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the American Farm School

THE **sower**

Thessalonica Agricultural & Industrial Institute



Building Bridges



**AMERICAN
FARM SCHOOL**
Thessaloniki · Greece

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From the President

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Summer edition of the American Farm School's newsletter "The Sower". In the following pages, you will read about the bridges that were built over the past few months. For some, it was a long time coming, for others, an exciting turn of events. The common factor in each case was the support and loyalty of friends and donors around the world.

The Vasilios S. and Aphrodite B. Haseotes Middle School was officially inaugurated in mid-June in the presence of the Haseotes family. The Middle School started operating in 2019 to serve as a bridge between the Elementary School and the High School. It was the missing link in the American Farm School's educational offerings, providing another extraordinary model of innovative, experiential education with STEM focus. We thank the Haseotes Family Foundation for helping us build this critical bridge.

We also thank the Panteliadis family. Their generosity brought vocational education back at epicenter. The new Pantelis Panteliadis High School in memory of AFS Alumnus, Trustee and longtime supporter Pantelis Panteliadis, connects students of the General and Vocational High Schools and introduces Haseotes Middle School graduates to the value of practical skills. Members of the family, Trustees, donors and friends joined the inauguration celebrations in late June.

Another institutional milestone was the accreditation of Perrotis College by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). This presents us with a great opportunity to build more bridges with U.S. academic institutions and offer both Greek and international students accredited courses in a learning environment like no other. Perrotis College faculty and administration are committed to keeping these bridges strong to lead the way for students on both sides of the Atlantic.

The AFS Class of 2023 witnessed the bridging of faith and science through the presence of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the Commencement Ceremony. During the ceremony, the Patriarch was appointed an Honorary Professor of Environmental Science at Perrotis College in recognition of his work on climate change. It was an emotional and exciting time for everyone on campus; one to be remembered for years to come.

There are still many challenges we need to tackle, more bridges to build. One of them – probably the most important one – is to highlight the importance of vocational education moving forward. Our plan is to build bridges with partners from all sectors (government, academic institutions, and businesses) to participate in a campaign promoting what we know to be true: workforce skills make a difference; hands-on learning effectively contributes to the economy; and learners who choose vocational education set themselves up for success.

Thank you for helping us to build bridges, past and future ones.

Sincerely,



Jeff Lansdale, Ph.D.

President

American Farm School

Inauguration of the Pantelis Panteliadis High School

"Our father would be very proud if he could see this wonderful building in his name," Chairman of the Board Stefanos Panteliadis said at the official inauguration of the Pantelis Panteliadis High School on June 22, 2023.

Trustees, donors and honorary guests joined the Panteliadis family at the ceremony; an occasion to honor the memory of AFS Alumnus, Trustee and longtime supporter Pantelis Panteliadis (Class of 1954). The new building was made possible through a generous donation from the Panteliadis family (OPTIMA-EPIROS-METRO-MY MARKET Group) and the support of AFS Trustees Dan Morgan, Frances Manthos, Theodora Valentis, Petros Levis, Barbara Heming, AFS alumni Dimitris Vlachos and Konstantinos Kravvas, Giorgos Gavalas and the Lansdale family.



"On behalf of the American Farm School community, I would like to express our gratitude for the generosity of the Panteliadis family who invested in high quality professional education through this amazing building," President Lansdale underlined in his remarks. Vice President of the Board Peter Schube shared: "It is particularly gratifying to have a physical plant for our high school that matches the extraordinary education that our dedicated faculty and staff deliver each and every day. We are now able to show our students how much we value and respect them by creating an educational home for them that will fully accommodate their talents and support their ambitions as they fulfill the mission of the American Farm School."

Representing the Panteliadis family, Stefanos Panteliadis said that the purpose of the gift was to give the opportunity to young people from northern Greece to study at the Farm School, develop their skills and follow their dreams. "The School changed the course of our father's life. That's why he always wanted to support and strengthen the Institution. He was grateful and lucky to have studied here. Personally, I feel privileged to serve the School today as the Chairman of the Board," he added. Together with his brother, Aristotelis, and their mother, Ourania Panteliadis, they cut the ribbon, opening the door to a unique learning experience for thousands of students.

The new building is more than a structure. It is a testament of an incredible success story that started on campus decades ago; a bright example of the eagerness to give back to a community; and proof of the impact of a quality education. We are indebted to the Panteliadis family for this support of our educational programs.

