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AFS Launches New Scholarship Program for Greek High School Students to Study Abroad with Support from Stavros Niarchos Foundation

Grant funding will also support opening a permanent AFS organization in Greece

August 19, 2019 - The Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) has awarded a \$525,000 grant to AFS Intercultural Programs to launch the Global Citizen Scholarship Program for High School Students from Greece. The scholarship program will provide 50+ Greek youth with year-, semester-, and trimester-long scholarships to participate in an exchange program abroad.

AFS is a global not-for-profit network with operations in 60 countries and exchange programs in 99 countries. The new scholarship program will help Greek students develop the global competence needed to collaborate and communicate across cultures and create personal ties between people in other countries and Greece, both widening the perspective of Greek youth and enabling citizens around the world to get to know Greek culture in a positive and personal way. Research shows that AFS exchange programs lead to measurable and significant improvements in intercultural competence and influence outlooks on social issues. AFS alumni have greater respect for other people and their ideas, beliefs, and viewpoints, even when they are opposed to their own, and are more comfortable in different cultural settings, both professional and personal.

"Intercultural education prepares young people to take their place as future leaders and changemakers," said Daniel Obst, President and CEO of AFS. "To be successful in their professional and personal lives, students must learn how to actively engage with people from different cultures and be comfortable with perspectives and ideas that are not familiar to them. The Stavros Niarchos Foundation's generous grant demonstrates the Foundation's commitment to create and foster transformational and long-lasting impact on Greek youth and society."

"Education is not only about what goes on in the classroom, but also about the personal growth that occurs when young people encounter unfamiliar people and experiences,

and the new ideas these carry with them,” said Taylor Glazebrook, SNF Program and Communications Officer. “Early international exchange experiences often have profound effects on participants that prove transformative throughout their lives. SNF is proud to support AFS in making this possible for Greek students who wouldn’t otherwise have the opportunity.”

Full and partial scholarships will be available for Greek youth to attend school abroad and live with a local host family for one academic year, semester, or trimester. AFS will conduct a competitive selection process that focuses on diversity, academic merit, and attributes that best position participants for a successful program abroad, based on AFS’s many years of experience. AFS will also identify host families and host schools in the destination countries, and provide a guided intercultural education curriculum.

The online application portal will be available in late 2019 and the first cohort of scholars selected in early 2020. To learn more and sign up to receive updates, please visit greece.afs.org.

AFS has nearly 1,000 Greek alumni, but has not been active in Greece since 1992. Support from SNF will also allow AFS to set up a permanent, fully self-sustaining AFS organization and volunteer structure in Greece that will expand intercultural learning opportunities for schools, students, and families in Greece.

About AFS

AFS Intercultural Programs is a global not-for-profit network that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world. Each year more than 66,000 people take part in AFS educational programs in 60 countries worldwide. Our 12,000+ study abroad and exchange students are supported by over 50,000 volunteers, 8,500 host families and staff. Since its founding in 1914, AFS has exchanged more than 500,000 young people all around the world.

About the Stavros Niarchos Foundation

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) is one of the world’s leading private, international philanthropic organizations, making grants to nonprofit organizations in the areas of arts and culture, education, health and sports and social welfare. Since 1996, the Foundation has committed more than \$2.9 billion, through more than 4,500 grants to non-profit organizations in 124 nations around the world.

SNF funds organizations and projects worldwide that aim to achieve a broad, lasting, and positive impact for society at large and exhibit strong leadership and sound management. The Foundation also supports projects that facilitate the formation of public-private partnerships as an effective means for serving the public welfare.