

Published for friends of
the American Farm School

THE **sower**



Thessalonica Agricultural & Industrial Institute

Sowing Seeds of Synergy
for 120 years



AMERICAN
FARM SCHOOL
THESSALONIKI

*Issue 188
Summer Edition*

Chairman
Stefanos Panteliadis

Vice Chairs
Peter Schube
Theodora Valentis

Secretary
Sophia S. Hartch

Treasurer
Constantine N. Darras

Trustees
David G. Acker
Deborah Androus
Olia Avdis
Joannie C. Danielides
Annie Maniati Efstathiou
Thymis Efthymiadis
Constantinos Hadjiyannakis
Barbara K. Heming
Vicki Kyriakos
Phoebe Legakis
Petros A. Levis
Frances Manthos
George Milonas
Nikolaos Pentzos
Joel S. Post
William L. Richter
Christina Kazis Sayare
William A. Tsacalis
Robert J. Uek
Sharon W. Vaino
Panayiotis Yatagantzidis

Honorary Trustees
Sheila Baird
Peter Bien
Loretta Constantinides
John R. Crunkilton
Phillip G. Foote
Seth E. Frank
Dimitri Gondicas
Annie Levis
John C. Lycouris
Daniel M. Morgan
Elaine K. Nelson
Anastasia Pappas
Aliko Perroti
George B. Post
Gail D. Schoppert
Manita S. Scocimara
Judson R. Shaver
Susan Stupin
Robert W. Uek

President
Jeff Lansdale

Contributing Editors
Angelos Angelidis
Nicky Christopoulou
Maria Ioannou
Athina Peristeropoulou

Design
Blind Studio

Printing
Puritan Press Inc

From the President

Dear Friends,

The American Farm School turned 120 this year. When Dr. John Henry House founded the School in 1904, his vision was to embody a system of education which would educate the whole person: the head, the hands, and the heart. Today, thanks to Dr. House and his wife Mother House, and thanks to dedicated teachers, thousands of students experience this holistic education, preparing them to responsibly address contemporary challenges. Today, thanks to donors and supporters like you, the School continues its mission of service.

We have dedicated the following pages to sowing seeds of synergy. New scientific laboratories for Perrotis College students were recently inaugurated with the support of USAID/ASHA and AFS Trustee Barbara Heming. These labs will offer research opportunities to our undergraduate and graduate students, as well as students from U.S. universities that choose Perrotis College for their study abroad experience.

Collaboration with educational institutions expands beyond our academic offerings. We hosted an International Poultry Symposium on campus in mid-June with the participation of academia from the U.S. and Europe. The School was the first to introduce Omega-3 eggs to Greece thanks to collaborations with other institutions and the industry. We anticipate that this exchange of know-how, technology, and research will lead to more innovations in the poultry sector.

Whether it is a partnership with Future Farmers of America, a sustainable agriculture project in Ghana or the Ohio 4-H Global Immersion program, the School honors opportunities for synergies that will further its mission of inspiring the whole person to lead, innovate and contribute to a sustainable future. We witnessed the outcome of our collective efforts during the Commencement Ceremonies in June; we bid farewell to the Classes of 2024 by highlighting their achievements inside and outside the classroom. Their stories are singular but their values are shared. We are proud to have served as their beginning.

Events in the U.S. celebrating our 120th anniversary were yet another reminder that our mission cannot be achieved without synergies. We thank the Consuls General of Greece in New York, Atlanta and Texas for introducing the School to new audiences and for forming valuable constituencies.

The School has been a Sower for 120 years. Thank you for your continuous support in achieving growth through the seeds of education.

Sincerely,



Jeff Lansdale, Ph.D.

President

American Farm School

New Perrotis College Scientific Labs Funded by USAID/ASHA

Two new, state-of-the-art laboratories have been established at Perrotis College with the substantial support of the United States Agency for International Development/American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (USAID/ASHA): one laboratory focuses on the development of new food products, while the other specializes in soil analysis. Both facilities will serve Perrotis College undergraduate and graduate students, enhancing their educational experience and research capabilities. They will also promote faculty research, collaboration with other universities, as well as provide technical analysis and support to farmers and the industry.



