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THE sower

Thessalonica Agricultural & Industrial Institute



Growing our potential



**AMERICAN
FARM SCHOOL**
Thessaloniki · Greece

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From the President

It is a privilege to welcome you to “The Sower” as the Interim President of the American Farm School. Each one of you has a unique connection with this special place. I am not an exception. I bear a family name that is linked to the School; I have a deep appreciation for the role that previous administrations played in its development; and I hold a vision of how this Institution could further evolve, building on its existing strengths and values, true to its roots, and close to its mission.

In this issue, you will read about some of our recent educational successes. In the previous school year, when classes were suspended due to COVID, the majority of the high school senior class was accepted to universities across Greece, while 11 members of the graduating class are currently studying in U.S. universities (such as Yale, WPI and Smith College) on full scholarships through their participation in our “Study USA” program.

Perrotis College has extended its outreach to a global audience. Dr. Kiki Zinoviadou and Head of the European USDA Laboratory for Insect Control Dr. Alexandra Haskopoulou were one of the top three finalists in the 2021 ARSX competition of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with their paper “Harvest for a Healthier Future”. The Perrotis College Krinos Olive Center organized its 2nd International Conference, bringing together distinguished speakers and attracting more than a thousand participants from around the world.

The revitalization of the School’s Educational Farm is a priority for the current administration. Significant gifts have been received towards this end, starting with the gift of Dr. George Gavalas for the renovation of the students’ poultry unit that is expected to advance this area of animal husbandry in Greece and promote sustainable practices.

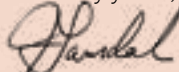
Thanks to the generosity of our donors in both Greece and the U.S., we were able to complete our Comprehensive Campaign raising \$23.1 million. We are deeply grateful for your continuous support.

We hope to see you at our upcoming events in the U.S. or welcome your children/relatives/friends to the “Greek Summer ‘22” program we will be hosting again after a two-year break due to COVID.

The ongoing pandemic has affected the School in many ways. Although we adjusted successfully to the new learning needs and conditions, we have decided to dedicate this issue to the loving memory of all AFS community members we lost, and to two in particular: John Cleave, a loyal and supportive Trustee, and George Katsinoulas, an alumnus and dedicated employee who served the School for more than 25 years.

Thank you for your interest in the American Farm School and its educational programs. With your contribution, we are able to give deserving youth the opportunity to make a difference, for themselves and their communities.

Sincerely yours,



Jeff Lansdale, Ph.D.

Interim President

American Farm School

Welcome President Lansdale!

As of September 1st the American Farm School has welcomed its new interim President, Dr. Jeffrey Lansdale. Dr. Lansdale hit the ground running, and not surprisingly, as he is no stranger to the institution. The son of Bruce Lansdale - a former president of the School - Jeff was born in New York and raised in Thessaloniki, spending his formative years on the AFS campus. It was during this time that he learned some of the important lessons of his life; lessons he has carried with him across the globe, and has now brought back to AFS. Among these, a profound respect for the land and all that it provides, as well as a respect for hard work, and all that it allows us to achieve. Most importantly however, he returns with first-hand experience of the miracles that this institution can help bring about in the lives of deserving youth – miracles which he is eager to help foster. In many circles, the Lansdale name has come to embody the remarkable history of the School – and while this may seem a heavy cross to bear, Dr. Lansdale is an undeniable force in his own right. With 45 years of experience in education and development programs, including six years of service as president of Zamorano University in Honduras, he adds valuable perspective, while his energy and drive are palpable in all that he does.

The mission of the American Farm School is to educate youth and adults in the latest practices in the fields of agriculture, ecology, and life sciences so that they can thrive professionally. Lansdale asserts that his personal goal as President is to motivate the staff, the teachers, and himself, to realize this mission while inspiring students, graduates, donors and volunteers to play their own invaluable role in the history of this unique institution.

In all his efforts to date, one can discern a deep-seated appreciation for the trajectory the School has undergone to get to where it is today. During his tenure, Dr. Lansdale aspires to enrich the educational programs that encourage young people to take full advantage of their potential through innovative academic and experiential learning programs. He plans to focus on improving and enhancing the Educational Farm, and on building and nurturing the American Farm School community.



