

HLA Honors Hellenism, Sarbanes, Stamboulidis

By Constantine S. Sirigos
TNH Staff Writer

NEW YORK – The Hellenic Lawyers Association (HLA) celebrated its 22nd Annual Dinner Gala on Nov. 12, 2010 at New York's legendary Pierre Hotel on Fifth Avenue, where more than 250 guests gathered in a celebratory atmosphere to honor their Hellenic roots and to pay homage to prominent Greek Americans in the legal profession. The 2010 HLA honorees included Congressman John Sarbanes from the Third Congressional District in Maryland and George Stamboulidis, Esq., Managing Partner of Baker Hostetler's New York office, who was selected Attorney of the Year.

In introducing Congressman Sarbanes, HLA President Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri observed that, in keeping with the tradition of his father, former U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes, Congressman



MARIA TOLIOS

HLA's 2010 Honoree Congressman John Sarbanes (L) and 2010 Attorney of the Year George Stamboulidis.

Paul Sarbanes "serves the Greek American community across all state lines and borders ... his

works and contributions represent the finest examples of dedication, courage, a willingness to uphold his convictions and principles and a genuine love for our heritage and legacy, and so, for these reasons the HLA is bestowing this recognition."

Stamboulidis was praised as the "prototype Attorney of the Year." His illustrious legal career includes 13 years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney, during which he successfully prosecuted high-profile cases including one against Mafia boss, Vincent "the Chin" Gigante. More recently, he has excelled at Baker Hostetler where Stamboulidis focuses on white-collar defense and corporate investigations. Stamboulidis expressed his gratitude and pride in being a Greek American and said he was proud to be a part of the HLA. He has been an avid supporter of the HLA for several years currently serves on its Advisory Board.

Special guests included former U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes, the Consul Generals of Greece and Cyprus, Aghi Balta and Koula Sophianou, respectively, N.Y. State Senator-elect Michael Gianaris and his newly-elected successor in the N.Y. State Assembly, Aravella Simotas, as well as the Nicholas Tsoucalas, Senior Judge of the U.S. Court of International Trade, who is also one of the founding members of the HLA.

HELPING STUDENTS

Nine law students received more than \$11,000 in scholarships – the most ever given by the HLA. Stathatos-Fulgieri proudly noted how the organization continues to expand its membership and services, including continuing legal education classes, seminars, and networking opportunities. The 2010 scholarship recipients are: Michael Lignos, George Tsiatis,

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Socrates Xanthopoulos, Konstantinos Kapatatos, Katherine Stefanou, Aggeliki Pantelios, James Vartholomeos, Georgina Tsakriou and Catherine Pinos. Speaking to the scholarship winners she said, "We wish you much success, and encourage you to remain involved with the HLA," declaring that it's for their benefit that HLA strives annually to excel and continue to increase the group's presence and status. She highlighted the year's achievements including the HLA's participation in the Greek Independence Day Parade on Fifth Avenue, the Mentor Program, the newly formed Advisory Board and a platform to create a Political Action Committee to promote and provide for contributions toward the HLA's members who aspire to positions on the bench and other elective offices. "These achievements are only the beginning in our continuing efforts to establish a solid foundation for the next generation of Greek American lawyers," said Stathatos-Fulgieri. Other guests

included members of the federal and state judiciary, prominent attorneys from the New York metropolitan area, and representatives of several Greek American professional organizations.

Gianaris told The National Herald that he was pleased to celebrate Hellenism and the HLA, and to honor Congressman Sarbanes "and his excellent work not only for the Greek American community but for the benefit of the United States as a whole." The new P.A.C. is happy about the HLA's initiative and he said, "Anytime Greek Americans organize politically, that is a good thing for the community."

Dimitrius Kalamaras, past-president of the Federation of Hellenic Societies of Greater N.Y. told TNH that organizations like the HLA need the support of Greek Americans in order for the community to grow. Simotas told TNH that she enjoyed the event, "which gets better and better every year," but said she was most happy to see Judge Nicholas Tsoucalas. She and her husband are among the dozens



Joining Congressman John Sarbanes (2nd left) at the Hellenic Lawyers Association banquet where he was honored were N.Y. Assemblyman and Senator-elect Michael Gianaris (L) and HLA President Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri, Attorney of the Year George Stamboulidis, Assemblywoman-elect Aravella Simotas, and his father, former U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes.

of Greek Americans who have worked for him and have been mentored and supported by him.

She explained to TNH that those people have become like a family. She had baptized the children

of two of the Judge's former clerks. Simotas, who is also an HLA scholarship recipient,

having won the first Melina Alexiou Award, said she was also pleased with this year's honorees, noting that Stamboulidis has always been a strong supporter of Greek and Greek Cypriot causes, while describing Congressman Sarbanes as "the community's pride and joy." She said she enjoyed speaking with the Congressman's father, who she says "still has his finger on the pulse of the community, especially its politics."

She also told TNH, "Judge Tsoucalas strongly encouraged me to run for office, as a way of giving back to the community." Along with Nicole Malliotakis, she will be sworn in January 1 as the first Greek American woman to serve in the N.Y. State legislature. The Hellenic Lawyers Association is the premier organization of legal professionals of Greek descent. The organization promotes professional excellence, cultural awareness, community service and civic involvement. More information is available at: www.helleniclawyersassociation.org.

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