The opening of the building was marked by a modest ceremony attended by notable figures, including the U.S. Consul General in Thessaloniki, Jerry Ismail, Chairman of the AFS Board Stefanos Panteliadis, President Dr. Jeff Lansdale, Trustee Barbara Heming, who contributed financially to the project, as well as other Trustees, Perrotis College faculty, students and staff. In his speech, the U.S. Consul General highlighted the ongoing support of the United States to the American Farm School, emphasizing the shared belief in its overarching philosophy. He noted that AFS has been "the heart and soul of the American presence here in Greece" and pointed out that Thessaloniki, and more specifically AFS, is the best HUB in the region. "These new labs will bring people together from all surrounding areas," he said. The American Farm School stands as a testament to the enduring partnership between the United States and Greece, showcasing the tangible benefits of international cooperation and support.



Commencement Ceremonies 2024

Graduation season at the American Farm School began with ceremonies for Kindergarten and Elementary, followed by Middle School, High School, and Perrotis College (Junior College, B.Sc., and M.Sc.) graduations. Students of all ages shared in the happiness and emotion as they reached a significant milestone in their educational journey.

At the AFS High School Commencement Ceremony on June 14, Dr. Dimitris Dermatas, a distinguished Professor at the National Technical University of Athens, delivered a poignant address on the urgency of addressing the climate crisis, encouraging graduates to "responsibly pursue their dreams." President Lansdale spoke proudly of the students, parents, and teachers, highlighting the School's unique ethos and creed. The Perrotis College graduation ceremony on June 15 featured Trustee Dr. David Acker, Professor and Associate Dean at Iowa State University, who commended the College's longstanding contributions and urged graduates to lead, persevere, and be ambitious and kind.



At the culmination of this momentous graduation season, we share the heartfelt words from the Haseotes Middle School speech by teachers Despoina Avramidou and Dimitris Neofotistos that moved everyone to tears: "The new life that is before you, is the beginning of a journey that will not be repeated. Let your life be bold, courageous, unpredictable, and mysterious. Embrace the different and see it as an opportunity for your personal and collective growth.

Don't reject it unless it offends you. The same goes for the old: cherish it and pursue it only when it serves humanity. And never hesitate to stand up against anything that offends the values this School has shared with you."

This is our wish for all our graduates: to lead lives filled with purpose, courage, and compassion. Congratulations to the Classes of 2024!



From Honduras to AFS: Intern Spotlight

Victoria Zavala traveled 6,500 miles from Zamorano University in Honduras to the American Farm School for her internship as a food science and technology student. She shares why she chose AFS, her experiences in Greece, and the roles she undertook, offering a glimpse into her enriching and fulfilling internship.

Why did you choose the American Farm School for your internship?

I chose the American Farm School for its renowned reputation in agricultural education and hands-on learning. As a food science and technology student from Zamorano, I sought an immersive experience to enhance my skills. Working in both the milk processing unit and poultry section aligns with my academic focus. Additionally, the international setting in Greece offers a rich cultural experience, broadening my perspective on agricultural practices.

What did you think of the AFS campus?

It's a hub for agricultural education and innovation, offering extensive grounds, advanced facilities, and picturesque landscapes that enhance learning and provide practical experience. The campus design reflects excellence and sustainability, contributing to its reputation as a leading Institution in agriculture and related fields.

What were your impressions of your internship experience at AFS?

My internship at AFS was immensely rewarding. I spent four weeks at the milk processing plant, gaining hands-on experience in cheese, yogurt, butter, and milk pasteurization, including lab analyses for food safety compliance.



Subsequently, I transitioned to the poultry unit, focusing on egg quality for market distribution and overseeing the egg hatching process for chicks. My thesis involved conducting laboratory analyses to characterize olive oil, providing a fascinating opportunity for further learning. Interacting with AFS leaders and staff enriched my understanding of agricultural practices and regional food processing techniques. Overall, I gained valuable practical skills and cherished the cultural exchange, making my internship at AFS truly fulfilling.

What made the biggest impression on you from your stay in Greece and AFS?

The cultural immersion in Greece made the biggest impression. The warmth of the people and the rich differences in food, history, language, and traditions compared to Honduras have been eye-opening. This experience deepened my understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Returning to Honduras, would you urge the rest of your fellow students to choose AFS for their internship?

I highly recommend AFS for internships. My experience here enhanced my practical skills and broadened my cultural understanding. The alignment with Zamorano's educational approach ensures a smooth transition, while AFS's advanced technology and well-equipped labs elevate learning opportunities. Experiencing a new region and diverse individuals enriched my perspective, making AFS an invaluable choice for internships.



AFS Hosts International Poultry Symposium

In June, the American Farm School hosted the International Poultry Symposium "Synergy in Poultry Production, Food Science and Public Health for Global Well-Being" organized in collaboration with the Multistate Poultry Research Program and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA-USDA). The Symposium brought together leading scientists from around the world and fostered a robust exchange of knowledge among researchers, poultry farmers, industry professionals, students, and other interested parties.

