

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026

Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

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Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event

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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 parks 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, in the midst of 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. Since January 2022 he served as Treasurer and since January 2024 as Vice Chair of the American Chambers in Europe (ACE) Executive Committee.

John D. Saracakis

President
American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce



John D. Saracakis is President of the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, elected in July 2025, following 18 years of service to the Chamber as Vice President, Chair of the Public Affairs Committee, member of the Executive Committee, and member of the Board of Directors. He has also served as Chairman of the Hellenic-Swedish Chamber of Commerce for two consecutive terms (2013–2019).

He is Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saracakis Group of Companies, a leading family-owned concern with a long tradition in the Greek economy and operations in four countries, where he has served in various capacities since 1998.

John studied Business Administration at Babson College, USA, and is a graduate of the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School.

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AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

The banner features a blue background with white waves and a white shark. Text at the top reads '5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026' and 'Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room'. Below this is the main title 'U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges'. The event is identified as 'Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event'. Logos for the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, NAMEPA, the U.S. and Greek governments, Propeller Club, Maritime Hellas, and SHIPPINGinsight are displayed at the bottom.

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Yuri Arthur Commercial Counselor U.S. Embassy, Athens

Yuri Arthur serves as Commercial Counselor/Senior Commercial Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Athens. She has held the role since August 2021 and is in her 5th year at Post. During her time in Greece, she has also served as the Acting Deputy Chief of Mission and as the Acting Regional Senior Commercial Officer for Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, and Serbia. In Greece, Yuri has overseen the expansion of a previously small office with a renewed mandate on commercial engagement through extensive collaboration with interagency colleagues. Her tour has witnessed successful deals as the result of years of Embassy effort, including the privatization of Elefsina Shipyards in the first project financed by the U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the prevention of malign infrastructure in tenders for Athens International Airport and Greek Customs, the inauguration of the Alexandropouli FSRU, and the Daedlus Supercomputer project. She helped broker a partnership between Elefsina Shipyards and Korean conglomerate Hanwha for energy infrastructure, defense, and shipbuilding projects to take place in South Korea, Greece, and the United States. The Commercial Section focuses on a deal-by-deal/transactional approach across multiple industry sectors, where locally engaged staff focus on sectors where U.S. firms have the greatest potential for business. Work has included resolving impediments to business, identifying suitable partners, and executing events such as trade missions and dialogues. The team most recently executed a successful Genomics Technology Mission and served as control for the first visit of Secretary Burgum to Greece. Prior to her tour in Greece, Yuri served at the U.S. Embassy in Manila (2017-2020) and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo (2014-2017). In Manila, she focused on leveraging USG resources and likeminded partners for opportunities in the infrastructure sector and worked with multilateral partners to address pharmaceutical issues. In Tokyo, she served as control officer for the first visit of former Secretary Wilbur Ross to Japan and for former President Obama's trip to the G7 Summit. Yuri joined the Foreign Commercial Service in 2011 but worked as a Desk Officer for the Office of East Asia in Commerce Headquarters. She represented the United States in official trade policy dialogues with Japan and was part of the Remediation Mission bringing U.S. firms to Fukushima following the nuclear disaster. Her domestic tour was at the West Los Angeles U.S. Export Assistance Center. Prior to government service, Yuri worked as an Information Officer for the Japanese Embassy in the United States and as an Account Manager for All Nippon Airways.

Joe Hughes

Chairman, NAMEPA
Board Member, P&I Club



Joe Hughes has served as chairman of the managers of The American Club, an International Group mutual, for nearly twenty-nine years.

Joe also oversees the activities of Eagle Ocean Agencies, Inc., an affiliate of SCB, which operates the Eagle Ocean Marine and Eagle Ocean America insurance facilities.

He is a director both the American Club itself and its European subsidiary based in Cyprus.

In addition to his chairmanship of NAMEPA, Joe is President of the Maritime Association of the Port of New York and New Jersey, a director of NYMAR also, sits on committees of the American Bureau of Shipping and Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

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Costis J. Frangoulis is a Greek entrepreneur, Founder, President, and CEO of Franman Group, a leading international trading house established in Athens in 1991.

He has been President of the Propeller Club, Port of Piraeus since 2019 and is currently in his third and final term, making him the longest-serving President in the Club's history.

In October 2025, he was elected President of the International Propeller Club, becoming the first non-American to hold this position since the organization's inception in 1927.

He also serves as Ambassador for the Sailors' Society in Greece, Trustee of the U.S.-Greece Trade & Investment Council, and a member of the Advisory Board of the Council for International Relations – Greece (CfIR-GR).

Costis Frangoulis

President
The International Propeller Club, Port of Piraeus

Carleen Lyden Walker

Co- Founder, CEO, North American Marine Environment Protection Association (NAMEPA)
Chief Evolution Officer, SHIPPINGInsight



Carleen Lyden Walker is a marketing and communications professional in the commercial maritime industry with over 40 years of experience. She is founder and CEO of Morgan Marketing & Communications, the Co-Founder and CEO of NAMEPA (North American Marine Environment Protection Association), Chief Evolution Officer of ShippingInsight, the fleet optimization and innovation platform for shipping and the Founder of the Consortium for International Maritime Heritage, She is also the Co-Founder and Managing Partner of MAR (Maritime Accelerator for Resilience) and Co-Author of “Zero Point Four-How U.S. Leadership in Maritime will secure America’s Future”.

In 2015, Carleen Lyden Walker was appointed a Goodwill Maritime Ambassador by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). She is a member of the Connecticut Maritime Association, The Marine Society of the City of New York, WISTA (Women’s International Shipping and Trading Association, WIMAC (Women in Maritime Association, Caribbean), and is a past President of the Propeller Club Chapter of the Port of NY/NJ. She is also a member of the Pathways Advisory of the US Friends of the World Maritime University and is consistently listed among the top100 women in maritime globally.

