Congressman Michael Bilirakis

Michael Bilirakis was born in Tarpon Springs, Florida, but grew up in the Pittsburgh area. He went to work on the assembly lines of US Steel upon graduating high school. He then enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, serving four years during the Korean War era. After leaving the military, he entered the University of Pittsburgh, studying petroleum engineering by day and working the night shift at Westinghouse Electric. He worked at the Federal Power Commission in Washington, D.C. before returning to Florida to attend law school at the University of Florida.

In 1982, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from the newly-formed Ninth District in Florida and served for 24 years before retiring from Congress at the end of 2006. During his tenure in office, Congressman Bilirakis served on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, where he was the Vice-Chairman of the full Committee and Chairman of the Health Subcommittee. He was also the Vice-Chairman of the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee and Chairman of its Oversight Subcommittee.

For 10 years, Congressman Bilirakis served as the Chairman of the Health Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over much of the health-related legislation introduced in the House of Representatives. As Subcommittee Chairman, Mr. Bilirakis was a vocal advocate for medical research and was a national leader on health reform. He was also instrumental in the passage of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003.

As a member of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee, the Congressman helped secure additional resources for Florida’s veterans - including $44.1 million for a spinal cord injury unit in Tampa, an outstanding outpatient clinic in Pasco County, and a more equitable resource allocation method implemented by the Department of Veterans Affairs. He led the fight to eliminate the offset between military retired pay and VA disability compensation.

For more than a decade, Congressman Bilirakis was a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Parliamentary Assembly which brings together Members of the U.S. Congress with Members of Parliaments from throughout the Atlantic Alliance.

Throughout his public service career, Congressman Bilirakis led efforts in the Congress to educate the American people and his colleagues on the problems of Greece and Cyprus. He and his wife, Evelyn, have two children. Their son Gus M. Bilirakis was elected to Florida’s Ninth Congressional District in November of 2006, succeeding his father in office.
Ambassador Loucas Tsilas

Ambassador Loucas Tsilas is the Executive Director of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA) in New York City, where he has served since 2000. He was born October 18, 1939, in Athens, Greece and holds a Degree in Law and a Degree in Economics from the University of Athens and a Master’s Degree in Political Science from the State University of Louisiana, New Orleans.

In 1965, he entered the Greek Foreign Ministry and served in Athens until 1968 in the Department of Balkan States. Ambassador Tsilas carried out many diplomatic missions abroad. From July 1998 until August 2000, he served as Permanent Representative of Greece to the European Union in Brussels. From 1993 until 1998 he served in Washington as Ambassador of Greece to the United States of America and Ambassador of Greece to the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. From 1991-1993, he was Director of the Diplomatic Office of the Prime Minister of Greece. He was elected as President of the Greek Diplomats’ Association for the period 1990-1991. In 1990, he served as Director of the Department of NATO, WEU and European Security Affairs in the Foreign Ministry.

He served as Consul General of Greece in Paris from 1981 until 1987, when he became Ambassador of Greece to South Africa. At the same time, he was accredited to Malawi, Swaziland and Lesotho.

From 1972-1975, he served as Consul of Greece in New Orleans, Louisiana. From 1975 to 1979, he served as Counselor of the Greek Embassy in Washington, D.C. From 1963-1965, he served as an Attorney at Law in Athens, Greece. From 1968-1972, he was First Secretary in the Embassy of Greece in Bucharest, Romania.

Ambassador Tsilas is the author of several studies, among which is a major thesis on the Balkans. He is fluent in English, French and Romanian and has received many foreign decorations and the highest Greek decoration. In 1997, he was one of the five members of the Committee which organized the successful Bid for the Athens 2004 Olympic Games.