Addressing the latest trends and innovations in poultry farming, with a special emphasis on sustainable and high-quality food production in the context of ongoing climate and humanitarian crises in the Mediterranean basin, the event featured a comprehensive program that included discussions on key public health concerns such as salmonella, critical flock health issues including bird flu, welfare and sustainability improvements, as well as the latest advancements in technology, nutrition, and digital transitions within the poultry industry.

The Symposium provided a platform for participants to delve into a wide array of topics essential to the future of poultry farming. Discussions covered poultry nutrition and management, crucial for ensuring the health and productivity of flocks; genetics and breed improvement, aimed at enhancing the resilience and performance of poultry; food safety and biosecurity, to mitigate risks associated with diseases and contaminants; and the economic and social challenges facing the poultry sector, particularly in the context of global market dynamics and local farming practices. Distinguished guests from U.S. universities – such as Auburn University, Purdue University, North Carolina State University, Virginia Tech, Mississippi State University, University of Connecticut, University of Kentucky, University of Arkansas, University of Georgia, and others – made significant contributions to the Symposium, sharing their expertise and insights on these critical issues.



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:
lsommers@amerfarm.org.

Empowering Ghanaian Agriculture through Sustainable Training

The American Farm School participates in the “VET-Ghana” Erasmus+ program that focuses on training young Ghanaian producers in modern agriculture to address climate challenges, ensure food security, and create a sustainable future. The project aims for professional excellence in agriculture, promoting employment and sustainable outcomes, and fostering an inclusive agri-food economy. Dr. Evdokia Krystallidou, Head of the AFS HUB for Innovation & Impact, highlighted Africa's disproportionate suffering from climate crisis effects despite low greenhouse gas emissions. She recently visited Ghana's Adidome Farm Institute to assess training needs and development prospects.



The American Farm School leads training-of-trainers, offering expertise in food processing technologies and quality assurance. Collaborating with local and European partners, the School aims to enhance Ghanaian agricultural education and improve access to modern agri-food processes. Through this collaborative effort, the project aspires to support Ghana's agricultural sector, providing young farmers with the tools and knowledge necessary to thrive in a changing climate.



Ohio 4-H Global Immersion in Greece

The American Farm School recently hosted 13 teens from the U.S. as part of the Ohio 4-H Global Immersion – Greece experience. During their 10-day visit, these enthusiastic teens – accompanied by Assistant Professor and Extension Educator Steve Brady – engaged in career exploration activities and immersed themselves in the rich culture and traditions of Greece.



Our Ohio 4-H guests gained valuable insights into Greek agricultural practices by working alongside our students in various internship experiences. They rotated between units focused on animal production, plant production, and food science and technology, exploring different career pathways. Cooper Schmidt expressed his excitement about seeing historical sites and ancient Greek ruins, while Kaelynn Mishne highlighted the impact of connecting with our community and trying new foods. These experiences not only expanded their agricultural knowledge but also enriched their cultural understanding and personal growth.

The trip provided a platform for cultural exchange, allowing the Ohio 4-H teens to forge lasting friendships with our students.

They returned home with a renewed sense of purpose and a deeper appreciation for global diversity. Through daily check-ins, they shared their highs and lows, fostering vulnerability and transparency within the group. "This trip taught me to be more open to new things and how to really understand different cultures and ideas through interacting with local people," said Schmidt. We are proud to have been a part of this transformative experience and look forward to future collaborations.

AFS Partners with Future Farmers of America (FFA)

The partnership between AFS and the Future Farmers of America (FFA) represents a significant advancement in agricultural education and international exchange. Since its founding in 1928, FFA has played a crucial role in developing leadership skills and promoting sustainable farming practices among rural youth across the United States, with a robust membership of 980,000 spanning 9,000 chapters.

While interactions between AFS and FFA have been sporadic since 1976, recent efforts have solidified this collaboration with the establishment of a dedicated FFA chapter at AFS in collaboration with Clarksville Christian School in Tennessee. The partnership facilitates reciprocal student exchanges: AFS students will have the opportunity to reside with American families whose children are FFA members, while AFS families will host American students. This exchange program aims to enhance cultural understanding and broaden educational perspectives for all participants.

Recently, AFS and Clarksville Christian School formalized their commitment through a Memorandum of Cooperation. This agreement outlines joint efforts to develop and implement agricultural curricula, organize farm operations for practical learning experiences, and promote student and staff exchanges. These initiatives not only enrich educational offerings but also cultivate global perspectives and leadership skills among participants.

By strengthening its partnership with FFA, AFS continues to lead in educational excellence and sustainable agriculture practices, bridging continents to empower future generations of agricultural leaders.



Celebrating 120 Years of AFS

CELEBRATIONS HOSTED BY GREEK CONSULATES GENERAL IN THE U.S.

The American Farm School's 120th anniversary was celebrated with great success through events hosted by Greek Consulates General in New York, Atlanta, and Houston. These celebrations, attended by distinguished guests and prominent Greek expatriates, served as a platform to highlight the School's remarkable journey and its significant contributions to the agri-food sector. President Lansdale delivered insightful presentations that underscored the School's dedication to education, innovation, and community development within Greece and the broader Balkan region.

During the events, donors, supporters, alumni and friends elaborated on the various initiatives and programs that have defined the School's mission over the years. They emphasized the Institution's role in advancing agricultural education, promoting sustainable farming practices, and supporting rural development. We thank Consul General in New York, Ambassador Dinos Konstantinou, Consul General in Atlanta Theodoros Dimopoulos and Consul General in Houston Lambros Kakkisis for their generous support as well as all the attendees who honored us with their presence.



"FARM TO FORK" BENEFIT EVENT IN CHICAGO

On May 19, the American Farm School hosted a "Farm to Fork" benefit brunch at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago in support of the Scholarship Program. President Lansdale addressed the attendees, elaborating on the Institution's mission, work, and core values. He shared his vision for the School's future role in education and highlighted the achievements of its successful graduates. Dr. Lansdale concluded by thanking participants for their meaningful contributions and loyalty.



"A TASTE OF AFS" BENEFIT DINNER ORGANIZED BY THE GREENWICH COMMITTEE

On April 11th, Trustee Vicki Kyriakos and the Greenwich Committee organized a benefit dinner at Telly's Taverna in Port Chester, NY, to raise support for the School. The event was attended by numerous friends and supporters of the School, as well as alumna Maria Ioannou (Class of 2022) who shared her transformative experience made possible through the Scholarship Program. The highlight of the evening was the pledge made by the Hellenic Foundation of St. Louis, committing \$400,000 over the next four years and presenting a check for \$100,000 for this year's Annual Fund. We thank President Vainalis for the Foundation's extraordinary support.

U.S. AMBASSADOR TSUNIS: "CONTINUING THIS PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NEXT 120 YEARS!"

In celebration of the 120th anniversary since the founding of the School, U.S. Ambassador to Greece George J. Tsunis recently re-visited campus. The Ambassador toured the Pantelis Panteliadis High School funded by the Panteliadis family as well as the House of Traditional Tools funded by Ariane Condellis in memory of her husband, Pavlos. He also had the opportunity to speak with Perrotis College Study Abroad students and American staff at the School, emphasizing the importance of international educational exchanges and cultural understanding.

"We are celebrating 120 years since the American Farm School's central role in improving life in Greece. Today, we recognize not only this milestone in pioneering agriculture in Greece but also the forging of deep and lasting educational and interpersonal ties between our two countries. We look forward to continuing this partnership for the next 120 years!", he stated.



Haseotes Middle School: Statistics Champion!

For the second consecutive year, our Middle School has claimed the top spot at the 7th European Statistics Competition! The team of students Dimitrios-Fanourios Georgiou, Maria Andra, and Anna Tziridou emerged victorious among more than 22,000 students from 20 European countries. Their journey to this achievement began with a first-place win in the 7th Pan-Hellenic Statistics Competition organized by ELSTAT, which qualified them for the European event.



Their winning video, which explored the theme "Everything was better before!... True or False?," featured a young man from 2099 deciding where to travel in time using AI-driven statistical comparisons between Greece in 1986 and 2024. The team, accompanied by their math teacher Olga Grigoriadou, attended the award ceremony on June 26 in Madrid.

AFS Graduates Preparing for their Transatlantic Studies

Eight students from the AFS High Schools have been accepted to prestigious U.S. institutions to continue their educational journey. These students, including Angelina Jarmeniti-Hanjara, Eleana Giannoula, Panos Dimtsoudis, Valia Itsiopoulou, Vasiliki Tassiou, and Nikolas Katsaros from the General High School, as well as Katerina Achliopa and Fotis Kouziortis from the Vocational High School, have been awarded scholarships and are eagerly preparing for this next chapter in their lives.



