



7th EXPORTUSA FORUM

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Tuesday, December 13th 2022
15:00 hours EET

SPEAKERS' BIOS *(Agenda Flow)*

Organizer



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Elias Spirtounias

Executive Director

American-Hellenic Chamber of
Commerce

After graduating from the School of Mathematics of the University of Athens, Elias Spirtounias completed his graduate studies at the School of Electrical Engineering (M.Sc. degree and pre-Ph.D. studies) at Boston University. During his residence in the United States, he participated as a Research Engineer in several research programs in co-operation with other organizations and companies such as NASA, MIT, UNH in the fields of analog and digital electronics, circuits design and applications. He returned to Greece in 1992 and after completing his military service in 1994, he held the position of Technical Director for the subsidiary of the Italian company Citec SpA., a company specialized in the design, production and application of voice and image processing systems. From 1997 until February 2009, he worked for the Foundation of the Hellenic World, a major Greek private non-profit cultural organization, starting as a Construction Supervisor and continuing as a Managing Director of the brand new then Cultural Center, Hellenic Cosmos an innovative, based on new technologies, theme park. During his tenure, he contributed significantly to the expansion, development and operation of the Center and its establishment as one of the most known technology-driven cultural theme park in Greece and abroad. From March 2009, he holds the position of Executive Director of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. Along with his colleagues and in cooperation with the Board have managed, during the economic crisis, to increase significantly the number of activities, undertake important initiatives, retain in high level the memberships, foster the advocacy level, expand further the presence of the Chamber in US and contribute to the evolution of the Chamber into one of the leading dynamic and reliable business organization in Greece. He serves as Treasurer of the American Chambers in Europe (ACE) Executive Committee.



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Nikolaos Bakatselos
President
American-Hellenic Chamber of
Commerce

Nikolaos Bakatselos is the Managing Director of Pyramis Metallourgia A.E. and Pyramis Deutschland GmbH. He was a Member of the Board of Directors and Deputy Managing Director of Northern Greece Publishing S.A. He has held the position of Managing Director of Imperium AEEF, and Member of the Board of Directors of Egnatia Bank Securities S.A. He was a Member of the Board of Directors of Attica Bank from February 2014 until June 2016. He was a Member of the Steering Committee of the International Hellenic University from 2006 until January 2014 and Member of the Board and President of the Northern Greece Committee of EEDE. He is Member of the Committee Support CERTH, Trustee of Anatolia College, Member of the Board and Member of the Steering Committee of SVE and Honorary Consul of Belgium for Northern Greece. After being a Member of the Board of Directors of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce for several years, in June 2010 he was elected Vice President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce and President of the Northern Greece Committee, and since June 2019 he was elected President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce. He is a founding member and member of the Board of the Council of Competitiveness of Greece. From October 2019 until February 2022, he was elected as President of HEDNO by the General Assembly of HEDNO. Nikolaos Bakatselos holds a B.A. in Sociology from University of Reading and a MSc in Shipping, Trade and Finance from City University Business School.



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Dina Athanasiou is Head of the International Trade Department “TradeUSA” of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, as of November 2018. Within her role, she assists and provides guidance to Greek companies interested in exporting to the U.S. market. Prior to entering the international trade sector by joining AmCham in May 2017, she was engaged in projects focused on marketing, communications and sales, having worked with agencies including V+O and Hill+Knowlton Strategies. She is a business development professional holding a Bachelor’s Degree in Marketing, a Diploma in Graphic Design and a Master’s Degree in Design Management with the specialization in Marketing and Branding from the University of Southampton (UK). She speaks Greek, English and Spanish.

