



# PANHELLENIC AFFAIRS

*Building a better America through Education & Hellenism*

October 2013

## Hellenic Birthright 2013 Report

### Twenty Sponsored Students say "Thank You"

From June 17 through July 22, 2013, the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation was proud to offer for a second consecutive year its **Hellenic Birthright** program—a five-week educational and cultural enrichment experience for Greek American college students *who have never been to Greece*. The Foundation was able to send twenty students to Greece for a total cost of \$100,000 in order to exercise their birth-given right to personally connect with the land of their ancestors and thus experience the magnificence of Greece. This would not have been possible without the generous support of our Community and faithful donors.

**Hellenic Birthright** was again offered in collaboration with our partners at Anatolia College and their School of Higher Studies, The American College of Thessaloniki. The twenty lucky applicants who were selected from across the United States not only experienced the trip of a lifetime, but created memories and friendships which they will cherish forever. In addition to visiting countless cities and archaeological sites across 2 continents, the students also received up to 4 transferable college credits through two courses, which included "The World of Alexander The Great" and an "Art History Museum Practicum." The classes were taught by highly qualified faculty on the beautiful Anatolia College campus in Thessaloniki.

For many of our sponsored students, it was the very first time they had ever left the United States and traveled so far away from "home." However, as they returned to the States following the completion of the

program, one by one, it was apparent that they now considered Greece their newly discovered "home." This is exactly why the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation and its Chairman, Chris P. Tomaras, wanted to create a program which gave Greek Americans the opportunity to visit their ancestral homeland and appreciate and absorb first hand all that Greece has to offer.



*Hellenic Birthright participants at the Acropolis for the first time.*

The 2013 **Hellenic Birthright** itinerary included Thessaloniki, Pella, Vergina, Delphi, Athens, Thebes, Dion, Olynthos, and Philippi, among many others. However, the most memorable highlight was the trip to Constantinople and a private meeting with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. Carlyn Loutos, a Broadcast Journalism major at the University of Central Florida, said "Meeting His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew was an experience I will never forget. It was so humbling being able to stand in his presence. What an absolutely incredible and inspiring human being. It made me so grateful for the religion and culture that I am blessed to have and know."

Another highlight of the trip was an impromptu Greek dancing lesson in Thessaloniki—a first for many of our **Hellenic Birthright** participants. The lesson was a special treat from the staff at Greece's *Artion Magazine*, who interviewed all twenty of our participants on the topic of what it was like growing up Greek in America, and how this once-in-a-lifetime trip has affected them. Mark

Bristol, a Sophomore at Emerson College majoring in Screenwriting, describes how he felt dancing with an authentic Greek dance troupe, "**I Greek-danced for the first time in my life this past week. The most memorable moments I have had in Greece have occurred whenever I truly immersed myself in the culture.**"

Above all, our participants learned the true meaning of Greek φιλότιμο through their experiences and daily interactions. One such interaction was when one of our participants required emergency dental care due to an old accident.

The dentist who assisted the student in Thessaloniki did so *absolutely free of charge—he refused to accept any money*. Although Greece is going through a very public economic crisis, this story serves as a tribute to the endurance of the Greek spirit, and the kindness of the Greek heart.





**Chris P. Tomaras**  
Founder & Chairman

## Letter from Our Chairman

*As Chairman of the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation, I would like to thank all of you for your generous support over this past year. As an organization and as a Community we have accomplished many goals together—and more importantly—we have impacted the lives of Greek American students in a positive manner.*

*The second consecutive year of our Hellenic Birthright program was met with glowing success, and took place between June 17 and July 22, 2013. We were fortunate to have many applicants from across the United States, and the twenty selected undergraduate students experienced the trip of a lifetime, created lasting memories, and will now cherish lifelong friendships. These young men and women were given the chance to see Greece for the first time, and it is all because of our faithful supporters who gave them the gift of their Hellenic Birthright.*

*We are also proud to announce that \$250,000 will be awarded to forty Greek American undergraduate students on Saturday, June 14, 2014, so please save the date. The application is now available on our website and the deadline to apply is January 31, 2014. We encourage you to help us spread the word, and share this opportunity with any young men and women you know who could benefit from this significant financial assistance.*

*As you read this special newsletter, I believe you will share my passion and dedication to education and the Greek American Youth of our Community. Thank you for your continued support, and I hope you will join our efforts in building a better America through Education and Hellenism.*

## The 2013/2014 Scholarship Application is Now Available The Foundation Will Again Award \$250,000

The PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation is proud to announce that its 2013/14 application is now available for eligible Greek American college students who meet the qualifying criteria. Since its establishment, the Foundation has awarded over 200 Greek American students with \$1.7 million through our Scholarship Awards and the Hellenic Birthright program.

The Foundation will again award \$250,000 in scholarships that will be distributed at our Awards Gala taking place at the Hilton Chicago on **Saturday, June 14, 2014**.



