



AFGLC/IFGLC
AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR GREEK LANGUAGE AND CULTURE
INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR GREEK LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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BULLETIN

Dr. Byron P. Palls

**AFGLC/IFGLC LOSES
ONE OF ITS FOUNDERS
AND ONE OF ITS MOST
DEVOTED LEADERS!**

ΕΠΕΣΕ ΕΝΑΣ ΓΙΓΑΣ!



Αιωνία σου η μνήμη
αγαπημένε μας Δημήτρη.

Our Foundation suffered an irreparable loss when Dr. Demetrios Halkias, one of its founders and a charter member of AFGLC, a giant of a man, left this world to be with the Lord in the early hours of April 19, 2008. He left behind his beloved wife Evangeline, three children, George, Chris, Kalliope (who is President of the Tampa Center of AFGLC) and Angelo, and two grandchildren, Demetrios and Thanasi. A wake was held on 21 April at Blount and Curry Funeral Home in Tampa, with a Trisagion service led by the priest of St. John's Greek Orthodox Church, and brief, poignant remarks made by his sons and Dr. John Balis, AFGLC/IFGLC President. Interment took place on 22 April at the Garden of Memories Cemetery.

The record of Dr. Halkias is remarkable, like that of few other icons of young immigrants who came to the New World determined to capture the American Dream: he immigrated to the United States at the tender age of 19, worked hard in Chicago's Greek restaurants during the day while attending night school to learn English. Eventually, he put himself through undergraduate and graduate schools, culminating his studies by earning a Ph.D. in Medical Microbiology from the Stritch School of Medicine of Loyola University. After working briefly in Omaha, he accepted a position at the newly created medical school of the University of South Florida, which he served as a professor and Chief of Microbiology at the James Haley Veterans' Hospital of Tampa. He remained active in the academic world, doing research and publishing papers, all the while teaching medical students about microbiology and fostering appreciation for the uniqueness of each and every one of us as creations of a loving God.

Dr. Jim was above all a compassionate man and a peace maker. He always looked for solutions to problems, always eager to work with others for the common good. He never expressed ill feelings toward others. A born altruist, he gave an inordinate amount of his time to his beloved church, setting the example and encouraging others to work on the church board or work during fund-raising festivals. He was one of a handful of committed professionals who put forth herculean efforts to realize another dream, this one in the form of a foundation that would promote Hellenism and its contributions to the world. He preferred to work quietly, often behind the scenes and away from the spotlight, never losing sight of what needed to be done, solving problems and praying for decency and common sense to prevail in times of confrontations.

Dr. Demetrios Halkias was a giant of a man, larger than life, a beacon of honesty and faith who will be sorely missed by all who knew him. AFGLC was another dream that he managed to capture; unlike his American Dream, this one was bigger than all those who conceived of it--often an impossible dream, to be sure—but realized by men of courage and determination like him, whose only wish was to embrace the torch of the Hellenic Spirit and pass it on to future generations.

His work is now finished: he had gained immortality through his children and his good deeds! RIP