



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**TRI-STATE AHEPA BANQUET TO HONOR THREE U.S. SENATORS,  
SIX OTHER DISTINGUISHED GREEK AMERICANS**

**May 1 Regional AHEPA Banquet will Recognize Outstanding Public Service and  
Excellence in Community Leadership**

CHICAGO, IL – AHEPA Supreme President Nicholas A. Karacostas today announced that America’s oldest and largest Hellenic heritage organization will honor three distinguished U.S. senators and a group of six Greek Americans for their commitment to community leadership and long-standing records of public service.

Karacostas said the tri-state American Hellenic community from Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana will gather at an AHEPA-sponsored banquet to honor U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin of Illinois; U.S. Senator Richard G. Lugar from Indiana; and U.S. Senator Russell D. Feingold of Wisconsin.

“These three public servants have had distinguished careers,” said Karacostas. “Each in their own way has been a friend and supporter of the Greek American community, and we are pleased to honor them for their many achievements in public life.”

Karacostas said AHEPA also will honor:

- Andrew A. Athens, a business and church leader who has accomplished a long list of humanitarian and philanthropic achievements;
- Harry Mark Petrakis, a noted award-winning author who has published many books;
- Dr. Mary Dochios-Kamberos, a philanthropist who has contributed significant gifts to the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center and the Greek American Rehabilitation Center;
- John Kass, an award-winning journalist and columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*;
- Chris Chelios, a professional hockey player who is a National Hockey League All-Star and member of a Stanley Cup championship team; and
- James Megellas, a WWII veteran who has been described as the most decorated officer in the history of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division.

“All of these Greek Americans have led extraordinary careers and have contributed much to their respective communities and our nation. Some have undertaken humanitarian missions; some have fought in wars to preserve freedom; and others have worked in their own special ways to give back to their communities and earn the respect and admiration of their colleagues,” Karacostas said.

Senator Durbin will receive the AHEPA Pericles Award; and Senators Feingold and Lugar will each receive the AHEPA Paul E. Tsongas Public Service Award. Athens will receive an AHEPA Lifetime Achievement Award, and Petrakis, Kass, Chelios and Dr. Dochios-Kamberos will each receive AHEPA Academy of Achievement Awards in their respective fields. Megellas will receive the AHEPA Medal of Freedom.

Karacostas noted that this is the first time AHEPA will have regional award banquets rather than one national gathering in Washington, D.C. The regional program was initiated in an effort to increase participation on a local level and bring more attention to the civic achievements of Greek Americans. Portland, Oregon, and New York City have already hosted other regional banquets. A fourth regional banquet is planned for Tampa this fall.

John Galanis, dinner chairman, noted that the Chicago banquet will take place on Saturday, May 1, 2010, at the Westin O’Hare Hotel with a reception at 6:30 p.m., followed by a 7:00 p.m. dinner. Tickets are \$100 per person.

Founded in 1922, AHEPA is the largest and oldest American-based Greek heritage membership organization. It was first established to fight prejudice from the KKK, and over the years has joined with the NAACP and B’nai B’rith to fight discrimination. Its mission is to promote the ancient Greek ideals of philanthropy, education, civic responsibility and family and individual excellence through community service and volunteerism.

For more information or to reserve tickets please contact John Galanis, 414-271-5400 or [jwg@gpjlw.com](mailto:jwg@gpjlw.com); or Cathy Ferguson, 708-749-4527 or [ccsf777@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ccsf777@sbcglobal.net). More information about AHEPA is available at [www.ahepa.org](http://www.ahepa.org).