

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

**2022 Western Regional
Centennial Celebration!**



SEPTEMBER 17, 2022

**SAINT SOPHIA GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**



Western Regional Centennial Banquet



As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of AHEPA's founding on July 26, 1922, we will honor our eight founders: Harry D. Angelopoulos, John D. Angelopoulos, George Campbell, James Campbell, Nicholas D. Chotas, George A. Polos, Spiros J. Stamos, and James N. Vlass.

As you know, these men were inspired to serve as our trailblazers navigating the many issues faced by their newly established Greek American communities. It was their desire to support one another that provided the motivation to establish an organization, AHEPA, to assist with their community's assimilation into their new country.

Since its founding, AHEPA has served as a beacon of education, philanthropy, civic responsibility, family and individual excellence, and Hellenism. Over the last century, hundreds of AHEPA chapters have been established with this shared vision in mind. The impact of our founders cannot be underestimated, and we can look back at the last hundred years with honor and pride. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of these men, thousands of deserving people have

been awarded scholarships, given the opportunity for safe and affordable housing, and held up the tenets of the American dream as principles by which to live.

2022 AHEPA SUPREME LODGE

- Supreme President - Jimmy Kokotas
- Supreme Vice President - Lou Atsaves
- Supreme Secretary - Savas Tsivikos
- Supreme Treasurer - Emmanuel C. Kaitson
- President of AHEPA Canada - Emmanuel Constas
- Supreme Counselor - Demetrios C. Kirkiles
- Sons National Advisor - Nick J. Kavadas
- Supreme Athletics Director - Chris G. Atsaves

- Supreme Governor, Region 1 - Kostas G. Sofikitis
- Supreme Governor, Region 2 - James E. Gregorakis
- Supreme Governor, Region 3 - Vassos Chrysanthou
- Supreme Governor, Region 4 - Dalton Respass
- Supreme Governor, Region 5 - Dimitris Papageorgiou
- Supreme Governor, Region 6 - Sam Benjamin
- Supreme Governor, Region 7 - Marshall A. Monsell III
- Supreme Governor, Region 8 - Alexander Mallas
- Supreme Governor, Region 10 - Yiannis Mitropoulos



Eleni Kounalakis

Ambassador Eleni Kounalakis was sworn in as the 50th Lieutenant Governor of California by Governor Gavin Newsom on January 7th, 2019. She is the first woman elected Lt. Governor of California. A native Californian, she visited each of the state's 58 counties during her historic campaign. In addition to her duties as Lt. Governor, Kounalakis is California's Representative for International Affairs and Trade, appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom by executive order.

From 2010 to 2013, Kounalakis served as President Barack Obama's Ambassador to the Republic of Hungary. Kounalakis was the first Greek-American woman – and at age 43 one of America's youngest – to serve as U.S. Ambassador.



Governor Jerry Brown appointed Kounalakis to chair the California Advisory Council for International Trade and Investment in 2014. Kounalakis was a Virtual Fellow at the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) between 2014 and 2017, specializing in international trade and immigration. She is currently a director of the Association of American Ambassadors and a National Democratic Institute (NDI) "Ambassadors Circle" advisor.

Prior to her public service, Kounalakis was president of one of California's most respected housing development firms, AKT Development, where she worked for 18 years. She built master-planned communities and delivered quality housing to the Sacramento region's working families – recognizing her as one of the capital region's most prominent businesswomen. Passionate about early childhood development, Kounalakis served as a member of California's First 5 Commission and the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Autism.

Eleni Kounalakis graduated from Dartmouth College in 1989 and earned her Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from U.C. Berkeley's Haas School of Business in 1992. She holds an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the American College of Greece. She is married to Dr. Markos Kounalakis and the couple has two teenage sons, Neo and Eon.

Her father, Angelo Tsakopoulos, is a AHEPA Life member of Sacramento Chapter 153.

The Very Reverend Father John S. Bakas

Fr. Bakas is the Dean of Saint Sophia Cathedral and Greek Orthodox Community of Los Angeles since 1995. Along with the talented leadership of the Cathedral, he spearheaded the drive for the major renovation of the Cathedral grounds and adjacent buildings. This renovation and renewal had spawned the redevelopment of the surrounding area into what is now the Byzantine-Latino Quarter of Los Angeles. He is Founder of the Diocesan Camp AGAPE, "Kids 'n Cancer" program for needy children suffering with cancer. Camp AGAPE offers summer camping programs in Fresno, California; Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington.



He has worked as an administrator at the University of New Mexico and at California State University Stanislaus. At the University of New Mexico he taught in the Latin American Affairs Department and served as Assistant Dean of Admissions. He is tri-lingual. In addition to English he speaks, Greek and Spanish.

Father Bakas has served as Chaplain and President of the Valley Children's Hospital Foundation in Fresno. At the Children's Hospital he led the fundraising drive to build a new 170 million-dollar facility, now in operation as the nation's state of the art, premier children's hospital. He currently also teaches Greek Orthodox Theology at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

In addition, Father Bakas is:

Founder, Camp Axios camping program for Los Angeles inner city at risk youth, Founder, Rotary House Children's Hospice in Fresno, CA. Founder, Project Nino-Mexico offering free medical care for poor children in Mexico through Rotary International. Founder of the Rotary Greek Amphitheater in Fresno. It is a 2,500 seat outdoor theater and built as a mini Epidauros of ancient Greece. Founder, Byzantine-Latino Quarter Neighborhood & Redevelopment Program in Los Angeles. Co-Chairman of the Police-Clergy Forum of the Los Angeles Police Department. Serves as Commissioner of the Los Angeles Commission on Children, Youth and Families

Past Supreme President Andrew T. Banis

Andrew T. Banis passed away peacefully on July 28, 2021. Andrew the oldest son of Tom and Olga Lazana Banis, was born in Sioux City, Iowa on June 16, 1932. The Banis family moved to San Francisco after the birth of their youngest son, Harry. Both parents were immigrants from Greece and were looking to San Francisco to start their new life. Andrew attended schools in San Francisco and graduated from Lowell High School. After four years of active duty in the United States Coast Guard he was Honorably Discharged and returned to complete his College Degree in Accounting and Business.