In 2010, she was awarded the Certificate of Merit by the United States Coast Guard and in 2014 a Public Service Commendation for he work on world maritime day and AMVER, respectively.

In March 2023 she received the Distinguished Service Award for the Coast Guard for her work with both NAMEPA and SHIPPINGINSIGHT.

Carleen Lyden Walker graduated from Wellesley College with a BA in Political Science and History (Minor in Economics) and studied accounting at Cornell School of Business Administration. She is a trained facilitator and media trainer and holds a USCG Captain’s License.

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Logo for the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, NAMEPA, the United States Coast Guard, the Propeller Club, Maritime Hellas, and ShippingInsight.

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Sydney Plante serves as the Acting Associate Administrator for Strategic Engagement at the Maritime Administration (MARAD) within the U.S. Department of Transportation. As a key member of MARAD's executive leadership team, she drives the agency's strategic outreach, stakeholder partnerships, and comprehensive policy agenda to strengthen the U.S. maritime industry.

Sydney brings a robust background in government operations, policy development, and strategic communications. Prior to joining MARAD, she served in the regional office of U.S. Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy during his tenure in Congress. In this capacity, she spearheaded regional policy initiatives and managed critical constituent relations. Complementing her public sector leadership, Sydney draws on over three years of experience as a paralegal, giving her a sophisticated understanding of administrative law, regulatory frameworks, and complex case management.

Sydney earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she focused her studies on Economics, Political Science, and Political Philosophy.

Sydney Plante

**Acting Associate Administrator for Strategic Engagement
at the Maritime Administration (MARAD)
U.S. Department of Transportation**

Aris Kourkoumelis

Assistant Secretary for Trade and Economic Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Aris Kourkoumelis serves as the Assistant Secretary for Trade and Economic Security at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. In this role, he leads DHS's efforts to identify, assess and mitigate national security risks arising from strategic competition, forced labor, supply chain vulnerabilities, foreign direct investment, and the illicit exploitation of lawful trade. He serves as the Department's representative to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) and the Committee for the Assessment of Foreign Participation in the U.S. Telecommunications Services Sector (Team Telecom). Mr. Kourkoumelis also plays a key role in White House, interagency, congressional, and international engagement on trade and economic security priorities.

Mr. Kourkoumelis brings to DHS a deep background in administrative law, international trade, and national security policy. Prior to joining DHS, Mr. Kourkoumelis was the managing partner of a full-service law firm where he advised clients on complex regulatory matters, litigation and government investigations. Previously, Mr. Kourkoumelis served as Senior Counsel in the Office of the General Counsel at the U.S. Department of Commerce where he led the Department's implementation of Section 232 tariffs and other strategic security and trade initiatives.

Earlier, Mr. Kourkoumelis practiced at a large multi-national law firm focusing his practice on complex commercial transactions and international trade.

Mr. Kourkoumelis began his legal career clerking for the Honorable Timothy C. Stanceu, then-Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of International Trade. He earned an LL.M. from Columbia Law School, and a J.D from New York Law School.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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Shark Tank Event



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Matthew J. Thomas has more than 30 years of experience in international trade, transport and maritime regulation, and government affairs, representing leading energy and commodities companies, shipowners, governments, insurers, investors, ports, shipyards, and marine terminal operators.

Matt works extensively in the areas of international trade sanctions, export controls, and related anti-money laundering measures. He has represented several global companies targeted for U.S. sanctions, reaching successful resolutions with the Departments of State and Treasury ("OFAC"). He has aided numerous clients around the world on sanctions and export control compliance planning, investigations, and transactional due diligence, with particular focus on the energy, commodities, maritime, transport, and services sectors.

In addition, Matt has extensive experience in the maritime, logistics, and container shipping sector. He has represented leading carriers, terminals, and logistics providers in regulatory proceedings before the Federal Maritime Commission ("FMC"), where he formerly served as the Assistant General Counsel for International Affairs. He represents marine terminal operators in complex joint venture arrangements and is experienced in global container operators' merger and integration projects.

He also counsels private companies and foreign governments on matters of international law and diplomatic strategy, particularly in defending national sovereignty or combating international trade barriers. During his government tenure, he was responsible for the FMC's relations with foreign governments and multilateral bodies, such as the European Union, World Trade Organization, and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Matt works with leading maritime and offshore energy clients on a broad range of compliance issues, including environmental, safety, citizenship, and "Jones Act" coastwise compliance. He has represented leading energy companies in key Jones Act rulings and investigations that have shaped domestic petroleum trade, and structured complex Jones Act compliance ownership structures.

Throughout his career, Matt has built strong relationships with U.S. government officials, trade associations, and the local legal and lobbying community. He guides international businesses in their dealings with the Departments of State, Treasury, Commerce, Justice, and Transportation, as well as independent regulatory agencies and Congress. In addition to his professional experience in maritime and international trade, Matt has also served as a federal lobbyist and led successful lobbying efforts on the behalf of local governments, advising on federal affairs and managing relations with congressional offices.

Matt's broad and diverse Washington career has given him unique skills in legal and regulatory strategy and project management, including the design and execution of hybrid legal and government relations efforts to shape policy and achieve client objectives.

Matt wrote the United States chapter for Ports and Terminals (3rd Ed.), a global compendium of port law that was published in 2018 by Getting The Deal Through.

