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PRESS RELEASE

UNIVERSITY OF INDIANAPOLIS, ATHENS CAMPUS COMMENCEMENT 2009 A MULTICULTURAL PUZZLE OF GRADUATES FROM 15 COUNTRIES

Athens 3 July 2009. Graduates from 15 nations received their academic degrees during the 2009 Commencement Ceremony of the Athens Campus of University of Indianapolis (UIndy Athens), attended by distinguished guests from Greece and abroad, parents and friends, faculty and staff. As in previous years, UIndy Athens graduates comprised of a **multinational gathering** from countries such as: **Cyprus, Spain, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Germany, Russia, USA, China, Kenya, Albania, Ghana, United Kingdom, Israel, Canada and Greece,**

The ceremony honored with their presence the Ambassadors of the USA Daniel Speckhard, who addressed the graduates, Albania Vili Minaroli, Israel Ali Yahya, Japan Takanori Kitamura, South Africa Mandisa Dona Marasha, Denmark Tom Norring, Cuba Hermes Herrera Hernandez and Uruguay Hose Luis Pombo.

“The graduating ceremony is the celebration that signals the future that all graduates are dreaming of, a future that the University of Indianapolis has supported and will continue to support” University of Indianapolis Vice President and Athens Campus Chancellor **Vasilis Botopoulos** said. “A future that is founded on values and principles that our University reflects: **Respect in tradition, belief in unique human capabilities and enthusiasm for a creative and prosperous future that will be sustained through the analytical and critical thought and the challenge of doubt and evolution**”.

“**As you launch that next phase in your lives, you should have the audacity and the confidence to believe in your dreams, to not lower your sights in the face of naysayers and pessimists, and to not give up when the first winds of adversity blow in your face**” said USA Ambassador Daniel Speckhard, addressing the graduates.

“The President of the USA is a living proof of the ability to succeed in the face of adversity. His and his wife’s secret is the positive attitude in the face of adversity, their continual sense of hope and their hard work – as is described in The President’s book «the Audacity of Hope»” noted the Ambassador. He further presented examples of other great achievers in history that defied skeptics and hardship, and were driven by hope and hard work to achieve their success. Such as Walt Disney who suffered repeated financial and business disasters, Oprah Winfrey, the first African-American woman billionaire who said that “**it doesn’t matter who you are or where you come from. The ability to triumph begins always with you**”.

“**Aristotelis Onassis** fled Smyrna, came to Greece and then migrated in Argentina. He lived in one of the poorest areas of Buenos Aires and ultimately became one of the world’s leading shipping magnates whose legacy still lives on” stressed Mr. Speckhard, urging science majors to consider “the life of **Stephen Hawking**, who was confined to a wheelchair and lost most his motor skills to Lou Gehrig’s disease, but did not let this deter him from explaining the physics of the universe to an entire generation”.

Mr. Panos Liatsos, President of AHEPA’s Athens Chapter talked about the cooperation between the organization and UIndy Athens through scholarship offers to outstanding students, and the successful

organization of the “Journey to Greece” program that offers the opportunity to American students to visit and exploit our country.

Dr. Deborah Balogh, Dean of University of Indianapolis, USA, expressed the gratification of the university’s management for the opportunities that arise through the identification of goals and visions between UIndy Athens and AHEPA. Addressing the graduates she pointed out that **“Your degree constitutes the means to exploit opportunities.** In your future achievements you should remember that you set an example for those who follow your steps. Aim for perfection in whatever you do”.

“Knowledge is our gift to the next generation, and a source of pleasure” said **Ms. Marianna Toli**, director, actress, producer of musicals for children and Valedictorian graduate of UIndy 2009 graduating class who also pointed out that “Intellectually we should never retire. We should never condemn our minds to inactivity. Going to school late in life is as precious as being reborn. It’s an exciting possible impossibility”.

“Live the life that you dream and not the others’. The choice is yours” said to the graduating class the President of UIndy Athens Alumni, Assistant General Manager of EFG Eurobank Ergasias SA., **Mr. Iakovos Giannaklis**, encouraging them not to waste the time without learning and creating something new. “If you find colleagues at work that they have settled, don’t copy their behaviour. Be different, innovative, creative, and open to new ideas. Don’t compromise with anything, but being the best. That and hard work, are the only passports to success”.

Mr. Giannis Alafouzos, President of SKAI Media Group, received the Corporate Social Responsibility Award for the for the organization’s campaign for the protection of the environment. Furthermore, former Minister of the Republic of Cyprus Mr. Patroklos Stavrou, representatives from local government and N.G.O’s, members of AHEPA, entrepreneurs, artists, students and families, as well as professors of UIndy USA and Athens were among the distinguished guests of the Graduation Ceremony 2009.

The UIndy Athens BIOS Chamber Orchestra, conducted by music director Alexandros Halapsis, Chair of the music department of the Athens Campus of University of Indianapolis, accompanied the ceremony with classical and modern repertoire.

The Athens Campus of University of Indianapolis is the only not for profit campus of an accredited American university in Greece, fully owned and controlled by its U.S. parent.

The University of Indianapolis (a top tier American university) is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of North Central Association of Schools and Colleges (NCASC) of the USA. The Athens Campus of University of Indianapolis offers 42 bachelor and 11 Masters Degrees in various topics such as: Executive MBA (with concentrations in Marketing, Organizational Leadership, Finance, Global Supply Chain Management, Technology Management), Clinical Psychology, Mental Health Counseling, Media & Communication, International Relations, Applied Sociology, Human Resource Management, English Language and Literature, Computer Science, Music και Nursing & Health Systems Administration.

For more information about The Athens Campus of University of Indianapolis call: 210. 3239740 – 210.3239785, or visit: www.uindy.gr or www.uindy.edu

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