

Metropolis Philoptochos Hosts Virtual Dinner for HCHC Graduates



Each year, the students from the Metropolis of San Francisco attending Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology are invited to a dinner hosted by the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos to celebrate the graduates and honor their achievements. With the Class of 2020 struggling through the limitations in place from the Coronavirus pandemic, this year's commencement festivities were postponed, but this did not diminish the energy and spirit of the Metropolis of San Francisco Philoptochos.

Continuing on with the "new normal" tradition of online gatherings, the Metropolis Philoptochos reached out to all our students and arranged for dinner to be delivered to each of their homes on Thursday, May 7 while at the same time everyone gathered on a Zoom call. It was a joyous celebration with the members of the Metropolis Philoptochos Board, under the leadership of President Jeannie Ranglas, joining with our students for a virtual dinner. Special guests for this event included His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, HCHC President George Cantonis, HCHC Board of Trustees Vice-Chairman Rev. Fr. Jon Magoulas, HCHC Dean of Students Rev. Fr. Antonios Papathanasiou, and Metropolis of San Francisco Lay Representative to the HCHC Alumni Council, Mr. Yianni Magoulas.

Students still residing on campus were able to share this time in fellowship with their classmates and families who have returned to the homes on the west coast. One student, Kyle Sterner, who is currently studying in Jerusalem, even joined the

call though it was in the middle of the night for him.

“We are blessed with a dedicated and visionary Metropolis Philoptochos, and their ingenuity in coordinating this gathering truly demonstrated their love for the students,” stated His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos. “To honor our graduates and all the students from the Metropolis of San Francisco brought so much joy to these difficult circumstances we have been confronted with in recent months. Regardless of our inability to be together in person, our students are always in our thoughts and prayers as they answer the call of the Lord in service to the Church.”

In her remarks, Jeannie Ranglas stated that this is the first time in ten years she has not been on campus for Commencement. However, it was important to her and the Metropolis Philoptochos Board to remember the students and find a way to bring everyone together and especially honor our graduates. Through the generosity of many donors and the successful Light the Path Christmas luncheons held in late 2019, the Metropolis Philoptochos is awarding \$150,000 in financial assistance to the HCHC students from the Metropolis of San Francisco.

President George Cantonis congratulated the graduates and remarked “you are not only important to the church for the future, but also to the school. The input we can receive from our alumnae is very critical to the plans that we make for the future.”

“When we become priests whether we acknowledge it or not, whatever we are, however we serve, it finds its roots at Hellenic College and Holy Cross,” commented Rev. Fr. Jon Magoulas. “Along with that experience, the camaraderie that we have the opportunity of sharing with fellow students but also with those who come on campus to participate in the experience of HCHC, creates a bond that is very sacred and very important for our Church in America.”

Special congratulations to the 2020 graduates from the Metropolis of San Francisco:

Paul Colwell, Master of Divinity (home parish: Holy Trinity Cathedral, Portland, OR)

Anthony Cornett, Master of Divinity (home parish: Saint George, Bakersfield, CA)

Demetrios Kumarelas, Master of Divinity (home parish: Ascension Cathedral, Oakland, CA)

Ioan Gheorghiu, Bachelor of Arts – Religious Studies (home parish: Saint Katherine, Redondo Beach, CA)

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