

Athens⁺Plus

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Zest for life Lemonheads

A museum and cafe dedicated to citrus fruits sounds like an unusual idea but on Chios it has proven a smart one. **Page 33**



Lasithi Natural feeling

At Crete's eastern edge, you can find Europe's only palm-tree forest and one of the most stunning gorges in the country. **Page 24**



A date at the newsstands

Athens Plus marks a year of providing readers with news and information about Greece.

1
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New Acropolis Museum opens its doors

Modern building housing thousands of antiquities is finally ready to welcome visitors

After a long wait, the New Acropolis Museum, the most significant landmark to grace the cultural landscape of Athens in years, will open its doors following its inauguration on Saturday. Priceless artifacts, some of which have been hidden away for years, will be displayed in surroundings

especially designed to showcase their splendor. Athens Plus examines the impact of the new museum on the city, the debate about its design, what visitors can expect to see and whether it strengthens Greece's case for the return of the Parthenon Marbles. **Pages 2, 4-9**

Terrorists shoot police officer dead

An anti-terrorism officer, who had been guarding a woman in a witness-protection program, was shot dead on Wednesday in central Athens, creating another bloody episode in the country's struggle against urban guerrillas.



Nektarios Savvas, 41, was shot more than 20 times as he sat in a car in the Ano Patissia neighbor-

hood in the first deadly attack since last December, when domestic terrorist groups began increasing the intensity and brutality of their actions. No group had claimed responsibility for the murder by Thursday night but ballistic tests linked the shooting to the Sect of Revolutionaries. **Page 11**



Cycle lane set to wind through city

In a first for Athens, the government said it intends to construct a bicycle route stretching from the northern suburb of Kifissia to Faliron Bay on the southern coast.

The route is due to be ready in eight months but cyclists are already saying that more such lanes are needed in the city. **Page 17**



Sitting on a balcony at the new museum, visitors watch a slide show and gaze at the Acropolis. [Eurokinissi]



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In step An array of talent will be showing off its moves at the 7th Athens International Dance Festival **Page 28**



International Education in Greece

Views from the institutions

Preparing High School Students for College Life

An educational analysis of a different kind of 'Morfofis'

The ACS Athens model

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Preparing students for college life and, more generally, for life beyond high school is a key challenge for many educators and secondary educational institutions. Above all, today more than ever, educators must prepare students for the unknown and the unpredictable: careers not yet known to us, opportunities that we can not imagine, and a world so rapidly changing that we likely won't be able to recognize it in 30 or 40 years.

Some of the questions that then arise are: What and how shall we teach our students? What skills do we expect them to develop? And what type of processes shall we help them cultivate? At ACS Athens we believe that the answers derive from the teachings of the ancient Greeks and are contained in the concept of "Morfofis" – that is, education beyond the classroom that concerns the whole person and cultivates strengths while minimizing weaker areas.

The Morfofis educational paradigm is sustainable when education is **Holistic, Meaningful and Harmonious (HMH)**. **Holistic**, as defined above, suggests an emphasis on the whole person and an appreciation for the differences between individual students, **Meaningful** refers to the idea that the subject matter being taught must hold meaning for the individual in order for it to make sense and be applicable within their "world." And **Harmonious** maintains that academics, athletics, activities and civic responsibility must be harmoniously balanced. Thus, sustainable HMH education must rely on specifically defined principles and values that enhance the concept of living a full life with ethos, as dictated by the ancient Greeks.

In this sense, because it is all-encompassing, **Morfofis** is well-suited to lay the foundation for success in higher education and, more importantly, in life itself. As we are well aware, teaching and learning does not only take place in the classroom, but on the playground, during activities, in assemblies, during group projects and in both team and individual sports. The seeds planted during the early years produce fruits that will eventually blossom and continue to grow in higher education. In order to adopt and implement such an educational paradigm, academic institutions need leaders and faculty who embrace and



apply the analogous philosophy. The atmosphere of the school must exude the philosophy itself, and an individual must be able to "pick up" the energy the moment they enter school grounds.

Therefore, as we look at primary and secondary education, one of the most fundamental questions being asked is how many of the skills acquired during these years really are necessary and sufficient to ensure student success in college? What knowledge is transferable? Are students able to apply the knowledge in different situations and utilize it in order to make educated decisions or to provide solutions to challenges they face as they move from one culture to another? How well do we indeed understand student learning styles? And how difficult is it for colleges and universities to train their faculty and staff to provide bridging skills for young people during their time of transition?

