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# The Anatolian



FALL 2006

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And Clean It Up

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## Anatolia Gets the Word – and Image – Out

It's not enough for Anatolia to be a great school," says President Richard Jackson. "We need to let the world know we are a great school. We need a communications strategy that will allow us to compete with top schools everywhere for students, faculty, and philanthropy – not just in Greece, but in Europe and the U.S. as well." To that end, Anatolia has recently embarked on a major upgrade of its public relations and communications effort.

Hercules Mousiades '79, Director of Marketing for Anatolia, elaborates: "Since the beginning of this year, we've taken steps to develop and execute an integrated, institution-wide approach to reach our local and international constituencies. We're linking our three divisions more closely under one Anatolia "brand" and positioning and promoting each division in its respective market. This is not only about advertising, but about using all the tools at our



disposal to establish and build an ongoing relationship with the public." The results of this effort are apparent in the form of electronic newsletters like ACT's "Vision", an extensive range of new, high-quality printed material for each division, the recently overhauled Anatolia websites (www.anatolia.edu.gr and www.act.edu), four new DVDs about the school, increased media coverage – as well as print, radio, email and outdoor advertising.

Commenting on the school's website, Panos Vlachos, Chair of Science and Technology at ACT, observes: "It's not just a matter of image but of accessibility. We want our website to reflect the user-friendly experience that students will have at this school. During the past year we've seen a substantial increase in the number of web visitors, with over 9000 individual visitors monthly, over 60% of them from abroad.

The new DVDs about Anatolia and ACT are available both in disc format

and on-line (for previews, see pages 4-5 inside). Alumnus Alexandros Kambouroglou '89 wrote and produced the DVDs at cost with his Athens-based company Myga. Three of the DVDs are directed at prospective ACT students (undergraduate, study abroad, and MBA), while the fourth presents the institution as a whole and will be used to support fundraising efforts. The new DVDs were made possible through the generosity of Anatolia Trustee and ACT Governance Chair Jack Florentin and his fellow Trustee John Pappajohn.

Kambouroglou comments: "For the student-recruitment DVDs, we decided to let ACT students and faculty do the talking. There's no narrator. We simply asked people to tell us about aspects of ACT in their own words, and we did the rest as editors. The fact that students really like ACT made our job that much easier." The result is intimate but powerful testimony to the many strengths of the school. For the

ten-minute institutional DVD a script was used. "But we also painted a picture through a kaleidoscope of hundreds of still and moving images. We wanted to produce a portrait that all Anatolians past and present could see themselves in. The message is one of connection, to what the school stands for and to each other." President Jackson and Board Chairman George Bissell, as well as Trustees Stavros Constantinides and Charlie Raphael appear in speaking roles.



There's more: The second annual President's Report, available on-line, presents a comprehensive review of the past Anatolia year. The newsletter you are reading, edited by Anatolia English Chair Phil Holland and redesigned two years ago, is also part of Anatolia's revitalized communications outreach. Miss an issue? They're all available on the Anatolia website.

## Anatolia Hosts Niarchos Board

On October 18 thirty-five board members and staff from the Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation gathered at Anatolia as part of their first-ever board meeting in Northern Greece. They came to campus from New York, Athens, Monaco, London, Luxembourg and Germany. Among the group were Niarchos family members Spyros Niarchos, Maria Niarchos-Gouaze and Andreas Dracopoulos. The group toured the Stavros Niarchos Technology Center and the Bissell Library and were briefed in the video-conference room by President Jackson, Head Librarian Karen Bohrer and Niarchos Center Director Dr. Panos Vlachos.

The President thanked the Niarchos Board and staff for funding the Technology Center and for so many creative contributions to academic excellence at all levels of Anatolia. These include full scholarships for Katrina refugee students from Louisiana and Mississippi; the Manhattan



President Richard Jackson, Spyros Niarchos

Theatre Club program for Anatolia and American high school students to jointly author and produce dramatic works; the ACT exchange program for students and faculty with Marymount Manhattan College in New York; the Stavros Niarchos award for excellence in computing, permitting this year's ACT winner to study at AIT/Carnegie Mellon; and the series of advanced workshops for librarians in which the Bissell Library Director has participated, both in New York and via teleconference from the Niarchos Center with the New York Public Library.