Matthew Thomas

Partner, International Trade Maritime
Blank Rome Law Firm

Dana Merkel

Partner, Maritime
Blank Rome Law Firm



Dana Merkel focuses her practice on domestic and international marine transportation and environmental issues for clients worldwide. Clients include ship owners, operators, and managers; offshore construction companies; shippers, charterers; and terminals. Major areas of practice include:

- Compliance counseling under a myriad of international conventions and U.S. and foreign regulations
- Coastwise trade
- Offshore construction, oil & gas, and wind farm development
- Crew citizenship, including visa and entry issues
- Defense of administrative, civil, and criminal enforcement actions
- Internal investigations
- Pollution response
- Counseling on compliance and risk mitigation strategies
- Development of administrative and legislative solutions to maritime and environmental compliance challenges
- Vessel construction and flagging
- International trade and sanctions issues

Dana's passion for the maritime industry began as a child growing up on Lake Superior, where she worked in marinas and on private yachts and small passenger vessels. She went on to graduate from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and worked through the International Organization of Masters, Mates, and Pilots ("MMP") as a Third Mate and Qualified Member of the Engine Department ("QMED") on a variety of vessel types, including container, dry bulk, tanker, ro-ro, ice breaker, and research vessels. Dana also worked ashore managing crude and product transportation for a major U.S. oil company.

Dana conducts customized training sessions for clients and assists in creating and implementing effective compliance programs. She also writes and presents on issues impacting the maritime industry frequently, such as: "The Regulatory Landscape: Immigration & Employment for OSW," at IPF Virtual, April 2020, "The Broad Reach and Limitations of U.S. Forfeiture Law," in Pratt's Energy Law Report, "Status of U.S. Jones Act and Its Implications to the U.S. Offshore Wind Industry," at the 2020 U.S. Offshore Wind Round Table Discussion, "Advances in Electronic Recordkeeping," in Maritime Reporter, "Opportunities and Challenges with Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)," in Maritime Reporter, "Let's Talk Vessels (Construction and O&M)," at the 2019 Sea to Land Conference, "New U.S. Effort in Strait of Hormuz Echoes Past Clashes with Iran," in USNI News, "MARPOL Compliance Alert: D.C. Court of Appeals Shuts the Door on APPS Relief," in Mainbrace

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Joshua Volz

Special Envoy for Energy Integration
U.S. Department of Energy



Joshua Volz is the Special Envoy for Energy Integration at the U.S. Department of Energy. Mr. Volz previously served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Europe, Eurasia, Africa and the Middle East in the Office of International Affairs.

Prior to joining the agency, Mr. Volz led the Eastern Mediterranean team at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Energy Resources and held numerous positions within the U.S. Department of Defense. He has served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and Syria.

Mr. Volz holds a B.A. in Philosophy and Political Science from Kalamazoo College, an M.S. in National Security Strategy and Resourcing from the National Defense University, and lectures at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies.

Thanos Dokos

National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of Greece



Thanos Dokos received his Ph.D. in International Relations from Cambridge University and has held research posts at the Peace Research Institute of Frankfurt (1989-90) and the Center for Science and International Affairs (CSIA) at Harvard University (1990-91).

He served as the Director for Research, Strategic Studies Division, Hellenic Ministry of National Defence (1996-98) and as an Advisor on NATO issues to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1998-1999). He was also a NATO research fellow for 1996-98. He was the Director of Research (1999-2006) and then the Director-General of the Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) [2006-2019].

He has taught at the Universities of Athens and Piraeus, the Hellenic National Defence College, the Diplomatic Academy and the Hellenic National Security Academy.

Since October 2020, he is the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of Greece. In October 2023, he was appointed by the Secretary General of NATO to the Expert Group in support of the comprehensive and deep reflection on NATO's southern neighborhood. In May 2025, he was appointed Secretary General for National Security.

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Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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Daniel Tadros

Chief Operating Officer
The American P&I Club



Dan Tadros serves as Chief Operating Officer for Shipowners Claims Bureau, Inc., managers of the American Club. As COO, Dan has an expanded role that combines the management of day-to-day operations of the Club and its offices in London, Piraeus, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Limassol, and Houston, as well as the design and implementation of policies to promote company culture and vision. Dan also has oversight of compliance and corporate governance and offers support to all departments. Dan joined the American Club's senior management team in July 2019 with extensive experience in P&I, FD&D and Owners' matters, having previously served as legal correspondent for many of the International Group Clubs. As a maritime lawyer with New Orleans and Houston based Chaffe McCall, LLP, the last 10 years as Practice Area Coordinator for the firm's Admiralty Section, Dan had managerial oversight of the section while dealing with a wide variety of maritime matters.

Dan received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Florida and his Juris Doctor from Loyola University College of Law – New Orleans, Louisiana. Dan is fluent in Modern Greek and is admitted to practice before the U.S. Fifth and Sixth Circuit Courts of Appeal, the U.S. District Courts for the Eastern, Western and Middle Districts of Louisiana, the Supreme Court of Louisiana, and the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas. He is a member of the Maritime Law Association of the United States.

Stratos Desypris

Chief Operating Officer
Navios Maritime Partners L.P.



Stratos Desypris has been Navios Maritime Partners L.P. Chief Operating Officer since November 2021, having previously served as its Chief Financial Officer from 2010 through November 2021. In addition, Mr. Desypris is the Chief Financial Controller of Navios Maritime Holdings Inc., Navios Partners' sponsor, since May 2006 and the Chief Operating Officer and director of Navios Shipmanagement Holdings Corporation since March 2025 and August 2019 respectively.

He has also served as director of Navios South American Logistics Inc. since August 2024, and previously from 2012 since 2022 and its SVP-Strategic Planning since 2011.

