

# Philip Modinos

Class of 1997



Entrepreneurial  
Artist



The OWL  
MARCH 2021 in review

# Philip Modinos

Class of 1997



## PRACTICAL ARTIST

How are performers surviving the pandemic? All over the world, the entertainment business including theaters, cinemas, concert halls and event venues has been hit hard.

Philip Modinos, class of '97, the largest private producer in Greece and second largest overall only to the National Opera, is adapting to the new realities that face the performing arts industry.

"I had a monopoly from 2015 until 2019 in Thessaloniki and Larisa. In 2020, I was due to work for 3 months at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, covering three lead roles, as well as a large tour producing and singing in Germany. It was likely that more would have happened after that. In the past, I have worked as an artist doing leads for Greek National Opera, National Orchestra in Athens and Thessaloniki, the Athens Festival and abroad. In 2011 I was awarded the Wagner Association Prize for competitions.

I was the financial director of the Larisa Symphony Orchestra (LSO) from 2016 until 2018 and I'm currently moving to create a non-profit organization in support of fair treatment of artists in Greece. This isn't so much driven by the latest "Me Too" type scandals which have emerged, but by other issues which we've all had to face in the art world: mainly payment issues and equal opportunities.

As a company we've held some charity events for various organizations. At some point we even donated some of our ticket income to "Theageneio" in Thessaloniki for Cancer Research. My wife and I are both honorary members of Rotary in Thessaloniki (who deals very much with meningitis). I've also been connected for years to Life Action Trust in London, who deal with a variety of causes. I've done many concerts for them and assisted them in other ways as well.

### PLACIDO DOMINGO ON VIDEO

Right now, future goals are fuzzy. It all really depends on how long the pandemic will last. Therefore, in the meantime, I'm attempting new things. I've been learning how to code (html, php, python) and I have to say, the English and the keyboarding are real corner stones to that. I've also recently looked into working with TV and Film, although I'm not sure if I'm going to see that through, and I've also gone into real estate.

My education at ACS Athens was from 10th to 12th grade (1994-1997). I was in Greek Public School before that and in German School up until the 6th grade but was sent to ACS because my parents felt





that the Greek Public School system wasn't offering me the opportunities that a place like ACS could. And if one considers that most kids who went to Greek School spent their entire day outside of school paying for private lessons, in the end the amount of money spent on schooling ended up being the same.

At ACS there were many valuable lessons, but what turned out to be the most valuable for me was English (which I had the fortune of doing at IB level) and (believe it or not) keyboarding (as in blind touch typing). Those were two skills that ACS cultivated in me which I ended up using greatly and daily in my life.

After ACS I had a long break from formal education. I had a lot to work out, and did Martial Arts and became a Martial Arts teacher for a while. Then, in 2004 I got accepted to a Bachelor's degree at Trinity College of Music in London to study singing and later

Piano and Conducting. I completed the course in 2008 and in 2011. I went back to London, this time to the Royal Academy of Music under scholarship from the Onassis Foundation for a one-year Master in Arts.

I didn't receive any recognition whilst at ACS, but, also I wasn't looking for any. Like I said, I had a lot to work out, and, in some ways, I'm still doing that, but back then I was switching between being introverted and extroverted. I was ranked 54 out of 200 or something like that... that flustered some of my peers who were ranked about the same, but actually spent the entire time at ACS studying hard. So, our ranking was about the same, but I wasn't making as much of an effort as I perhaps should have. In retrospect, I wish I would've made more of an effort back then, I had only myself to blame. Perhaps then I would've been ranked in the top 10. But, I'm still really happy I went there and experienced everything I did.





### Family

My parents were both very successful opera singers. John Modenos and Jenny Drivala. My father passed away in 2011. My mother is still very well and she continues to sing every now and again, making an effort to stay in shape even now in her later years. I have a daughter from my previous marriage, and am currently married to Kassandra Dimopoulou, who is also my partner (in crime) in most of our business ventures. Everything I have accomplished in the last few years has been in partnership with her.

