



CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2023 - Spring 2024

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The Center for Hellenic Studies serves as a hub of initiatives and activities focused on Hellenic language, history, society and culture. Through the comprehensive study of Greece and Hellenism, the Center aspires to foster in-depth knowledge of Hellenic civilization and promote its values and ideals. It also aims at forming strong bonds between the University and the Greek-American communities of Long Island and New York and at establishing connections and interactions with educational and academic institutions in the US, in Greece and Cyprus.



Another busy year of activities for the Center for Hellenic Studies at Stony Brook University (SBU). We had our biggest cohort of students ever! In addition to our established Modern Greek classes at all levels (Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced), this year we inaugurated an additional class in Conversational Greek at the Intermediate level. Moreover, our students took extra courses in Greek, exploring Greek history through the ages, geography, and literature. All this resulted in an increased number of students graduating with a minor in Hellenic Studies (Marie Lolis, Dimitra Miloulis, Georgiana Misthos, and Christina Varvatsoulis)!

We enjoyed insightful and exciting lectures on various topics, ranging from the benefits and influence of Greek cuisine to discussion about the Greek diaspora in the US and in Australia, to the history of Greek-speaking Romaniote Jews, and the presentation by a Greek-American author of her highly praised first book! We were delighted to welcome the Consul General of Greece in New York, Ambassador Dino Konstantinou, who spent time interacting with our students and members of the community. And of course, we were excited to co-host with our students-members of the Greek and Cypriot Student Association an evening celebrating the OXI-day as well as a beautiful evening of Greek poetry and songs.

Finally, we were able to host on campus another Hellenic Film Weekend, in collaboration with the Hellenic Film Society USA, which was attended by students, faculty, and the community. We are grateful for all the support we received from our friends: all the people who supported the Center for Hellenic Studies during SBU's Giving Day, the AHEPA chapter of Port Jefferson for supporting, for the fourth year in a row, an essay competition focusing on documenting the journey of Greek-American and Cypriot-American immigrants who arrived in New York fifty or sixty years ago. The AHEPA awards, called now the AHEPA 319 Bobby Gemelas Scholarship, honor the late Bobby Gemelas, a great supporter of Hellenism and the Greek-American heritage.

We are grateful for the continuous support and generosity of Mr. Peter Tsantes and Dr. Eleni Bacola-Ciacco. An intense and great collaboration last year led to the implementation of the Summer Abroad program in Athens, under the leadership of Dr. Maria Athanasopoulou. The program was made possible with the great efforts and organization by Ms. Efie Spentzos, Ms. Mariam Isack, and Ms. Margaret Hartofilis who took the project to their hearts, and the Athenians Society of New York. This year a second group of students is participating in the program, and they are about to take off for Greece to visit and study in Athens, Nafplio, and Aegina with trips to multiple locations in the area.

This year, as well, our collaboration with the Medical School at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and through long discussions that involved some of our faculty members (i.e., Drs Tassiopoulos and Georgakis), resulted in the first exchange of medical students between the two schools: three of the SBU medical students are going to Thessaloniki for a month to study there under the guidance of Greek faculty members, and two Greek medical students are coming to SBU to spend a month in the medical school here. Many more scholarship exchanges to come!!

All these activities with our students and our friends helped conclude a successful 2023-2024 academic year. We are energized for the future! Thank you to all. I wish you a nice, relaxing Summer. See you in September!

Stella Tsirka, PhD
Center for Hellenic Studies Director

OXI Day Celebration by the Greek & Cypriot Student Association and the Center for Hellenic Studies

The Stony Brook Greek and Cypriot Student Association hosted this year's OXI Day celebration. The event was open to families and friends. Prof. Stella Tsirka spoke about the day and its history, and the students read poems, sang songs and danced.



The Center for Hellenic Studies
presents

The World-Wide Influence of Greek Cuisine

Chef Nicholas Poulmentis



Executive Chef Nicholas Poulmentis is an @FoodNetwork Chopped Champion based in New York City. Poulmentis was born in New York City. At the age of one, his family moved to the Greek island of Kythira, where Chef Nicholas grew up. Following in his parents' footsteps, Chef Nicholas returned to NYC, conquering the culinary scene with his reimagined Greek cuisine keeping his culture and traditions alive through his art.

Among his many accolades, Chef Nicholas has been featured in Forbes Magazine, the New York Times, was certified as an official Ambassador for Greek Gastronomy throughout the world and was chosen to cook at the White House.