Prior to lunch in the Bissell Library, attended by Trustees Stavros Constantinidis and Jack Florentin along with ACT faculty and selected students, the Niarchos Trustees and staff viewed the new Anatolia institutional DVD – in a room built through their own generosity to the school.



Anatolia's lykeia were chosen to represent secondary education in the October 28 OXI Day military parade along the Thessaloniki seafont. Flagbearer Dimitris Lagoudis '07 is flanked by classmates Dimitris Zikopoulos and Ioanna Nella on their way to the parade..

## President Jackson Commemorates Haystack Meeting

On September 23 President Richard Jackson traveled to Williamstown, Mass., to speak at the 200th anniversary of the celebrated Haystack Meeting, which led to the launching of the American missionary movement and to the founding of Anatolia College in Asia Minor in 1886 and its precursor, the Bebek Seminary, in 1840. In August 1806, five Williams College students took refuge from a thunderstorm under a haystack near the campus and decided then and there to evangelize the world. Their successors founded missions and schools worldwide.

"Many of the participants in the commemoration were themselves evangelical Christians," comments President Jackson, "and spoke of their missionary efforts. I was invited because Anatolia is proof of what the Haystack Meeting began and one of the few institutions started in the mid-19th century that are still going strong in the 21st. In 1956 Secretary of State John Foster Dulles addressed the 150th anniversary celebration, and I felt honored to commemorate the Bicentennial on the spot where, in a real sense, Anatolia began."

## ...and Travels Coast to Coast for Anatolia

President Richard Jackson recently returned from a three-week, bi-coastal trip to the U.S. during which he met with members of the Anatolia Board of Trustees in Boston and also with Anatolia alumni, friends, and supporters, prominent Greek-Americans, government officials, and others in a position to help the school. Besides making fundraising calls, he met with numerous university deans to promote study-abroad ties to ACT.

On the West Coast, President Jackson was the guest of honor at an elegant reception at the Greek Consulate in San Francisco organized by Anatolia Trustee Natalia Orfanos for about forty alumni and supporters. Consul General Xenia Stefanidou read a glowing letter from Greek Ambassador Alexan-

der Mallias extolling Anatolia and its contribution to Greek-American relations and understanding. President Jackson also travelled to Los Angeles to meet with good friends of the College there.

Back East, after appointments in New York, President Jackson went to Washington, DC, where he delivered a talk, "The Greek University: Policy Reforms in Higher Education," to an invited audience at the prestigious Woodrow Wilson Center. The issue of state recognition of private universities is under intense public discussion in Greece and has clear implications for ACT, Anatolia's university division. The trip ended in time for President Jackson to be back on campus for – appropriately enough – the annual Thanksgiving celebration.

## Raphael Renovations Underway



Raphael plan by architect Petros Makridis '67

The former Raphael Hall is well on the way to becoming a state-of-the-art performing arts center. Work began during the summer, and the building is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2007. The former assembly hall will become a 280-seat space for theater and music as well as a venue for visiting speakers and performers. It will also feature an exhibition area and have videoconferencing capacity. Located on the highest ground of the Anatolia campus, it will serve the needs of all divisions of the school. The Raphael Hall Performing Arts Center is the latest in a series of ambitious construction projects recently undertaken at Anatolia.

### The Anatolian

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This issue was edited by Phil Holland and designed and printed in Greece by M. Diamantidi S.A.

## New Director for European Front

Maria Tsekou '82 has been appointed to the new position of Director for European Development. She will spearhead Anatolia's fundraising efforts in Greece and in Europe, where an increasing number of Anatolians have assumed leadership positions in corporations and other organizations. Based in Athens, she will be working closely with President Jackson and Anatolia's Greek trustees on development initiatives.

"I know Anatolia well," comments Maria, "having graduated from the high school and having attended ACT (it was called SBALA then) in its earliest years. My job is to help build relationships with individuals and corporations in a position to help the school. I will be asking alumni to give back to the institution that has shaped us all in so many ways, and I will be approaching business leaders to persuade them to invest in education and to create partnerships with us, especially with ACT." The appointment of a Director for European Development is part of Anatolia's effort to increase outreach to donors on the Greek side of the Atlantic to parallel the school's development program in the States.



