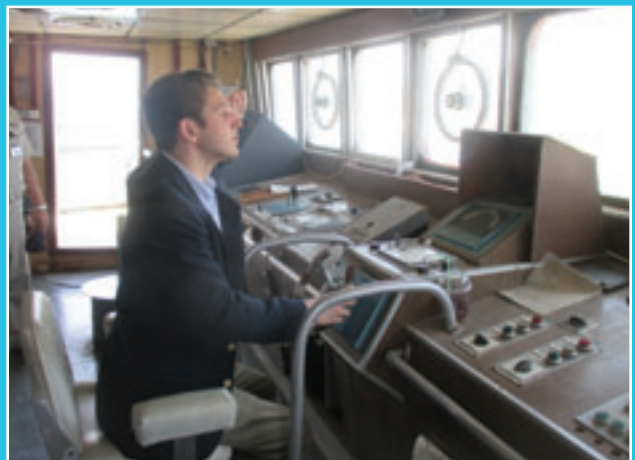
President of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, Yiannakis Omirou, with the students.



Students at a desecrated church in the occupied part of Cyprus.



Government Spokesman Nicos Christodoulides meets with students.



Yanni Metaxas aboard the NMIOTC training frigate.





*Students tour Acropolis Museum.*



*Students with Captain Emmanouil Papadakis following their tour of the F16.*



*Students at the Nicosia International Airport in the DMZ with a member of the UN Peacekeeping Forces.*



*President Pavlopoulos with the students.*

During the program, the students received firsthand experience about the foreign policy issues affecting Greece and Cyprus, their relations with the U.S., and the interests of the U.S. in the region. Meetings or briefings were held with American embassies, officials from various ministries, including foreign affairs; parliament members, religious leaders, think-tank organizations, and members of academia and the private sector of both countries. In Cyprus, the group visited the Turkish-occupied area.



*Students tour the Greek Parliament chambers.*

"The AHIF Foreign Policy trip gave me an unforgettable learning experience, one that would have been impossible to attain from any textbook or lecture...Not only was this trip educational and informative, but it also reinforced my pride as a Greek-American. Learning about the social, political and economic challenges of both countries strengthened my ties and affinity towards my heritage and culture," said participant Zoe Andris.

"The AHIF Foreign Policy Trip is an incredible experience for any Greek-American. The work that AHIF is doing is of paramount importance to Greeks and philhellenes everywhere. Going abroad and being exposed to the foreign political apparatus of Greece showed me a side of the country that you rarely see on summer vacation on the islands. I cannot recommend this program highly enough, and would have every young Greek-American participate if it were possible," said Orlando Economos.

## AHIF Hosts 14th Annual Future of Hellenism in America Conference

AHIF hosted its Fourteenth Annual Conference on the Future of Hellenism in America, keeping the discussion of the promotion and preservation of Hellenism at the forefront of the community. This year's conference was held in Baltimore, Maryland at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, November 20-21.



From left: Nick Larigakis, Nitsa Morekas, Aris Melissaratos.



Aris Melissaratos and Nick Larigakis with Tom, John and Lou Korologos.

Featuring nearly 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 identified how Hellenism could be promoted in the future through these various channels.

AHIF held a dinner on the eve of the conference, November 20. There, AHI President Nick Larigakis officially opened the conference. Welcome remarks followed from Conference Chairman Aris Melissaratos and greetings from Ambassador Christos Panagopoulos, ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Andreas Akaras served as Master of Ceremonies. U.S. Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD) provided the evening's keynote address. Longtime Baltimore community supporters and members Nitsa Morekas and the Korologos brothers, Tom, John, and Lou, received AHI's Hellenic Heritage and Public Service Award for the Promotion of Hellenism in America.

The AHI Foundation hosted the conference in cooperation



Honorees Nitsa Morekas and the Korologos brothers with Kaliopé Parthemos (Chief of Staff, Office of Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake), Sen. Paul Sarbanes, Rep. John Sarbanes, and Nick Larigakis.

with the National Hellenic Society (NHS) and SigmaPharm Laboratories LLC sponsored it. "We sincerely appreciate the generous sponsorship of Sigma-Pharm Laboratories, which is under the leadership of Dr. Spiro Spireas," AHI President Nick Larigakis said. "Without its support, the Conference on Hellenism would not be the successful event that it was."

