

National Philoptochos Society 2016-2018 Committee Report



Children's Medical Fund Luncheon

Chair: Anastasia Michals

Co-Chairs: Alexis Limberakis, Eleni Constantinides, Evellyn Tsiadis

Members: Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos Board

The Children's Medical Fund Luncheon is the principal fundraising event of the National Philoptochos Society, and since its inception in 1989, the biennial luncheon has raised over \$3.7 million for children's hospitals and research programs, as well as special programs that serve the needs of ill and fragile children, along with assistance to individuals and their families throughout the United States and in other parts of the world.

On November 11, 2017, over 750 guests gathered at The Venetian in Garfield, New Jersey to support the Fund. Under the inspirational leadership of Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos President Anastasia Michals, Luncheon Chair, and her co-chairs, Eleni Constantinides, Alexis Limberakis and Evellyn Tsiadis, the event was a resounding success. During the luncheon, grants totaling \$253,700 were awarded to 15 programs located in New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and the Philadelphia metropolitan area, all part of the Metropolis of New Jersey. The balance of the funds raised in association with this event will be disbursed to cover the medical expenses of needy children throughout the United States during the interim period until the next luncheon as well as to fund children's medical programs and projects at our National Philoptochos Convention. (Go to www.philoptochos.org/outreach/cmfsection for a detailed listing of grant recipients.)

The luncheon program featured the inspiring remarks of His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios, Geron of America, and a warm welcome from His Eminence Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey. Maria Vinci Savetierre, Esq., Executive Director of Deirdre's House, the Center for Morris County's Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect, one of the grant recipients, provided an impactful, realistic picture of the issue of child abuse and emphasized that the children need not only medical and physical, but also emotional and spiritual care. Anita Baglaneas Devlin, an advocate for addiction recovery, delivered a moving keynote address on the national epidemic of opioid addiction.

Laura Evans Manatos, award-winning journalist, served as Master of Ceremonies for the event, and students from Westminster Choir College from Princeton, New Jersey entertained the guests with a musical interlude including the liturgical hymn, *Ti Ipermacho* (Mighty Defender), sung in the original Greek. Frances Levas, Luncheon Chair of the 2015 Children's Medical Fund Luncheon, was the 2017 Honoree.

National President Maria Logus thanked the Metropolis of New Jersey for hosting the luncheon. In addition, the National Philoptochos and the Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos are deeply grateful to Metropolitan Evangelos of New Jersey for his support and to Mr. Demetrios Kourgelis, owner of The Venetian, for his extraordinary generosity.

As a result of the outstanding efforts of the Metropolis of New Jersey Philoptochos, the support of the National Board, and the generosity of the many sponsors who supported the event, **the 2017 National Philoptochos Children's Medical Fund Luncheon netted record breaking proceeds exceeding \$423,000.** Axioi!

As a society we have no greater responsibility than the protection, health and welfare of our children. The Children's Medical Fund Luncheon enables Philoptochos to provide continuing support to benefit these most vulnerable and fragile members of our society. With warm hearts, the record number of attendees left the 2017 Children's Medical Fund Luncheon newly inspired by the work we do and the difference we make through this most important Philoptochos ministry.