Maria Tsekou '82

## English teachers wanted

One or two openings in the Anatolia English Department are anticipated for the coming academic year (beginning September 1, 2007). Requirements include at least one degree in English Literature or Teaching English as a Foreign Language; teaching experience, preferably at the secondary level; and teaching certification. We are especially looking for native speakers of English with first-hand knowledge of American culture. Additionally, we are looking for candidates with experience of leading extracurricular activities such as theater groups, sports teams, debate, publications, etc., in a secondary school setting. The school offers competitive salaries and benefits. Send or email letter of inquiry and resume to Dr. Philip Holland, Chairman, English Department, Anatolia College, PO Box 21021, Pylea 55510, Thessaloniki, Greece (holland@anatolia.edu.gr).



# High School News

## Dr. Robert Ballard Teleconferences from Santorini

**W**orld-famous oceanographer Dr. Robert Ballard, known for his discovery of the Titanic in 1985, paid Anatolia a digital visit via the Stavros S. Niarchos Teleconferencing Center on June 3 and 5, speaking with both elementary and high school students. The connection was live to Santorini, where Dr. Ballard is leading a joint U.S.-Greek team conducting underwater research on the volcanic seabed of the Aegean. Honorary Trustee Bill Drakos made the event possible.

Dr. Ballard, Director of the Institute for Archaeological Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography, spoke about his discoveries and answered questions from students about his work. What brought Dr. Ballard to Santorini? The titanic volcanic blast around 1600 B.C. that may have put an end to Minoan civilization and may have given rise to the myth of the lost continent of Atlantis. Or maybe it's not a myth...stay tuned.

## Anatolians Take Prizes in Story Contest

**L**ast spring the Navarino Foundation announced a Greek short story contest aimed at generating texts suitable for beginning learners of Modern Greek for use via the Internet. When Anatolia philologist Xenia Dolopoulou caught wind of the competition, she encouraged her 7th and 8th grade students to enter. They responded, and she chose to submit twenty of their stories to the judges at Dartmouth College, a co-sponsor of the contest. The result: two of the seven worldwide winners were Anatolians George Mamakoukas and Kyriaki Leoni, who each received a \$100 check in return for their signatures on a form permitting publication of their stories on the web.

This is not the first time Ms. Dolopoulou's students have distinguished themselves in national and international writing competitions. In 2003 three Anatolians traveled to Munich, Germany, to claim their prizes in a world poetry contest run by the Cultural Association of Bavaria. Last spring a team of Anatolia writers took the Gold Award in the "Safe Internet Story Contest" sponsored by the Greek Consumers' Education Association in cooperation with the European Union and the Greek Ministry of Education. And Ms. Dolopoulou's students are regular winners of competitions under the auspices of the European Authors' Union.

The Navarino Foundation is a new Greek philanthropy supported by Navarino Resorts, an environmentally sensitive development corporation based in the historic Messinia region of the Peloponnese.

## It's Summertime...Abroad



Chemistry teacher Dr. Ilias Kalambokis with Anatolians at Michigan Tech University

**F**ifty Anatolia students chose international study over easy living this past summer, attending high-level academic programs in Hong Kong, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, South Carolina, Massachusetts, and Washington, DC. For many years Anatolia has been sending students to the prestigious Northfield Mount Hermon Summer School in Massachusetts, thanks to the generosity of Antigone Raphael, but this summer saw students at many American universities as well – plus the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong's Summer School of Chinese Language and Culture. The vast majority of Anatolians, moreover, received scholarships to enable them to attend.

The initiative for these summer experiences came from President Jackson and Eva Kanellis, Director of U.S. College Counseling. "We are building our ties to U.S. colleges and universities in many ways," notes Ms. Kanellis, "and these summer opportunities are one of the fruits of that process. For me the reward is getting enthusiastic reports from our students come September." Anatolia Chemistry teacher Dr.

Ilias Kalambokis, who accompanied a group of thirteen students to Michigan Tech University, was no less enthusiastic. "The conditions for learning were ideal. The program emphasized observation, experimentation, and critical thinking in small classes and labs. No tiresome memorization – students were plunged right into the essence of the scientific process."

Current IB student Alexander Beltes learned about airplane design at the "Frontiers at WPI" program at Worcester Polytechnic, and classmate Liliana Aslanidou attended the National Student Leadership Program at Georgetown University. The three Anatolians in Hong Kong found Chinese tough going at first, but after 50 hours of classes found they could claim it as their fourth – or in Ioanna Zera's case, fifth – language. As for the 10-strong Northfield Mt. Hermon contingent, they immersed themselves in life and study abroad with the usual zeal, and left their customary Hellenic cultural mark on the NMH community.



