17/07/2024

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The Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus, under the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Youth (MOESY), organized a training program for Greek-American teachers from the community schools of the Archdiocese of the United States of America. The program took place from July 9 to July 19, 2024.

According to an announcement, the group consisted of 14 Greek-American educators. This program was an offering from the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Youth to the Hellenism of the diaspora, in collaboration with the Holy Archdiocese of America. The Director, Dr. Anastasios Koularmanis, accompanied the teachers, who hailed from New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Chicago, Washington DC, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Michigan.

The primary goal of the program was to help teachers deepen their understanding of the rules of the Greek language and acquire more knowledge and teaching skills for Greek as a second/foreign language or as a language of cultural heritage. The seminar program was complemented by visits to archaeological and historical sites, providing participants with experiential knowledge and experience of the island. These visits included significant locations such as the ancient city of Kourion, the Tombs of the Kings in Paphos, and the medieval castles of Limassol and Kolossi.

On Tuesday, July 9, a meeting was held between the group of Greek-American educators and the Minister of Education, Sports, and Youth, Athina Michaelidou. The Minister welcomed the educators, emphasizing that the Cypriot state, particularly the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Youth, offered training programs for teachers not only in the United States but also in the United Kingdom and other countries of the European Union and the Black Sea region. These programs aimed to meet the increased needs and interest in learning the Greek language and culture. During the meeting, the Minister highlighted the importance of cultural exchange and the role of educators in preserving and promoting Greek heritage abroad.

It was also noted that within the framework of this program, meetings were held between the Greek-American educators and Archbishop Georgios of Cyprus. Archbishop Georgios expressed his support and appreciation for the educators' efforts in promoting the Greek language and culture in their respective

communities. He also discussed the challenges and opportunities of teaching Greek in the diaspora, offering his insights and encouragement.

The expenses for the program were covered by the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus, while His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America secured funding for the airfare, ensuring that the teachers were not burdened with any expenses.

The program concluded with a farewell ceremony where certificates of completion were awarded to the participants. The educators expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the program, emphasizing the valuable knowledge and experiences they gained, which they plan to bring back to their classrooms in the United States.

We are hopeful that this program will continue every summer, fostering ongoing collaboration and support for Greek-American educators and their efforts to preserve and promote the Greek language and culture.

Photos: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Department of Greek Education

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