I've been very grateful to see that friends from ACS have maintained a certain amount of loyalty, to the extent that is possible. We kept meeting after graduation and I've had the great fortune that my good friends Stelios Fragos and Alexi Papaconstantinou (ranked #1 I think in our class) let me stay at their place in London a few times, including the time I auditioned for the Royal Opera House. It wasn't as much financial, as it was to have friendly faces during some difficult ventures in London. I cherish the existence of these bonds more and more as I grow older.





## Wisdom for the Next Generation

"As for words of wisdom for the next generation, here it is: There are three things in this life that you will need to learn well, no matter what you study. Those things are (in order):

### 1 Accounting and Taxes

### 2 Law and legal procedure

(How to file a lawsuit for example)

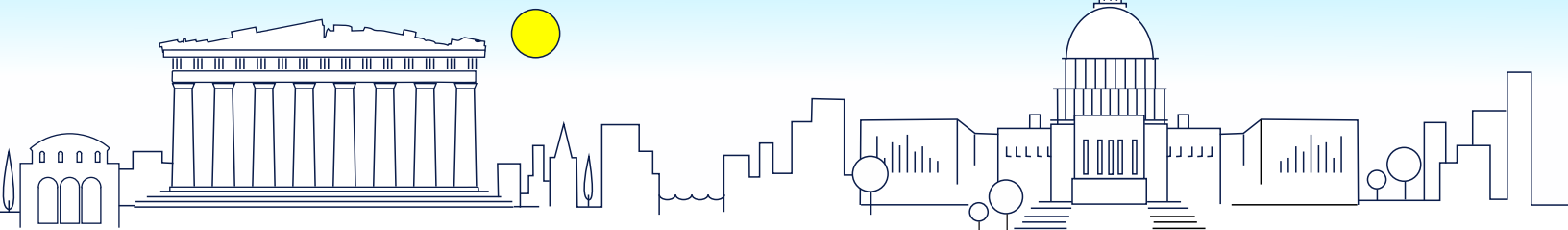
### 3 Politics

I don't care if you're becoming a rocket scientist, a clarinet player or a professional Lacrosse cheerleader. You will need to learn those three things... or you'll be pushed to the side by those who know them better than you. Make it a point to have as much friction and interaction with those things and you will see that your life will be better. Avoid them, doesn't matter the excuse, and you will be beaten by your competitors and adversaries who have a better understanding of these things. "

Please enjoy the performances of Philip Modinos and  
Kassandra Dimopoulou (Perouze) here:

**MODINOS & DIMOPOULOU**





# MONTHLY MESSAGE



**PEGGY PELONIS, Ed. D.**  
PRESIDENT

AMERICAN  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOLS  
OF ATHENS



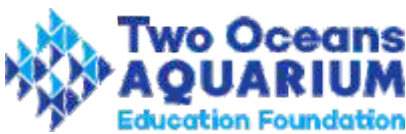
"On this special day, let's celebrate Greek Independence Day and the Modern Greek state's 200th year birthday along with the pursuit of ideals of freedom and democracy. We at ACS Athens, with our American philosophy of education, share and promote these ideals and practices. We strive towards the ultimate goal of developing citizens who aim to make the world a better place for all. This is indeed worth celebrating. Happy Independence Day Greece!"



**ACS Athens**  
American Community Schools

Sincerely,  
Peggy Pelonis, Ed.D  
President





My name is Eva-Maria Alexandra Panagiotou (but I go by Alexandra), and I am a wildlife conservationist, educator and rehabilitator from Athens, Greece. I moved to South Africa last year. I have a MSc in Conservation Science and Policy, and a BSc in Natural Resources Conservation with a specialization in Wildlife Conservation and Ecology.

Over the years I have had the honor of working for many different organizations around the world, primarily as a wildlife rehabilitator and an environmental educator.