The PanHellenic Awards are available at two levels:

- **Twenty (20) Awards of \$10,000 based on academic achievement and financial need.**
- **Twenty (20) Awards of \$2,500 based solely on academic achievement.**

The \$250,000 in scholarships is the largest amount awarded to Greek American students by any organization in the United States. Founded in 1998 by Chris P. Tomaras, the Foundation's goal is to *build a better America through Education and Hellenism*. "I believe that by providing scholarships and educational programs to Greek American students who have the potential to be life-long achievers, we can strengthen our civic fabric in America and deliver enlightened and engaged citizens. Over 10 million students in the US applied for financial aid in 2012 in order to pay their college tuition. I want to make sure that the best and brightest of our Community have the resources they need to complete their education," said Tomaras.

**Students from all fifty states are encouraged to apply, and applications should be postmarked by Friday, January 31, 2014.**

*"I felt incredibly honored to receive such a prestigious award and be amongst some of the most talented and intelligent Greek Americans from across the nation. It is very heartwarming to know that an organization such as the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation exists, and cannot express enough thanks for the monetary assistance they have provided me and countless others in supporting us through our education. I plan to always live up to the expectations set forth by the organization and hope that when my studies conclude that I too will be able to support the next generation of Greek Americans to pursue their own dreams through education and Hellenism."*

– **Petros Petrides**, Columbia University

## Hellenic Birthright 2013 Participants

**Melpomeni Arianas**  
University of Illinois at Chicago

**Mark Bristol**  
Emerson College

**Kelcie Brush**  
University of Iowa

**Andrea Calvert**  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

**Christina Darin**  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

**Jennifer Fokas**  
Northwestern University

**Demetra Frangos**  
Case Western Reserve University

**Alexandra Glenges**  
Franklin & Marshall College

**Matthew Goutis**  
Wayne State University

**Zoe Grant**  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

**Demetria Hayman**  
University of Vermont

**Amanda Karakoudas**  
Boston University

**Carlyn Loutos**  
University of Central Florida

**Chloé Loutos**  
University of Central Florida

**Dallas Mindo-Panasis**  
University of California, San Diego

**Alexa Papastratakos**  
DePaul University

**Ariana Papastratakos**  
University of Iowa

**Adrianna Sakolari**  
Loyola University Chicago

**Katina Stavropolus**  
Fox Valley Technical College

**Stavro Victor**  
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona



*"This has been the most amazing five weeks of my life, and I wouldn't trade it for anything else in the world. I owe it all to the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation and The American College of Thessaloniki for giving me the opportunity of a lifetime. I have never been so proud to be Greek. Απτό Ελλάδα, αγάπη μου."*

**Mark Bristol**  
Emerson College



*"I can truly say that these five weeks were the most exhilarating and important five weeks of my life thus far...Your efforts to not only help students such as myself but also allow our dreams to come true, serves as an inspiration not only to myself but to the Hellenic Community as a whole."*

**Melpomeni Arianas**  
University of Illinois at Chicago



*"This trip has opened my eyes to a culture that I always associated myself with—but until now never truly felt a part of. I have learned so much about myself on this trip and more importantly my Hellenic roots that I am so proud of."*

**Stavro Victor**  
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona



*"This trip to Greece has been more than I could have dreamed it to be. I feel so lucky to have been able to participate in it—I would have never been able to have this kind of eye-opening experience if it wasn't for this scholarship. I've learned so much about my heritage, my family, my faith, and most importantly myself. I could not have learned these lessons anywhere else but Greece."*

**Adrianna Sakolari**  
Loyola University Chicago



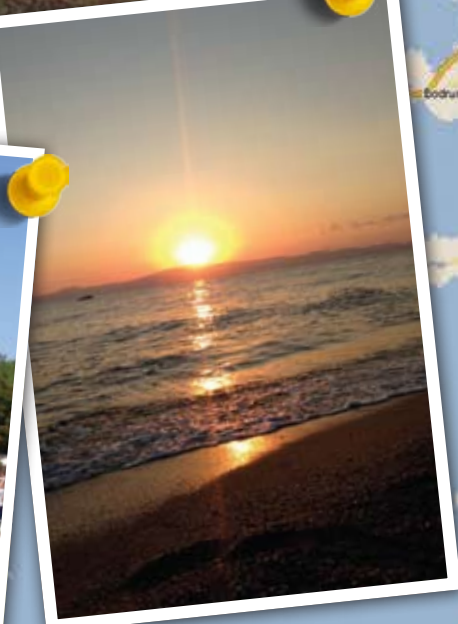
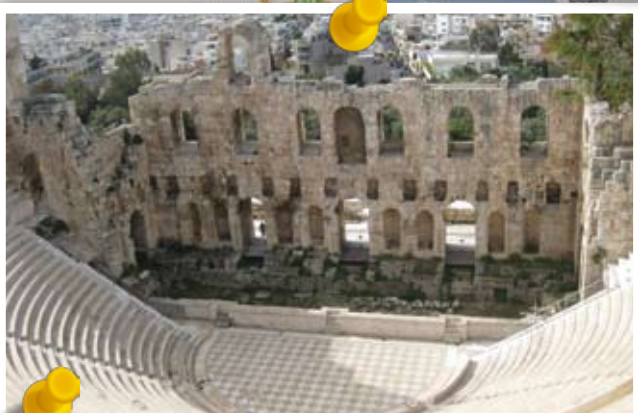
*"I knew as soon as my foot hit the Greek soil for the first time, I was finally home. Thank you PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation for this opportunity you have granted me—I have done things here that I only dreamed of until now."*