His wife, Penelope Kartsonas-Tsilas, is a lawyer, a graduate of Athens University Law School, and author of legal studies. They have two children, Nicos Tsilas, and Vicky Tsilas, both Attorneys at Law.
Christine Kondoleon

Christine Kondoleon is the George and Margo Behrakis Senior Curator of Greek and Roman Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, a position she has held since 2001. She is also Adjunct Professor in the Department of Classics, Tufts University and was a Resident at the American Academy in Rome in 2007. Her previous positions included Curator of Greek and Roman Art, The Worcester Art Museum 1995-2001; Co-director of NEH Summer Seminar, American Academy in Rome 1996; Chair, Art Department, Williams College 1994-1995 and Associate Professor of Art, Williams College, 1982-1995; Visiting Professor, Harvard University, 1993; Visiting Professor, Tufts University, 1997 and Acting Director, Graduate Program in History of Art, Williams College, 1991

Dr. Kondoleon earned her Ph.D. at the Department of Fine Arts, Harvard University in 1985, an M.A. from Yale University in 1975 and a B.A. from Tufts University in 1974. Her specialty is Roman Art, Early Byzantine Art and Mosaics.


Dr. Kondoleon has done field work as an archaeologist in Israel, Cyprus and Tunisia and is Associate Co-Director of the Corpus of Tunisian Mosaics. She is also a Member of the Collections Committee, Harvard University Art Museums.
Kenneth Dean Shapiro Lapatin

Kenneth Dean Shapiro Lapatin is Associate Curator, Department of Antiquities, The J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, California. He was Assistant Professor of Art History, at Boston University from 1994 to 2002; Visiting Assistant Professor, John Cabot International College, Rome in 1990; and Lecturer, Boston University Summer School in Greece and Turkey in 1989. He received his Ph.D. in Classical Archaeology, University of California at Berkeley in 1994, Master of Studies in Classical Archaeology, University of Oxford (Balliol College) in 1986; and Bachelor of Arts in English and Classics, University of California at Berkeley in 1984, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Lapatin holds numerous awards, honors and grants, including Bogliasco Fellow in the Visual Arts, Liguria Study Center for the Arts and Humanities; John L. Caskey Memorial Lecturer in Aegean Archaeology, Archaeological Institute of America; Parker Distinguished Lecturer, Center for Old World Archaeology and Art, Brown University; David E. Finley Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art; Oscar T. Bronner Fellow, American Academy in Rome; and Fulbright Scholar, American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

His field work includes 1997 Traditional Marble-Carving Workshop, Tinos, Greece; American Academy in Rome Excavations of the Atrium Vestae, Roman Forum; American Academy in Rome Rescue Excavation of Trajan’s Aqueduct and Mills, Rome; American School of Classical Studies at Athens Excavations, Ancient Corinth, Greece; Underwater Excavations, Caesarea Ancient Harbor Exploration Project, Israel; Medieval Farmhouse Excavations, Mill Farm, Oxfordshire, UK; and Bronze Age Settlement Excavations, Tel Gerisa, Israel.


Dr. Lapatin has also authored numerous articles and book reviews on Greek and Minoan art and has lectured widely. He has also done radio and television programs and films in the U.S. and abroad. He has taught at UCLA, Boston University, University of California at Berkeley, the Montclair-Kimberly Academy and the John Cabot International College, Rome.

He is a member of the American Philological Association; the Archaeological Institute of America; the Associazione Internazionale di Archeologia Classica; the College Art Association; the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London; and the International Society for the Classical Tradition.
Jane Seymour

Award-winning actress Jane Seymour has showcased her talents on the Broadway stage, in motion pictures, and on television, blazing the trail for family-friendly programming, with her Golden Globe-winning role as “Dr. Michaela Quinn” on Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman. Seymour’s film credits include the iconic James Bond film Live and Let Die and the cult classic Somewhere in Time. She recently co-starred in the hit comedy film Wedding Crashers alongside Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn as well as in the comedic feature Blind Dating with Chris Pine and Eddie Kaye Thomas and directed by her husband, James Keach. Seymour also recently participated in the 5th season of the Emmy nominated hit program Dancing with the Stars.

Dubbed a “Renaissance Woman” by the press, Seymour recently launched the new Jane Seymour Home Collection – a national lifestyle brand inspired by her homes, art and family-centered lifestyle. Rolled out in 2007, this collection of home textiles, lighting, home fragrance and decorative accessories is available at such retailers as The Great Indoors, Amazon.com, home décor specialty stores and on Seymour’s e-commerce website www.janeseymourhome.com.