Before joining Navios Holdings, Mr. Desypris worked in the accounting profession, most recently as manager of the audit department at Ernst & Young in Greece. Mr. Desypris started his career as an auditor with Arthur Andersen & Co. in 1997. Mr. Desypris is also a member of the governance committee of Maritime Emissions Reduction Center established by the Lloyds Register. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the University of Piraeus.

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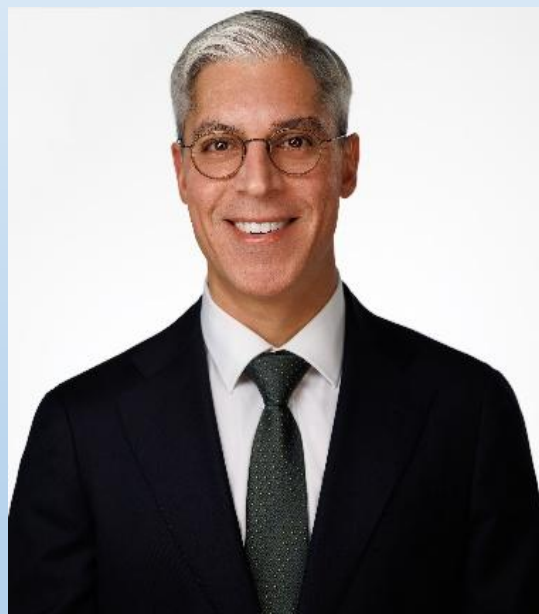


Shark Tank Event



Robert Obayda

Chief of Staff to the CEO, Davie Shipbuilding
f. Director of Maritime Industrial Policy, White House
National Security Council



Robert Obayda serves as Chief of Staff to the CEO of Davie Shipbuilding, where he supports the company's strategic growth and engagement across North America and allied markets. Prior to joining Davie, he served on the White House National Security Council under both the Biden and Trump administrations as Director for Maritime Industrial Policy. In that role, he helped shape U.S. maritime and industrial strategy, including supporting the establishment of the Office of Shipbuilding, authoring the Executive Order on Restoring America's Maritime Dominance, leading the design of tariffs on Chinese-made port equipment, and was the principle architect of the Icebreaker Collaboration Effort (ICE Pact), a framework designed to mobilize allied investment in shipbuilding and critical infrastructure.

Mariniki Psifia

ALBA Visiting Faculty
Economist & Head Shipping Market Analyst
Latsco Marine Management



Dr. Mariniki Psifia is an accomplished maritime economist and research strategist with over 18 years of experience in shipping market analysis, investment evaluation, strategic project development, and industry-oriented education.

As Head of Research at Latsco Marine Management Inc., she leads the company's market intelligence and freight forecasting initiatives, with expertise spanning Crude and Product Tankers, LPG, LNG, Dry Bulk, Containerships, and Chemical Tankers. In parallel, she has served as Educational Program Coordinator at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, designing and delivering advanced e-learning modules in Shipping Market Analysis.

Her professional background includes senior leadership as Director and Head of Research at Christos P. Lemos Shipping, as well as analytical and academic roles at Arrow Shipbrokers, the University of Piraeus, and BCA College, where she taught courses in Shipping Finance, Risk Management, and Investment Analysis. Dr. Psifia holds a PhD in Shipping Studies from the University of Piraeus, where her research focused on evaluating traditional shipping investment methods and forecasting freight rates using chaos and complexity theory.

She also holds an MSc in Management with Finance from the University of Bath and a BSc in Maritime Studies from the University of Piraeus. Her continuing executive education includes programs at Imperial College Business School and Lloyd's Maritime Academy. Fluent in English and French, Dr. Psifia blends analytical rigor with strategic foresight, contributing thought leadership and impactful research across the global maritime sector.

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Joshua Divin is the Senior Vice President of Marine Business Development at ABS. In this role, he drives strategic client engagement, fosters key partnerships and develops innovative business solutions to advance ABS' presence in the marine sector.

Divin joined ABS in 2007 as an engineer and has held various engineering leadership and program management positions around the globe, including in Houston, Shanghai and Singapore. Divin is passionate about innovation and leveraging emerging technologies to enhance client solutions and drive advancement in the marine industry. He is known for his ability to connect with people from varied backgrounds and develop high-performing teams, helping him progress through several leadership positions during his time with ABS.

He advanced to the role of Government Program Manager and later Director of Navy Programs, where he was instrumental in initiating and developing a condition-based class approach for government vessels. He then went on to serve as Vice President of Engineering for the Americas, followed by Senior Vice President of Western Operations.

Divin has a foundation in electrical engineering and experience in naval systems design, marine and offshore construction, and reliability-centered condition-based programs. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M University and a Master of Science in Engineering Management from George Washington University.

Joshua Divin

Senior Vice President, Marine Business Development
American Bureau of Shipping (ABS)

Maria Kolitsida

Founder and CEO
Signal Fusion



Specializing in AI, behavioral analytics, and risk assessment, with a strong background in innovation policy across Europe, Canada, and the US. With experience in both corporate innovation and startups, Maria has led AI-driven solutions for crisis services, digital healthcare, and human risk assessment in high-pressure industries such as maritime, defense, and healthcare.

Bridging policy, technology, and commercialization, she has worked with authorities and global organizations to develop data-driven risk management solutions. Her expertise lies in scaling AI innovations, integrating behavioral data with operational metrics, and enhancing decision intelligence for high-stakes environments worldwide.

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Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



George Kokosalakis

Executive Director, Center of Excellence in Shipping,
Logistics, and Energy

Associate Professor, School of Business and Economics,
Deree



Dr. Georgios Kokosalakis is the Executive Director of the Center of Excellence in Shipping, Logistics, & Energy, and is appointed as an Associate Professor at ACG specializing in maritime operations and entrepreneurship.

