

The AHEPA Journey to Greece scholarship program has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. Two years previously, I had the privilege of accompanying my sister Anjelika, who had received that year's scholarship, along with our younger sister, Dimitra. as we each participated in it's first-rate and dynamic curriculum. While on this magnificent "Journey" we were endowed with knowledge and pride in our remarkable ancestry in being Hellenes. Our eyes were in wondrous delight as we discovered Greece's most popular sights while on excursions at different islands, the museums, the parliament buildings and many others. To have shared this experience with my sisters and to have made lasting memories and loving friendships with our Greek students has been priceless.

To add to my blessings, last year I too received a JTG scholarship and this summer I attended both sessions at the UINDY in Athens. Both semesters were balanced in terms of learning and excursions and I was able to cement my knowledge of our culture's history, politics and language. During the excursions I was able to relax, reflect and connect with my Hellenism. The most purposeful and significant excursion was by far, the stay at the town of Kalampka in Thessalia, Trikala. The monasteries of "Meteora," where only six have survived, are divinely perched on top of million years old sandstone pillars. Looking up to the 'Theopetres', or God's rocks, as they are referred to and which seem to be suspended on air was visually stunning, breathtaking, deeply penetrating and emotionally stirring. It was while visiting these ancient old monasteries that I encountered a significant and overpowering feeling that I was both spiritually and bodily closer to God.

Another momentous experience was our stay in Thessaloniki and Macedonia, birthplace of Alexander the Great, and the city of Edessa, where we saw the famous and awe-inspiring waterfalls.

With every passing year the JTG program adds to the learning and to the excursions. For myself and my sisters the JTG has rewarded us with a flawless experience but most importantly with a deeply meaningful exposure as to where we came from and who we really are in terms of ancestry.

I am eternally indebted and grateful to the AHEPA family, who have provided these life changing scholarships which produce unforgettable experiences to all students of Hellenic descent!

Annah Evangelopoulos JTG Recipient 2012



The Journey to Greece was truly one of the most incredible experiences of my life. I have always loved to travel, so for me, the greatest part of the program was getting to learn about my heritage by actually experiencing it. It's one thing to read about Greek culture and sites in a book and another thing entirely to stand on the cliffs of Meteora and see the almost unfathomable monasteries, or to visit the place where Aristotle himself taught. I loved exploring Athens and learning to speak the language by using it on a daily basis - the trip really brought my studies to life. It was also a great opportunity to get to know people. Traveling together and learning in a smaller classroom setting than I'm used to was a great way to bond, share knowledge, and make the experience even more fun and meaningful.

Overall, the Journey to Greece was an odyssey that I will always be happy I embarked on. I saw ancient structures, artifacts, cities, and natural sites that I had wanted to visit for my entire life; I met incredible people and shared some of the most meaningful experiences of my life with them; and I learned first hand what means to be a student of the world. It was one of the best things I've ever done!

Demi Antonakes JTG Recipient 2013



The "Journey to Greece" was exactly what the program defined it to be – the most unique, powerful and valuable personal journey in connecting with my Hellenic heritage and all the while enlightening and enhancing my knowledge of it and further more appreciating my culture's gifts to the modern world. This was truly an unforgettable expedition; from the daily Greek courses taught by the most captivating professors to the excursions cruising the islands of Aegina, Poros and Hydra to the four-day trip to Thessaloniki, Macedonia and my personal favorite, the visit to Μετέωρα. It was this particular experience that for me was the most rewarding because it was visually, spiritually and emotionally gratifying. The program took us to many of the Athenian attractions such as the Acropolis, the impressive Benaki museum, the Archaeological Museum, the highly respected, 'Tomb of the unknown Guard', the Hellenic Parliament and many others. The streets leading to Syntagma Square, the area of Plaka and Monastiraki became so authentic to me that I felt that I have lived here forever. Visiting the temple of

Zeus and the temple of Poseidon as well as the theatre at Epidaurus was breathtaking. Alongside this ultimate and rewarding experience were the life-long friendships that culminated as the result of the JTG program. I have made many friends from around the world that I stay in touch with and I have plans to see. I am forevermore indebted, appreciative and grateful for the JTG scholarship that I received from the AHEPA family and for the constant encouragement by my Greek schoolteacher, Diane, who is always advocating and inspiring our Hellenic ancestry.

Dimitra Evangelopoulos JTG Recipient 2013

