

**Speech by Dr. Panagiotis Koulouvaris, who received the 1st Annual SNF Philotimo Award on behalf of the Mobile Medical Units**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the entire Mobile Medical Units team, I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to attend tonight's special event. It is a great honor for us to be standing in front of you this evening, as the first recipient of this very special award, the *Annual Stavros Niarchos Foundation Philotimo Award*.

This is not your standard gala night. The OXI Day Foundation has honored a number of extraordinary individuals, and we are humbled and proud to have been included as well.

Our team consists of 51 MD and PhD scientists. At the conclusion of these brief comments, we will be showing a short video to introduce our team and our work. Please allow me to bring to your attention three members of our team, who have joined me here this evening: the Gynaecologist, Dr. Bobotis, the health visitor, Ms. Vlassi, and the head nurse, Ms. Beltsiou.

Receiving this award, came as a great surprise to us, as we believe that we have done nothing more than our duty. This of course, is what philotimo in many ways is all about: a natural, deeply embedded sense of duty.

I would like, to share a few words with you about Philotimo

There is a certain magic and feeling in Philotimo.

There is something more, and that something more has no name, this mystery makes us Greek.

Philotimo makes a Greek stand tall and proud.

Philotimo is an individual's most outstanding act during his lifetime.

It is true that our homeland, Greece, is facing many difficulties.

Not only do we have the highest unemployment rate in Europe, but many also continue to believe that we do not deserve anything better, as we have been Europe's spoiled child, the one that deserves to be punished for behaving badly. It seems that Europe does not trust us any longer, and this loss of trust has resulted in our loss of confidence, even though most of the people in our country are not responsible for the current situation.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of our team, I would like to stress that we are trying hard to show everyone that we can overcome the difficulties, like our ancestors did, with dignity and honesty. We deeply believe in Philotimo and everything good that comes

because of it. You can easily see how important philotimo is, if you follow the heartbeat of everyday life in Greece.

It was in January 2011 when SNF announced the renovation of the pediatric ICUs in Greece. It was that moment that inspired our philotimo. We then realized that we should do more. With the generous support of the SNF, two ultramodern mobile medical units were put together. I would say two state of the art mobile hospitals. From that moment on, every six weeks we close our offices, leave our family and travel to one of the remote islands where we care for all patients free of charge. We perform microsurgeries and if patients need major surgery they are referred to a University Hospital in Athens under our supervision.

Finally, through our experience with the Mobile Medical Units more needs for kids emerged. So, we started creating teams to address the needs of these kids in remote islands. At the moment, we are in the process of establishing a team to set up an online network for kids with early learning disabilities and to provide training for teachers. In addition, this summer we will create a team which will train 100 physical education teachers to run a multisport camp for kids aiming at youth development through sports

In these difficult times, we are very lucky to have benefited from the work of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Its philanthropic actions, always manifested through a high level of professionalism, have played an important and vital role in helping our homeland enter a phase of regeneration.

Last but not least, the SNF makes us feel proud and decent.

Now, I would like to share with you a short video of our work in these remote islands.