

Niarchos Foundation's New Program

TNH Staff

NEW YORK – The Stavros Niarchos Foundation has launched an initiative that aims to help Greece's most needy people during the economic crisis. €1,500,000 (\$2 million) will be dedicated to a pilot program focused on the region of Attica and the city of Athens.

The program is centered on three areas of support: provision of social housing services to prevent homelessness, operation of day centers to support the homeless, and distribution of food aid. According to a statement on the Foundation's website, www.snf.org, the Board of Directors "recognizing fully that the consequences of the extended financial crisis are now felt keenly across all strata of Greek society, approved in its recent meeting a series of grants

Continued on page 3

Niarchos Foundation Initiative Focused On Helping Greece's Neediest

Continued from page 1

for the purpose of contributing, to the best of our abilities, to addressing the country's acute social needs in the most effective way possible."

There will be a one-year initial pilot stage with a focus on "extensive and carefully-drafted evaluation mechanisms, and on potential collaborations between NGOs (both nationally and internationally), as well as between the private sector and local communities." The Foundation participated extensively in discussions with proven leaders in their respective fields, including Common Ground Community Solutions, Bronx Works, Coalition for the Homeless, City Harvest, Feeding America, and Food Bank NYC, as well as the with Ford Foundation and the Aspen Institute.

The Foundation noted with alarm that "the fiscal crisis in Greece has resulted in a sudden and dramatic increase in poverty levels across the country. The total population receiving food and other types of aid (shelter, clothing, school supplies, and medical assistance) in Athens is rising at an alarming rate. Despite high levels of home ownership in Greece, the country is also experiencing sharp increases in homelessness."

The program developed to address the crisis is innovative by Greek standards, both in



Stavros Niarchos (L) turned his family's grain business into a shipping empire. The Niarchos Foundation has offices in New

terms of its methods and its potential impact in Greek society, and "has been designed in accordance to best practices and after extensive discussions with organizations with long-term practical experience" in such matters. The Foundation declared that its purpose and philosophy is "to complement rather than replace the work of institutional organizations."

The nonprofit organization PRAKSIS will collaborate in the social housing program, which is aimed at supporting families

currently at risk of becoming homeless. Targeted support will be provided through psychological and social programs, financial education, and employment programs. "The program will focus on needs-specific support, with the emphasis on financial assistance, which will allow the families to maintain their financial independence and consequently their homes. The program will include assistance with home security and additional aid (food, clothing etc.), throughout this time period."



TNH ARCHIVES

York, Athens, and Monte Carlo. Andreas Dracopoulos, President (R), at his desk in New York.

Three day centers will operate in strategically selected areas of Athens in order to achieve maximum impact. Relief will be provided for those who are already homeless. The centers will offer basic services during the day to their visitors: psychological and social support, the use of bathing and laundry facilities, clean clothes, a place to rest, and meals. PRAKSIS is also part of this effort. They will provide skill building/employment support in addition to helping to access related services all

over Athens. There is a street work component to the program in order to reach homeless persons in need across the city.

Artos-Drasi (Bread-Action) is another nonprofit that will participate. By funding and supporting Artos-Drasi, the Foundation will make possible "the distribution of prepared meals to support other food aid programs in Attica, and the collection of excess food for distribution. Educational programs for children and young people are also an important part of the

program." Through collaborations with farmers and supermarkets, food will be distributed to families in need in selected areas in Attica and to a network of soup kitchens.

The program also includes an educational and training component for unskilled young adults in one of the most impoverished areas of Attica.

According to its website, the Foundation "is an international philanthropic organization, makes grants in the areas of arts and culture, education, health and medicine, and social welfare. While prominent in its support of Greek-related initiatives, the Foundation's activities are worldwide in scope. The Foundation funds institutions and projects that exhibit strong leadership and sound management and that have the potential to achieve a broad and lasting impact. We encourage grantees to collaborate, and we work closely with them to monitor their progress. In addition, the Foundation actively seeks to support projects that facilitate the formation of public-private partnerships as effective means for serving public welfare."

The Foundation has provided total grant commitments of € 9 3 3 , 0 0 0 , 0 0 0 (\$1,251,000,000) since its founding in 1996. It has made more than 2,100 grants to nonprofit organizations in 95 nations around the world.