Dr. Lansdale holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University, master's degrees from California Polytechnic State University and the School for International Training in Vermont, and a B.A. degree from Stanford University. He is fluent in English, Spanish, and Greek. He is an adjunct professor of North Carolina State University.



Haseotes Middle Schoolers recognized for their extra-curricular achievements

In a small ceremony which took place in the Haseotes schoolyard, President Lansdale recognized members of the Middle School student body for their performances in national and international competitions. Among those honored were students who achieved distinction in the Pan-Hellenic EL.STAT. statistics competition, participants in the European Moon Camp Explorers competition organized by the European Space Agency, and youth in the national chess championship. Those who entered speech and English language competitions, IT conferences, physics challenges, the competition for Pontian Hellenism, and the “Kangaroo” mathematics competition were also congratulated for their achievements.

Harvest for a Healthier Future

With their joint submission to the US Department of Agriculture's 2021 ARSX competition, Drs. Kiki Zinoviadou, Chair of the New Food Product & Business Development M.Sc. program, and Alexandra Haskopoulou, Head of the European USDA Laboratory for Insect Control, achieved another win for Perrotis College. Their entry, entitled "Harvest for a Healthier Future", has placed them amongst the top three finalists, and addresses one of the world's most pressing challenges.

With global population projected to reach 9 billion by 2050, the need for food and water will reach unprecedented levels. Edible insects may serve as an important alternative food or feed source, as they are rich in nutrients and their harvesting has a lower ecological footprint compared to other sources of protein.

The idea to evaluate the suitability of mosquitos as animal feed was born by looking at the rising interest worldwide in exploring alternative food sources that are at once sustainable and nutritious, and pairing this information with the threat to public health posed by the growing mosquito population.

Initial research, conducted as part of Ms. Androniki Christaki's graduate thesis at Perrotis, has been encouraging. Not only are mosquitos an excellent source of protein - which is a vital component of animal feed - but they were also found to contain high levels of calcium and phosphorus which are essential for animal development. Findings from their impact on quail and poultry feed were positive.

Congratulations to Drs. Zinoviadou and Haskopoulou, and Androniki Christaki for this important distinction!



The 2nd Perrotis College Krinos Olive Center International Olive Conference

In an effort to promote dialogue, exchange views and disseminate the latest advancements in the sector, Perrotis College and the Krinos Olive Center organized the 2nd International Olive Conference (on campus and virtually). The Conference, titled "Pursuing Innovation, Exploring Trends" brought together 35 distinguished speakers from the US and Greece, as well as Spain, Australia, Israel and Belgium, and attracted 1,200 participants from all over the world.

The conference was opened by the Minister of Rural Development and Food, Mr. Spilios Livanos, who stressed the importance of olive cultivation in Greece, and emphasized the current administration's investment in making Greek olive oil synonymous with quality. "[...]It is our national choice to protect and promote Greek products. The modernization of the olive sector in our country is necessary in order to cope with the increasingly competitive global environment", he underlined. He also referenced the need to formulate a coherent and integrated policy for olive and olive oil through the cooperation of all stakeholders. Mr. Alexander Georgiadis, Chairman of the Organizing Committee and benefactor of the Krinos Olive Center, stressed that Perrotis College, through the collaborations and relationships it has developed with universities and institutions abroad, is now a model educational and research center for the growing Greek food industry. He also announced that the Krinos Olive

Center would provide a full scholarship to a student exhibiting special interest in pursuing a career in the olive industry.

Topics addressed included: Best Agricultural Management Practices, Legislation and Marketing trends, Waste Management and Bio-economy, and more. The conference ended with the recognition of the President of the Hellenic Health Foundation and Professor Emerita of the University of Athens Medical School, Dr. Antonia Trichopoulou, for her contribution to the understanding of the nutritional value of olive oil. She graciously characterized the award as one of the most important moments in her career, before presenting "The science of nutrition, sustainability and culture as one: olive oil at the heart of the Mediterranean diet".



Trustee Alexander Georgiadis and Dr. Antonia Trichopoulou

Another year of academic excellence

2021 marked another year of successful college placement in Greek and American universities for our High School seniors. Both the General and Vocational programs posted impressive results; examples include Zoe Tziora from the General High School who was the third-ranked candidate to be accepted to the School of Economics at the University of Macedonia, one of Greece's most demanding programs. "These were very extenuating circumstances because of the pandemic. For two years most of our instruction was remote. At first I was afraid that the extended lockdown would negatively affect my performance, but as it turned out, the results were quite the opposite! With the help of the School I felt very well prepared – I was able to study a lot and focus on my goal".

