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THE NATIONAL HELLENIC MUSEUM RAISES FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE PRESERVATION OF HELLENIC LEGACY AT 2018 ANNUAL GALA

*Community Members Gathered Saturday Evening, May 12, For Night of
Philanthropy and Greek American Entertainment*

CHICAGO (May 2018) – At its Annual Gala, “Connecting Generations,” Saturday, May 12, at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile, **The National Hellenic Museum** and more than 500 Greek Americans, friends and community members from across the country raised more than \$800,000 during the night of auctions, live music, dancing and celebrating the legacy of Hellenism. The philanthropic support from the evening is set to benefit tens of thousands of museum visitors, with 83 cents of every dollar spent on programming.

The event was emceed by WGN’s Very Own Dean Richards with live musical stylings by the Chris Sarlas Orchestra, with George Dimas and Voula Karahaliou, and The Levendes, featuring singer Nikos Koutras.

“What a wonderful night it was with so many elegant attendees, the spectacular live music, and of course, the great generosity of our donors,” said Dr. Laura Calamos, President of the National Hellenic Museum. Celebrity emcee Dean Richards of WGN TV and Radio, thanked the mothers in the room, recalling the importance of his own mother and yiayia to his upbringing. Cubs Legend and National League All-Star, Ryan Dempster wowed the crowd by offering signed jerseys to bidders in the live auction. One attendee exclaimed: “The dance floor was packed with 10 lines of Greek dancing circling all around! This was definitely one of the best galas to date!”

One highlight of the evening included the presentation of the inaugural Alec K. and Viena P. Gianaras Philanthropy Award, given this year to The Gianaras Family and Frank S. Kamberos, in recognition of donors who have demonstrated a steadfast commitment to the National Hellenic Museum and to the ideal of philanthropy. The National Hellenic Museum Philanthropy Award is named after Alec K. and Viena P. Gianaras because they exemplified all the aspects of true philanthropists. Their vision in supporting the National Hellenic Museum modeled to others the spirit of giving to great causes in the Greek American community.

Boasting a rich repository of 20,000+ artifacts, photos, historic newspapers, books and an archive of 450+ recorded histories, the NHM serves as the physical hub of Greek American history, now many generations strong and celebrates the mosaic of the Greek diaspora, immigrant journeys and the breadth of the American experience.

The Museum preserves the largest collection of artifacts and oral histories dedicated to the Greek American story anywhere in the world, serving as a central repository for researchers, teachers and students of all ages. Special events help to fund classes, field trips, tours, programs, and, as highlighted in this year's theme, the protection of the museum archives and the important memories preserved for all. The artifacts in the NHM Collections serve as a crucial component of NHM's educational outreach.

For more information, visit www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org.

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About the National Hellenic Museum

The National Hellenic Museum (NHM) portrays and celebrates Greek heritage and the Hellenic legacy through educational classes, exhibitions and programs. With a growing repository of over 20,000 artifacts, the Museum catalogs and highlights the contributions of Greeks and Greek Americans to the American mosaic and inspires curiosity about visitors' own family journeys through cultural expression, oral history and experiential education. Located in Chicago's Greektown, the NHM provides lifelong learning for the whole community using artifacts and stories to spark inquiry and discussion about the broader issues in our lives.

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

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