However, my most recent work and research has involved sea turtles, a species I am very passionate about working with and protecting. There are seven sea turtle species of which three species are critically endangered, two are endangered, one is threatened, and one has an unknown conservation status. Why do I mention this? Sea turtles are ocean ambassadors, they play an important part of the planet's food web, and the maintain the health of the world's oceans.



So what? Healthy oceans are vital for the wellbeing of our planet and all its inhabitants, including humans. Healthy oceans help regulate climate and reduce climate change impacts. Additionally, ocean currents distribute heat across the globe, which aids in regulating temperatures and weather. The ocean also absorbs over 90% of the heat and approximately 30% of carbon dioxide emissions produced by human activities. Moreover, the ocean provides millions of livelihoods, particularly in developing countries, that stimulate local and global economies, and it provides a vast array of recreational opportunities that help the coastal and marine tourism industry.

Also, if you like breathing, scientists estimate that 50-80% of the oxygen production on Earth comes from the ocean (pretty important if you ask me!).

And those are just some reasons why healthy oceans are important. So, the main way I have decided to help protect our oceans is through researching, caring, rehabilitating and raising awareness about sea turtles.

[MORE HERE](#)



### Fay Pazartzis

**New President  
of the  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMITTEE  
of the  
UNITED NATIONS!**



On March 1, 2021, Ms. Foteini (Fay) Pazartzis was elected the new Chair of the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, a two year term of office from March 2021 to March 2023.

Fay was born in Athens and studied at the Department of Public Law of the Law School of the National Kapodistrian University of Athens. She holds a Master of Arts degree in International Law as well as a PhD, both from the University of Paris.

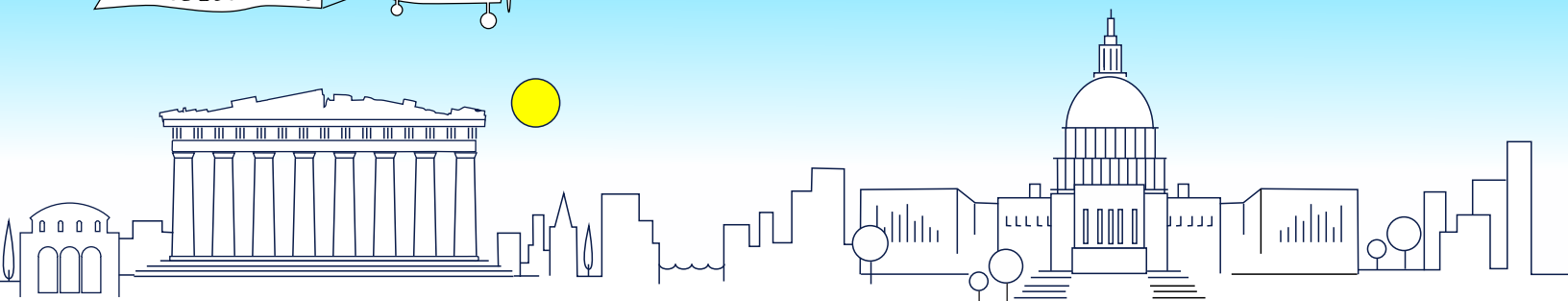
She is a professor of International Law at the Law School of the National and Kapodistrian University of

Athens, and President of the Department of International Studies of the school as well as coordinator of the postgraduate program of International and European Studies. In 2014, Fay was elected to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, re-elected in 2018 for a second term and named Vice President soon after.

In September 2019, Fay became President of the European Society of International Law (ESIL). She is also the President of the Greek branch of the International Law Association. She is also a member of the Hellenic Society of International Law and International Relations, the Société Française pour le Droit International and the American Society of International Law.

Fay has also served as: Rapporteur of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Chairman of the Working Group of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for the Rules of Procedure, Visiting Partner at the Lauterpacht Research Center for International Law, University of Cambridge, and Director of Studies of the French Department of Public International Law at the Academy of International Law in The Hague, among other appointments. She is the author of numerous articles and books in Greek, English, and in French.

