

Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) grant to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America supports Greek education for students by focusing on teacher training



Read the Archdiocese's statement regarding the grant received from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) to enhance education in Greek language, history, culture, and tradition for students in the United States.

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America's Department of Greek Education is pleased to announce that it has received a two-year grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) to enhance education in Greek language, history, culture, and tradition for students in the United States. The \$600,000 grant will support the Department's Greek educational programs, expansion of its offerings for students, and professional development for teachers.

The new grant builds on SNF's long-standing efforts to support and enhance Hellenic education in the U.S. Over the years, the Foundation has helped bolster the teaching of Greek language and culture by providing funding to strengthen and preserve the Greek curriculum at a number of day, afternoon, and Sunday schools. This support totaling more than \$4 million, has benefited thousands of students while promoting collaboration between teachers and schools including language programs at The Cathedral School, the William Spyropoulos School of St. Nicholas, and the Saint Demetrios Greek-American School in New York, among others.

The new grant will support professional development for teachers within the Archdiocese, strengthening skills and furthering knowledge in Greek language, classroom differentiation, educational technologies, and more. It will also enable the development of a teacher certification program in partnership with the Democritus University of Thrace in Greece and of teacher trainings in collaboration with Simon Fraser University in Canada.

The SNF grant will also support educational and cultural programs for children, including the creation of a new Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Youth Choir for young people ages 10 to 18.

SNF's grant will be the foundation for the establishment of a fund aiming to support Greek schools in procuring textbooks and other educational materials, technological equipment and software that will enhance learning, as well as other supplies identified by teachers as critical to the implementation of innovative educational approaches. The fund will give emphasis to programs that are located in low- or middle-income communities, build toward success in fluency exams, and actively seek to collaborate with other programs.

In acknowledging the grant, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros said, "We are grateful for the continued support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. With its generosity, our Greek education program in America will continue to grow and inspire the children in our schools. During this pandemic, our families and our parishes find their financial resources very limited. This grant will assist us so that we can continue our important mission."

"Since its inception twenty-five years ago, SNF has directed significant

support toward efforts to sustain and expand modern Greek language and culture studies globally, particularly in North America. Greek schools perform a critical service for young people, incubating a love for Greek language that, hopefully, will last a lifetime,” said SNF Co-President Andreas Dracopoulos. “We are excited about this collaboration with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and its Greek Education Department and hope a centralized and systematic educational approach providing educators and students with important resources and a sense of direction will help schools in Greek-American communities around the country not only survive, but look to a brighter future.”

Helping promote the teaching and cultivation of Greek letters and Greek language among the global communities of the diaspora and beyond has long been a focus in SNF’s work. The Foundation provided support for a long-term project at Simon Fraser University to create digital language-learning tools that culminated recently in the launch of the StaEllinika initiative. As part of the new grant, the Department will help teachers incorporate StaEllinika’s interactive resources into their curricula.

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Department of Greek Education’s mission strives for the promotion, continuous improvement, and dissemination of Greek education academic programs, resources, supports, and services of excellence which holistically safeguard and advance our collective faith, beliefs, language, culture, and customs.