

EDITORIAL

By Dean Moskos
District 6 Governor

WHAT HAS AHEPA DONE FOR ME?

My dear brothers, chapter officers and members of our District:

First of all, I would like to thank you for the honor and trust that you bestowed upon me to be your District Governor. It is a position I take seriously. I had the opportunity during this almost six-month period to travel throughout our wonderful State and meet so many of you. I am at awe at all your achievements, your civic endeavors, your philanthropic work, and your pride in your heritage. Even if some of you are not of Hellenic heritage, you aspired to the Hellenic ideals, and in my eyes, you are more Greek than for the rest of us! I salute you!

I have made many friends in this brotherhood. I visited half of our active chapters, some of them two or three times, and I will not stop until I visit all of our chapters, big or small, urban or rural. I listened to your concerns, your constructive criticism, and your advice. However, what prompted me to write this epistle is the disillusionment of a number of members who are considering not renewing their AHEPA membership. This will result in the eventual closure of historic chapters! Why is this happening? Why this despair?

I am not going to tell you what was the need for AHEPA was established nearly 100 years ago. You all know that, but if you need a refresher, see the attached brief history of AHEPA and all of the major contributions it made throughout its centennial history. Some of you asked me “Why should I continue to be a member of AHEPA?”, and “Is AHEPA relevant today?”. My answers are “Yes” and “Yes”. Let me tell you why. I am not going far back. This is recent history. I am going to use only two examples.

Ten years after the destruction of the twin towers and of our St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox church, as a result of the terrorist attack on 9/11/2001, AHEPA’s leadership, on July 3, 2011, AHEPANS rallied to rebuild the Ground Zero St. Nicholas Church. With cries of “Rebuild now! Rebuild Now!” parishioners and supporters of the Greek Orthodox church that was destroyed in the 9/11 attacks rallied at Ground Zero on Sunday, June 26, 2011, in hopes of resuming negotiations to rebuild the church. St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey have been at odds for several years over the cost and exact location of the rebuilt church.

“Shame on the Port Authority to take this long to rebuild our church,” Nicholas A. Karacostas, the then Supreme President of AHEPA, at a rally that drew about 100 people to the site of the former World Trade Center. See photo below.



In message, Executive Director Basil Mossaidis said, “Sunday’s AHEPA rally to rebuild St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, the only church destroyed on September 11, was a tremendous success. On behalf of Supreme President Nicholas Karacostas and the Supreme Lodge, I would like to thank everyone who participated and added his or her voice to this noble cause. And we were definitely heard — loud and clear! Whether it was repeated coverage on CBS News and the other New York City major network affiliates or placement in Religion News Service, or Greek American media outlets, I am confident our calls for St. Nicholas to be rebuilt at the agreed upon Ground Zero location of 130 Liberty Street, and for Governors Andrew Cuomo and Chris Christie to “Cut the Red Tape” of bureaucracy at the Port Authority will make a difference.

Yes, my dear brothers. AHEPA has made a difference. Not only that, a successful fundraising campaign ensued and the one million dollar pledge was fulfilled at the Chicago Supreme Convention in July 2019, with the help from members like you and me throughout the AHEPA domain. See photo below.



© GOA/Dimitrios Panagos
Figure 1 AHEPA Chairman of the Board Nicholas Karacostas (l) and Supreme President George Loucas (r) presenting the \$1 million donation to Archbishop Elpidophoros.

Another recent example of AHEPA’s philanthropy and civic contribution to our country is the creation of the AHEPA Service Dog for Warriors program that became a National AHEPA project at the 2016 Supreme Convention. AHEPA’s involvement in the K9 for Warriors effort was started by Garden State Chapter 517 in partnership with the Lt. Dennis W. Zilinski II Memorial Fund in 2016 when our chapter sponsored AHEPA’s first service dog (a beautiful black lab who will be named “AHEPA”). These wonderful dogs help veterans suffering from (PTSD). Chapter 517 was appointed by the National Projects Committee to coordinate this effort and to manage the funds through a 501c3 corporation formed for this purpose. The cost to train a service dog is \$27,500. Most of the dogs are rescue dogs and none of the costs are borne by the veteran.

