

## Remarks of Andrew A. Athens

Presentation of Honorary Doctor of Law  
American College of Greece  
Commencement – June 27, 2009  
Athens, Greece

Honorable President and Faculty Members  
Distinguished Guests  
Graduates of the Class of 2009

Today you begin a new path in your journey of life. Your best years are ahead of you. New opportunities will abound. Along the way to fulfilling your dreams, I ask you to remember four things:

**Family**  
**Country**  
**Integrity**  
**Service**

**Family** - because your parents and their parents made sacrifices to build a better life that has given you the opportunity to be here today. Every generation wants a better life for their children.

One day you may have a family and will want the same opportunities for your children. Your family and everything that encompasses the meaning of family has shaped who you are and who you will become. Remember your roots.

**Country** – wherever you live in the world, honor and respect both the country from whence you came and the country you live and work in. Learn to live with all. Your generation must seek peace. Take civic responsibility seriously. Celebrate diversity and stand up for human rights and justice.

**Integrity** – because your words and actions define who you are. Live honorably and you will never have a moment's regret.

**Service** – One single act of kindness can change two lives: the life of the person you help and your life. Everyone’s life has a purpose. Help those with limited resources by giving them the opportunity to fulfill their purpose. Be a catalyst for change, but uphold the dignity of every human life.

Today, the world poses new challenges, but do not let them deter you. There will always be uncertainty, economic instability, political turmoil and social strife.

When I began my career and humanitarian service it was at the height of World War II, a time of great crimes against humanity. But we survived and persevered.

Strive to make a difference. Always do your best. These four principles have guided me throughout 87 years of life. They have brought me happiness, good fortune and comfort during many difficult times.

Let them be your guide.

I commend you for your achievements and wish you much success. I have faith and confidence in all of you.

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity to share this momentous new beginning in your life.