

American Hellenic Institute
36th Anniversary Hellenic Heritage Achievement and Public Service Awards
Dinner

Remarks by David G. Horner
President, The American College of Greece
March 12, 2011

Thank you, Senator Sarbanes, for those wonderful words of introduction. We are grateful, indeed, for your friendship and advocacy on the College's behalf over many years, including at some critical moments in our history.

And, on behalf of all those associated with The American College of Greece, I am delighted to accept this award.

Those of us who work at the College today are inheritors of an extraordinary legacy symbolized by individuals who are present this evening:

- Peter Thun, currently completing his distinguished term as chair of our board of trustees – a role filled previously by his father, who also chaired the board of Williams College;
- Ambassador Tom Korologos, a former chair of our board, whose son, Philip, will succeed Peter Thun as board chair this June and whose daughter Ann, also here this evening, has been a member of our board and will be teaching at the College this summer, and
- Manny Rouvelas, who as our primary legal advisor in the United States has guided us through decades of complex issues.

The contributions of these leaders and others over our 136 years of history remind us of the responsibility we all have to cherish what we have been given and to pass it on.

The stories of the individuals who have been honored by AHI, both tonight and in past years, are also truly inspiring. In their achievements and personal character they reflect the high ideals and values of Hellenism and remind us of the best we can be.

The story of The American College of Greece is of a different sort. It is a story of many individuals over more than any one individual's lifetime, a story of imagination and courage, suffering and triumph, faith and hope. Above all, ours is a story of service: first in Smyrna to girls of Armenian, Greek, Jewish and Turkish heritage; then, since 1922, in Athens to students who today come from 55 countries, but the majority from Greece.

Over its institutional lifespan, The American College of Greece has served in times of genocide, foreign oppression, dictatorship and now financial crisis. The College's stature has been forged through social circumstances more challenging than perhaps any educational institution on American soil, but we are no less the product of American vision.

America's colleges and universities are certainly among this country's most notable inventions. But, this tradition of excellence traces its roots through the great universities of Europe founded as early as the 12th century to an even earlier time in classical Greece.

The soul and service of The American College of Greece encompasses this duality. Like so many here tonight, we are profoundly American and passionately Greek. We draw on the best of American education as the basis for the gift we offer in service and gratitude to Greece, and through this service, like the ancients, we touch the whole world.

As an American and Greek institution we feel a special bond and obligation to the Greek American community. We understand the aspiration of this community to preserve its unique inheritance, and we are determined to deploy our unique resources as the oldest and largest American college or university in Europe to support this goal.

So, we thank AHI for this singular recognition that affirms not only the mission and history but also the promise of The American College of Greece. Thank you very much.