Chapters enthusiastically adopted this program in their own fundraising events, and it became a huge success with Bro. George Karatzia, PSG of Region 3 as its Chairman. As of the Chicago 2019 Supreme Convention, the amount of \$420,000 was raised for 27 Service Dogs. Once again, AHEPA has made a difference. See photo below:



As a side note, Past Supreme President George Horiates announced that the AHEPA Service Dogs for Warriors program resumed after a 16-month hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I encourage all chapters who have not undertaken this worthwhile project to learn more about the program by visiting <https://ahepa-servicedogs.org>.

These are just two major examples of how relevant AHEPA is. Every member, every chapter can make a difference at the local and national level, by doing community work, raising funds for philanthropic causes, scholarships, or churches, or doing community work, like volunteering as an AHEPA chapter to a local cause. I will paraphrase President John F. Kennedy. Ask yourselves not what AHEPA can do for you, but what YOU can do for AHEPA! Continue your membership by paying your dues, attend meetings and events, and be an active member. We need you!

Please know that as of the 12/15/2021 AHEPA Statistical Report, there are still 370 members who have not paid their dues to their chapter treasurers in order for the chapters to submit your \$45 per capita tax to Global Headquarters in Washington, DC. If you have not yet paid your dues, please call, text or e-mail your chapter President, or Secretary and advise them that you will continue your AHEPA membership and that your payment is on its way. Brother, I count on your *fielotimo*. Continue to be a proud member of AHEPA, and be part of the solution. Spread the word in your community, and help AHEPA thrive and grow. We need AHEPA to give us purpose, and for the future benefit of the next generation.

Fraternally,

Dean Moskos
AHEPA District 6 Governor



2020 AHEPA - OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE 1922

Since 1922, the AHEPA has initiated over 500,000 members into over 400 Chapters worldwide. With Chapters in the United States, Greece, Cyprus, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, England, Germany, France, Austria, Bulgaria, and Constantinople. AHEPA is reaching out worldwide.

AHEPA is the world's leading membership organization for Hellenes. We salute our members of the Empire District #6 for being part of the largest District in the AHEPA domain with over 1,600 members. Our District and our chapters strive to support and promote active works of charity and great deeds in our respective communities. We stand committed to provide our membership with plenty of opportunity for fellowship, civic responsibilities, charity, and educational contributions. We also must do our duty to recruit more members. We do great work! Reach out to your local AHEPA, Daughters of Penelope (DOP), Sons of Pericles (SOP), or Maids of Athena (MOA) chapter and apply for membership today!

Beginnings

AHEPA was founded in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 1922, for the simple purpose of assisting all immigrants of Hellenic descent in achieving American citizenship through chapter "schools" of instruction in the principles of American government, the use and increased fluency in the English language, and assisting the Greek immigrants to participate in the civic life of America.

AHEPA's Contributions to Worthy and Charitable Causes

The Order of AHEPA has contributed financially to many worthy causes during its span of nearly 100 years of existence on a national and international level. These contributions do not take into account the many local activities of our chapters within the realm of their communities. The local AHEPA, DOP, SOP and MOA chapters have always given generously and vigorously supported local community undertakings in the fields of education, charity, and civic improvement. The national and international contributions worth hundreds of millions of dollars since 1922 include the following:

1. Raised over \$512,800 for the Greek Relief securing shipments of medical supplies totaling \$14 Million.
2. Awarded \$1,250,000 in AHEPA Educational Scholarships in 2018 cumulatively.
3. Awarded over \$55,000 in Athletic Department Scholarships.
4. Provided relief to tens of thousands of needy children and families in Greece since 2011.
5. Received a \$1,249,000 donation from the Estate of Nancy Horton, wherein the interest will support the charitable work carried out in our hospitals in Greece.
6. Maintained the AHEPA 'Journey to Greece Program' which sends 25 students to participate in the summer credited program, tuition free on an annual basis.
7. A donation of \$25,000 from L.M. Kohn and Company for the Educational Seminar and sponsorship of the annual Hellenic History Tournament where \$10,000 in scholarships are awarded.
8. \$10,000 to the Ionian Village towards their rebuilding after the recent tornadoes.
9. Raised \$100,000 for Hurricane Harvey relief in 2017.
10. Donated \$100,000 to the Ecumenical Patriarchate since 2008.
11. Donated over \$25,000 by supporting the AHEPA Marathon for AHEPA charities.
12. Donated over \$5,000 in children's toys and gifts to Children's Hospital and to the children of St. Basil's Academy at Christmastime.
13. AHEPA Veterans Committee launched the website for registration of veteran members of the AHEPA and for the collection of donations to Veteran's Programs.