Equally noteworthy achievements were recorded among the students of the Vocational High School, including Taxiarchis Kourtellis, who was the first candidate accepted to the School of Environmental Engineering at DUTH, and Nikoleta Pelagidou, who was accepted in the School of Agriculture & Agrotechnology of the University of Thessaly and was also the third-ranked candidate to make it to the School of Food Science & Technology of the University of Patras.

Students in the Study USA program performed exceptionally well, with admissions to: Anna Maria College; Bowdoin College; Brown University; Davidson College; F&M College; Pomona College; Sewanee, The University of the South; Smith College; Vanderbilt University; Worcester Polytechnic Institute; and Yale University.

Congratulations to all our graduates! We wish you all the best in this exciting new chapter in your academic and professional lives!



Konstantinos Markopoulos joins Katerina Karioti (AFS class of 2019) at Yale. Konstantinos plans to study mechanical engineering, and hopes to continue his studies at the Master's level. His dream is to work in what he calls the "magical" world of Formula 1. Both Katerina and Konstantinos were awarded full scholarships to attend Yale University.



Team VeloCT posted second place finishes in the first and second phase of the national finals of the Formula 1 in Schools competition. Team VeloCT, comprised of 18 students from the General High School, will represent Greece in the world final of this event, which will take place in London.

Last year, the VeloCT team won the award for best newcomer in the national Formula1 in Schools competition, and this year the team is setting its sights on qualifying for the world final of the largest STEM competition worldwide.



The new Gavalas Poultry Lab

Dr. George Gavalas is a force. Even without looking back on his illustrious academic career in Chemical Engineering - one which spans more than five decades and boasts many distinctions, publications, and accolades - it is plain to see that this man has a wealth of energy, intellectual curiosity, and drive.

His last visit to campus a few years ago has stayed with him; it was plain to see even then how he took in every detail and retained every word. As an educator and scientist, the AFS and Perrotis College seem to resonate strongly with him; the hands-on learning model that the School applies across academic divisions, and the practical training throughout, are important components of a unique and meaningful educational experience.

This year, in an effort to help the School in its bid to revitalize the Educational Farm, Dr. Gavalas has bestowed a generous gift that will allow for the full renovation of the students' poultry unit. The unit, which will be named The Gavalas Poultry Lab in his honor, will replace the small broiler shed currently in use. Here students in the Vocational High School manage various projects over the course of the academic year, dealing mainly with poultry genetics and nutrition. The renovations will modernize the facility, making it a center to demonstrate, test and advance this area of animal husbandry in Greece, while promoting sustainable practices. One of the important upgrades will be the installation of solar panels; since around the clock heating is a necessity for the baby chicks, the ability to harness alternative energy will significantly lower the environmental footprint, and serve as a model for the region.

A heartfelt thank you to Dr. Gavalas for this transformative gift!



Emma Hart Willard & the American Farm School Pioneers in Women's Education

Two years ago, Kaitlyn Kelly became one of the youngest donors to the American Farm School. Pooling resources from family and friends, she decided to gift the experience of Greek Summer to a student from the Emma Willard School, to honor the memory of an activist and hero in women's education. Kaitlyn had planned to share the following address at the Greenwich Taverna event this past spring. While the event was postponed until Spring 2022 owing to Covid, Kaitlyn's inspirational act of generosity, as well as her insightful words on women's education deserve to be shared with all our AFS friends. Thank you Kaitlyn!

A few years ago, I made a discovery that revealed a beautiful link between an early American educator and the establishment of the first school for girls in Greece. It was a beautiful yet little-known story that made me feel even closer to my godmother, Joannie Danielides, who is a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Farm School. It was a discovery that happened as the 200th anniversary of Greek independence was about to be celebrated. I learned of a historic twist on how one American - a woman - helped to promote Greek Independence and establish the first school for women in the newly independent country. It was a story of how the women of The Troy Female Seminary (now the Emma Willard School) helped the 19th century descendants of the ancient women of Troy.