Dr. Kokosalakis, following receiving his diploma in Engineering from National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), holding a Doctorate and a Master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, as well as parallel studies in Business Administration.

A shipowner, manager, and entrepreneur himself with broad experience in the industry, Dr. Kokosalakis has also worked as a consultant for other firms, while continuing his work as a researcher and scholar. Interdisciplinary areas have always attracted his attention, as he has worked professionally and scholarly in areas that combine management, operations, engineering, monitoring, artificial intelligence, wireless sensor networks, energy conservation, and environmental preservation.

Sang H. Yi

President & CEO

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA)



The Honorable Sang H. Yi is the President and CEO of the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA). AAPA represents more than 130 sea ports in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America, and various maritime industry partners. Most recently, Mr. Yi served as the Deputy Administrator of the Maritime Administration (MARAD) at the U.S. Department of Transportation. As Deputy Administrator, Mr. Yi oversaw MARAD's responsibilities that provide critical infrastructure and support for the nation's commercial and military maritime sectors.

Before joining MARAD, Mr. Yi served in the U.S. House of Representatives for almost 15 years where he led congressional oversight and investigations related to various national security matters, including transportation and maritime security, and natural resources and environmental issues. Prior to his congressional career, he served in the Intelligence Community.

In addition to Mr. Yi's federal service, he served his local community as a Councilman in Fairfax, Virginia. First elected in 2018, he served on the City Council for two terms. For more than two decades, Mr. Yi has served as an officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve and held a U.S. Coast Guard issued Merchant Marine license.

Mr. Yi holds a B.S. in Logistics and Intermodal Transportation from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, a M.A. in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College, and a J.D. from the George Washington University Law School.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

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U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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Themis Vagiakos

Director of Global Sustainability American Bureau of Shipping (ABS)

Themis Vagiakos is the Director of Global Sustainability at the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), where he leads a global portfolio spanning Decarbonization Strategy, Performance Advisory, ESG Excellence, and Sustainable Finance. He is responsible for driving client-focused sustainability services while advancing new product development to support readiness and resilience for strategic marine assets. Prior to this role, Themis served as Manager of Digital Sustainability at ABS, where he led the development and go-to-market strategy of digital tools supporting emissions reduction and regulatory compliance.

Before joining ABS, Themis held senior roles at Microsoft and Wipro, leading digital transformation, innovation, and sustainability initiatives for global clients across banking, energy, and manufacturing. He also co-founded a Digital Innovation Hub in Greece, aligning digital solutions with the EU Green Deal. Earlier in his career, he advised on M&A, restructuring, and regulatory projects at Deloitte in Greece and Germany, and began his professional journey as a Financial Controller at Allianz.

Themis holds an MBA from INSEAD, an MSc in Finance from Warwick Business School, and a BSc in Management Science & Technology from the Athens University of Economics & Business. He is also a Global Chartered Management Accountant (CIMA – ACMA, CGMA).

Cynthia Hudson

President
Shoreline Hudson



Cynthia Hudson founder of HudsonAnalytix (Hudson Marine) serves as President of ShorelineHudson.

Her background and experience includes project management, risk management consulting, preparedness, training, compliance, incident response for more than 150 incidents including significant maritime claims as well as heavy marine and underwater construction contracting for shipowners, ports and terminals, maritime insurers and government entities. She led company initiatives into international maritime security, maritime claims support and maritime cyber offerings.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia  Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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MARITIME HELLAS supports the Greek marine
SHIPPINGinsight

Logo for the 5th Trading in U.S. Waters @ Posidonia 2026 seminar, featuring a shark and waves.

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



Kirk Kaiser
Chief Technical Officer
Airglide AI



Kirk Kaiser has spent his career at the intersection of AI, developer tools, and emerging platforms. As a founding engineer, he built Triller (NASDAQ: ILLR), a pioneering AI-powered video editing app for iPhone that went on to go public in 2024.

He also created Lightcloud, an early IoT platform for industrial lighting. Kirk later joined Datadog, where he rose to lead the Developer Relations team, helping shape how developers adopt and succeed with modern observability tools through the company's 2019 IPO on the Nasdaq.

He is the author of Make Art with Python, and a frequent speaker at major industry conferences including AWS re:Invent, PyCon, PyGotham, and Datadog's DASH. Recently he took second place at OpenAI's inaugural Agent hackathon in New York City.

Vasilis Kikilias

Minister
Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy



Vasilis Kikilias was born in 1974 in Athens. He is a graduate of Leonteios School of Nea Smyrni. He studied at the Medical School of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, pursued postgraduate studies at the National School of Public Health and subsequently earned a PhD in Medicine (Magna cum Laude) by the Faculty of Medicine in the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. He is a surgeon specializing in orthopaedics. Alongside his studies, he built a notable career in sports, particularly in basketball, playing for teams such as AEK, Panionios, Ionikos, and Apollon Patras, with his participation in the Hellenic National Basketball Team being a particularly distinguished honor.