In 2021, he published his first cookbook *The Novelty of Greek Cuisine*.

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 - 6.00pm

Poetry Center, Humanities Building

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT



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Influence of Greek Cuisine

In a captivating lecture, the Greek chef Nicholas Poulmentis discussed the worldwide influence of Greek cuisine and its profound impact across the globe. From the shores of the Mediterranean to bustling metropolises, Greek flavors have become synonymous with gastronomy, but have also become everyday culinary ingredients in the US. Greek cuisine inspires food enthusiasts around the world said the chef to our students and other community members.



HELLENIC FILM WEEKEND 2023

Films are shown with English subtitles



Saturday December 2, 2pm

Ακούσε με - Listen - Dir. Maria Douza Cast: Efthalia Papacosta, Dimitris Kitsos, Giorgos Pырpasopoulos, Yoana Bukopvska Davidova, Mikos Koiukas, Vangelio Andreadaki (105 min)

Financial upheaval forces a teenage deaf girl, Valmira 16, to leave her progressive Athens school and return to her father's struggling island where she is confronted by the danger of prejudice and intolerance, most shockingly -- her own. 3 awards and 8 nominations in International Film Festivals.



Saturday December 2, 4.30pm

Σμύρνη μου Αγαπημένη - Smyrna - Dir. Grigoris Karantinakis Cast: Mimi Denissi, Leonidas Kakouris, Burak Hakki (141min)

A century after the disaster of Smyrna comes to life the critically acclaimed and moving drama about an elderly Greek American woman whose family diary recounts the 1922 burning of the cosmopolitan city of Smyrna where Greeks, Turks, Jews, Armenians, and Levantines once lived together harmoniously. 6 awards and 7 nominations in International Film Festivals.



Sunday, December 3, 1pm

Με Αξιοπρέπεια - DIGNITY - Dir. Dimitris Katsimiris Cast: Electra Gennata, Giorgos Ieronymakis, Giannis Kotsifas, Marouska Panagiotopoulou, Thanassis Chalkias, Charisa Tsitsakis, Vangelio Andreadaki (75 min)

Family members gather on the birthday of their ailing patriarch. What begins as a celebration, however, quickly turns into an intense confrontation when the fraught question of who's to care for the old man comes up. Secrets and mistakes of the past are revealed, changing the lives of all involved. 1 award and 1 nominations.



Sunday, December 3, 3pm

Ευτυχία - Eftihia - Dir. Angelos Frantzis Cast: Karyofillia Karabeti, Katia Goulioni, Pigmalion Dadakaridis (123 min)

The story of songwriter Eftyhia Papagiannopoulou (1893-1972), who escaped the burning of Smyrna and journeyed to Athens, Greece, where she became a major figure in Greek popular music and the beloved lyricist of the country. 10 awards and 9 nominations in International Film Festivals.

Entrance is free

Donations to the Center for Hellenic Studies are welcome

A collaborative effort with the Hellenic Film Society USA

Wang Theater - Stony Brook University

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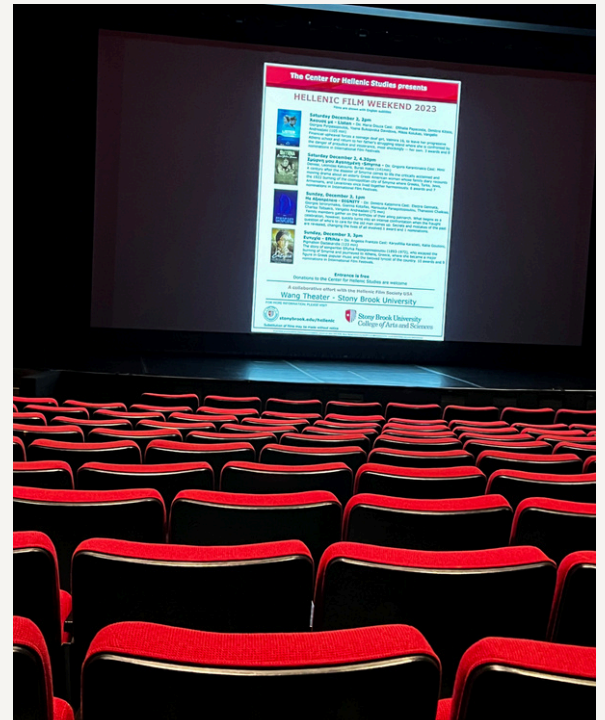
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Substitution of films may be made without notice

Hellenic Film Weekend

The Hellenic Film Weekend, hosted at Stony Brook University by the Center for Hellenic Studies continues to be our annual celebration of modern Greek cinema.