Vasilios S. and Aphrodite B. Haseotes Middle School Officially Inaugurated



“Our students are lucky to be studying in such a supportive environment. They benefit from experiential learning activities, learn how to take initiative, work on career projects, participate in innovative science workshops, but most importantly they feel safe, trusted and loved. On behalf of our teachers and students, I would like to express our deepest gratitude to the Haseotes family. You’ve given us a unique opportunity to bridge the AFS programs and make our dreams come true,” said Principal Slavoudis.



The Vasilios S. and Aphrodite B. Haseotes Middle School is now entering its 5th year of operation; the official ceremony had been postponed due to the pandemic. Other donors who supported the Middle School include: the Androus Foundation, the Burpee Foundation, the Cleveland H. Dodge Foundation, Inc., the Darlene Y. Keeley Estate, Konstantinos Kravvas, the Levis family, Daniel M. and Mayo Morgan, Elaine K. Nelson, and William and Marie Tsacalis. The American Farm School is grateful for their generous contributions.



Members of the Haseotes family joined students, faculty, administration and staff at the Vasilios S. and Aphrodite B. Haseotes Middle School Inauguration Ceremony on June 16, 2023. Anastasia Marty, Zacharie Vinos, Louis Vinos, Jean-Catherine Vinos, Athena Haseotes, Angelica Iannone, Isabella Branham, Harry Murphy, and Lily Murphy expressed their excitement to be on campus for this special celebration of achievement, made possible through the Haseotes Family Foundation.

“It was a great honor for me personally and the whole AFS community to be given the opportunity to thank you in person for your incredible gift and support over the years,” President Lansdale said in his short remarks, while Chairman of the Board Stefanos Panteliadis underlined the essential and multi-faceted contribution of the Haseotes Family Foundation to the School. Anastasia Marty, daughter of Vasilios and Aphrodite Haseotes, thanked everyone at AFS for their hospitality and spoke of a beautiful structure, both physically and spiritually.



His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew Addresses Keynote Speech at AFS Graduation

Graduation season is always special at the American Farm School as families, teachers, donors and supporters celebrate the achievements of deserving students. But this past June, graduation season was extraordinary.

The AFS High School Commencement Ceremony was celebrated on June 22 in the presence of his All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew; an exciting and spiritual experience for everyone on campus. In his speech, the Patriarch spoke of the importance of environmental education in addressing climate change and protecting the planet for future generations. He praised the School's holistic educational programs, its multi-dimensional curricula and the combination of scientific knowledge, research and practical emphasis, and expressed his certainty that our graduates will be ecology pioneers.



In his remarks, President Lansdale said: "His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has united people around the world not just through faith, but also through his commitment towards the protection of the environment. He has managed to connect religion and science in a time where younger generations needed it the most. He has helped raise awareness of what institutions and individuals can do to address climate change. This is what we teach our students at the American Farm School; how to connect their soul with the soil, how to be proactive, and how to be ready to own success. To give credit where credit is due but also to know when they deserve to receive credit. Tonight, we are giving credit where credit is due and we are teaching our graduates what it means to be deserving of an honor." Dr. Lansdale then proceeded with appointing his All-Holiness an Honorary Professor of Environmental Science at Perrotis College.



Before the Commencement Ceremony, the Patriarch visited the St. John Chrysostomos chapel and was also given a tour of the newly established exhibition "Tools of Tradition: the Collection of Pavlos Condellis" by donor Ariane Condellis, giving his blessings to students and guests along the way.



The Kindergarten, Elementary School and Haseotes Middle School celebrated the achievements of their graduating classes a week before. Perrotis College (Junior College, B.Sc. and M.Sc.) bid farewell to the graduating students in the presence of Trustees, faculty, staff, families and friends on June 17. Founder and General Manager of Augmenta Dimitris Evangelopoulos said in his keynote speech: "Sometimes it takes time to get to where you want to be; more often than not you also have to be a little bit lucky. But when you are well educated and prepared, when you have an Institution like this supporting you, you have the skills to build your future the way you envision it."

We wish each and every one of our graduates the best of luck and the brightest of futures as they pursue their next endeavors!



By supporting the American Farm School and Perrotis College Scholarship Program, you help deserving youth **EVOLVE** into caring, responsible citizens, respectful of the people and the environment around them.