## AHI Foundation Publishes Online Policy Journal

The AHIF issued the sixth volume of its Spring 2015 Online Policy Journal. "With this issue, we again seek to enhance the quality of American foreign policy regarding the eastern Mediterranean, particularly Greece and Cyprus. Our essayists combine historic analysis with recent events and place them in broad cultural contexts," 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). "We believe key factors in enriching American policies are the activities of the Greek community and its allies, and we seek to empower them in whatever way we can. We think it especially important to work with Greek Americans still at the onset of their careers. In all our endeavors, we advocate the need for a commitment to the principle of Rule by Law coupled with a commitment to rendering an authentic historic record stripped of ethnocentric bias."

## AHI Foundation Study Abroad Student's Account Published by The National Herald

Niko Piperis, a junior at Boston College, and participant on the 2015 AHI Foundation Study Abroad program, had his experience published on the op-ed page of *The National Herald*, a leading Greek American weekly newspaper, December 19-25 edition. Piperis' piece, "As We Ponder Solutions to 'A Simple Twist of Fate'" recounts his time on the trip in Cyprus, and specifically, the student group's visit to Turkish-occupied Cyprus.

He grapples with calls by many to move on from the past thus tolerating injustice for the sake of compromise. In addition to Piperis' piece being published in the newspaper, two additional student accounts were published on



*The National Herald's* website, [www.thenationalherald.com](http://www.thenationalherald.com). Zoe Andris' article "Do you know anything about Cyprus?" and Jerry Christodoulatos' article "The Cyprus Invasion, the Tragedy of Power Politics – A View on Latest Talks."

## AHI Foundation Study Abroad Student Interviewed by Ivy School's Daily Newspaper

Elias Gerasoulis, a sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania, and participant on the 2015 AHI Foundation Study Abroad program, had his experience published in his university's newspaper. The article, "In the midst of a financial crisis, Penn student meets the president of Greece," appeared on the front page of *The Daily Pennsylvanian*, October 5.

Gerasoulis recounted what it was like to be in Greece during a critical time in its history to *The Daily Pennsylvanian*, the independent daily student newspaper of the University of Pennsylvania. The article reported on the many meetings Gerasoulis and his fellow students had with dignitaries and government officials, including President of Greece Prokopis Pavlopoulos. It also shared a few of his personal and memorable moments as Gerasoulis was able to connect with relatives living in Greece with whom he's had little or no contact.

## Three Former AHI Foundation Study Abroad Students' Works Published

Three former AHI Foundation Study Abroad participants had their recent works about Cyprus published. Leah Barkoukis, a features editor for Townhall.com, who participated in the program in 2010, authored a piece titled "Europe's Last Divided Capital Remembers Anniversary of Turkish Invasion," which was published in Townhall.com, July 20, the 41st anniversary of Turkey's invasion of the Republic of Cyprus. Barkoukis received a Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution from Georgetown University and a BA in Government and Classical Studies from the College of William and Mary.

Alexcia Chambers, a 2013 participant of the AHIF Foreign Policy Program, had her e-book titled, "Cyprus: Perfectly Blue Waters Hiding Politically Explosive Gas," published in April 2015. The e-book is available on all mobile platforms: iStore, Google Play, and Amazon (through the Diplomatic Courier app). Alexcia interned at the U.S. Embassy in Nicosia in the summer of 2015.

Constance Baroudos, Vice President, Lexington Institute and a participant on an AHIF Foreign Policy trip in 2011 authored articles and appeared in several interviews to discuss Greece's debt crisis and the ramifications of the Greek referendum vote.

## AHI Business Network

AHI highlights the professional accomplishments of its members through various communications vehicles to provide the Greek American community with a viable business network. For example, AHI's semiannual

newsletter features the "Member Spotlight" and "Members in the News" sections that highlight the latest "movers and shakers" in the community.

In 2015 AHI's "Members in the News" section featured: Stavroula Kotrotsios was sworn in as an Assistant District Attorney for the Delaware County District Attorney's Office in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on January 5. Helen Abadzi was selected as one of the five new members of the International Jury for the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes. Nicholas Kalis, founding president of the AHI Northern Virginia Chapter and president of Kalis Development Corporation, awarded \$2,250 to students at Catholic University's Real Estate Development Graduate Studio to create a new vision for Warrenton Town Centre, Warrenton, Va. George D. Behrakis received an honorary doctorate from the Medical Faculty of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens for his contributions to science, and for his extensive humanitarian endeavors, December 11.



## LEADERSHIP, AWARDS & STAFF NEWS

### AHI President Honored By Greek Orthodox Community of Falls Church, Virginia



Nick Larigakis being presented with the award by parish council president Jim Stoucker and Father Costa Pavlakos.

