



For Immediate Release

**2024 HELLENIC CHARITY BALL HAILED A BIG SUCCESS
BIENNIAL BENEFIT AWARDS SHOW & DINNER HONORED
TOP GREEK AMERICANS FROM ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY:
TONY ORLANDO, CHRIS DIAMANTOPOULOS, GEORGE FRANGADAKIS,
ALEXANDRA PATSAVAS with MARILU HENNER**

<https://elios.org/hellenic-charity-ball/>

SAN FRANCISCO (November 12, 2024) – The **Hellenic Charity Ball**, the Bay Area’s prestigious biennial black-tie event produced by the **Elios Charitable Foundation**, returned Saturday, November 9 and attracted 350 guests from across the Bay Area and nation to The Ritz-Carlton San Francisco. The elegant benefit evening - that overflowed with unabashedly Hellenic pride and joy - was hailed “a big success” by Elios President & Chair **John Gumas**.

The Hellenic Charity Ball celebrates and honors prominent Greek Americans who have made significant contributions to the entertainment industry. This year’s honorees included Emmy-nominated Hollywood film and television actor, animation voice star and Broadway stage veteran **Chris Diamantopoulos**; Hollywood’s multi-award-winning Special Makeup FX creator and Immortal Masks co-owner, **George Frangadakis**; and critically acclaimed Netflix Music Creative/Production Executive and Music Supervisor/Soundtrack Producer, **Alexandra Patsavas**. The celebratory evening was distinguished by the presentation of the inaugural **George and Judy Marcus Lifetime Achievement Award** to **Tony Orlando**, the famed GRAMMY-nominated iconic pop/rock singer, songwriter and music executive, who is of Greek-Cretan and Puerto Rican heritage.

Launching the festivities, Orlando surprised the assembled guests with a performance of his most popular song, “Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree,” enthusiastically proclaiming, “Tonight, we are among greatness and I am humbled to my core with this award ... I’ve never felt so proud of my Greek ancestry.” The evening’s festivities were guided by popular television (“Taxi”) and Broadway star **Marilu Henner**, who served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the award show and dinner, welcoming everyone to what she described as a “big Greek family reunion.”

Joining the 2024 Honorees were many distinguished guests including: **California Lt. Governor Eleni Kounalakis and Markos Kounalakis**; **Greek Consul General Grigorios Tassiopoulos and Kayci Tassiopoulos**; **George and Judy Marcus**; **Theadora Vriheas**; **Dr. Kenneth and Angie Frangadakis**; **Gerry and Jeannie Ranglas**; **John and Janice Gumas**; **Patrick and Vanessa Mockler**; **Sid and Nancy Ganis**; **Jim and Ann Gianopulos**; **Helene**

Alexopoulos; Ariana Savalas; brothers Bobby and Dimitri Vardakastanis; Judy and Steve Padis; Byron Scordelis; Angelo and Sofia Tsakopoulos; Andy Mastorakis; and Vicki Liviakis and Randy Fry.

Celebrity auctioneer **Liam Mayclem** led the black-tie dinner guests through a lively auction of luxury travel and premier dining opportunities all in support of the Elios Charitable Foundation's beneficiaries including the popular **Elios Scholars/Heritage Greece** program for youth. The Hellenic Charity Ball Chair was **Janice Gumas**; the Award Show Producers were **Frosene Phillips** and **Gig Xifaras**; and the Elios Charitable Foundation Executive Director is **Caterina Vasil Peterson**.

His Grace **Bishop Spyridon of Amastris** led the Invocation. Lively dance entertainment was provided by favorite Greek music group, **Mythos Band** with special guest, Grammy-nominated producer, songwriter, performer **Paul Psarras**, followed by **Big Crush**, the high-spirited pop/rock band; earlier during the cocktail reception, guests were treated to the musical sounds of **DJ G-Stav**. Redwood Valley's **Denise and Athan Poulos of Lolonis Family Vineyards and Winery** generously provided the Double Gold Medal award-winning wines served during the sumptuous 3-course dinner.

Originally set for the Palace Hotel San Francisco, the decision to move the event with less than two weeks was made in response to the ongoing labor strike and related protests at the hotel. Pivoting to The Ritz-Carlton San Francisco was decided after careful deliberation, ensuring both the safety and participation of all guests, and the continued success of the organization's vital fundraising efforts.

Commenting on the venue change, Elios Foundation President & Chair **John Gumas** stated, "After extensive discussions, we determined that relocating this year's Hellenic Charity Ball to The Ritz-Carlton San Francisco, was the best course of action to ensure the Ball's success and uphold our critical fundraising goals. Our commitment to supporting Greek American achievements and cultural heritage remains unwavering, and our pivot to a new venue allowed us to carry forward our mission without compromise."

Preceding the Hellenic Charity Ball, a welcome reception for sponsors, honorees and past honorees was held Friday evening November 8 at San Francisco's world-renowned Greek dining destination, **Kokkari Estiatorio** at Jackson Square, graciously hosted by **Dr. Kenneth and Angie Frangadakis** and **George and Judy Marcus**.

For more information on the 2024 Hellenic Charity Ball and the Elios Charitable Foundation, please visit <https://elios.org/hellenic-charity-ball/>.

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