Her diverse and multidimensional scientific background, dedication to the academic and research field of international law, and her many years of international service are all sure to contribute to the development and upgrading of this international body. Congratulations!







# PROFESSIONAL NOTES



Christina Hudson in Greece: My expat guide to the rare green spaces of Athens, Pt. 1



Check out Leah Sirkin's latest work!



Manya Louvari offers us  
**THE ELIXIR EXPERIENCE**

Elixir Cruises is about boutique cruising redefined. Unique journeys of discovery of new places and a new you. A holistic approach that embraces mind, body, and soul aboard yacht-like havens of wellness and understated luxury.





# PROFESSIONAL NOTES



## Diana S. Wynnberry Simply Greek

All the best alum Diana S. Wynnberry!  
"Simply Greek by Wynnberry is born. This took me 1 year...13 hours a day no days off... souvlaki here we come... get ready Sarasota Florida!"



### Awards

4 wins & 6 nominations

2021 Luleå International Film Festival  
🏆 **Won**, Best Actress in a Feature  
Tess Spentzos Pretentious Pictures (pretentious pictures)  
🏆 **Won**, Best Director of a Feature  
Robert MacLean Pretentious Pictures (pretentious pictures)

2021 Rome International Movie Awards  
🏆 **Won**, January Award  
Best LGBTQ  
Robert MacLean Pretentious Pictures

## Tess Spentzos

### **Best Actress Award in the Rome International Movie Awards!**

"Congratulations to The Light Touch team! So proud and happy to see our film being loved by audiences."

Luleå International Film Festival, thank you for the nomination and win! I'm so honoured to receive, the Best Actress Award for The Light Touch.

Thank you @Luleaifilmfestival"



Hilda Youssef Gholmieh  
featured as an "agent of change"  
by the EW-WWF for earth hour.  
For the full interview:







# ATHENS

# Reunion

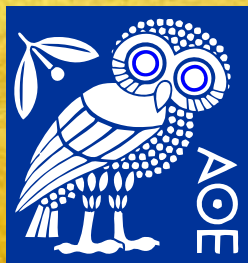
## Cautious Optimism for Summer 2022

It wouldn't be a grand reunion without our Global alums there, so we continue to hope and plan for the possibility of summer 2022.

We remain so grateful for the support of those who intend to sponsor, to attend, to musicians and performers committed to organizing the eventual reunion of the century.

We at Global wish to express our gratitude to the Reunion's perseverant committee, and look forward to enjoying the eventual results of their appreciated commitment!

Wishing you all good health till we can all meet and celebrate together!



ACS ATHENS GREECE  
ALL-CLASS REUNION  
TARPON SPRINGS, FL  
September 17-19, 2021



# Updates

# and News

## HELLENIC NEWS OF AMERICA

CONNECTING AND ENGAGING THE GREEK-AMERICAN AND PHIL-HELLENIC COMMUNITIES - SINCE 1987

CONSCIOUS OF AND RESPONSIVE TO COMMUNITY PRIDE AND SPIRIT

VOLUME 34 | No. 7 | MARCH 2021 P.O. Box 400 | Chino Hills, CA 91709 | Telephone: 951.427.7440 | E-mail: info@hellenicnews.com | www.hellenicnews.com

### ACS Athens School in Greece has international flavor, American roots

**CHRISTINE**



**Dr. Peggy Pelonis**  
School President  
ACS Athens, Greece

There's a place in the suburbs of Athens, Greece, where children are taught to be world citizens.

ACS Athens is a private K-12 international school that embraces the American educational philosophy but also has a multi-national flavor.

The school's president, Dr. Peggy Pelonis, appreciates the mix. The psychologist grew up in a Greek family in Los Angeles, studying in the U.S., but has also run an international training center for psychologists in Greece. She's been the school's president since 2018.

"We are a top rank school in Greece with a strong emphasis on American curriculum and philosophy, and a leading school with over 65 nationalities. The combination of these two things is important," Dr. Pelonis says.