Dina Athanasiou

Head of the International
Trade Dept. “TradeUSA”
American-Hellenic Chamber
Of Commerce



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Marinos Giannopoulos

CEO
Enterprise Greece

Marinos Giannopoulos is an experienced finance and academic professional with a Doctorate in Strategic Management. For several years he lived and was active in the UK where he worked in the City of London as a banking executive and business consultant. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the Management School, University of Liverpool, a master's degree in international business economics from City University London, and a PhD from Brunel University London, with the thesis title: "Divesting assets and redeploying resources as predictors of the performance of acquisitions: The case of Greece." Prior to assuming his current duties as CEO of Enterprise Greece, he worked for more than a decade in the banking industry, both in Greece and abroad. He has extensive experience in managing credit risk in investment banking portfolios and participated in the management and consolidation of credit risk portfolios at financial institutions and companies in emerging Europe. Upon returning to Greece, he led the team at one of Greece's leading banks responsible for facilitating in the implementation of Greece's National Recovery and Resilience Fund – Greece 2.0 – while also liaising with European development bodies and Greek government agencies. He served as advisor to New Democracy's Secretariat for International Relations & European Union from 2013 to 2019. He has been a member of various academic and professional committees and has been actively engaged in research and writing with numerous articles published in leading international journals, such as the Journal for Global Business Advancement and the International Journal of Business and Economic Sciences. At the same time, he also taught at Brunel University and the Hellenic Open University in the fields of Strategic Management and Business Economics.



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Erik Holmgren

Economic Counselor
U.S. Embassy Athens

Erik Holmgren is the Economic Counselor at U.S. Embassy Athens. Erik serves as the Ambassador's principal advisor on economic issues and manages a team of seven U.S. staff and two locally employed staff. Prior to arriving in Greece in July 2021, Erik served as the Energy, Environment, Science, and Technology Counselor in Mexico City. Erik has served as Deputy Political Counselor Moscow, Political and Economic Chief Podgorica, as NATO Desk officer in the State Department as well as tours in Kyiv and Lima. Erik has a J.D. from George Washington University and a B.S./B.A. from University of Wisconsin-Platteville in civil engineering and Spanish. Erik is originally from Madison Wisconsin. He is married with three children.



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Laura Strange

Senior Vice President
Communications and
External Affairs

National Grocers Association

Laura Strange is the Senior Vice President Communications and External Affairs at the National Grocers Association. In this role, she manages a broad portfolio that includes the organization's strategic communications and messaging, marketing and advertising strategy for programs, initiatives, and events, content strategy for publications and all NGA outlets, including digital, as well as public affairs and media relations. In 2021, Strange led the associations comprehensive rebranding efforts. This was the first such brand enhancement since NGA was founded in 1982, with a new logo, refreshed graphics and color package, and stakeholder messaging. She has been named to Top Women in Grocery (2019), Grocery's Women of Influence (2020) and Women of Produce (2022).

Strange came to NGA in 2013 from Capitol Hill where she served as communications director for Members of Congress serving on the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the House Appropriations Committee. Prior to working on Capitol Hill, she held positions in the government relations department for Yahoo! Inc., where she managed an issue portfolio on the federal and state levels, and in the communications and marketing division for a state taxpayer trade association. Strange started her career as a staff assistant in the U.S. Senate, and eventually worked her way to take on a role as deputy press secretary. She has a master's degree in strategic public relations from George Washington University and an undergraduate degree in public relations from the University of South Carolina.



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Dimitris Karavasilis

International Trade Advisor
American-Hellenic Chamber of
Commerce;
Founder and CEO, DK Marketing and
Idea Monkeys LLC



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Dimitris Karavasilis is a highly motivated, visionary and performance driven international marketing professional, with an advanced know-how and significant expertise in a wide range of economic and industrial sectors; since 1999 he has been providing significant Greek and foreign firms with marketing services.

He is founder and CEO of MI-MALL HOLDING P.C. (i-mall Micro Market, #1 Robotic Micro Market Worldwide). He is also Founder and CEO of "DK CONSULTANTS GROUP" which owns the brands DK MARKETING, OLWINN, IDEA MONKEYS, EXPORTNEWS, EXPORTANGELS with offices in Athens, New York, London, Shanghai.