The movies showcased for our students and the community historical events, important musical composers, and stories of contemporary Greece. They served as a platform for conversation between the students and the wider Greek community.



Christmas Students' Project



Greek Christmas Boat and Christmas wreath from the students of GRK211 Intermediate Greek and GRK221 Greek Conversation: A wonderful way for students to celebrate the holidays and learn Greek traditions. Crafting a Christmas wreath and the traditional Greek Christmas Boat was both educational and enjoyable for the students. Learning about the cultural significance of these decorations helped them appreciate the traditions associated with Christmas in Greece.



Greece in the USA: a 21st century perspective

Ambassador Dinos Konstantinou
Consul General
Consulate General of Greece in New York



Ambassador Dinos Konstantinou has been a member of the Hellenic Diplomatic Service since 1999. He studied Private International Law at Paris II Panthéon-Assas University of Sorbonne. He speaks fluently English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

He has served at the Political Department Directorate for European Countries in the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 2002 to 2005 he was a member of the Embassy of Greece in Washington D.C., serving both at the political and consular sections. He then joined the Diplomatic Cabinet of the Prime Minister of Greece the time, Mr. Karamanlis.

He has served as the political Counselor and Consul at the Embassy of Greece in Buenos Aires, and at the Political Department for Cyprus, dealing with all aspects of this top priority issue for Greece. From 2014 to 2018 he served as the Consul General of Greece in São Paulo, the only Greek General Consulate in Brazil. He returned to Athens in 2018 at the Political Department for Arab Countries & the Middle East. After serving as the Diplomatic Advisor to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport of Greece, Mr. Kostas Karamanlis, he assumed his duties as Consul General of Greece in New York in August 2022.

Monday, February 19, 2024 - 5.30pm

Poetry Center, Humanities Building, Stony Brook University

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The Consul General of Greece in New York at the Center for Hellenic Studies

The Consul General of Greece in New York, Ambassador Dinos Konstantinou, after his lecture spent time interacting with our students, faculty, and members of the community.



"Greek Melbourne" Calling! New Cartographies of Diasporic Belonging

Yiorgos Anagnostou
Miltiadis Marinakis Professor
The Ohio State University



Being diasporic animates multiple affiliations. It involves connections with immigrant history, the historical homeland, the new home as well as other diasporas. Diasporas orient themselves in space and time in relation to the elsewhere and the here, the then and the now. From this position they engage with their various pasts, configure the present, and project visions for the future. In this talk I explore how Greek Melbourne places its cultural identifications in relation to the cultural and political fabric of its city as well as Greece and Australia. I draw examples from Greek Australian poetry, murals, photography, painting, institutional practices as well as cultural and political activism. How does Greek Melbourne chart its diasporic belonging? What issues does it raise for Greek diasporic production in global cities such as New York City?

Yiorgos Anagnostou is the Miltiadis Marinakis Professor of Modern Greek language and culture at The Ohio State University. His research interests include diaspora and American ethnic studies, with a focus on Greek America. His published research covers a broad range of subjects, including film, documentary, ethnography, folklore, literature, history, sociology, and public humanities. He is the author of *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America* (Ohio University Press, 2009 [Greek translation, Nisos 2021]). He is a co-editor of *Redirecting Ethnic Singularity: Italian Americans and Greek Americans in Conversation* (Fordham University Press, 2022). Since 2017 he is the editor of the online journal *Ergon: Greek/American Arts and Letters* (<http://ergon.scienze.com/>).

Friday, March 8, 2024 - 1.00pm

Humanities 1052, Stony Brook University

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The Greek Diaspora in the US and in Australia



Professor George Anagnostou from the Ohio State University talked about the Greek diaspora in the US and in Australia.



Romaniote Greek-speaking Jews: Their History and Their Story

Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos

**Author of *Meet Me on the Corner of Broome and Allen*
Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina Museum**



Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos has been Museum Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina since 2004 and President of the Association of Friends of Greek Jewry since 1997. As a former educator, writer, editor and translator, she has dedicated her life to telling the story of Greek Jewry. Marcia was honored to be chosen a member of scholarly committee for review, translation and microfilming of Salonika Archives at YIVO and compiled the text and visuals for the USHMM's website on the Holocaust of Greek Jewry. She has often presented at the MGSA (Modern Greek Studies Association) symposiums. She sits on the Board of Trustees for Kehila Kedosha Janina, the Board of Advisors for the Lower East Side Preservation Initiative, the Board of Judaic Studies at Queens College, and is a proud member of AJC (American Jewish Committee) Cyprus Team, where she engages in Diplomatic Outreach.

