

Thank you, Tony. And good evening, everyone. It's wonderful to be here, accepting this honor on behalf of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and my colleagues who are here with me tonight.

A crisis has brought us all here tonight. It was the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean and the SNF's support of the humanitarian response to this crisis in Greece and beyond. That support recently caught the attention of CUCS.

That support is the natural extension of the Niarchos Foundation's two decades of grantmaking. In our 20 years, and always within our capacity, we have supported efforts to help survivors of disasters in every part of the world - for immediate relief and for the longer-term. This emergency relief grantmaking is a small, but important, part of our work. Overall, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation has provided more than 3,500 grants with almost two billion dollars to support non-profits in the arts, education, health and sports, and social welfare in 111 countries around the world. And though it's only a fraction of this work, our crisis relief grantmaking highlights a key element of our work and our Board's decision-making: responsiveness and the flexibility to contribute in a meaningful way to the world's changing needs.

This history of responsiveness brings me to the other major crisis that introduced us to CUCS in the first place.

Five years ago, a colleague from Athens and I were on our way to meet with an organization working with the homeless here, and had a mini-NY workday crisis of our own. It was about 4pm, it was raining cats and dogs, and we needed to get a taxi to a part of the Bronx with no public transport options – and you know how that works during the shift change. Needless to say, that downpour made 2011 the rainiest on record for the city and we arrived as evidence of that, soaked through and through and late to our meeting.

The real crisis I am referencing, though, was the financial crisis that was starting to overwhelm a large part of Greece's population at the time. The Foundation, having just started supporting organizations working on hunger and homelessness in this city given the crisis which had taken shape here some years before, wanted to learn from these organizations to help the people of Greece, as well.

There at the table during our meeting was an individual that caught our attention. She was not directly connected to the group we were visiting, but contributed in a significant way to the conversation. We approached her afterwards to learn about her work and there it was that we learned about CUCS. She was part of the CUCS Project for Psychiatric Outreach to the Homeless. That summer we visited with the CUCS team and learned that, in much the same way that their one colleague demonstrated, CUCS was a strong partner, contributing to the work of so many others working in homelessness services – especially housing and healthcare services. A quick look around the room makes this clear – the government sector, corporate sector, non-profits, and philanthropy are all represented here tonight.

We learned a great deal from CUCS, became supporters of their work here, and through knowledge from them and their many partners in the field, were able to support the development of much-needed services in Greece, which are now helping people there overcome major challenges they face around employment, housing, and hunger.

But crisis situations have not just activated SNF. Crisis is in the CUCS DNA, as the organization itself was born out of crisis. In late 1970s New York City, when economic instability, crime, and poverty were on the rise, CUCS began its work. Over its lifetime, it has

developed real and practical solutions, brought together key players in the field, and provided services that now other groups around the country and world are replicating in their communities.

And yet not many of us lay people in New York City know about CUCS. Though CUCS is tackling two of New York City's greatest public health challenges – homelessness and mental illness – the people affected are invisible to many of us most of the time, and the issues can be easy to ignore. But as invisible as these issues may seem, we are still in crisis mode. Tonight, 61,000 New Yorkers, 24,000 of them children, will spend their night in a homeless shelter. Thousands more will sleep on the street. And mental illness, a major factor in street homelessness, is an important issue for everyone in our city – with one in five New Yorkers experiencing a mental health disorder in any given year, according to the City's latest report.

CUCS' work is of increasing importance, as it not only provides services to address these issues directly, but it supports, invisibly yet effectively, all its partner agencies in doing the same.

I'd like to close by thanking Tony and Julie and the entire CUCS team. Our Foundation's efforts are most valuable when they are in support of organizations like yours. Thank you for all that you do. We are proud to be counted among your supporters.

Thank you.