Every gift matters

To make your gift please visit:
www.afs.edu.gr/giving/
or contact our NY Office at:
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Thank you for supporting evolution in action!

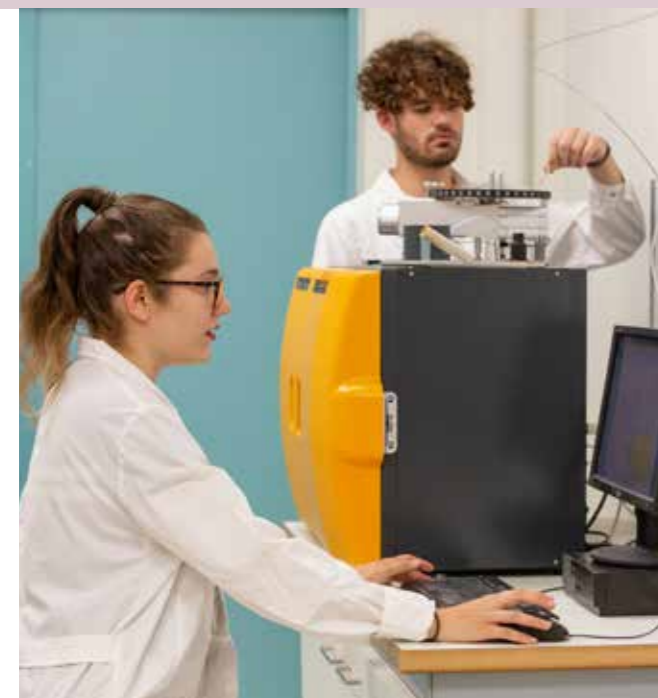
Perrotis College Accredited by NECHE

Perrotis College was granted initial accreditation by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), validating the Institution's hard work and reaffirming what we all appreciate about Perrotis College: its uniqueness, relevance and quality.

The Commission congratulated Perrotis College on demonstrating compliance with the Standards for Accreditation well within the five-year candidacy period. Having partnered with Cardiff University (UK) since 2007, the College has a well-established track record of delivering high quality academic programs in support of its mission "to deliver the best possible holistic agricultural and environmental science education while becoming an inspiring learning and research center in the wider region."

While Perrotis will continue to offer its degree programs in Sustainable Agriculture and Management, Food Science and Technology, International Business, Environmental Science, and Digital Marketing Management in the three-year format required by the Greek government, to meet NECHE's standards, the College "reassessed and appropriately redesigned" its curriculum to include a minimum 40-credit General Education component that reflects the Institution's dedication to the American-style liberal arts model and "encourages students to realize their intellectual and cultural potential, grow professionally, and develop as responsible citizens."

Perrotis offers an array of academic and student support services that, combined with the extraordinary commitment of the College's dynamic faculty and staff to the Institution and to its students, contribute to laudable student success rates (e.g., 80% of Perrotis graduates are employed or pursuing advanced degrees within 18 months of graduation).



The Commission shares the Institution's confidence that with the support of its competent leadership, dedicated faculty and staff, and enthusiastic students, Perrotis will continue to "provide degree programs that are both research-based and practically oriented, and which respond to the public's social, economic, and environmental concerns ... to students from rural and urban Greece, Southeastern Europe, the European Union, the United States, and worldwide."

The New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), established in 1885, is recognized as an institutional accreditor by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and serves as a reliable authority and independent voice on the quality of higher education. The Commission promotes educational excellence and quality assurance to its over 200 member institutions both inside and outside the United States, all of which are degree granting post-secondary educational institutions offering higher education.

Perrotis College Expands its Study Abroad Program

Promoting interuniversity collaboration, Perrotis College welcomed more than 70 students from various U.S. universities through its study abroad program. Students receive academic credits for their assignments, which are then transferred to their universities. All projects are designed and supervised by the Perrotis College professors, aiming to explore practical aspects for each specialty while maximizing the students' academic experience.

In their testimonials, the students say that they chose Perrotis College to expand their learning opportunities, to experience the agro-food sector in Greece, and to combine theory and action, within an international context. They were impressed by the Perrotis College and the AFS campus facilities. What they enjoyed the most was the hands-on learning approach of Perrotis College; the fact that all theoretical classes are coupled with laboratory practice made this the most personalized training they have ever received.