For the fourth straight year, students of the Anatolia IB Program conducted a pre-summer, day-long cleanup operation at the mile-long beach at Epanomi, forty minutes south of Thessaloniki. Service work is a required component of the IB curriculum. This year's haul of fifty bags of garbage was down from those of previous years, and students weren't sure whether to be disappointed or encouraged.



# Anatolia/ACT on DVD

## ACT MBA



Hello, my name is Joanna, I'm Greek-American. I studied here as an undergraduate in Management, and decided to continue with my MBA degree...



At ACT you'll find a very good balance of academic knowledge and practice...



These days I'm working in the family car dealership in Thessaloniki, and I now realize how valuable the two years I had in the MBA Program were...



Nikolaos Kourkoumelis  
Chair, Business Division, ACT

In our MBA Program, we offer four concentrations... Marketing... Management... Entrepreneurship...



## Anatolia: All Divisions



It is a remarkable institution... preparing young men and women for the challenges of the 21st century...



In 2006 Anatolia celebrated 120 years.



In 1934 Anatolia moved to its current campus overlooking the city of Thessaloniki. Here, Anatolia rebuilt itself from the ground up.



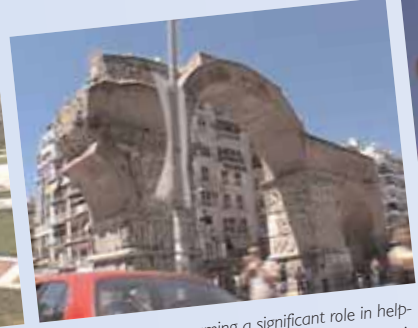
It has earned an extraordinary excellence.



For a quarter century Anatolia's university division, has been a bridge connecting America to Greece and the Balkans as one of the few institutions outside the United States with full, U.S. accreditation.



ACT is educating the region's future business and civic leaders.



Today ACT is also assuming a significant role in helping Greek-American students retain their Hellenic identity.



Thanks to the generous supporters, Anatolia can offer a program unparalleled in Greece.

## ACT



My name is Elina, I'm Greek... In the beginning I was a little skeptical about the level of studies in private schools... but these prejudices quickly dissolved.



My name is Lydia, I'm from Zimbabwe...walking down the hallway you'll hear several different languages being spoken...



My name is Ilsa, I'm from Albania. The teaching style here is different. It develops your critical thinking...



My name is Nicholas. I come from New Jersey. Thessaloniki is one of the most wonderful cities I've had the pleasure of encountering...



We had a simulation of... were able to find a solution...

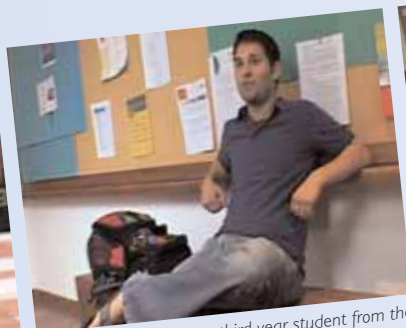
## ACT Study Abroad



My name is Chris. I grew up in Maine and I currently attend Northeastern University in Boston...



Teachers are happy to see a study-abroad student, they know that you're going to add something special to that class...



My name is Todd, I'm a third-year student from the University of Illinois... It's not what to do, but what to do first...





...t, Banking and Finance, and



The case-study approach...has been working terrifically for us



A direct link with the business community...



The MBA Program at ACT was an investment worth making... I probably wouldn't have gotten this position without it...



We want our graduates to have a competitive edge...



...ordinary reputation for educa-



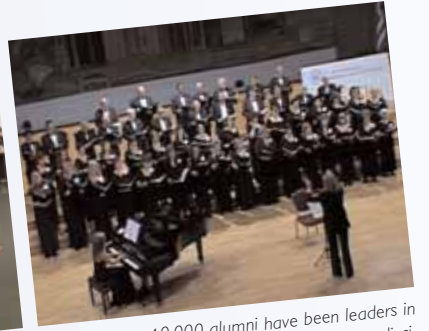
Education here starts early - at the Kindergarten and the new Anatolia Elementary School.



For more than eight decades, the secondary school, known as Anatolia College, has been among the best in the country.



