

2016 Journey to Greece Program Session Another Success

STUDENTS DISCOVER THEIR ROOTS
WHILE EARNING COLLEGE CREDIT



Webster University Athens welcomed students from across the U.S. and Canada to the unique heritage program, AHEPA Journey to Greece, June 23 to July 23, 2016. The program is sponsored through AHEPA, and this year, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation provided the students with full scholarships.

AHEPA and Webster Athens have a long standing relationship and provide a unique opportunity for students of Hellenic descent to discover their roots in the birthplace of their ancestors and earn up to six college credits. Students spend

a month studying the Greek language and Greek culture and society, while they travel around Greece during the program excursions.

Exploring Ancient Locations

Aside from their class work, the students were busy visiting sites around Athens and learning firsthand about Greek culture and society. The students traveled to northern Greece and visited the archaeological sites of Delphi, Dion, Vergina (tomb of King Philip, father of Alexander the Great), Ancient Pella (birthplace of Alexander the Great), in addition to visiting the

monasteries of Meteora and the cities of Thessaloniki, Edessa and Veria (the monument/shrine to Saint Paul the Apostle at the place thought to be Veria's Vima, on the western side of the city, where he preached Christianity around 49-51 A.D.), and Naoussa (school of Aristotle). They also visited the islands of Aegina, Hydra and Poros and the Temple of Poseidon in Cape Sounio.

In addition to the excursions and site visits around Athens, the students also visited the Hellenic Parliament building to learn about the political system in Greece and how it functions and operates. They had the opportunity to witness the parliament in session and afterwards had a briefing at the Webster Athens campus of what they observed. They also visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and learned about Greece and United States relations, in addition to current events.

Program Learnings

The First Secretary, Political Section of the United States Embassy in Greece, spoke to the students about U.S.-Greece relations and what services the U.S. Embassy provides to American citizens who are abroad. The students were interactive in all the visits and asked several questions.

"I felt the program was excellent," said Harry Theodore, a finance student from Boston College. "It gave me a unique opportunity to learn more about my ancestors. The museum visits and Greek culture classes contributed greatly to my growth as an individual and I highly recommend this program."

Arianna Stasioulas, a marketing student at Drake University, "This experience has been one of the best in my life. I learned more about my own culture and other aspects of Greece I did not know before. Every student on this trip bonded so much, and I can honestly say that all of us will be lifelong friends... I am extremely grateful to have been given this opportunity."

The original AHEPA Journey to Greece program began in 1968, and after a hiatus, re-launched in 2006. Tom Mazarakis, Webster University Athens Campus, is the AHEPA Journey to Greece Coordinator and Past Supreme Governor Philip Vogis served as an Adult Advisor.

JTG Students Advance Philanthropy in Greece

The AHEPA Journey to Greece program is about more than earning college credit while studying in beautiful Greece. It's also about giving back and learning the value of philanthropy.

The JTG students assisted with the packaging and distribution of food to needy families in Greece under the administration of the Hellenic Relief Foundation in Athens, Greece, July 14. The students volunteered their time and services while attending Webster University for the Journey to Greece program. Tom Mazarakis and Dina Skias supervised the day's operation.

Founded December 2011, the Hellenic Relief Foundation provides food to more than 800 needy families each month throughout various parts of Greece. Past Supreme Governor Phil Vogis is a founding member of the foundation and serves on its Board of Directors.