Additionally, a group of 15 students and 3 professors from Auburn University, Alabama, studied the specifics of poultry science in Greece, 22 students and 2 professors from Purdue University, Indiana studied animal science and agriculture.

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College students visited Perrotis College to learn more on food production in the region.

Thanks to NECHE Accreditation, the College now offers more accredited courses for students who are interested to study in Greece, either short-term or for the complete duration of their studies.



AFS and One Drop Foundation at the United Nations Water Conference

The American Farm School could not miss global discussions on water, the most valuable natural resource. In collaboration with One Drop Foundation, AFS and Perrotis College participated in the United Nations Water Conference 2023 hosting the online event "Valuing our Water – Investing in the Next Generation" in late March.

During the event, the two organizations highlighted examples that focus on the importance of mobilizing youth leadership in water management, preservation and sustainability efforts. The audience was engaging through creative and interactive participatory virtual tools. Dr. Lansdale elaborated on the challenges that the future represents in terms of global water management, pointing out the important aspect of the exponential population growth.

Dr. George Fytianos, former chair of the B.Sc. program in Environmental Science at Perrotis College presented the environment-related courses as well as the actions and initiatives undertaken by the School towards environmental protection. The joint action brought together citizens of the world through an innovative approach on water management. This was the first time – after four decades – that the United Nations hosted a conference on water.

INFORMATION ON WATER

- By 2030, water demand will have surpassed water supply by 40%
- 3.6 billion people have insufficient access to water
- 74% of natural disasters (2001-2018) were linked to water
- Every minute, 1 million water bottles are sold worldwide



AFS Graduates Receive Scholarships to Study in the U.S.

Nine AFS High School graduates were accepted to continue their studies at U.S. universities on full scholarships, adding to the long success list of the "Study USA" program. Congratulations to Vassiliki Apostolidou, Petros Gkenos, Vassiliki Ioannidi, Kostas Ioannou, Despina Katsiokali, Noah Kourtzidis, Odysseus Koutrolikos, Stavros Poggas and Thanassis Rakopoulos!

Petros Gkenos, an active member of the AFS Peacejam Club is preparing to attend Brown University to study Math. "I'm thrilled to be offered this opportunity. I wouldn't have made it without the help and support of the Study USA office staff," he said. Vassiliki Ioannidi, who chose the AFS precisely because of the Study USA program, shared: "I got accepted to Colgate University where I will study Neurosciences. I am very happy that my hard work has paid off."

Kostas Ioannou followed on the footsteps of his sister, Maria, who is already a student in the U.S. through the Study USA program. He got accepted to Lafayette College where he will study Economics and Information Science. Despina Katsiokali is grateful to the School and the Study USA program. She got accepted to Kenyon College and wants to major in English Literature and Sociology. Vassiliki Apostolidou got accepted to Pennsylvania State University.

Noah Kourtsidis, whose brother also studies in the U.S., will be studying International Relations at Lehigh University. Odysseus Koutrolikos got accepted to Davidson College and Stavros Poggas to WPI. Thanassis Rakopoulos got accepted to Franklin & Marshall College where he will study Molecular Biology. "The level of the classes offered at AFS was exceptionally high and equipped us with all necessary skills and qualifications to tackle the demanding U.S. academic world" he shared.

In the past 11 years, close to 90 students, both from the General and Vocational High School, have secured a scholarship to study at U.S. universities through the Study USA program. All students benefited from the School's Scholarship Program, supported by donors in the United States and Greece.



Haseotes Middle School Students Win First Place at the European Statistics Competition

The Haseotes Middle School came out on top at the European Statistics Competition, organized by Eurostat. Ninth graders Polykarpos-Aris Kalaitzidis, Dimitrios Paroutis and Maria-Anastasia Trevla, were awarded first place among 1,444 schools, 5,208 teams and 19,388 students from 19 countries in Europe! This is the first time a Greek team receives the first award at a Eurostat competition.

The team qualified to the European competition by securing second place at the National Statistics Competition 2023, organized by ELSTAT, the Greek National Statistics Service. They won first place for their 2-minute video on ...prosperity.

In it, they detail the life of "Yanni", a young man striving to survive in Greece in 2023, faced with the aftermath of the long financial crisis. While watching the story, the audience is barraged with statistics and tables, confirming what they see on screen.

The three students take pride in their success: "We worked hard and we worked systematically. This is the third year we are participating. Statistics is an extremely interesting science, a truly appealing one". Together with their math teacher Olga Grigoriadou, the students attended the award ceremony in Luxembourg in late June.