**Matthew Goutis**  
Wayne State University



*"Above all, my trip to Greece taught me about family and the importance of taking care of those you are closest to. Family is an essential element of Greek culture and though I had expected to see and experience this before arriving, I feel that, after spending 5 weeks in Greece, I understand what a family truly is better than ever before."*

**Zoe Grant**  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



Hellenic Birthright™

# Hellenic Birthright Highlights

Between June 17 to July 22, 2013, twenty Greek American college students experienced the trip of a lifetime through **Hellenic Birthright**. Participants traveled across two continents and countless cities—creating memories, friendships, and a deeper connection to their ancestral roots.



# Hellenic Birthright Sponsors

Thank you for giving Greek American students their birth given right and making it possible for them to visit Greece for the very first time.

## Premier Founding Sponsors (\$25,000+)

Stavros Niarchos Foundation (2012)  
Mr. Chris P. Tomaras (2012, 2013)

## Founding Sponsors (\$5,000+)

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John & Mary Pappajohn Scholarship Foundation (2013)  
In Memory of Our Father Yiannis Skarpathiotis - Given by the Dr. George Skarpathiotis Family (2013)

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# From the Executive Director

**Hellenic Birthright 2013** was a great success, and we have in part our Foundation supporters to thank for making this dream a reality. We are very grateful for your continued support and your assistance in helping us accomplish this most significant goal. We would also like to thank our program partners, Anatolia College, for their dedication to this partnership and excellent implementation of our **Hellenic Birthright** program. Our twenty students came back to the Unites States as cultural ambassadors for their ancestral homeland—Greece—whom they met for the very first time this past summer. Please take a minute to visit our blog and read their personal weekly journal entries.

We are also looking forward to an exciting year ahead. The Foundation's scholarship application for our 2014 Awards was released on August 1, 2013, and we encourage students from all 50 States to apply. Please save the date for our Awards Ceremony and Gala at the Hilton Chicago on Saturday, June 14, 2014, where we will award 40 exceptional Greek American students with \$250,000 in monetary scholarships.

Once again, thank you for your support, and make sure you stay connected by subscribing to our Blog, liking us on Facebook, and following us on Twitter.

– Yanni Valsamas

*Our Mission is to promote education by providing scholarships and educational programs to Greek American students who, guided by the values of their Hellenic upbringing, have the potential to become life-long significant achievers and contribute meaningfully to society.*

## A Community Working Together

The PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation is proud to announce a special gift from The Mando Gouvas Scholarship Foundation. After being dissolved in 2013, their Board of Trustees has decided to gift our Foundation with **"The Mando Gouvas Scholarship"**. Founded by the friends and family of Mando Gouvas, a lifelong educator and influential member of the Greek American Community, the foundation served as a tribute to her devotion and enthusiasm for educating students in the Hellenic language, culture, and Orthodox religion. We give very special thanks to everyone at The Mando Gouvas Scholarship Foundation for this significant gift.

## We Still Need Your Help

**Hellenic Birthright** would not have been possible without our faithful donors. Through the generosity of our supporters and people like you, the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation can continue giving these amazing opportunities to the young men and women of our Greek American Community. Consider donating to the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation. Any amount—large or small—makes a difference in a young person's life.

Please visit our website for *Donor Opportunities* and additional ways to get involved. You can make your secure donation online or make your check payable to "PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation." All donations are tax deductible.

Don't forget to *stay connected*—help us reach 1,000 "likes" on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and subscribe to our Blog. Help us share our opportunities with the youth who could benefit from them the most.

## GuideStar

The PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation invites you to find us on *GuideStar* and join the larger philanthropic community in supporting our cause. Our Foundation is proud to display a *Silver Level Guidestar Exchange Seal*, a distinction awarded only to organizations who are committed to transparency. Visit [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org) and search for the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation.

## GoodSearch

*Help our cause by donating nothing at all.* If you are unable to make a donation at this time, please join us by becoming our philanthropic partner and register with *GoodSearch* at [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com). Choose the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation as your cause, and help us raise money by simple everyday actions.

Through *GoodSearch* you may also register for other innovative programs including *GoodSwipe*, *GoodDining*, *GoodTravel*, and *GoodShop*. A portion of each purchase you make goes directly to the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation—make a difference simply by swiping your credit card at over 50,000 locations, enjoying a meal at your favorite restaurants, planning your next vacation, or shopping online from over 3,000 retailers.

Add the *GoodToolbar* to your browser to ensure that every purchase and web search you make will count as a donation toward the **PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation**. Start searching so that next year, we can help even more Greek American students make their dreams come true. Help us keep up the good search!



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