His political career began in 2006 when he was elected as a Municipal Councilor of the City of Athens. From 2007 to 2010, he served as President of the Organization for Youth and Sports of the Municipality of Athens. In November 2010, he ran for Regional Governor of Attica in the local elections and emerged as the leader of the major opposition party. That same year, he was appointed Secretary of Sports for the Nea Demokratia political party, and the following year, he was designated as a Deputy Secretary of Program Planning. The year 2012 marked a milestone in his political career, as he was elected Member of the Hellenic Parliament for the Athens 1st constituency with the Nea Demokratia political party, a position he has still held continuously for the past twelve years. Throughout this period, he has participated in various parliamentary committees, including those on National Defense and Foreign affairs, Public Administration, Public Order and Justice, Social Affairs, and Gender Equality, among others. In June 2014, he was sworn in as Minister of Public Order for six months, during which he achieved significant progress in combating terrorism. In 2016, he was appointed as the spokesperson for Nea Demokratia, and in 2017, he assumed the role of Head of the National Defense Sector for the Nea Demokratia political party. In July 2019, he was appointed Minister of Health, successfully managing the critical period of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, he was sworn in as Minister of Tourism, serving for two years. From 2023 until March 2025, he served as Minister for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection, effectively addressing the challenges posed by climate change. Till today, he has implemented major reforms to enhance Greece's preparedness and response mechanism to natural disasters. Since March 2025, he is serving as Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia  Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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Panos Xenokostas

Founder & President, ONEX Shipyards and Technologies Group President, Hellenic Shipyards Association



Panos Xenokostas is a visionary entrepreneur and investor in the industries of Shipbuilding, Maritime, ICT, Aviation, Defense & Security, and Energy. He holds a degree in aeronautical engineering and an MBA from the Kurt Bösch University Institute in Switzerland. He founded the ONEX Shipyards & Technologies Group, a global brand recognized for being second to none in investment and technology, fostering growth, excellence, and innovation in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean.

ONEX secured a financing line of \$125 million from the US Development Finance Corporation (DFC) for the shipyards' rehabilitation and upgrade plan in Elefsina. With 2 modern shipyards in Syros and Elefsina now serving as national benchmarks, the Group maintains a diversified portfolio spanning shipbuilding, ship repair, naval defense, power ships and offshore constructions, floating wind farms, ICT/IoT, business process outsourcing, rail rolling stock manufacturing & repair, defense technologies, port infrastructure management, logistics support, energy, etc.

ONEX's vision is to establish an Integrated Logistics & Innovation Hub for Eastern Europe, position Greece as a regional leader in maritime excellence while providing cutting edge maritime solutions for power acceleration and owns assets of appx. €1 billion. The Group directly and indirectly employs more than 3.000 people. With a target asset base of €5 billion by 2030, alongside an ongoing €650 million investment program in Greece, ONEX Group is establishing itself as an emerging leader in critical infrastructure and high-value asset management.

Panos Xenokostas also holds an institutional role as Chairman of the Board of the Hellenic Shipyards Association, which was founded in 2023 at his initiative. He has received international recognition for his entrepreneurial achievements, environmental contributions, and service to science and society. He remains an active citizen with a significant social impact.

Georgios Plevrakis

Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean
Hanwha



Georgios Plevrakis serves as Hanwha's Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean. He leads business development activities across key markets including Greece, Turkey, Israel, Cyprus, Egypt, and Lebanon, focusing on strategic growth, fleet transformation, and energy advancement.

With over 20 years of experience in the maritime and energy sectors, he has held senior leadership roles including Vice President of Global Sustainability at ABS (American Bureau of Shipping), CEO of Hellenic Environmental Center (HEC), and Head of New Buildings, Power Plants and Turbomachinery at MAN Energy Solutions (now Everllence). Throughout his career, he has been at the forefront of integrating technology, regulatory insight, and commercial strategy to support the evolving needs of the shipping industry.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight



U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ORGANIZERS



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Kimberly Guilfoyle

U.S. Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic
U.S. Embassy, Athens



United States Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic Kimberly Ann Guilfoyle was sworn in on September 29, 2025, in Washington, DC.

Ambassador Guilfoyle brings over two decades of experience in law, media, and national political advocacy. She began her career as a prosecutor in the San Francisco and Los Angeles District Attorney's Offices, where she handled serious felony cases including domestic violence, sexual assault, and homicide. In 2000, she was appointed Assistant District Attorney in San Francisco, earning recognition for her work on victims' rights and trial litigation. Her legal accomplishments laid the foundation for a national media career, most notably as a co-host of *The Five* on Fox News, where she provided legal and political commentary on issues ranging from constitutional law to foreign affairs.

Ambassador Guilfoyle is a best-selling author, writing *Making the Case: How to Be Your Own Best Advocate*, and the delightful children's book, *The Princess and Her Pup*.

Most recently she served as the founder and CEO of Polished Rice, Inc. and Managing Member of Metropolitan Medspa LLC and KGT Productions LLC.

Beyond her legal and media work, Ambassador Guilfoyle has played a prominent role in national politics and public communications, having formerly served as a Senior Advisor to President Donald J. Trump and as National Chair, Trump Victory Finance Committee, Donald J. Trump for President, Inc.

Originally from California, Ambassador Guilfoyle graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of California, Davis and earned her Juris Doctor degree from the University of San Francisco School of Law. She currently resides in Florida and has one son, Ronan Villency.

Ambassador Guilfoyle is the 25th resident U.S. Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic and the first woman to hold the role.

Marina Hadjipateras

Founder and General Partner
TMV



Marina Hadjipateras is a Founder and General Partner of TMV, where she invests in early-stage companies reshaping legacy industries. Shaped by a 200-year family legacy in shipping and firsthand experience operating at scale, Marina brings deep industry insight and an operator's perspective to the founders she backs.

Prior to TMV, Marina played a central role in investor relations efforts surrounding Dorian LPG's transition to the public markets, driving investor communications and engagement across the process. She also founded Filotimo Partners, her family's private investment arm, where she developed and deployed a next-generation private equity strategy.

