



For Immediate Release

November 6, 2016

Boston, MA – The National Hellenic Student Association (NHS) of North America, Inc. a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, hosted their bi-annual convention in Boston, MA, November 4th-6th, 2016. NHS succeeded in uniting over 150 students and young professionals from across the U.S., Canada, and Greece, with a shared interest to preserve the beloved Hellenic identity and culture which has survived through generations of tradition. Attendees traveled from near and far to learn, network, and bond.

The weekend kicked off on Friday, Nov 4th, at the *Hilton Back Bay* where attendees arrived throughout the day to check-in. Participants had the opportunity to meet and network with each other during the welcome event at *Boston University*. Day 1 was concluded by an entertaining Greek Night co-hosted with Party Allis at *Serafina* restaurant/bar featuring DJ Petros Dev from Athens.

The conference was hosted at the *Boston University Questrom School of Business Metcalf Trustee Center*. NHS President, Ms. Konstantina Panagiotopoulos, began the day introducing the collective conference theme of hope in her speech, “*Hope*” is the thing with feathers -. Opening remarks were also given by prominent members of the Hellenic community: Rev. Father Athanasios Nenes who represented His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston; Hon. Ifigenia Kanara, Consul General of Greece in Boston; Mr. Miltiades Athanasopoulos, President, Federation of Hellenic American Societies of New England; Ms. Elpida Velmahos, President, Boston University Hellenic Association; and Ms. Kelly Polychroniou, Head of the Modern Greek Language Program at Boston University.

Conference emcee, Ms. Andriana Mitrakos, introduced the first panel discussion titled, “Greece’s Security Environment: Old and New Opportunities and Threats.” NHS Vice President, Alexander Thomopoulos, moderated the panel, composed of Dr. Elizabeth Prodromou, Associate Professor, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University; Mr. Drake Behrakis, President, Marwick Group; Mr. Nicholas Anton, UN Program Coordinator, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese; and Mr. Leonidas Marcantonatos, General Director, Greek Foreign Affairs Council. Panelists gave their expertise on the Migration Crisis, Human Rights Violations, Greece and Europe’s Security, and Religious Freedom.

The conference transitioned to a discussion about the trials and tribulations of leadership with Mr. George Logothetis, Chairman and CEO of Libra Group, led by Mr. Konstantine Ouranitsas, NHS Chairman. Speaking from personal experience, Mr. Logothetis had the room enthralled with his empowering words on leadership and humanitarianism. Mr. Logothetis inspired students to turn their hopes and goals into action and captivated the audience with his authority and insight.

The final speaker of the day, Dr. George Velmahos, MD, PhD, Chief of Trauma, Massachusetts General Hospital, gave an in-depth presentation of his account of the Boston Marathon Bombing aftermath, focusing on the importance of preparation, collaboration, and leadership.

During lunch, donated by *Saloniki Greek* restaurant, students participated in casual networking sessions and engaged with representatives from the *Libra Group*, *Boston University Greek Studies*, and the *American*



College of Thessaloniki, who provided information on extracurricular initiatives in which students can engage.

The conference concluded with two interactive workshops. The first workshop, focusing on community activism, was led by Mr. Christos Marafatsos, President of Blue Sky Capital, and Ms. Vasiliki Mitrakos, Director of Operations, NHSA. The second workshop, led by Ms. Tamika Tompoulidis, Lecturer, Univ. of Kentucky, and Mr. Konstantine Ouranitsas, Chairman, NHSA, provided interactive activities with attendees regarding networking and career building. The conference concluded with closing remarks by NHSA Vice President, Alexander Thomopoulos.

Attendees had the rest of the evening to explore Boston's historic sites. Saturday concluded with a Greek Night at *49 Social*, co-hosted with Party Allis, featuring an encore performance by DJ Petros Dev.

On Sunday, NHSA took attendees to the *Museum of Science* where participants explored the exhibits and shared lunch, concluding the weekend and exchanging contact information to keep in touch.

NHSA President, Konstantina Panagiotopoulos, summarized the convention.

“The convention was an astounding success and drew the largest number of student and young professional participants to date. Attendees had very positive feedback, emphasizing how proud to be Greek, the weekend left them. We look forward to continuing to create these professional, educational, and social platforms, and expanding our reach to provide greater opportunities for the Hellenic community,” she said.

Dr. George Velmahos also reflected on his experience and the takeaway of the student participants.

“It is always refreshing to see young people who are concerned about their fellow human beings and do not hesitate to commit time and energy in making things better. The conference, which was impeccably organized, spread hope to those who need it and pride to those who attended it,” he said.

After a successful weekend, the NHSA Executive Board would like to thank our participants for joining us in a socially energized, educationally enriching, and network expanding convention. NHSA would also like to thank our sponsors including the Libra Group, KPS Capital Partners, Alpha Omega Council, and Plastic Molding Manufacturing for supporting our organization and mission to unite the Greek and Cypriot diaspora. Furthermore, the Executive Board's gratitude goes to our supporters including His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America and His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston as well as the Greek and Cypriot Embassies and Consulates of the US and Canada. With the generous support of the Hellenic community, NHSA is able to provide opportunities to students and young professionals to grow into the future leaders of our community.

For additional information on the Boston Convention, membership, sponsorship, etc. please visit www.nhsaofamerica.org or contact nhsa@nhsaofamerica.org.