The presentation, accompanied by visuals, will tell the story of this little-known part of the Jewish and Greek worlds. Their fascinating story, little known and understood shows the bridges that formed between these two civilizations and how, in essence, this interaction formed modern western civilization.

Wednesday, April 3, 2024 - 6.00pm

via Zoom: Meeting ID: 935 7530 6675 Passcode: 572778

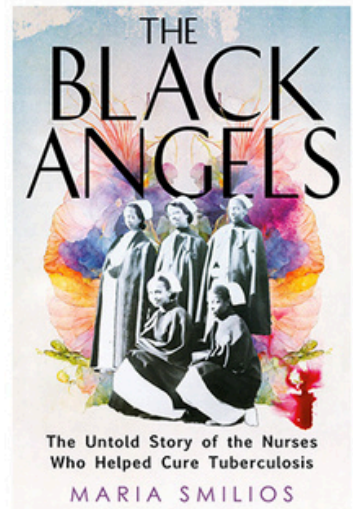
The presentation introduced the history and relationships of the Greek Romaniote Jews who have lived mainly around Ioannina for over 2000 years. A strong community now living a New York City discussed their connection with the few remaining families in Greece.

The Black Angels: Stigma, Sickness, & the Social Caste

Maria Smilios
Author



Join author Maria Smilios in a captivating discussion of her new book *The Black Angels: The Untold Story of the Nurses Who Helped Cure Tuberculosis* as she delves into the profound historical impact of these women and whose tenacity in the face of adversity changed the global fight against humankind's greatest scourge, tuberculosis. This remarkable story provides a unique intersection between medicine, history, social justice, and the immigrant experience.



Maria Smilios was born and raised in New York City. In 2016, while working as a developmental editor for Springer Science she learned about this extraordinary story and became determined to tell it. She holds a Master of Arts in American literature and religion from Boston University where she was a Luce scholar and taught in the religion and writing program. Her work has appeared in *The Guardian*, *Narratively*, *The Forward*, *Lit Hub*, *Writers Digest*, *Dame Magazine*, *The Rumpus*, and other publications. The city and State of New York recently recognized her for "outstanding service" and "positive contribution" to the people of New York. The book also inspired the Staten Island Museum to curate the exhibit "Taking Care: The Black Angels of Sea View," which is on display through November of 2024. You can find Maria at mariasmilios.com

Wednesday, April 17, 2024 - 5.30pm

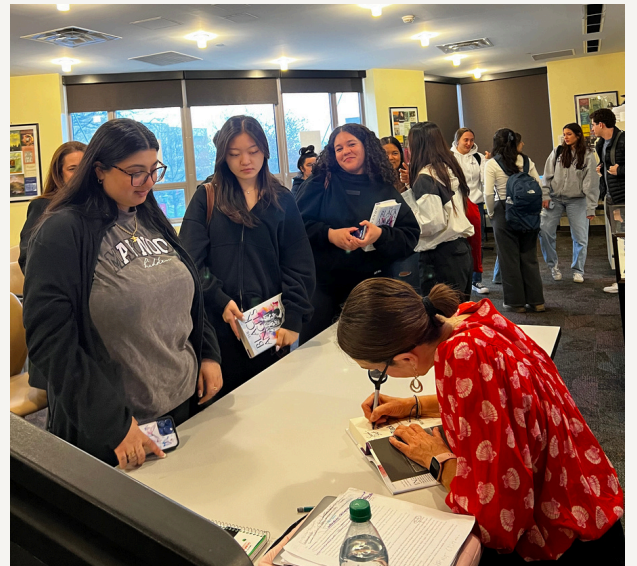
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A Greek Author presents her book at the Center for Hellenic Studies



Greek-American author Maria Smilios presented her book *'The Black Angels'* discussing the nurses who treated the patients with tuberculosis and staffed the clinical trials that helped establish the current treatments for TB patients. Maria's presentation was fascinating, the audience thoroughly enjoyed it, and many had their book copy signed by the author!