Indeed, for primary educators the challenge is not only to provide an exciting, relevant and meaningful curriculum to their students, but also to understand the secondary curriculum and to align all efforts in an appropriate direction. Likewise, secondary educators must understand primary curriculum and must agree about the

type of skills that must be developed in primary school that will eventually translate to middle school and ensure the success of students at all levels.

To the same end, secondary educators and administrators must not only focus on understanding the strengths and talents of their students so as to provide the best possible curriculum and learning opportunities, but they must also understand the environment of higher education. Their task is also to prepare students to succeed in their transition to College education and to endow them with strong tools which will not only give them a ticket to higher educational institutions, but will secure their success. Similarly, faculty and administrators of higher education institutions focus on analogous goals for their institutions, and rightly so.

The bridging method proposed requires a reciprocal understanding of both worlds by both entities. Students are guided, at best, in high school, to do what is necessary to meet the required criteria of the desired higher educational institution. As the students gets closer to the last two years of their high school career, the focus seems to suddenly switch to achieving the necessary grades, test scores, oh

and... yes... enough extra curricular activities to provide a great package for college acceptance.

But it is clear that the most successful student entering college is the student that is happy with the institution, the location, and the subject they have chosen. What then ensures a happy student? It is making sure that there is a match made in heaven; a perfect fit. To achieve this goal three prerequisites are necessary:

1. To know the student academically, intellectually, emotionally, and ethically to the greatest extent possible.
2. To understand the student's personal and professional goals in life, and
3. To know the higher educational institution.

Knowing the student as a whole means collecting information and putting pieces of the puzzle together that will create a picture of who the student really is, what are the student's strengths and weaknesses, what life experiences have influenced the student's thinking, how does the student cope with challenging, unforeseen and even successful circumstances, what interests does the student have outside of academics, what values does the student uphold, what are the student's limitations.

This approach allows the development of a strong academic foundation, emotional stability and strategies to cope with internal and external pressure, together with a physical well being enhanced and enriched with strong principles and values.

The educational experience, then, must be meaningful for each learner, according to each one's strengths, talents and dreams... The learner should internalize that the knowledge, skills, principles and values obtained are the defining ingredients of his/her life trajectory; all integrate and define who the learner is and what signature he/she will leave in his/her life's journey.

While it is important to collect information via the websites, publications and alumni of a school, nothing can replace the personal understanding of the environment within the institution. This can only be achieved with a meaningful visit to the institution itself. No amount of information received will replace "the feel" one gets by being on the grounds of an institution, attending a class or two, talking with students and faculty, seeing the facilities and experiencing the reception that is extended.

Education is not only a continuous act of acquiring skills, knowledge and problem solving abilities, but also a way of learning and making educated decisions in academic establishments and, most importantly, in life. In this journey, the transition from one environment to another must be smooth, as painless as possible and meaningful in a holistic way.

As travellers between the two worlds, secondary and university education, we find it refreshing and inspiring to work with colleagues –leading educators at both ends of the spectrum that have the same goals – to teach, inspire and guide students to be the best that they can be. It is only natural, then, that we would want to see these two worlds unite in an effort to take education to another level. The **Holistic, Meaningful, and Harmonious** connection between the two worlds, we are convinced, will not only produce better learners but better teachers as well. There is no better example of **Morfofis** in action and no better preparation for a world yet unknown...but just around the corner.

Highlights

■ **Morfofis** lays the foundation for success in higher education and, more importantly, for life itself because it is all-encompassing.

■ Secondary educators and administrators must not only focus on understanding the strengths and talents of their students so as to provide the best possible curriculum and learning opportunities, but they must also **understand the higher education environment**.



Congratulations Class of 2009



ACS Athens congratulates its 2009 Graduates
for being accepted at the following Colleges & Universities:

USA:

American University (DC)
Bard College
Birmingham Southern College
Boston University
Corcoran College of Art Design
Cornell University
Dakota State University
Dickinson College
Duke University
Emerson College
Florida Institute of Technology
George Washington University
Goucher College
Grinnell College
Hamilton College
Ithaca College
James Madison University
Johns Hopkins University
LeTourneau University
Longwood University
Louisiana State University
Massachusetts College of Art & Design
Michigan State University
Michigan Technological Institute
New York University
Northeastern University
Northern State University/South Dakota
Parsons School of Design in NY
Penn State University
Radford University
Skidmore College
Skidmore College
St. Lawrence University

St. Mary's College
Suffolk University
Tufts University
Tulane University
Union University
University of California at Riverside
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
University of Massachusetts at Lowell
University of Miami
University of New Hampshire
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