AFS Welcomes Founder's Descendants

History and family ties were strengthened in July when AFS Founder's descendants visited campus. Dr. John Henry House's great-great-grandson Dr. John C. House III with his wife Cynthia and their son John S. House with his wife Eva spent a week at the School, touring the facilities, seeing the new developments and meeting with AFS and Perrotis College faculty. Everyone's excitement was evident as the family experienced how much Dr. House's vision and hard work have accomplished. During their stay they visited the historical archives, the memorial park and paid tribute to the new bust of Mother House.



Farm Revitalization Initiative: The Beekeeping Center

On June 21, the American Farm School celebrated the inauguration of its new Beekeeping Center in the presence of AFS Trustees and donors Attiki Bee Culturing Company Alex Pittas and USDA-ARS. Professor Emeritus of the Agricultural University of Athens and AFS Alumnus Dr. Paschalis Harizanis (Class of 1969), whose contribution in this effort has been crucial from the very beginning, introduced the Center, including honey harvesting by some Trustees.

The Center's objective is to provide training in bees, from their biological cycle to their role in the sustainability of life and their high value products. AFS students of all ages as well as visitors will become acquainted with aspects of beekeeping, both on a theoretical and on a practical level. The Beekeeping Center currently hosts 15 beehives and is surrounded by a bee-friendly garden within a radius of several meters, which includes specimens from bee-attracting flora found in Greek rural areas (trees, bushes and herbaceous plants).

Mr. Giorgos Pittas, Ms. Alexandra Chazapi-Pitta and Mr. Panagiotis Pittas, representatives of Attiki Bee Culturing Company expressed their satisfaction for the result. "The Beekeeping Center has the capacity to train up to 25 people each time and it includes main and auxiliary facilities. The main facilities, include a 30-meter-long hangar which hosts about 15 beehives, a 15-meter-long hangar with workbenches for the trainees as well as a 5-meter-long hangar with information on all aspects of beekeeping. Next to the hangar, there will be a storage room to keep all training material and equipment. The remaining space will accommodate well-known bee-friendly plants from all around Greece, arranged in a way that provides information on each plant. The second space includes a hangar and an apiary with more beehives destined for workshops on more specialized beekeeping operations, like raising queen bees and producing beehive products, or fighting against enemies and diseases affecting honeybees. This second space forms an integral part of the training process", commented Dr. Harizanis.



"The establishment of the AFS Beekeeping Center will expand the potential of applied research in the field of entomology but it will also create new training opportunities for students, attracting new talents in the field of agricultural research. Our workshops are connected to knowledge, innovation and the training of the next generation of researchers. This is the reason we are grateful that we remain active on the AFS campus, a unique and ideal context to further develop applied agricultural research", said Dr. Alexandra Chaskopoulou, head of USDA-ARS located at Perrotis College.

Literature Supports AFS

Trustees, AFS graduates and friends attended Katherine Kaye's "Sailing with the Wind of Freedom: Lascarina Bouboulis and the War for Greek Independence" book presentation at the New York Society Library in early May. A percentage of the proceeds from the sale of the book go to the American Farm School.

Kaye's interest in the life of Lascarina Bouboulis, the legendary heroine of the Greek War for Independence, began when she visited the Greek island of Spetses in 1984. From this island in the Saronic Gulf, Bouboulis, who became known to history as Bouboulina, helped launch the Revolution of 1821 that would free part of Greece from Ottoman Turkish rule. Kaye has taken care to write about complex themes—including the importance of national unity and self-determination, the cascade of horrors unleashed by ethnic hatred, and the limited options open to women for most of recorded history—in a way that makes them understandable to young readers. While the book was written for children and teenagers ages 12 to 18, it will also appeal to people of any age who are interested in the history of modern Greece, the Ottoman Empire, and the usually unrecognized role of women in determining their country's destiny.



Trustee and Co-Chair of the Development Committee Joannie Danielides shared information about the School following the book presentation. Among the audience was Evgenia Oikonomou Doska, who graduated AFS in 1953 with 19 other girls thanks to the Marshall Plan! We thank Ms. Kaye for her support and for bringing us back together with members of the extended AFS community.

