

**Media Contact:**

Rena Lee  
Director of Museum Experience  
National Hellenic Museum  
333 South Halsted Street  
Chicago, IL 60661  
Office: 312.655.1234 ext. 27  
Cell: 224.565.2982  
Email: [rlee@hellenicmuseum.org](mailto:rlee@hellenicmuseum.org)

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## **National Hellenic Museum Announces Departure of Connie Mourtoupalas**

**CHICAGO, IL** - After more than four years at the National Hellenic Museum, Connie Mourtoupalas has stepped down to return to her home base of Washington, DC.

**NHM Board of Trustees Statement:** We are grateful to Connie for her commitment and dedication to the National Hellenic Museum over the last four years, and we wish her the best in her future endeavors. As President and Acting Curator, she raised the Museum's national profile, introduced a new level of creativity that enriched the Museum's offerings and broadened its outreach, making it relevant to audiences beyond the Greek community.

Connie's passion for the Greek immigrant story moved and inspired our donors, visitors and members. She made it her mission to ensure that the Greek contribution to America takes its proper place in the cultural landscape of America. Her creativity and her deep knowledge of Greek history and culture enhanced the Museum's offerings, and enriched the community, while highlighting the continued relevance of Greek culture and the Museum itself.

Over the past four years, Connie developed and curated a series of inspiring and moving exhibitions that received extensive media coverage. Named one of the year's "top ten" by The Chicago Tribune, her "Street Art" exhibition "stretches boundaries for the young Greektown museum," demonstrating "quick thinking and acting that are rare in the museum world. . ." (*Steve Johnson, Chicago Tribune*)

Connie brought national attention to the Museum, developing the "Trial Series" now practically a Chicago institution, which has brought together some of the country's best legal minds debating some of humanity's perennial questions, attracting media coverage around the world and audiences of thousands.

Furthermore, Connie set the Museum on the path of becoming a "hub for the humanities," a center of dialogue and debate, where prominent thinkers and the general public, touched upon important topics, highlighting the value of Greek thought as a tool in navigating contemporary life. Among other

achievements, she was part of the team that developed the Museum's Greek language and culture program that currently serves more than 100 students.

We are also grateful to Connie for the partnerships she established with major cultural and academic institutions across the country and abroad. Her collaborations with scholars, artists, and exhibition designers from Greece showcased not only the richness and variety of modern Greek culture, but also highlighted the creativity and imagination of contemporary Greeks, and strengthened the bonds of the Greek American community with the homeland.

**Connie Mourtoupalas Statement:** "It has been a privilege to help document and preserve the Greek story in America, a story that sheds light on more than 150 years of American history, and showcases the role of Greek immigrants and their descendants in helping to build, settle, and empower America. It is important for all Americans to remember that ***'we are all immigrants; some just came earlier than others.'***"

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*Located in Chicago's Greektown, the sleek 40,000-square-foot National Hellenic Museum at 333. S. Halsted St. is both contemporary and timeless, connecting all generations—past, present and future—to the rich heritage of Greek history, culture, art and the Greek American experience. The National Hellenic Museum, previously known as the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center, has been fulfilling this mission since 1983.*

For more information, visit <http://www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org> or call 312-655-1234.

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