14. Publish THE AHEPAN AHEPA'S quarterly magazine.
15. Coordinated and donated over 10,000 gallons of milk to the families affected by the lead poisoning in Flint, Michigan.
16. Raised awareness and funds for the K-9 Service Dogs for Wounded Warriors programs and projects. AHEPA has purchased 16 dogs valued at \$20,000 each so far, each for PTSD veterans.
17. Hosted events across the USA and Canada in support of the Sons and Maids, along with many other projects.
18. Donated \$1 million towards the rebuilding of the St. Nicholas Shrine Church at the World Trade Center after its destruction on 9/11/2001 as a result of the terrorist attack of the twin towers.
19. Donated \$50,000 to sponsor the Religious Freedom Conference in Washington, D.C.
20. Relief of Florida hurricane victims
21. Relief of Mississippi flood victims.
22. Relief of Corinth, Dodecanese, and Ionian Islands Earthquake victims.
23. Relief for the War Orphans of Greece.
24. Contributed to the Hellenic Museum.
25. Provided and continue to provide national scholarships to worthy students.
26. Donated to the Theological Seminaries at Pomfret, CT and later at Brookline, MA.
27. Relief for the fatherless children of Refugees through the Near East Relief.
28. Donated to the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Jerusalem.
29. Raised funds for the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial at Hyde Park, NY.
30. Commissioned the Demetrius Ypsilanti statue in 1928 in Ypsilanti, MI, and restored and re-dedicated in 1995.
31. Commissioned the George Dilboy Monument in 1930 in Somerville, MA.
32. Supported the Ecuadorean Relief.
33. Donated towards the Kansas City Flood Relief and the Greek War Relief.
34. Greek War Relief Program during and after World War II.
35. Financed the construction of the AHEPA Hospital in Thessaloniki, Greece, and a wing of the Evangelismos Hospital in Athens, Greece.
36. Financed the construction of seven AHEPA Health Centers in Greece following World War II.
37. Financed the AHEPA Agricultural School in Greece.
38. Financed the AHEPA Preventorium in Volos, Greece.
39. Established the Daughters of Penelope Girls' Shelter Home in Athens, Greece.
40. Funded the construction of the AHEPA School and the AHEPA Hall for Boys at St. Basil's Academy, Garrison, NY.
41. Sold \$500 million in U.S. War Bonds during World War II as an official issuing agency of the U.S. Treasury Department.
42. Contributed towards the Truman Library, Independence, MO.
43. Contributed to the Dr. George Papanicolaou Research Center Institute, Miami, FL.
44. Commissioned the AHEPA Truman Statue and Plaza in Athens, Greece (subsequently relocated to the Grounds of the U.S. Embassy).
45. Donated 40,000 American and Canadian books to schools and libraries in Greece.
46. Presented 7-volume sets of the Greek Classics to schools and libraries in the U.S. and Canada.
47. Donated CARE Tool Kits for students of vocational schools in Greece.
48. Support of the AHEPA Cooley's Anemia (Thalassemia) Research Fund and the AHEPA SAVE-A-HEART Fund.
49. Raised funds to aid war refugees of World War II.
50. Donated sports kits for Greek school children.
51. Raised over \$100,000 for victims of the devastating Attica wildfires in Greece in 2018.
52. Donated \$27,250 worth of protective gear for Greek Police Border Guards, Evros, Greece.

These are just some of AHEPA's contributions to worthy causes in nearly 100 years of its existence, which exclude contributions made by individual AHEPA districts and chapters.





American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association

PROMOTING HELLENISM, EDUCATION, PHILANTHROPY, CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY,
FAMILY AND INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE

History

The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association is the largest and oldest American-based, Greek heritage or grassroots membership organization. Its scope is international with chapters in the United States, Canada, the Bahamas, England (3), France (1), Belgium (1), Germany (5), Austria (1), Netherlands (1), Turkey (Constantinople), Greece, Cyprus, and "Sister" chapters in Australia and New Zealand under the auspices of AHEPA Australasia.

AHEPA was founded on July 26, 1922, in response to the evils of bigotry and racism that emerged in the early 20th century American society. It also helped Greek immigrants assimilate into society.

Today, AHEPA brings the ideals of ancient Greece, which include philanthropy, education, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence to the community through community service in voluntarism.

Although a majority of the membership is comprised of Americans of Greek descent, application for membership is open to anyone who believes in the mission of the organization.