The school also offers the most extensive program of extracurricular activities in Northern Greece,



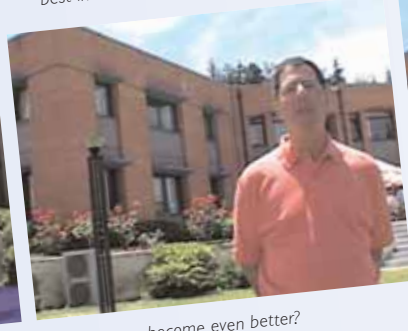
Its more than 10,000 alumni have been leaders in the arts, the professions, business, and other disciplines across the globe.



...s contributions of its many in sustain a scholarship pro- Greece.



...uniting Greeks and Americans in the shared vision of a great, truly bi-national institution.



...how can we become even better?



...a brotherhood and bridging of cultures which is very rare...



Anatolia's history spans three centuries, three continents and thousands of families. Its mission remains vital, its future is unlimited - if we build it together.



...out Iran and the UN, and we lution...



We have a great teleconference room... we get to communicate with people across the Atlantic...



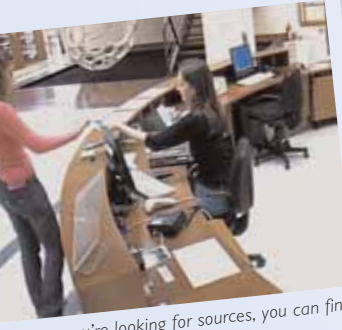
...my house, 5 minutes from the water...



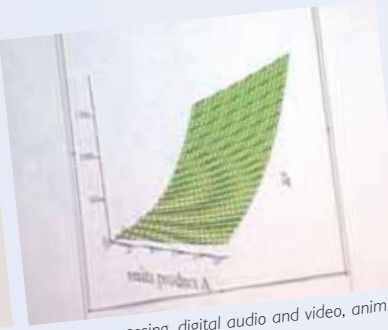
I feel very much at home here... it's like a family, it's personal...



That's what makes the difference at the American College of Thessaloniki.



...Whenever you're looking for sources, you can find them...



...image processing, digital audio and video, animation...



Great time travelling around getting to see Greece...



...I love the people, the islands, mountains, beaches...

Directed by Spiros Iakovides  
Written and produced  
by Alexandros Kambouroglou '89  
for Myga Works 2006



# ACT news



ACT summer-term study-abroad students from the U.S. enjoyed a trip to the island of Skiathos. 58 study-abroad students attended the ACT summer session, 59 are here for the fall term, and still greater numbers are expected for the spring.

## Homecoming 2006: Call it ACT's 25th Birthday Party



On the lovely Sunday morning of September 30th, the American College of Thessaloniki welcomed back 200 alumni and their families to campus. This was the first time ACT had mounted such an ambitious gathering, and the turnout means that it will not be the last.

ACT faculty and staff were all on hand for an exciting range of social and athletic activities: networking, soccer, basketball, beach volleyball, chess, backgammon, yoga, Pilates – and of course catching up with old classmates. There were also academic and orientation panels, presentation of the ACT Alumni Association's new website, and a tour of campus and the Bissell Library.

But it must be said that a dozen recently-arrived American study-abroad students stole the show. Mastering an impressive repertoire of Greek traditional dances in their first 10 days in Thessaloniki, the students put on a surprise demonstration on the ACT terrace before President Jackson and appreciative alumni. See photo!



ACT's MBA Program recently organized two day-long conferences on subjects of interest to the Greek business community. The 4th Annual ACT Automobile Conference on November 25 was perhaps the most successful yet, with nearly 300 people in attendance at Thessaloniki's Noesis Center (above). This year's theme was "Future Trends in Automobile Design." Speakers with first-hand leadership experience in car design came from both Greece and Europe to exchange views with members of the Greek automobile sector. The 2nd ACT Retail Market and Commercial Real Estate Conference, held on November 4, built on the interest generated by last year's gathering on a hot topic in Greek business circles.

### 2nd Annual MBA Conference

#### Retail Market and Commercial Real Estate

Saturday, November 4, 2006

**Conference Hall, Thessaloniki Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

The conference focuses on the current status of the Retail Market, analyzing new trends, developments and investments in the Commercial Real Estate Market.