When I was 12 years old, my parents encouraged me to attend the Girls Summer program at the Emma Willard School in Troy, NY. My mother had known the school for its reputation as the oldest school for girls in the USA, dating back to 1814. I was intrigued by the school's history and its beautiful setting. The first afternoon we arrived at the school's imposing main door, my mother took my hand. She said with tears in her eyes, "Kaitlyn, remember this. If it were not for Emma Hart Willard neither you nor I would be here today. I would never have gone to college. I would not be this proud mother who is bringing her daughter to this historic school." At the time, I wasn't as clear on the meaning as I was of the emotion of her message.

I thought again of my mother's comment a couple weeks later, when I visited an antique bookstore in downtown Troy with my Creative Writing class. I saw a large book, "Wrought With Steadfast Will: A History of Emma Willard School", which is the in-depth biography of Emma Hart Willard. I was immediately drawn to this book and bought it. The next few nights were spent diving into the fascinating history of the woman who would be a pioneer of women's education in America, as well as other countries. In reading the book, I learned that Emma Hart Willard was an important political advocate and Women's Rights activist, as well as an educator.



Kaitlyn Kelly, committed to the education of women



Kaitlyn Kelly poses on the front lawn of the Emma Willard Hart School

In the 1820's, as Emma Hart Willard was expanding her school in Troy, NY, she was also advocating for the establishment of a women's educational institution in the recently independent country of Greece. From my readings, I learned that she believed the only way for Greece to maintain its independence after hundreds of years of Ottoman oppression was by educating its women. She gave speeches on the need to provide an educational platform in Greece, upon which freedom would thrive in the future. Emma Hart Willard's argument for the education of women in Greece included the need to provide teacher training. Many of the young students of Emma Hart Willard's Troy Female Seminary and women from Greek immigrant societies in America worked with her in securing donations to establish a girls' school in Athens. One of the surprising aspects of her advocacy was how she utilized sophisticated lobbying skills and publicity to raise money, and as awareness about the need for women's education in Greece. She also used key political connections in New York to help promote her funding of the first female teachers' college in Greece.

The history of Emma Hart Willard inspired me to establish a scholarship in her honor - almost 200 years after her initial efforts to support the independence of Greece, and to promote women's education in the newly established country. Two years ago, I secured donations from family and friends to honor Emma Hart Willard by establishing a scholarship to be given to an Emma Willard School student so that she may be able to study at the American Farm School in Greece - a school that owes a lot to the efforts of one very courageous woman of modern Troy.

In Gratitude

The American Farm School thanks the following individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations for their generous support during the previous fiscal year, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. In these extraordinary times, their commitment to the Institution and its ideals have been exemplary, allowing the School to successfully achieve its Comprehensive Campaign goals.

Today, Tomorrow, Together was more than a campaign; it was a promise to our students. Thank you for joining us in this important effort.

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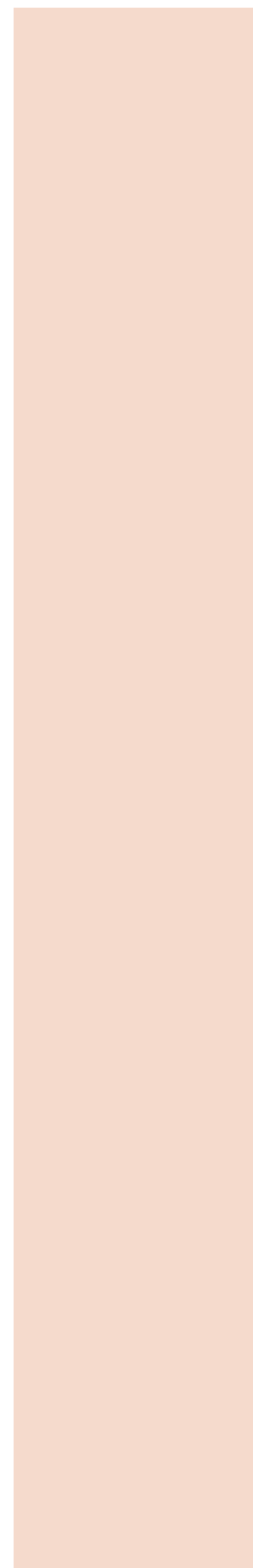
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Donors make the Difference:

Dr. Alex Doolas and Maria Svolos Gebhard

Ever since first meeting at the AFS event “Reuniting old friends & Making new ones” in the winter of 2019, Dr. Alex Doolas and Mrs. Maria Gebhard have been inseparable. Pooling together their wit, charm and love for the School, this dynamic duo has lent a new vitality to the School’s Chicago network, and, almost overnight, has managed to successfully revive the Chicago committee - friends of the AFS who spearhead volunteer actions and events to build awareness and help raise funds for the School.