Mission

The mission of the AHEPA family is to promote Hellenism, Education, Philanthropy, Civic Responsibility, and Family and Individual Excellence.

Hellenism

An important component of AHEPA's mission is to create an awareness of the principles of Hellenism to society. These principles include a commitment to humanity, freedom, and democracy. The preservation and promotion of these ideals is where AHEPA has been, and always will be, deeply committed. AHEPA educates the community on these matters through symposia, forums, and conferences.

Education

AHEPA's commitment to education has been well documented throughout its history. Over \$3 million is endowed at the local, district, and national levels towards the use of scholarships and a half-million dollars are awarded annually. Thousands of young men and women have benefited as recipients of AHEPA scholarships at these various levels.

The AHEPA National Educational Foundation administers the scholarship program at the national level. It offers scholarships to a wide variety of students. Recipients are: traditional and non-traditional students; seminarians, including those entering the Holy Cross Greek School of Theology; and high school seniors, college and post-graduate students who are looking to become tomorrow's leaders.

The preservation of Hellenic or Classical Studies programs on college campuses is an important issue for the AHEPA Educational Foundation. A subcommittee of the foundation, the Hellenic Cultural Commission, actively works to support the study of the Classics at universities.

In addition, educational programs such as "Journey to Greece" with more than 400 alumni in Washington internships are sponsored by the Foundation.

Philanthropy

Philanthropy and voluntarism have been pillars of strength for AHEPA. From national disaster relief to raising funds for the elimination of life-threatening diseases, to making significant contributions to our local neighborhoods, AHEPA is at the forefront of charitable giving.

AHEPA's philanthropic deeds are evident in the restoration of the **Statue of Liberty** and **Ellis Island**; in the halls of the **St. Basil's Academy**, a childcare facility in Garrison, NY; in the care packages we sent to our troops in cooperation with the USO; and in the building of healthcare facilities in Greece. Yet, this only scratches the surface of the numerous philanthropic works of the association. In addition, countless charitable projects are undertaken every year by AHEPA's chapters and districts.

Civic responsibility

Our grassroots have a strong voice. With chapters in every major metropolitan city and in rural areas of North America, AHEPA communicates the positions of the Greek-American community to elected representatives at the federal, state, and local levels, as well as to our diplomatic leaders. These issues pertain to Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey; however, our constituents are also interested in domestic policy areas affecting the philanthropic, civic, and community service-based programs in which they are involved. These positions are based upon our American heritage and ideals with the best interest of the United States in mind.

AHEPA educates its constituents about these issues through seminars and conferences, providing expert panelists from the U.S. government, prominent Washington, DC, think-tank organizations, and the business world. Furthermore, AHEPA keeps a watchful eye on Congress with his **Congressional Scorecard**, a tool that evaluates members of Congress on Greek-American issues.

Family and Individual Excellence

What makes AHEPA unique from other organizations is the creation of the AHEPA Family. Together with three affiliated organizations, the AHEPA Family works as a unit toward the fulfillment of a common mission. Combined, the four organizations have contributed hundreds of million of dollars to national projects throughout their history.

The **Daughters of Penelope** was established in November 16, 1929, is the women's affiliate of AHEPA. It is the first Greek-American women's organization in the United States. One of its crowning achievements is the Penelope House, a shelter for battered women in Mobile, Alabama. It is the first shelter for battered women and their children in that state.

The **Sons of Pericles** was established in February 3, 1926, and was officially recognized as the Junior Order of AHEPA in 1928. Finally, the **Maids of Athena** was founded in July 5, 1930, as the Junior Women's Auxiliary of AHEPA. The two youth groups have combined to contribute to such worthy causes as: Muscular Dystrophy, Deborah Heart and Lung Foundation, the Special Olympics, St. Basil's Academy, and Cooley's Anemia research.

The Ideals of Ancient Greece

AHEPA members are proud of the contributions of ancient Greeks gifted to western civilization. As Americans, we share many of the values put forth by them: civic responsibility, philanthropy, education, family and individual excellence, and the ideals of democracy. This is the essence of our heritage. This is the core of our mission.

Moreover, throughout the span of its history, AHEPA has served as a vital vehicle for the progressive development and emergence of American citizens of Greek heritage into every facet of society: government, business, education, and the arts. This fulfillment illustrates the promise of the **American Dream**, and symbolizes the hard work ethic of our immigrant forbearers who labored to achieve that dream with the principles of Hellenism rooted deep in their hearts.