**Scheduled Speakers:**

- Mr. Chitza Follas, Deputy Minister of Economy and Finance
- Mr. Christos Tsolias, CEO Oxford Company
- Mr. Dimitris Antoniou, Director Real Estate and Development, Media Markt
- Mr. Serge Hadji-akaloglou, Attorney at Law specialized in Real Estate
- Mr. Vasilios Vlasseros, Development Director of Lamda Development S.A.
- Mr. Yiannis Perrotis, CEO, Lambert Smith Hampton Hellas S.A.
- Mr. Petar Chrenashkaki, Instructor of Accounting, ACT Business Department
- Ioanna Leonteraki, MBA Student

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Registrations: T: 2310 304 555 B: 398 230, F: 2310 301 076, E: info@act.edu

**ACT**  
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THESSALONIKI  
THE UNIVERSITY DIVISION OF ANATOLIA



# Commencements 2006

## At ACT

The 90 members of the American College of Thessaloniki class of 2006 received their degrees on June 27 at the open-air amphitheater in front of the Bissell Library. Dr. Panos Kanelis, Anatolia Executive Vice President and COO, welcomed the graduates and guests, and President Richard Jackson offered remarks upon the occasion of ACT's 25th Anniversary. The keynote address was given by Anatolia Trustee Leonidas Evangelidis '53, a career Greek Ambassador who was in charge of security for the Athens 2004 Olympics. He closed his remarks with advice from Confucius: "He who loves what he

does will never work a day in his life."

ACT's honorary guest, HRH Princess Katherine of Serbia, received the Philip and Marjorie Ireland Humanitarian and Public Service Award for her ongoing charitable activity, in particular on behalf of children in a country that has suffered in recent years. Class valedictorian Ms. Tanja Petrovska addressed her fellow graduates, highlighting the positive impact her studies at ACT had on her self-confidence and the development of skills to succeed in contemporary business. Tanja extended special thanks to her professors at ACT for their support and guidance.



Ambassador Leonidas Evangelides '53 also had a few words for, l.to r., Iphigenia Paparoussi, President of the ACT Alumni Association, Tanja Petrovska, Valedictorian, HRH Princess Katherine of Serbia, President Jackson, and Dr. Panos Kanelis.

## At the High School

On June 28, Anatolia celebrated the graduation of 213 students from its two lyceums and International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The main speaker at this year's ceremony was Dr. Ioannis Manoledakis '55, Emeritus Professor of Criminal Law at the University of Thessaloniki. His message: become involved in society as informed citizens, use your education for the public good. Other speakers included President Jackson and Vice President Toula Georgiadou.

As ever, the three top students in the lyceums and IB received awards, as did those who distinguished themselves for participation in athletic and extracurricular activities, and in English. The Greek national anthem was sung, the traditional pledge recited, and the two torchbearers led graduates through the crowd of parents, faculty, and visitors to a new beginning.



The Anatolia College Class of 2006 expressing their joy before the traditional Commencement ceremony

## At Anatolia Elementary

If you think pomp and ceremony is only for older students, you might change your mind if you saw the dignified but joyful graduation exercises for the 6th graders of Anatolia's Elementary School. They came to Anatolia's Pappas Hall for graduation, and made use of the stage for singing and recitations. The words of Greek poet George Seferis echoed through this year's ceremonies, as those of Elytis did last year. The principal speaker was Nikolaus Amaoutis, now in his fourth year as Director of the School. 37 members of this year's graduating class are now 7th-graders at Anatolia, and public interest in the school increases with every year.

## At the ACT MBA Program

The 25 members of the MBA class of 2006 received their degrees at a September 30 ceremony in Anatolia's Ingle Hall. Elena Ambrosiadou, Chairwoman and CEO of Ikos Asset Management, addressed the graduates. Ambrosiadou, who was the youngest ever senior executive of British Petroleum at age 27, established Ikos in 1992 and now has close to \$3 billion under management, with an annualized return of 10.2 percent. She proudly proclaimed, "I grew up as a person in Thessaloniki and as a professional in London, both of which gave me massive advantages," which she described in inspiring detail.

Other highlights of the ceremony included the awarding of the John and



President Jackson and Dr. Panos Kanelis with ACT MBA Valedictorian Roxanne Alexiou and her parents

Mary Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Project Award to Roxanne Alexiou, the MBA Award for Academic Excellence

to Ioanna Leontarakis and the MBA Award for Exceptional Service to Gert Peshkatari.