Seymour is also an established author. She has just completed her eighth book, Making Yourself at Home, a decorating book featuring her home and lifestyle tips that hit shelves in 2007. Amongst her other books is the autobiographical Remarkable Changes: Turning Life’s Challenges into Opportunities, profiling her own and 20 personal stories of others who have experienced positive transformation in the face of life-changing crisis. The birth of her twins John and Kris in 1995 inspired Seymour to team with her husband, director/producer/actor James Keach, to write a series of exceedingly successful children’s books entitled This One ‘N That One, inspired by the changes having twins brought into their lives. She is also the author of Two at a Time: A Journey through Twin Pregnancy and Birth and Jane Seymour’s Guide to Romantic Living.

When she is not acting, writing or designing, Seymour can be found in her painting studio. With a thriving career as an artist and her own art gallery in Los Angeles, she has exhibited in numerous galleries and venues across the nation. Her art also serves as inspiration for her designs that include an exclusive collection of art to wear handbags and scarves.

In addition to her busy life of acting, writing, designing and painting, and mothering six children, Seymour is a dedicated activist for a number of charities seeking to improve children’s lives around the world and has been actively involved in charitable endeavors for over twenty-five years. She serves as the Honorary Chairperson for City Hearts, an organization that enriches the lives of inner-city children and disadvantaged youths, and is an International Ambassador for Childhelp, a national organization dedicated to the research, treatment and prevention of child abuse. She is, as well, a member of the American Red Cross Celebrity Cabinet and spearheads their campaign to eradicate measles as the number one killer of children in Africa.

Seymour is an advocate of combining traditional Western Medicine with alternative medicine practice, after witnessing the amazing results the combination had upon her ailing father in his last days, as well as the positive influence this theory has had on her other family members.
Theodore P. Angelopoulos is a leading Greek industrialist and entrepreneur with international business interests and activities. He was born in Athens in 1943 and lived in Switzerland for many years where he received his BSc in Business Administration from Zurich University.

Mr. Angelopoulos leads an internationally based group of companies with interests, primarily, in shipping and steel, and with investments in real estate, private equities and other financial entities worldwide. His businesses are based in Greece, USA, United Kingdom and Switzerland. In 2002, he took control of the Dutch shipbuilding company, oceAnco, and re-established it as a leading shipbuilder of luxury, custom mega-yachts.

Parallel to his business ventures, Mr. Angelopoulos is noted for his philanthropy in promoting science, culture and education and in advancing health care. He has made generous contributions in support of Harvard University’s pioneering medical research and has served on the Harvard School of Public Health’s Board for cancer prevention.

Following in the tradition of his father, Panagiotis, Mr. Angelopoulos is the lifelong Sovereign of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The honorary title has its roots to the Byzantine Empire and, at the time, was equivalent to that of the Prime Minister. Mr. Angelopoulos is also a Grand Benefactor of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Together, they are actively involved with a wholly owned media group in Greece, comprised of a leading, nationally-distributed daily newspaper “Eleftheros Typos”, a news portal www.e-typos.com and a radio station. The couple has further contributed to Harvard University by endowing the Angelopoulos Professorship in Public Health and International Development. They live in Athens, Greece with their children; Carolina, Panagiotis, and Dimitris.

Ambassador Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki was born in Crete and earned a First Class Honors Law Degree from the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki. Upon graduation, she was admitted to the Athens Bar and practiced as member of a respected Athens firm. She entered the political arena and went on to win three consecutive elections in four years, winning a seat on the Athens Municipal Council in 1986 and, as a candidate for the New Democracy Party, election as Member of Parliament of the Greek Republic from Athens’ First Constituency in 1989. She won re-election the following year.

In 1990, she married Theodore Angelopoulos and resigned her seat in the Parliament. She became active in the international shipping business. In 1994, she was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Dean’s Council of Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government.

In 1996, she accepted the Prime Minister’s proposal to lead Greece’s campaign to host the 2004 Olympic Games. Recognizing her talents and tireless service to her country, the Republic of Greece appointed her Ambassador-at-Large in 1998. In 2000, she was asked to assume the presidency of the Athens 2004 Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games. Under her leadership, Athens made up for lost time and gave the world what IOC President Jacques Rogge called: “an unforgettable, dream Games”.

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