Dimitris Karavasilis has studied Business Administration and International Marketing at "The University of Sheffield". Prior to DK CONSULTANTS GROUP, he had been working as a senior executive in industrial and commercial enterprises in Greece and abroad, such as SATO, Toshiba, Sunair, Premierotel, Pointgroup, Axon Inc., and D&B group. During his career, he has undertaken major projects on behalf of big multinational consulting firms in the UK, Luxembourg, Germany, Hungary, USA, Romania, Turkey, and China; he has also participated as an invited speaker in many local and international conferences. He operates as an international trade expert for organizations such as the European Commission, the International Trade Center, the World Bank, GIZ, UK International Trade, and the American Marketing Association.

Dimitris Karavasilis is an Executive Consultant on international trade issues at the American - Hellenic Chamber of Commerce in Athens.

He also participated in the core team of European Task Force, contributing to establishing the Trade and Promotion Roadmap as the key source for reforming the Greek Export Strategy. Since 2016 he has been a member of the National Committee for Extroversion.

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Ted Diamantis

President
Diamond Wine Importers

In 1992, Ted Diamantis created Diamond Wine Importers out of the belief that Greece, with its natural terroir of mountain vineyards, maritime influenced climate, volcanic and alluvial soils, and over 200 ancient indigenous varieties, can once again become a source of some of the greatest wines in the world.

Over the last 30 years of tasting and traveling throughout Greece, we have compiled a portfolio of the best artisan, vineyard-driven producers who are working with the best native varieties from the best appellations. We only focus on producers and growers who are fully committed to quality and sustainability from vine to bottle. These producers are people that have passion, are self made men, work with the land, and embody the true winemaking spirit.

Our goal is to now educate and enlighten the American wine market about these indigenous varieties, ancient appellations and, most importantly, the spirit of these outstanding producers.

Currently our distribution network is active in 46 states, Puerto Rico, Grand Caymans, US Virgin Islands and Bahamas.

We recently also just launched a new Greek Gin brand " Stray Dog" Wild Gin. It's the first and only " wild gin" in the category and one of only 3 gins produced in Greece today.

In addition to DWI, we also have a food brand and importation company named Naturally Greek Foods. This company was launched in 2012 for the purposes of representing and creating gourmet greek food brands to the US consumer.

Born and Raised In Chicago IL

Education: Northern Illinois University, BA Economics, BA Political Science

Work: Allstate Insurance Co. Commercial Division, Claims | AJ Gallagher - Risk management | Heritage Wine Cellars |

Diamond Wine Importers

Organizations: Hellenic American Leadership Council (HALC) National Board Member



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Gerasimos Tzeis

Managing Director
Atradius Greece

Gerasimos Tzeis was born in 1970 in Athens.

He studied Mathematics at the University of Ioannina (B.Sc. in Mathematics) and he then completed his post-graduate studies in Actuarial Science at the Cass Business School of London / former City University (Diploma & M.Sc. in Actuarial Science).

From 1998 to 2003 he worked in various positions at the Hellenic branch of Gerling Konzern Speziale.

In 2004 he took over the position of the Managing Director at the Hellenic branch of Atradius Crédito y Caución S.A., which he holds until now.

Memberships:

Member of the CEO Clubs

Member of the Association of Chief Executive Officers of Greece

Member of the Association of Representatives and Executives of Hellenic Insurance Companies

Other professional fora



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Eleni Almpanti

Exportgate, i-Services
Eurobank

Eleni Almpanti is part of Intelligent Services Division in Eurobank GTB, Transaction Banking Solutions. She is leading Exportgate.gr and Extroversion Initiatives in collaboration with International Banks. Exportgate is an innovative International Trade Portal for Greek and Cypriot companies and an integral part of Trade Club Alliance which is a unique global network of banks aiming to make international trade simpler and better.

She joined Eurobank in 2007, where she held positions in several roles such as in International Activities, General Division and Corporate Transaction Banking.

She holds a Degree in Faculty of French Language and currently attending an MBA from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She speaks Greek, English and French.



