HC/HC NEWS

New Program Emphasizes a Holistic Growth Experience

by Nayla Day

Hellenic College Holy Cross is an institution of higher learning where students receive an education based on Orthodox Christian principles. Deacon Nicholas Belcher, dean of students, says, “Hellenic College is the only place in the Western Hemisphere that offers an education based on the classical ideals of Hellenic civilization and the life of the holy Orthodox Church. Just as the Eastern Roman Empire was a multinational civilization built upon this synthesis of Orthodoxy and Hellenism, our school continues in this tradition by welcoming students from a variety of countries, ethnic groups and cultures to worship and study together on our Holy Hill.”

First-year student Gabriel Moes grew up in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. “In my search for colleges, I found that HC–HC was well known in many Orthodox communities around the world. In my time here, I hope to receive a higher form of education that will inspire and challenge me.” Moes plans to pursue psychology.

Theo Karcher, a freshman who grew up in Greece says, “HC–HC provides an exceptional opportunity to grow spiritually, which is crucial to the completion of my life objectives.” Karcher hopes to continue on to Holy Cross.

A new program has been introduced this academic year to welcome a diverse group of students to campus. The program offers a holistic growth experience that addresses their personal, spiritual, intellectual and social formation. Dr. Demetri S. Katos, dean of Hellenic College says, “This new program is called ‘Eisodos’ and it embodies the college’s educational philosophies.”

Deacon Nicholas says the Greek word eisodos was selected very carefully because of its meaning. “Eisodos is the term we use liturgically for an entrance. Eisodos was used when God’s holy people gathered and entered with the angels for leitourgia or common service.

Similarly, we welcome them to enter with us in this common purpose by living the life of a student in a Christ-like way and being educated for a life of faith and service.”

The Eisodos program unfolds over several weeks. A unique component of the program is called the “Pistevo Project.”

“In Greek rhetoric, the word ‘pistis’ originally had the meaning of an argument. In the Creed, when we say ‘Pistevo’ or ‘I believe,’ we are not only proclaiming our faith, but we are also making an argument about who God is and who we are meant to be. This argument has implications for how we live,” said Deacon Nicholas.

The first-year students of Hellenic College will be asked to write a reflection paper on what they believe about the world, and their faith. They will revisit these papers in their senior year to see how their world view has been challenged and enhanced by their educational experience.

Most students are from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, but one in five is not. HC–HC attracts many Orthodox Christians from other jurisdictions and around the world. Students who have attended represent the following Churches: Antiochian Archdiocese, Orthodox Church in America, Metropolitan of Hong Kong, Church of Greece, Patriarchate of Alexandria, Patriarchate of Bulgaria, Patriarchate of Moscow, and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

This trend continues as this year’s class represents different countries and students from different jurisdictions. They all enroll with the same purpose—to receive an education that integrates faith, education and service.

HC–HC has evolved from its origins as a place that only educated men for a priestly vocation to a higher education institution that also prepares men and women for leadership in their professions and in their communities.

“HCHC continues to serve in its primary function as the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese seminary. However, 45 percent of the students are undergraduates studying for a bachelor’s degree. The majority of those men and women are studying human development, elementary education, classics, management and leadership, and literature and history,” said Dr. Katos.