Dr. Alexander Doolas

Doolas was born in Thessaloniki in 1935. His father, George Doolas, started working as a teacher at the American Farm School in 1929, moving the Doolas family to campus where Alex spent “six wonderful years”, until the Germans occupied the city of Thessaloniki in 1941. At that time, the family was forced to move back to the city, later emigrating to the US at the end of WWII. Since then, he has visited campus twice, and always speaks of his time here with great emotion. “This is where I spent the first six years of my life; it was a place full of happiness, kindness and generosity. Charlie House and his wife Ann were wonderful people who embodied all these traits with honesty and good humor. My family felt like an integral part of the community here, a community of students and educators.”

A respected member of the Medical community for many years, Doolas, now retired, has dedicated himself heart and soul into spreading the word about the American Farm School in the greater Chicago area, and generously supports the School’s Scholarship Program and the Educational Farm.



What are your memories of the AFS?

I have only positive associations. I took my first steps – quite literally – on campus. My father was a teacher here from 1929 – 1941, so we lived at the School and grew up running around the farm and playing with the animals. I will never forget the calmness or serenity that radiated across the green expanse of the campus. I also remember the kindness of the teaching staff and the willingness of the children to learn. I may have been young, but these images are etched in my memory. As an adult, I have had the opportunity to visit the School twice, and was happy to find that the Institution continues to make important strides forward, while still being a place that inspires kids to learn. It’s the School’s timeless contribution to Learning that has led me to provide for the establishment of a scholarship bearing the Doolas family name.

How did you get involved in the Chicago Committee?

All these years the School has not left my mind for a moment. So when I had the opportunity to participate in a presentation of the School and its programs at the National Hellenic Museum of Chicago, I gladly accepted. It was there that the Committee was reborn – I have always been impressed by how much these volunteer groups give back to the students of the School, and how much their collective contribution is valued.

Maria Svolos Gebhard

Maria Gebhard's first encounter with the American Farm School was in 1985 when she married Paul Gebhard, former member of the Board of Trustees, whose two children had participated in the School's Greek Summer program. Together the couple created the original Chicago Committee, building the network and promoting the School's work across the state of Illinois. The couple's son George also visited the School and participated in various programs as a child. Though Paul is no longer with us today, Maria exudes enough love and devotion for the two of them – spearheading the revival of the Chicago Committee and leading the networking efforts in the area. Without her devoted energy, none of this would have been possible.

How do you describe the American Farm School to someone learning about the School and the Chicago Committee for the first time?

I describe it as it is... That is to say, a unique non-profit educational institution, with over a hundred years of history and service to the community. The School is a place where faculty and staff share a unique vision and desire to pass on vital knowledge to the youth, and work together to give them all the necessary tools to pursue brilliant careers in the agri-food sector, but above all to become good citizens. This I think is the most important difference between the AFS and other academic institutions: it contributes to the nurturing of decent people and thoughtful citizens.

Do you feel that you share the School's educational vision?

Of course! Otherwise I could not participate in the Chicago Committee. I believe in experiential and holistic education. In the importance of our connection to the land. In everything that the founder of the School, Dr. John Henry House represented and which continue to be relevant even today. After all, it's this unique educational program and vision that Dr. Doolas and I are trying share with others in the state of Illinois; to make them believers in this wonderful program and bring new energy and vitality to the Chicago network.

After all, I have always known first hand how much the School relied on the support and generosity of its network.

What is your advice to AFS students today?

To study, to seize opportunities wherever they come from, to help their fellow man, to accept well-intentioned criticism and to think before judging. Simply put: to be good people. After all, this is what everyone is looking for; good people.



What are some of the things you hope to achieve through the Chicago Committee?