The Saint Katherine Greek Orthodox Church community of Falls Church, Va., honored AHI President Nick Larigakis with its Community Service Award at its Annual Dinner Gala on November 8. Father Konstantinos A. Pavlakos and Jim Stoucker, Parish Council president, presented Larigakis, who currently serves as vice president of the Parish Council, with the award.

"In thought, deed and action, Nick has devoted his life to the advancement of Orthodoxy, Hellenism and the defense of freedom and democracy...as well as an articulate advocacy of the rule of law as it pertains to Greece and Cyprus. We are proud to honor his service to the community as a champion of Orthodoxy, our heritage and the Diaspora," Stoucker said.

In acceptance, Larigakis paid homage to his parents whom he credited for instilling the importance of education,

hard work, and good citizenship in his life. He also acknowledged their sacrifices as well as the sacrifices of his brother, Constantine, a caregiver to his parents; and his daughter, Panayiota, over the years. "Without the support and sacrifices of others, I could not be where I am today," Larigakis said.

Approximately 220 persons attended, including former American Ambassador to Greece Tom Miller, Christine Brennan, journalist, *USA Today*, representatives from the Embassies of Greece and Cyprus, and several local parish priests.

## AHI Founder Honored by The Cyprus Children's Fund, AHC of California



AHI Founder Gene Rossides, honoree, with organizers and dignitaries at the Cyprus Children's Fund testimonial dinner.

The Cyprus Children's Fund honored AHI Founder Gene Rossides, presenting him with The Cyprus Children's Fund Recognition Award at the organization's testimonial dinner held March 21, Terrace on the Park, New York City. "I am deeply grateful for this wonderful honor from the Cyprus Children's Fund, which has done so much to help alleviate the plight of underprivileged and displaced children of Cyprus, following the Turkish invasion and subsequent occupation of 37.3 percent of Cyprus," AHI Founder Rossides said. Rossides was honored alongside the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) by the Cyprus Children's Fund. He thanked AHEPA for its financial assistance following the invasion that allowed for a significant grassroots campaign that led to the successful U.S. rule of law embargo of arms to Turkey.

In addition, the American Hellenic Council of California honored AHI Founder Rossides at its 40th Annual Honors Dinner Dance, April 25, Los Angeles. "I am deeply grateful for this wonderful honor from the American Hellenic Council of California, which has done so much to help Greek Americans advocate in California," Rossides told the group. "It's also humbling to be honored among a distinguished group of accomplished Hellenes." Rossides was honored alongside prominent Hellenes: John P. Calamos, founder, CEO, and chairman, Calamos Investments; Ambassador Eleni Kounalakis, former U.S. ambassador to Hungary; and Peter Economides, owner and founder, Felix BNI. Demetrios Boutris, former California Corporations Commissioner, served as the event's Master of Ceremonies.

In addition, Rossides made a presentation on his recently released book *Kissinger & Cyprus: A Study in Lawlessness* at



Presentation of the American Hellenic Professional Society's inaugural Hellenic Spirit Award to Gene Rossides, following his book presentation at the Sutter Club.



Gene Rossides receiving the Saloutos Award from the Chairman of the American Hellenic Council of California board, Dr. Menas Kafatos.

the Sutter Club in Sacramento, CA on April 24. Angelo and Sofia Tsakopoulos sponsored the event and the American Hellenic Professional Society and CSUS, Hellenic Studies Program, sponsored the program. A book-signing and Q&A session were also held.

Furthermore, event organizers surprised Rossides and presented AHI's founder with the first Hellenic Spirit Award.

"We thank Angelo and Sofia Tsakopoulos and the program sponsors for graciously providing a forum for Mr. Rossides to speak about his new book and how it relates to the current situation in Cyprus today," AHI President Nick Larigakis said. "We also appreciate the honor bestowed upon Mr. Rossides."

## Internship Program Prospers

AHI's internship program is designed for college students who are interested in learning more about U.S.-Greece-Cyprus relations and how foreign policy is formulated in Washington, D.C. Students who are chosen for the program spent weeks to months working on various assignments comprising of research projects, attending events in area think tanks and in congress, and assisting with an assortment of educational events sponsored by AHI.

AHI's interns in 2015 were Tiffani Wills, who is pursuing a BA at the University of Alabama; Rozi Lamprakaki, who is pursuing a BS in Economics at George Washington University; and Vasilia Anayiotis, who is pursuing a BA in International/Global Studies at Dickinson College.