At TMV, Marina works closely with founders on go-to-market, strategic partnerships, and scaling within complex, trust-driven industries. Her approach is rooted in unlocking commercial pathways and embedding innovation directly into legacy systems, positioning TMV as an active partner to both founders and global operators.

Beyond TMV, Marina has spent over a decade as Vice Chair of the INTERTANKO Environmental Committee, working alongside the International Maritime Organization to advance sustainable solutions for global shipping. She is also a mentor with Endeavor, supporting high-impact entrepreneurs across emerging markets.

Marina has been recognized with the NYOT Innovators & Disruptors Award for Venture Capital and named among Lloyd's List's Top Ten in Finance. She holds a B.A. from Georgetown University and completed the United States Merchant Marine Academy's STCW program.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia  Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

U.S. MARITIME CODE

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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Semiramis Paliou

Chief Executive Officer
Diana Shipping



Semiramis Paliou is the Chief Executive Officer of Diana Shipping Inc., a leading global shipping company that specializes in the transportation of dry cargo goods. She has been with the company since 2015, serving in various positions including Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and member of the Executive Committee. In addition to her role at Diana Shipping, Ms. Paliou also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Diana Shipping Services S.A. the wholly owned ship management company.

Semiramis is also actively involved in various industry organizations and committees. She currently serves as the Chairperson of HELMEPA and Chairperson of INTERMEPA, organizations dedicated for the last 40 years to promoting the protection of our seas through education, activities, and projects for our seafarers and the broader society. Under her leadership HELMEPA now focuses on the Sustainable Development Goals as defined by the United Nations, to promote social, economic and environmental sustainability.

She is also the Vice president of the Greek committee of Det Norske Veritas, a member of the Greek committee of Nippon Kaiji Kyokai, the Greek committee of Bureau Veritas, Hellenic Advisory Committee of Lloyd's Register and the American Bureau of Shipping. Moreover, Semiramis is a member of the board of directors of the UK P&I Club, the Union of Greek Shipowners and the Global Maritime Forum.

Semiramis Paliou's passion for the shipping industry was instilled in her from a young age, having been born into a family with a long-standing tradition in the sector.

She holds a BSc in Mechanical Engineering from Imperial College, London, and an MSc in Naval Architecture from University College, London. She has also completed several executive education programs at Harvard Business School, including "Finance for Senior Executives," "Authentic Leader Development," and a certificate program on "Sustainable Business Strategy."

Semiramis began her career as a trainee ship surveyor at Lloyd's Register of Shipping where she was assigned field postings in Spain and Finland. Her experience at Diana Shipping Agencies S.A. further solidified her passion for the field, and Semiramis has since held numerous leadership positions throughout her career.

George Alexandratos

President
Hellenic Chamber of Shipping



George Sp. Alexandratos was born in Athens in 1973. He holds a BSc in shipping business from Plymouth University and an MSc in Maritime Policy from Cardiff University.

He is the director of Apollonia Lines S.A., a company founded by his father Spyros in 1974. Since 2013, George established, along with co-partners, a shipping fund called Blue water Maritime Capital focusing on investing in dry bulk shipping.

George Sp. Alexandratos is the President of the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping, elected since January 2025. He previously held the position of Vice President since 2017. He is also the General Secretary of the Hellenic Short Sea Shipowners Association since 2015. Additionally, he was elected as the President of the Piraeus Marine Club. In the past (from 2014 to 2016) he also served as the President of the Hellenic Hull Mutual.

He believes very much in synergies, and he is a strong supporter of the Maritime Hellas, the official Hellenic Maritime Cluster

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia  Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Stephen Schueler

Managing Director, European Maritime Finance
Chairman, Enerjen Capital



Stephen Schueler is Managing Director, European Maritime Finance. Chairman Enerjen Capital. President of the American Club Denmark, celebrating their 105th anniversary. Great grandson of the former U.S. Ambassador to Denmark.

Member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) - World Maritime University (WMU) Investment Committee Endowment Fund. Co-Owner of Nordic Storm (Denmark's American NFL Football Team) and Copenhagen Polo Club (Denmark's National Polo Team).

Danae Bezantakou

CEO Navigator Shipping Consultants
First Vice President, The International Propeller Club
Port of Piraeus



Danae Bezantakou holds the positions of CEO of Navigator Shipping Consultants , which exclusively represents a significant number of globally renowned Towing Companies and Shipping Agencies, operating in over 1,400 commercial ports worldwide with a fleet of more than 1,000 tugs. Moreover she is shareholder of KEFI S.A. & MATILDA HOTEL in Zakynthos Island. One of her biggest accomplishments is the organization of NAVIGATOR – THE SHIPPING DECISION MAKERS FORUM since 2001, aiming to enhance the open dialogue among the stakeholders of the Greek and International Maritime Clusters.

She is the Concept Founder of Young Executives Shipping (YES) FORUM - the platform of open dialogue among principals, executives, school & university students, recent graduates and young executives in Shipping and Sea Tourism Sectors. She is also the author of "Destination Sea," the first shipping guidebook for children aged 8 and up.

She also serves as the 1st Vice President of International Propeller Club (Port of Piraeus) and Director at Large of The International Propeller Club. She is the President of iforU-Greek Mentoring Network, which empowers small and medium women entrepreneurs through mentoring & networking since 2012, Member of the Maritime Committee of French - Hellenic Chamber, Board Member of the Hellenic Entrepreneurs Association and President of the Hellenic U.S. Alumni Association of State Department Programs.

She was selected as a European Young Leader in 2013 and as a Young Global Leader in 2015 by the World Economic Forum.