Andrew was married on January 16, 1955 to Thalia Joan Bezaitis for forty-four years. Their children are Tom and Marie Dalkas Banis and George and Kristine Barakos Banis. He has been blessed to have five grandchildren, he always referred to them as his “A’s”. They are Alexandra, Andrew, Angelique (C.T. McIntosh), Anisa (Alex Khoury) and Anthony Banis.

Andrew was Founder and Past President of Banis Restaurant Design, Inc. The business services the food industry in Design and Furnishings of all related food establishments. He was pronounced as “Archon Megas Hieromnimon of the Great Church of Christ, Order of Saint Andrew” by His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholmeos of Constantinople, Turkey. He also is a recipient of the “Archdiocesan Medal of Saint Paul” and 58 year member and Past President of Ascension Cathedral of Oakland.

Andrew was an active member of the Order of AHEPA for sixty years and has served in all offices on the chapter and district level and given the opportunity to serve as Supreme President of Order of AHEPA 2001-2002. He has served with personal and honor to the ORDER.

The Hellenic American Professional Society of California presented “The Axion Award” for Andrew’s exemplary service to his learned Profession.

He was co-founder of the Bay Area Greek American Business Society. Served with his wife Thalia and Director Paul Manolis during founding of the Patriarch Athengoras Orthodox Institute at University of California Berkeley.

But above all, Andy will be remembered as a loving father, husband and grandfather. He taught us all to live life to the fullest, say yes to spending time with family and friends and always have a good story to tell. His positive attitude was contagious and model of how we live our lives. No matter the circumstance, he saw the best in every situation. It was a life well lived in grace, integrity and love.



Past Supreme President Dr. Jim Dimitriou

Dr. Jim Dimitriou is a noted educator, grant recipient and former Director for the “Journey to Greece,” Travel Study Program. He has taken over 2400 students to Greece in over 25 years.

As a Past AHEPA Supreme President, Dimitriou served in a variety of educational programs over many years. He has served as National AHEPA Education Chairman and Chairman of the Cyprus & Hellenic Affairs Committee. Currently, he is on the Board for Hellenext, the Next Generation Initiative. Dimitriou was named to the Order of Saint Andrew of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 2004.



Dr. Dimitriou is a noted educator and scholar on Greek American studies. He served as an adjunct professor of global studies at USC. As the faculty advisor to the national award-winning Model United Nations, he was chosen by the “UN 50 Project.” His program is ranked in the top 10 in California and the top 50 in the US. He is a noted scholar and author in Greek American studies. Including the film, “The Greeks of Los Angeles.” His research includes a Title IX, ESEA grant. He served on the LA Bicentennial Commission; author/contributor to the ADL, project, “A World of Difference;” the LA County Leadership Commission; Multicultural Advisory Council, and contributor to the archives of the Ellis Island and the “Shades of LA” project for the Los Angeles Library.

He earned his Doctorate in International Studies at USC, where he also earned two master’s degrees. He has served as a consultant to Global Studies Program, GEPSCA, and other staff development programs.

Dimitriou is a co-founder of the Greek Heritage Society; former President of AHI, LA Chapter; former Executive Director of the Axios Foundation; founding Board Member of the Save Cyprus Council for 12 years (today’s American Hellenic Council); veteran of several years on the St. Katherine’s parish council and long-time President of the Marmarion Society.

He is the father of Kara Sultana, a graduate of Cal Poly University and American University and Dimitri Dimitriou, a UC Berkeley graduate. Dimitriou’s parents were pioneer members of the Greek Community & his Grandfather, “Capitaneos Rallis,” opened the first Greek Caffeneon in LA, “The Acropolis Cafe” in 1904. Finally, Over 450,000 students have used Dimitriou’s children’s book, “Faces of Greece”.

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**Saint Sophia Chapters
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Order of AHEPA-Notable Members

Politics

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States
- Harry S. Truman, President of the United States
- Gerald Ford, President of the United States
- Hubert H. Humphrey, Vice-President of the United States
- Spiro T. Agnew, Vice-President of the United States
- Robert F. Kennedy, U.S Senator
- Paul Tsongas, U.S Senator
- Claiborne Pell, U.S. Senator
- Paul S. Sarbanes, U.S. Senator
- John Glenn Jr., U.S. Senator and Astronaut
- Robert Menendez, U.S. Senator
- Gus M. Bilirakis, U.S. Representative
- Peter Visclosky, U.S. Representative

Athletics

- Jack Dempsey, Boxer
- Milt Pappas, Baseball player
- Nick Markakis, Baseball player
- Jim Londos, Wrestling
- Alex Karras, Football

Businessmen and Philanthropists

- Andy Athens
- Alex Spanos
- John Catsimatidis
- Chris Tomaras

Religious Leaders

- Archbishop Iakovos, Archbishop of North and South America, Exarch of the lands between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans
- Metropolitan Cleopas Strongylis, Metropolitan of Sweden and All Scandinavia
- Metropolitan Gerasimos, Metropolitan Bishop of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco



