



2026
Testimonial
Dinner

Testimonial Dinner

HONORING

Mr. John Josephakis

Global Vice President of Sales and Business Development

HPC/Supercomputing, NVIDIA

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

and

Mr. Stavros Kamilaris

President

Lampousa Cypriot American Association

Mrs. Despina Axiotakis

Past General Secretary

Cyprus Federation of America

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



HONORARY CHAIRPERSONS

His Excellency

The President of the Republic of Cyprus

Mr. Nikos Christodoulides

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America



Friday, September 25, 2026

Cocktails: 6:30 p.m. ~ Dinner: 7:30 p.m.



Terrace on The Park

52-11 111th Street, Flushing Meadows Park, New York 11368



Business Attire

JOHN JOSEPHAKIS

Born in Famagusta, Cyprus in 1964, I grew up in a beautiful coastal city with no idea what the future would hold. I was the eldest of two children; my sister was born in 1970. Both of my parents were born in the same city, with grandparents from the wider Famagusta province — I was always proud of my roots.

Prior to 1974, I was aware of the tensions between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, but I never imagined I would live through what happened that year. Overnight, on August 15, 1974, we left our home and never returned. I often think about the fate that befell my family and the roughly 220,000 other Cypriots forced to leave their homes behind. It was not an easy time, yet I still remember as vividly as if it were yesterday the determination of my parents and grandparents — their unwavering commitment to survive and build a better life for the family.

After a year moving between Athens, London, and Cairo, my family settled in Athens in September 1975. I lived there until 1982, when I came to the United States to attend the University of Texas at Austin. Though my family had remained close to many Cypriot families in Athens, arriving in Austin introduced me to a wide community of young Cypriot men and women my own age, all

newly arrived like me. It was then that I began to understand more deeply what my life might have looked like had we never had to leave. Being a history enthusiast, I continued studying my home country, and the more I learned, the more I dreamed of one day giving back.

I knew that to support my family and break the cycle of accepting circumstances as fixed, I had to work hard and take risks. After earning my Master's degree, I threw myself into my career, always going the extra mile. It was not long before a technology company recruited me, and from that moment I caught a passion for the industry that still drives me today.

From Austin, I moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where I started my family. In addition to my wife Diane, I have a 30-year-old daughter who, along with her husband Collin, has given us our first grandchild — our little Yianni.

My first role in New Mexico was with a small

company working alongside the U.S. Department of Energy's national laboratories — Sandia and Los Alamos. Watching world-class scientists at work, I saw firsthand how the vision of a few dedicated people could change the world. That experience convinced me that with hard work, anything is possible.

I was soon recruited by a California-based company, and my drive told me to take the leap. I joined and grew into a Global Sales leadership role. But while things were looking up professionally, the early 2000s brought devastating personal losses. I lost my father, my uncle and godfather, and my sister between 2001 and 2005 — blow after blow, each one deeply felt, especially by my mother. Determined to be there for her, I visited Athens almost monthly, and her resilience gave me the strength to keep moving forward.

In 2013, I made a pivotal career move and joined Cray Inc., the company synonymous with supercomputing. I continued to grow my career, working across the globe on some of the most complex and demanding technical challenges the world had ever seen.

During that time, NVIDIA came calling. I knew the technology was exceptional, but it was the culture of

relentless excellence and innovation that truly attracted me. As they say, the rest is history. In the six-plus years since joining, NVIDIA has become arguably the most important company in the world, driving continuous advances in AI and scientific computing. I learn something new every day, and that is something I try to share with everyone I meet: never stop learning, never stop innovating, and always think beyond today and tomorrow.

What life has taught me is this: we must never forget our families, our roots, our beliefs, and the values we were raised with. We must always strive to do the right thing — even when it is not the easiest thing.

As I look ahead, I think often about how to be present for my family and for the place I will always call home.



STAVROS A. KAMILARIS

Stavros Kamilaris was born and raised in the village of Agios Georgios, in the District of Kyrenia, Cyprus, which has been under Turkish occupation since 1974. He attended elementary school in Agios Georgios and graduated from the Nicosia Technical School as a Technical Assistant of Building Works. Upon graduation in 1973, he joined the Cyprus Army and served in the 33rd Commando Squadron (33 Μόζα Καταδρομών) based in Bellapais, Kyrenia. He fought against the Turkish invasion at several locations including Agios Hilarion on Pendadaktilos, Agios Georgios, Kyrenia, Vasilia and Filia. After surviving the invasion and becoming a refugee, he arrived in the US in September 1977, with his only possessions being \$300 and his parents' blessings, to fulfill his dream of becoming a civil engineer.

Like many other Cypriot students, he struggled to balance full-time school and work, but his many hardships added to his success. Upon receiving his green card in 1980, he started his engineering career in the nuclear power industry. In 1985, he earned his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from New Jersey Institute of Technology. In 1986, he joined Dewberry Engineers in the civil-transportation sector, where he advanced to the positions of Project Manager, Department Director, and Vice-President of Northeast Operations.

Stavros' professional engineering career spans 46 years, during which he worked on major, award-winning transportation projects as well as various other civil engineering fields including nuclear, fossil and chemical plants, military facilities, airport facilities, building and facility structures, cellular telecommunication facilities, site development and municipal improvement projects. His major client list includes the NJ Turnpike Authority, Port Authority of NY & NJ, New Jersey DOT, New York State DOT, New York City DOT, US Air Force, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), and various New York and New Jersey counties and municipalities.

Stavros is a licensed Professional Engineer in New Jersey and New York, as well as a Professional Planner in New Jersey. He has been a member of several professional organizations

including the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) and the American Concrete Institute (ACI). Recognized for his leadership, dedication and passion for civil engineering, he received the 2003 Civil Engineer of the Year award from the ASCE, as well as Dewberry's Client Focus Award in 1999 and Project Management Award in 2013. An expert on the repair and rehabilitation of transportation structures, he has served on numerous professional committees and authored several technical papers.

Since 2003, Stavros has served as President of the Lampousa Cypriot American Association, a cultural and philanthropic organization, founded in New York City in 1937 by Greek Cypriot immigrants from Karavas and Lapithos.

Following the 1974 invasion and occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkey, Lampousa embraced many new immigrants from the occupied areas helping them adjust to life in the United States. Stavros was instrumental in developing Lampousa's cultural program which offers Cypriot dance, history and geography lessons for members' children at no cost to their families. At the same

time, Lampousa has been working alongside the Cyprus Federation of America and PSEKA to raise awareness of the ongoing Turkish occupation and struggle for justice. Stavros served on the Cyprus Federation Executive Board for several years and as one of its Vice Presidents from 2013 to 2018.

A devoted community member, Stavros has been a parishioner at the Metropolitan Cathedral of St. John The Theologian in Tenafly, NJ, for over 35 years, serving as a Parish Council member and chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee for over 25 years.

Stavros and his wife, Maria Pandehi from Karavas, reside in Bergenfield NJ. They are the proud parents of three awesome daughters and their husbands - Despina and Marios, Anastasia and Steven, and Christina and Kyle - and six amazing grandchildren: Dimitris, Sophia, Zoe, Lucia, Theodoros and Nicos.



DESPINA AXIOTAKIS

Despina was born in Asgata, Limassol, Cyprus, and in 1956 emigrated to the United States with her family. She is the seventh of eight children of Kyriacos and Maria Ioannou. After graduating from high school, Despina attended the Traphagen School of Fashion and, during the summers, worked at her father's summer resort in the Catskill Mountains. Following in her parents' footsteps, Despina owned and operated the Olympia Hotel in upstate New York for many years before retiring from the hotel business.

Despina became active in the political arena, serving the presidential campaigns of Governors Michael Dukakis and Bill Clinton, as well as serving as Finance Director for Chris Evangel for Congress. She has served on many boards and also at the Church of the Assumption in Windham, New York.

The Asgata Association of America "Cyprus" was founded in 1934 and was one of the founding members of the Cyprus Federation of America. While serving as President of the Asgata Association Women's Division, she founded the Asgata Youth and Dance Divisions, which included teaching the group Greek and Cypriot dances. In addition, she was the editor of the "Asgata Newsletter" for over eight years.

Despina has been an active member of the Cyprus Federation for over 40 years and currently serves as Vice President of the Philanthropic Committee. Additionally, she is the Executive Director of the Cyprus U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a nonprofit organization that has helped foster trade relations between the U.S. and Cyprus for the past 27 years.

Despina founded the Greek Cypriots of New Jersey in 2018 and is currently the President. Despina is also the Event Coordinator for the Hellenic Federation of New Jersey.

Despina was the recipient of the Panpaphian Association's "Distinguished Fellow Cyprian" award. In April of 2008, she was also honored by the Association of Expatriates Apothimon Asgatiton in Cyprus. Despina was also honored by the Asgata Association "Cyprus" in November of

2008 for her many years of dedicated service to the Association. She was honored by the Society of Foreign Consuls in New York, Celebrating Women Leaders in Our Communities. Despina was awarded a proclamation by the New York State Assembly in Albany for Greek American traditions and contributions to the Greek American community in honor of Greek

Independence Day. Despina was also awarded a proclamation by the City Council of New York at City Hall in honor of Greek Independence Day.

She is President of Axiocom, Inc., a public relations firm specializing in event planning and community fundraising. Axiocom has organized many concerts and networking events. She stays active in her local community as well as her beloved Cypriot community.

Despina was devoted to her late husband, John, and their two children, Lucas and Rena, and is the proud grandmother of five: Daniel, Thomas, Despina Demetria, Nikki, and John





FEDERATION OF CYPRIOT AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS

The Federation of Cypriot American Organizations (FCAO) is a nonprofit entity representing 28 Greek Cypriot American associations located throughout the United States. Its mission is to develop good relations and solidarity among its chapters, promote their goals, and represent their interests and the coordination of their social, educational, philanthropic, and cultural activities. The FCAO undertakes and promotes charitable activities primarily within the Cypriot and Greek American communities; preserving and promoting the Greek language, as well as the Greek and Cypriot history and cultural heritage in the United States. It also supports the leadership of the Greek Orthodox Church in the establishment and preservation of Greek American identity and the Greek Orthodox faith in the United States.



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Lifetime Achievement Award honors an individual with exceptional accomplishments in their field. The recipient exemplifies the highest standards of professional excellence and integrity, with contributions of lasting quality and significance that bring honor to Cyprus.



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

The Community Service Award recognizes individuals who have contributed outstanding volunteer service to their community by dedicating their time and efforts to promoting the ideals and values of Hellenism.