The ultimate goal? Giving students a sense of purpose and wonder so they will go out into the world and make it a better place.

The school dares to ask the questions: Are our children happy, and how do they achieve contentment?

"They achieve many awards. They get degrees. They become very successful but what about internal satisfaction?" Dr. Pelonis asks.

ACS Athens was founded in 1945 as a school for children living on American and English military bases in Greece.

Over time, the military left, but the school remained, opening its doors first to worldwide students, then to students in Greece.

English is the culture language at ACS Athens and students graduate with an American high school diploma. They can also earn the International Baccalaureate diploma, as well as a Greek university diploma.

ACS Athens faculty are multilingual.



**ACS Athens**  
American Community Schools of Athens

*Dr. Peggy Pelonis, President of ACS*

Dr. Peggy Pelonis, Photo courtesy of ACS

"The American Philosophy allows students to have choices," Dr. Pelonis says. "It's more about seeing the individual differences in students and guiding them to find where they excel."

The result is independent learners who will think about knowledge critically, synthesize it and use it to solve problems.

ACS Athens is an innovator. It's already introduced the concept of artificial intelligence in its Elementary School.

When COVID-19 shut down schools world-wide, ACS Athens was up and running online overnight. It had been investigating online learning when the pandemic struck.

"It caught everyone else by surprise but we were prepared because we were looking ahead," Dr. Pelonis says.

They recognized that we have these practices in place for continuous improvement and life-long learning, which is what we expect from our students," Dr. Pelonis says.

Faculty and staff teach critical decision-making, so students understand their decisions and actions have consequences.



**ACADEMY**

*The famous Academy blue doors. Source: ACS Facebook page*

*Hellenic News of America's Inspiring Women Series*

HELLENICNEWS.COM

## 'Hellenic News of America' interviews ACS Athens President, Dr. Peggy Pelonis

In its latest publication, the Hellenic News of America features an interview with Dr. Peggy Pelonis, President of the American Community Schools of Athens.

In her interview, Dr. Peggy Pelonis talks about the school's history, its success and innovations, and the ongoing goal at ACS Athens to "offer students a sense of purpose and wonder so they will go out into the world and make it a better place".

Dr. Pelonis also describes how ACS Athens "brings the best of both worlds", as a private K-12 international school located in Athens, Greece, that embraces the American educational philosophy but also has a multi-national flavor.

The Hellenic News of America (HNA) is one of the leading newspapers in the USA committed to informing the Greek American community.





# ACS Athens NEWS

## ACS Class Rings



K18 yellow/white 535€  
K14 yellow/white 455€  
K9yellow/white 355€  
Silver 175€



K18 yellow/white 425€  
K14 yellow/white 370€  
K9yellow/white 290€  
Silver 175€

Vicky accepts bank wire transfers. Once full payment is received, it takes approximately 10 days for a ring to be made. Under pre-Covid circumstances, shipping via FedEx/DHL delivered the ring in 2 days, normal mail took 7-10 days. Vicky's contact information:

Vicky Nikolopoulou  
Private Jeweler  
GIA Gemologist

[v.nikolopoulou@vickysgems.com](mailto:v.nikolopoulou@vickysgems.com)

Telephone: +306948538871

Shipping cost to USA (DHL post) 33€ approximately, depending on region.

## ACS Athens Athletics Director featured on Agapotobasket.gr



and heading the athletics program of ACS Athens. Annie is singularly qualified to implement a vision for the future Women's basketball, within the Hellenic Basketball Federation. "We want women's basketball to have what it deserves."

Annie Constantinides spoke to agapotobasket.gr, about her decision to support Vangelis Liolios in the upcoming elections, who shares her foundational values.

For the full interview (in Greek), please click here.



The Iron Lady of Women's Basketball in Greece, Annie Constantinides. A sports icon: leader of the national women's team for 8 years, marathon runner and squash champion.

A business administrator and educator, her deep experience includes organizing Olympic and Paralympic Games, International sports events