

Athanasiaides Foundation Awards 2008 Scholarships

BY CATHERINE TSOUNIS

The Athanasiades Cultural Foundation has awarded scholarships to outstanding students for 16 years. Their elegant Awards Ceremony, held every Thanksgiving weekend, has promoted a positive self-image among participating college students. The 2008 Athanasiades Cultural Foundation scholarships were awarded to 34 college students in the United States, England, Greece and Albania. They include the following scholars: Elona Papa, Economics University of Tirane; Sable Diakos, English, St. John's University; Theodora A. Christodoulou, Speech P&A, St. John's University; Markos Papadatos, Education, Queens College; Michael C. Lydakos, Sports Management, St. John's University; Nicole A Yaneff, Accounting, Regis College; Despina Galatoulas, Childhood Education, Queens College; Erjona Dhimo, Dental Sciences, University of Tirane; Haritomeni Scoufaras, Sociology, St. John's University; Gregory Melissinos, Psychology, Fordham University; James Orfanos, Management, St. John's University; Katherine Polihrom, Nursing, Fairfield University; Veronica Georgiades, Psychology, St. John's University; Irene Zoupaniotis, Political Science & Government, Queens College; Anna

Kouremenos, Archaeology, Oxford University; Maroulla Eleni Plangetis, no major yet declared, University of Maryland; Elena Christine Toumaras, Nutrition & Exercise Sciences, Queens College; Ashley E. Frank, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Drew University; Julia Kourkoumelis, Speech P&A, St. John's University; Maria Guerros, Byzantine & Modern Greek, Queens College; Maria Stantynos, Pharmacy, St. John's University; Alexandra Polihrom, Sciences-Chemistry, Villanova University; Magie M. Christodoulou, no major yet declared, Queens College; Evangelia Podaras, Political Science, Berkeley College; Bridget Fotiou-Barry, Legal, St. John's University; Solon Stephanou, Political Science, Hofstra University; Peter J. Parthenis, Biomedical Engineering, City College of New York; Eleftheria Filippousis, Psychology, Hunter College; Georgios Stamboulis, Management, St. John's University; Michael L. Nisyriou, Finance, St. John's University; Sophia Panagos, Child Study, St. Joseph's College; Andy Kokkinos, Biology, St. John's University; Euterpi Tiggi, Medical Sciences, Aristoteleion University, and Eleftheria Manou, Statistics & Annuities, Piraeus University.

Costas Athanasiades was born in

Kalavassos, Cyprus on Mar. 3, 1921. He studied in Italy and acquired a degree as an agriculturalist. He served valiantly with British Commander Montgomery's Cypriot troops during WWII. He immigrated to the United States in 1959. Athanasiades purchased the *Campana* newspaper in 1961. He has authored more than a dozen books over the years. He has been cited for his insights and contributions by prestigious institutions, including the United Nations.

Athanasiades has been challenging the status quo since the 1950s. "I have been honored by George Bush twice and Ronald Reagan," he said. "Our Foundation gives scholarships with the hope that others will follow our example. One hundred universities have honored me with their presidents giving me the highest honors. Whatever we do, we do without publicity. From the day I came to America, I do everything from the heart for my adopted country." The Athanasiades Foundation's philosophy is epitomized in the Percy Bysshe Shelley quotation: "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts have their roots in Greece."

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States honored Athanasiades in 2004 for his "faithful support of America's deserving veter-



(L. to r.): Kostas and Maria Athanasiades and Vivi and Christos Tzelios.

ans and their families". The organization stated in the citation that, "patriotic Americans like you, Mr. Athanasiades, ensure that our nation remains 'the land of the free and the home of the brave for generations to come.'" The benefactor was inducted as a member of the National Library of Congress and Congressmember Carolyn B. Maloney honored the author in the *Congressional Record* in March 2001.

"Mr. Costas Athanasiades believes every person is responsible for his/her condition on the local, national and international level," Christos Tzelios, businessman/philanthropist of the Athanasiades Cultural Foundation, Inc., said. "For example, every person can protest the collapse of our banking system. This is a powerful statement.

Aristotle said that persons who are not involved in politics are useless.

"Costas Athanasiades could not achieve so much without the full support, cooperation, help, love and encouragement of his devoted wife, Maria," Tzelios added. "She has been taking care of her husband, especially his diet, cooking healthy only. Mrs. Athanasiades was working while her husband was publishing the non-profit *Cambana* newspaper. She is a fair and just person. They do not come like her any more. A patriotic, courageous woman, she comes from the Pontos. Mr. and Mrs. Athanasiades live a frugal life and are environmentalists. They care for the people and the earth." Maria Athanasiades is now in poor health; this article is dedicated to her.

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