She actively participates as a speaker at shipping conferences, entrepreneurship events, and career days at schools and universities.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

The banner features a blue background with white waves at the bottom. A white shark is swimming in the water. Text is arranged in a hierarchy: event title at the top, date and location below it, main theme in large bold letters, and event type below. Logos for various organizations are displayed at the bottom.

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



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ORGANIZERS



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Miles Keeney Ritchie

Founder and CEO
Aloft Systems



Keeney-Ritchie is the founder and CEO of Aloft Systems, a U.S. company developing modular, autonomous wind propulsion to cut fuel consumption across commercial shipping.

With a background spanning aerodynamics, robotics, and manufacturing, he leads Aloft's work at the intersection of renewable energy and maritime efficiency. His experience includes hands-on development of purpose-built robotics solutions, aerodynamic control systems, remote sensors, and data-driven vessel analytics used to model real-world performance and optimize fuel vessel operations. He brings over a decade of expertise in hardware development, project management, and mechanical design in start-ups, including leading hardware development and new product introduction. Miles holds a Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Colorado Boulder and is named on six patents.

Anastasija Kuprijanova

Director of Business Development
Carbon Ridge



Anastasija Kuprijanova is Director of Business Development at Carbon Ridge, where she leads commercial strategy to bring carbon capture technology to market across the global shipping industry – working directly with shipowners, operators, and partners to move decarbonization solutions from concept to vessel. With experience spanning in ammonia-to-power development at Amogy and the launch of NYC Ferry with Hornblower Group, she brings a proven track record across emerging clean technologies and complex maritime operations.

Anastasija has been recognized as a Women in Hydrogen 50 Honoree by Hydrogen Economist and among Marine Log's Top Women in Maritime (2024). She holds a degree in Maritime Affairs from California Maritime Academy.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event

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IN COOPERATION: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026

Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

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U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event



AMERICAN-HELLENIC
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Sidney McLaurin

Founder & CEO
Fleet Robotics



Sidney McLaurin is the Founder and CEO of Fleet Robotics, a startup developing autonomous robots to groom and inspect ship hulls while enabling a more data-driven approach to hull maintenance and performance.

Previously Lime's first General Manager, he led rapid international expansion and now focuses on applying robotics to improve efficiency and sustainability across global shipping.

Hans Olson

Director of Business Development
Quartermaster AI



Hans Olson is the Director of Business Development at Quartermaster AI, a VC-backed maritime domain awareness startup building a distributed maritime intelligence network for commercial shipping, insurance, and national security customers. Quartermaster's SmartMast platform turns vessels and maritime infrastructure into real-time sensor nodes, helping close visibility gaps across global shipping lanes, detect dark vessels, support safety of life at sea, and provide evidence-grade data for operational and insurance use cases.

Hans brings deep experience across defense, intelligence, cybersecurity, and emerging technology. He has worked with DARPA, the Department of Defense, U.S. Special Operations Command, and the intelligence community to help transition next-generation technologies into operational use. He previously served as a Department of Defense Operations Officer and Navy Reserve intelligence officer, with multiple overseas tours, including two deployments to Afghanistan.

Hans has also held senior roles in government, academia, and the private sector, including Assistant Undersecretary for Homeland Security and Senior Advisor for Antiterrorism and Cybersecurity for Massachusetts, Senior Vice President at Teneo Risk, and roles supporting the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the UMass Lowell Applied Research Corporation. He holds an MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School, an MBA from Babson College, and a BA from the University of New Hampshire.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ORGANIZERS NAMEPA IN COOPERATION WITH THE SUPPORT Propeller CLUB MARITIME HELLAS SHIPPINGinsight

The banner features a blue background with white waves and a white shark swimming. Text at the top reads '5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026' and 'Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room'. Below this is the main title 'U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges'. In the center, it says 'Seminar at Posidonia' and 'Shark Tank Event'. At the bottom, there are logos for 'AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE', 'NAMEPA', 'IN COOPERATION' with the US and Greek flags, and 'WITH THE SUPPORT' of 'Propeller CLUB', 'MARITIME HELLAS', and 'SHIPPINGinsight'. A vertical 'easystyle CODE' is on the far right.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026

Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia



Shark Tank Event

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Sean Simons

CCO and Co-Founder
Robot Toolworx



Sean Simons is CCO & CoFounder of Robot Toolworx, turning fragmented technical documentation into interactive 3D Digital Procedure Models for heavy-asset industries.

Previously, Sean was an early-stage venture investor at NVP Capital, concentrating on maritime, aerospace, supply chain, defense, and other industrial markets. Before transitioning into investing, he worked hands on in aviation maintenance and scrap yards in northern New Jersey.

Matthew Ezekiel Riley

CEO and Co-Founder
Sidonia



Matthew Ezekiel Riley is the CEO and co-founder of Sidonia. Born and raised in Southern California, he became the first person from Santa Catalina Island to attend Yale University. Before Sidonia, he co-founded Vault Kinetics, a human performance technology company delivering analytics for athletes, first responders, and researchers nationally and internationally. At Yale's Planetary Solutions Accelerator, he worked with world-class faculty to unlock the power of regenerative forestry, advancing the viability and future of mass timber and sustainable building.

Driven by a conviction that innovation should work with the grain of natural design, Matthew has returned to his roots by the ocean. Now he's building Sidonia alongside some of the most influential people in maritime to ensure the ocean economy is as resilient as the waters it depends on.

5th TRADING IN U.S. WATERS @ POSIDONIA 2026
Thursday, June 4 | Metropolitan Expo Center | Central Seminar Room

U.S. and Greek Approaches on Today's Maritime Challenges

Seminar at Posidonia Shark Tank Event

AMERICAN-HELLENIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ORGANIZERS
NAMEPA

IN COOPERATION
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