# Around the World in 414 Days

Jules Verne's Phileas Fogg accomplished it in eighty days using a variety of conveyances, including steamship, stagecoach, and elephant. Psychologist Vassilis Mesitidis '93's round-the-world journey took fourteen months, but he traveled principally by bicycle; at the finish line his odometer read 54,028 kilometers (33,768 miles). He had made no wagers, and he didn't race. He did hop the oceans – and most of Canada – by air; there was a train ride of 14 hours in Pakistan that severely dehydrated him; on his way from Montreal to Buenos Aires he once took a bus to get through the tail end of a hurricane; he skirted the coast of war-torn Columbia on a Greek-captained freighter; and there was a ride on the back of a pickup over rough road in Cambodia. But otherwise, across five continents and 40 countries, he pedaled.

He set off from his native Thessaloniki on May 5, 2005, heading East. His route took him across Asia, Australia, New Zealand, North and South America, and Europe; he had to leave Africa and Antarctica for another day. He traveled light: a few clothes and other necessities, including a t-shirt with the words "World Peace" designed by his brother; a little money – his budget was less than \$1000 a month, including airfare – and a cell phone for use only in emergencies (there were a couple). His bicycle was a KTM Viaggio, bought locally. He had done some cycling in Greece before, but got the idea for his trip from reading about a French couple who had circum-pedaled the world in 14 years.

"The world embraced me," says Vassilis. "Strangers the world over helped me, sheltered me, fed me. The Islamic countries were especially welcoming, and



Vassilis Mesitidis '93 in front of Aghia Sophia in Istanbul

the warmest reception of all came from people in Iran. In one Iranian village I was the first foreigner of any kind they had ever seen." But enduring extremes of temperature and weather (he narrowly escaped tornadoes in Alabama, and was frequently buffeted by headwinds); sleeping in parks, churches, police stations, and sometimes, literally, in the street; eating well in Asia where food was cheap, but surviving on bread and jam for long stretches in South America and Australia; pedaling an average of ten hours a day, keeping his bicycle in working order over thousands of miles of road – it wasn't easy. "But I was never bored," comments Vassilis. "A bicycle allows you to travel at the ideal speed to come into contact with nature and with people. Your body is working and your senses are alive. They have to be – the sudden appearance of a lizard by the side of the road in Malaysia, as long and thick as a man, comes to mind."

One thing Vassilis discovered is the world fellowship of Greeks. He often stopped in at Greek embassies in the countries he visited, but it was chance



With Manhattan landmarks behind him



With members of the volunteer fire department and a local couple of Greek descent in Zarate, Argentina

meetings with people of Greek descent that moved him the most. "I bumped into the one Greek man in the town of Oaxaca in Mexico; in New York City, a Greek-American bicycle-shop owner completely overhauled my bike and wouldn't accept a penny in return; I had Thanksgiving with the wonderful, generous Greek community in Houston, Texas. I met Greeks not only in Australia, but in Santiago and Zurich. There are Hellenes the world over."

Vassilis also connected with Anatolia classmates Menios Karanos and Youli Diamanti in Boston, Sophia Mylona in Dover, England, and Nikolaus Papakonstantinou '69 in London. He also had a global network of friends from Georgetown University, where he did his B.A. in Psychology (he also holds an MSW from NYU).

When Vassilis reached Greece on June 25 of this year, he decided to bike around the country before returning home. On July 7 he arrived in Thessaloniki. He made a circuit of the city, as if reluctant to end his journey, posed for a picture in front of the White Tower, then headed home to family, friends, and excited family dogs. Later in the month, he pedaled up to Anatolia at the invitation of President Jackson.

Although he chose not to have sponsors in order to keep his freedom, Vassilis did do some fundraising for one organization, a Greek NGO called PRAKSIS he had previously worked with as a volunteer. PRAKSIS helps homeless people, recent economic immigrants to Greece, and excluded social groups with medical, legal and psychosocial services in Thessaloniki and Athens.

The overall effect of the journey? "Awareness, in a word. Awareness of the essence of life, of things that can't be bought and sold. When you don't have much, you learn to value human kindness, natural beauty, things as simple as water. I see now that too often we don't value the gift of life. We hear and say that phrase, but do we feel it? I now feel the need to give to my fellow man something of what I experienced as I traveled around the world."

For a detailed account of Vassilis' trip (in English, with pictures), go to [www.earthcycle.blogs.friendster.com](http://www.earthcycle.blogs.friendster.com), or wait for the book that he plans to write about his journey.



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