"A Taste of AFS"

The School organized a benefit dinner featuring products from its Educational Farm at the Avli on the Park restaurant in Chicago on May 19. Friends and AFS enthusiasts, including major donor Dr. Alex Doolas, representatives from the Hellenic Foundation and Loyola University, Greek Summer alumni, business people from the area and the Consul General of Greece in Chicago Emmanuel Koubarakis, gathered to show their support and learn about recent developments at the School.

"A Taste of AFS" can refer to many things. For Dr. Lansdale, that particular night was the taste of community. Addressing the guests, he said: "At the American Farm School, we are strong believers in the power of communities: the community of our teachers, who provide a holistic educational experience; the community of our students, who appreciate nature and strive to become responsible citizens of the world; and the community of our donors, who transform our students' lives through their contributions."

Having met this wonderful community in Chicago, I am confident in its power to help us keep our mission relevant and worthy of support".



Greek Summer 2023

By Greek Summer 2023 counselors Charlie Marks and Chloe Frelinghuysen (GS Class of 2015)

Greek Summer has always been about community, identity, and personal growth. Against the backdrop of the Mediterranean Sea, the hot summer sun, and the ancient mountains, we spoke with borrowed languages and gestures of gratitude. Greek Summer '23 continued a long standing legacy of finding yourself and community in the faces of strangers. Although it is only a month, a lifetime happens during those short weeks.

This summer was another astounding success filled with a vast array of cultural experience, hands on problem solving, and lots of laughter. We began our trip together (after overcoming the obstacles of overseas travel) with a trek up Mt. Olympus. After three hours that seemed to fly by seeing the amazing views of the Olympus Biosphere, we stayed the night at Spilios Agapitos Refuge.

Following our hike down, we returned to the American Farm School and enjoyed some time in Thessaloniki learning the history of the city and indulging in our first (perhaps best) Gyro! We spent a few days back at the American Farm School readying our plans to enter our village stay and community English teaching camp. We planned lessons and activities to teach the village children, practiced a welcome speech and our performance of two songs (Eis Ton Afro and Three Little Birds). After our preparation was complete, we departed for the village of Foustani in the Pella Region of Northern Greece.

We were welcomed into the village with open arms. We performed our songs and speeches before meeting our families who so kindly took us in. Our time in the village seemed to fly by with our routine of English camp in the morning and evenings with our village families. The English camp was a resounding success, with the number of campers increasing by day. It was a tearful farewell for many on the evening of our departure.

Upon our return to the School, we received some hands-on experience with farming tasks around campus including: yogurt production, wine tasting, snail breeding, beekeeping, mushroom production, and gardening. The participants even became entrepreneurs getting some sales experience selling the vegetables we harvested!

Then it was time for the Big Trip: Vergina, Meteora, Delphi, Thermopylae, Athens, Nafplio, Palamidi Castle, Ancient Olympia, Vonista, Lefkada, the Ionian Islands, and Grevena. Each location was special and unique in its own way.



Together, the adventures we had there provided a detailed picture of the history around the wonderful country that is Greece.

Our Big Trip concluded with a daylong boat ride on the Odyssea, where we explored the island of Lefkada. Finally, we returned to the American Farm School for the last time. We enjoyed one last day on the beach and then had a closing circle where we reflected on all that we had done together and prepared to say our goodbyes. Of all the things said in the reflection circle, one theme seemed the most common: community and friendships.

As the students packed their bags to leave, they were not only taking their belongings with them, but also memories of a place and a people that fundamentally changed their perspective for the better.

For information on Greek Summer 2024, please visit: www.afsgreeksummer.com



Upcoming Events



On the occasion of
the visit of Dr. Jeff Lansdale,
President of the American Farm School of Thessaloniki
the Consulate General of Greece in Boston
cordially invites you to a reception
Tuesday
OCTOBER 17TH 2023
6:30 - 8:30 pm
@ the Consulate General of Greece in Boston, 86 Beacon St



AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL

Annual Benefit Dinner
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2023
6:00 PM
THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB
NEW YORK CITY

Honorary Guest: The Honorable George J. Tsanis,
Ambassador of the United States of America
to the Hellenic Republic

For online tickets, please visit: www.afs.edu.gr/nwd/nycevent/
Don't miss the online Silent Auction!
Visit: www.givebutter.com/c/DB87JM/auction

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If you want to receive news about the American Farm School & Perrotis College send us an email at sower@afs.edu.gr and we will add you to our electronic newsletter contact list.





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