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Tim Lombardo

Senior Director
EAS Consulting Group

Mr. Tim Lombardo, Senior Director for Food Consulting Services for EAS Consulting Group is a widely regarded expert in food safety and microbiology with over 25 years of direct experience leading these programs at a variety of manufacturing facilities. Tim's direct experience includes dairy, infant formula ingredients, baked goods, nuts and nut products, fruits and vegetables, meat and poultry, spices, color flavors and other ingredients and many others. He is a Lead Instructor through the Food Safety and Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) in Preventive Controls for both Human and Animal Foods, Lead Instructor for the HACCP Controls Alliance, and is certified in Thermal / Aseptic Processing and Sterilization through the Better Process Control School.

Tim is an international speaker and long-time member of many food associations. He is also a decorated combat Veteran, having served in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.



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Vasileios Tsipas
Founder & CEO
PlantBox

Vasileios is the 3rd generation of his family working in the plant production industry. He studied Agriculture Sciences in Thessaloniki with a major in plant propagation and breeding. During his studies he was working as a seller and distributor of plants in garden stores around Greece, and actively sourcing more than 235 plant/garden shops with potted plants. In 2016 he started his own plant production nursery with a focus in producing fruit plants for agriculture professionals and fruit potted and shaped plants, for garden centers in Greece and around Europe. From 2017 to end of 2018, he was chosen as one of the most promising young agriculture professionals in EU by the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) of the European Union and he worked with EU and Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs to exchange knowledge between the two parties and land the first agriculture trade agreement.

At the same time he started building PlantBox. PlantBox is building pre-potted and pre-packaged living plants with extended shelf-life. His first product, the Greek Olive Tree PlantBox hit the market in 2018 and was delivered to more than 27 countries around the world, directly from Greece.

PlantBox in 2018 and 2019 got awards for its innovation, first from Athens Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Attica Region, then from the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce in Tif USA 2018, and after from the National Bank of Greece and others.

As a result of the awards, Vasileios traveled and exhibited PlantBox in CES Las Vegas, European Parliament and Beijing, and was awarded as the 2nd best young Greek Agriculture Professional for 2020 by the Greek Young Farmers Association.

In 2020 to 2022, Vasileios was focused on expanding production of plants, started exporting plants in Western Europe and importing from other growers for the Greek market, and finalized all the research and development needed to scale PlantBox's range of products. His last step is to focus on the set up, development and expansion of PlantBox as a brand and build a startup company around it.



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Dionysis Valentis

Business Development Director
Matrix Pack

Dionysis Valentis is the Director of Business Development of Matrix Pack S.A, the leading European producer of Paper Straws and Biodegradable Lids for hot and cold drinks with export activity in the U.S since 2019.



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Dimitris Tsoukalas

Editor in Chief
Direction Business Network

Dimitris Tsoukalas is a trade and business journalist, with almost 20 years of work experience. He is the Editor in Chief at Direction Business Network, serving as the Head of the editorial team that is responsible for the monthly BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE and the trade publications ADBUSINESS (Marketing & Communications), RETAILBUSINESS (FMCG & Retail) and CSR REVIEW (CSR & Sustainability), alongside with their respective newsletters BUSINESS TODAY, RETAIL TODAY and CSR WEEK and their annual special editions. He is also in charge of content for the portals advertising.gr and csrnews.gr and has served as Editor in Chief of «Manager», the monthly magazine of the Hellenic Management Association (EEDE). He is an active member of the Organizing Committee of RETAILBUSINESS AWARDS, the esteemed institution for the Retail & FMCG Sector in Greece and a member of the Special Committee for the "PROTAGONISTS OF THE GREEK ECONOMY" event & awards. In 2019 he joined the Epica Awards jury and he is still a part of the judging process. He has also been a Member of the Evaluation Committee for the Made In Greece Awards (2013, 2015, 2017 events) and for the Bravo Sustainability Awards. He has translated in Greek 3 books on management, emotional intelligence and coaching strategies in business. He has studied Communication & Mass Media at the faculty of Communication and Mass Media of the University of Athens and holds a MSc in Media Psychology from Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences.



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