Eleana Giannoula will attend Washington and Lee University, her first choice, where her brother Harry has been studying since 2022. She aims to major in Business Administration and Marketing. Expressing her gratitude, Angelina Jarmeniti-Hanjara, who is headed to Mount Holyoke College to pursue a degree in Computer Science, said, "I am so thankful for all the support from the School, especially from the Study USA office. I wouldn't have made it without them."

Katerina Achliopa will fulfill her academic aspirations by studying Theater at Bryn Mawr College. Fotis Kouziortis, notable for being the first Greek student to receive a full Global Scholarship from Babson College, will study Finance. Vasiliki Tassiou and Nikolas Katsaros will attend Bentley University and Richmond University respectively, with Vasiliki planning to specialize in Digital Marketing and Nikolas aiming to study Economics and Business Administration.

Panos Dimtsoudis, who chose the American Farm School specifically for the Study USA program, has been accepted to the University of Pennsylvania to study Electrical Engineering. Valia Itsiopoulou, who will attend Elmhurst University with plans to earn a double degree in Communication and Acting, shared her excitement: "I can't wait to see what the future holds for me."

The rigorous AFS academic environment and robust Scholarship Program supported by donors and friends worldwide has equipped these students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel. Over the past twelve years, the Study USA program has enabled 95 students to secure admission and scholarship support to U.S. universities.

Greek Summer 2024: A Journey to Remember

Greek Summer is a unique program that leaves a lasting positive impact on every participant's life. It is an environment that forms enduring bonds and lifelong memories. Over the course of four weeks, each Greek Summer participant experienced significant individual growth.

Their orientation begins with a trip to Metamorfosis, Halkidiki, where each student writes a letter to their future self. Metamorfosi in Greek means transform, symbolizing the goal of this journey: for each participant to transform into who they are supposed to be.

The homestay is a highlight for both the students and hosts. Each year, Greek Summer participants are hosted by families from a local village. Often, the families do not speak English, but the participants learn to communicate and bond with them in unconventional ways. A 70-year-old woman from this year's village, Nea Gonia, Halkidiki, was overjoyed when she finally met her participants. Holding two pink roses in her hands, she welcomed the girls to her house with warmth and excitement. By the end of the week, both she and the two students had bonded deeply. "What am I going to do now that they're leaving?" the host said, bursting into tears while hugging the two girls during the closing ceremony.

While at the village, participants hosted workshops and activities where local children learned English and made new friends. When it was time to depart, the children chased after the bus, waving goodbye. The participants and local citizens cherish these strong bonds and friendships.



During the program, participants visit archaeological sites, travel around Greece, and climb Mount Olympus. By exploring ancient ruins and historic landmarks, they gain insights into Greece's rich cultural heritage. They also learn about farming and participate in workshops and activities around campus, including snail breeding, hay baling, wine production, vegetable harvesting, and Greek cooking classes. These activities teach valuable skills and provide a deeper understanding of Greek culture and agricultural practices.

On the last day, participants read their letters to their future selves, reflecting on their expectations and experiences. This reflective exercise highlights their personal growth and transformation over the course of the program.



Greek Summer is more than just a cultural immersion program; it is a journey of self-discovery and growth. Each participant returns home with a newfound sense of self, lifelong friendships, and cherished memories. The lasting impact of this experience is evident in the profound transformations seen in every participant, making Greek Summer a truly unique and life-changing program.

The Greek Summer 2024 group thanks Siri for playing:
*"Slipping through my fingers all the time
 I try to capture every minute
 The feeling in it"*

By AFS Intern & GS support staff Maria Ioannou (AFS Class of 2022)

For more information on Greek Summer 2025, please visit:
www.afsgreeksummer.com



AMERICAN
FARM SCHOOL
THESSALONIKI

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER

THURSDAY | OCTOBER 17, 2024

The Union League Club
38 E 37th St
New York

Stay in touch!

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.

American Farm School & Perrotis College

Marinou Antipa 54,
Post Office Box 60097
GR-57001 Thessaloniki, Greece
Tel +30-2310-492-700
Fax +30-2310-492-710
info@afs.edu.gr

1740 Broadway, Suite 1500
New York, NY 10019
Tel +1-212-463-8434
Fax +1-212-292-3801

usoffice@amerfarm.org

Get social!

- AmericanFarmSchoolThessaloniki / Perrotiscollege
- americanfarmschool / perrotiscollege
- American Farm School / Perrotis College
- American Farm School / Perrotis College

NOTE: If you are not receiving our invitations/save the dates via email, please contact us at info@afs.edu.gr

www.afs.edu.gr