A beautiful evening of Poetry and Songs

CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES & GREEK & CYPRIOT CLUB

GREEK POETRY NIGHT

Friday

APRIL 19TH
UNION AUDITORIUM
5:00-8:30

Funded by the
USG
Student Activity Fee

A Greek Poetry Night



THE JOURNEY OF GREEK- AND CYPRIOT-AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS COMPETITION

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The AHEPA chapter of Port Jefferson support, for the fourth year in a row, an essay competition focusing on documenting the journey of Greek-American and Cypriot-American immigrants who arrived in New York and who settled on Long Island, NY.

These AHEPA-sponsored awards are called the ‘AHEPA 319 Bobby Gemelas Scholarship’ in honor the late Bobby Gemelas, a great supporter of Hellenism and the Greek-American heritage.

The four winners of the competition for 2024 are:

- Dimitra Miloulis
- Christina Varvatsoulis
- Athina Ketsetzidis
- Constantinos Michaelides

The AHEPA 319 Bobby Gemelas Scholarship 2024

The students of the Center for Hellenic Studies **Dimitra Miloulis, Christina Varvatsoulis, Athina Ketsetzidis, Constantinos Michaelides** winners of the AHEPA 319 Bobby Gemelas Scholarship competition for 2024 introduced their work to the parish of Port Jefferson Church, thanking the AHEPA chapter 319 for the opportunity, described their gratitude for the Boddy Gemelas award, and commenting on the impactful experience interviewing the Greek immigrants and working with them as they formed their commentary on the current immigration environment.



The winners of the scholarship competition for 2024 Dimitra Miloulis, Christina Varvatsoulis, Athina Ketsetzidis, Constantinos Michaelides with Prof. Maria Athanasopoulou and Mr. Peter Tsantes, the primary benefactor of the Center for Hellenic Studies at Stony Brook University

Article of National Herald Newspaper

<https://www.thenationalherald.com/port-jefferson-ahepa-chapter-319-awards-scholarships-in-memory-of-bobby-gemelas/>

STUDY ABROAD

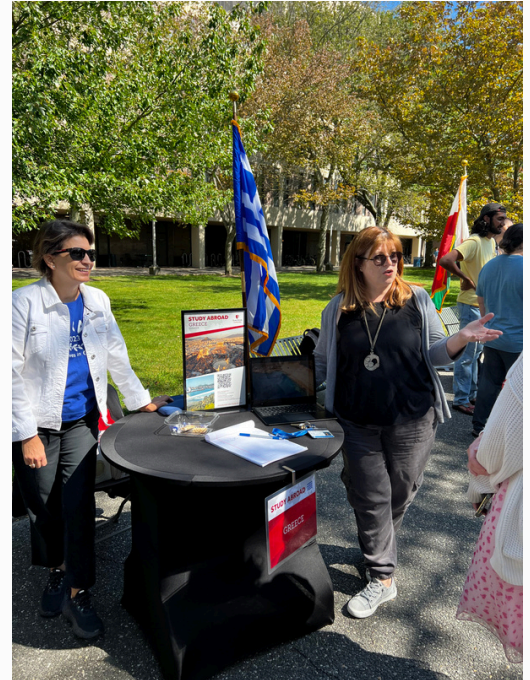


Summer in Greece 2024

We are grateful to the Tsantes Family and the Athenians' Society of New York for their continuous support of the Summer in Greece Program.

Three participating students received Peter V. Tsantes Family Endowed Scholarship to Study Abroad in Greece towards their expenses for the trip

- **Katia Mihael**
- **Evangeline Tsevis**
- **Kenny Ortiz**



This year, during May and June 2024, the students used Athens and Nafplio as base and visited islands in the Saronic gulf and locations in the Peloponnese, as they immersed into the Greek language and culture, and learned about Greek history, customs, traditions and dance.

Summer in Greece 2024





THE CENTER FOR HELLENIC STUDIES

MEET THE FACULTY

Styliani-Anna (Stella) E. Tsirka, PhD

Director
SUNY Distinguished Professor
Miriam and David S. Donoho Endowed Professor
Department of Pharmacological Sciences and
Languages & Cultural Studies
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Renaissance School of Medicine
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Maria Athanasopoulou, PhD

Adjunct Lecturer, Program Director of the
Summer Abroad in Greece, Languages & Cultural Studies
Faculty Development Specialist, Office for Faculty Affairs,
Renaissance School of Medicine
Health Sciences Center 4-142
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**A very warm welcome to the two new faculty
members of the
Center for Hellenic Studies**

Simos Zenios, PhD

Assistant Professor
Peter V. Tsantes Endowed Professor in Hellenic
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