

Drexel President Constantine Papadakis Honors Nicholas Vidalakis with the Drexel University President's Medal

PHILADELPHIA (April 28, 2006)—Drexel University president **Dr. Constantine Papadakis** presented **Dr. Nicholas Vidalakis** of Seattle, Washington with the Drexel President's Medal at a ceremony held at the University. The event was part of the Vidalakis family's visit to Drexel during which they met Greek-Americans and Cretans from Greater Philadelphia and New York.

Vidalakis, his wife, **Nancy**, and their children **Nicole, John, and Perry**, daughter-in-law, **Zoe**, and grandson, **Nicholas**, in complete Cretan costume, attended the ceremony. Also, Vidalakis Family Foundation board members Antigone Ganakis Giusti and Mary Vasilakis attended all the joyous, inspiring, and outstanding events of the long weekend. The medal was presented to Vidalakis in recognition of his contributions to the advancement of the Cretan and Hellenic cultures. He joins a distinguished group of Drexel president's Medal recipients, including President Bill Clinton, President of China Jiang Zemin, Nobel Laureate Oscar Arias and inventor Dean Kamen.

A gift of \$1 million from the Vidalakis Family Foundation to Drexel University endowed the Vidalakis Family Cretan Scholars Program. Each year, through this program, eight students will be awarded a \$5,000 stipend in support of their six-month cooperative education placement on Crete. Through Drexel's renowned co-op program, students will "learn by doing" as they alternate periods of classroom study in Philadelphia with periods of off-campus, full-time paid professional employment in Crete aligned with their academic interests.

While students of Cretan descent will be considered first, followed by students of Greek descent, all Drexel undergraduate and graduate students, regardless of major, are eligible for the program. Students who transfer to Drexel from other universities are also eligible.

The first Vidalakis Family Scholars began their co-op assignments this spring. Caterina Carafides, a biology student, is working at the General University Hospital in Hrakleion, Crete. Genell Canty, a film and video student, is working for Indigo View in Chania, Crete and producing documentaries.

As part of the program's academic component, Drexel now offers to all its students courses in Cretan and Greek Culture and the Modern Greek Language. Drexel also entered into an agreement with the Technological Educational Institute of Crete (TEI) that will allow Drexel students to register at the TEI during their six-month stay in Crete, be assisted in finding work placements in Crete and living accommodations, and take courses in Greek history, language and culture.

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The Vidalakis family has a long tradition of supporting Cretan causes, encouraging values such as education, integrity, and excellence and hard work. Nicholas Vidalakis is founder, chairman of the board and CEO of the Vidalakis Family Partnerships, a group

of private companies that develop and operate large commercial shopping centers, invest in U.S. and international securities, and fund private equities, venture capital, mining and consulting. He has founded or co-founded more than 25 companies. He and Nancy are of Cretan descent.

In addition to the family's commitment to higher education, the Vidalakis Family members value their Greek Orthodox faith. All six family members (Nicholas, Nancy, John, Perry, George and Nicole) are recipients of many academic, religious unity honors and awards. Nicholas Vidalakis is an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and a recipient of the St. Paul Award, the Ellis Island Award and the Hellenic Spirit Foundation Outstanding Greek-American Award. He and Nancy are leaders of the Greek Leadership 100.

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Photo Caption 1: Drexel President **Dr. Constantine Papadakis** (left) presents **Dr. Nicholas Vidalakis** (right) of Seattle, Washington with the Drexel University President's Medal.

Photo Caption 2: **Dr. Nicholas Vidalakis** (right) with his wife, **Nancy**, their son, **Perry**, daughter-in-law **Zoe**, Drexel President **Constantine Papadakis** and grandson **Nicholas** dressed in traditional Cretan costume.

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