The truth is that we have set many short-term and long-term goals, which are related to a specific action plan. We will continue to work with passion and determination with the staff of the School in Greece and at the same time we will expand the circle of its supporters in the USA.

Heartfelt thanks to Maria Gebhard and Alex Doolas for their tireless efforts on behalf of the AFS, and thank you to all the members of the revived Chicago Committee who believe in the School and all that it stands for.

Planned Giving

Planned Giving allows supporters of the American Farm School to integrate gifts into their overall financial, tax, and estate planning. A planned gift enables a donor to make a lasting impact by contributing significantly to the School and making a difference by helping many future generations of students.

METAMORPHOSIS SOCIETY

The Metamorphosis Society recognizes and honors the generosity and foresight of those individuals who have made provisions in their estate that include the American Farm School and who have apprised the School of their intentions. The name “Metamorphosis” is chosen for its deeper connection to the School’s tradition of providing education that brings about positive change, or “metamorphosis,” in the individual.

David Acker, Peter Bien, Emily Carey, Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Carson Jr., Hugh Cullman, Marvin Fisher, Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Doolas, Mr. and Mrs. George Draper, Phillip G. and Mary Foote, Barbara K. Heming, Sarah Holland, Edmund Keeley, Elizabeth (Tad) Lansdale, Susan Mees Longfield, Daniel and Mayo Morgan, Nicholas Pizaris, Gail Schoppert

BEQUESTS

By including the American Farm School in their wills, the following individuals provided a final gift that will strengthen the School’s endowment or support other educational needs.

Theodora Abrames, Charlotte Armstrong, Charles Storrs Barrows III, James Michael Broomas, Gregor L. Calender, Esther Carbart, Jean S. Crosby, Maria Couvaras, Alexander Drapos, Angeline Ducas, Lula Ducas, Marvin Fisher, Claire C. Katsanis, Elizabeth M. Godley, Alice L. Hansen, Truda Jewett, Darlene Keeley, Eve Curie Labouisse, Clara Nickolson, Eleanor McKay Norris, Mr. and Mrs. James G. Paterson, Sr., Andrew Ponaras, Ruth Schoppert, Aristides Sideropoulos, Mary R. and Charles F. Lowrey, Mary Elizabeth Stewart, Barbara L. Wood, Charles L. and Joan Thomas, Winifred E. Weter, Nancy Worcester

ESTATES AND TRUSTS

By creating an estate or trust, the following individuals provide annual support to the American Farm School that will last past their lifetimes.

Esther Carbart, Ernest Thomas Chepou, Philip and Hazel Constantinides, Lois Kerimis, Fred W. Kolb, Mary P. Gill, Henry T. Maijgren, Demosthenis Raptelis, Dean C. Zutes

For more information about joining the Metamorphosis Society and other Planned Giving opportunities, please contact Laura Sommers at lsommers@amerfarm.org.



In Loving Memory

The American Farm School family bids a final farewell to two of its beloved members



George Katsinoulas

George, Head Landscaping Technician, was a graduate of AFS and a member of staff for more than 25 years. He cared deeply for his fellow man, and created an atmosphere of optimism and courage even during the most difficult times. George's love for his work and devotion to the School has always served as an inspiration to all. George passed away on October 18 at the age of 44, after battling serious complications from COVID-19. He is survived by his wife Mary Akrivopoulou and five children. In a moving address during the memorial service held at the church of St. John Chrysostom on campus, longtime colleague and friend, Apostolos Vourkoudis, expressed the words on everyone's mind – what a great soul Katsnioulas was, and how sorely he will be missed.



Sophia-Nancy Brown Birk

Nancy, Professor Emerita at Kent State University in Ohio, was a volunteer at the Dimitris & Aliki Perrotis Library since 2007, helping with the organization of the School archive. She passed away on October 16 after a brief but courageous battle with cancer. Her last visit to the School was in the fall of 2019, after which she would have required one more visit to complete the archive project. Nancy has been a valued member of the AFS family for these many years, and called the American Farm School her second home, even receiving the baptismal sacrament at the campus church. Nancy's family has decided to direct all gifts in her memory to the American Farm School, and we could not be more grateful for her longtime friendship and devotion to the Institution. Her kindness of spirit will always be remembered.

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