Albanian-American National Organization

74th National Convention



Culture – Fellowship – Scholarship

Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

August 5, 6 and 7, 2022

ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

Since 1946, the Albanian-American National Organization (AANO) has been perpetuating the Albanian ethnic identity in the United States and Canada. With no religious or political affiliation, the objectives of the AANO are to maintain Albanian traditions and language and to engage in cultural, educational and social activities.

OUR MISSION

- Perpetuate our ethnic identity in America and Canada.
- Provide scholarships to students of Albanian descent.
- Educate people about Albanian history and literature.
- Maintain Albanian traditions.
- Preserve the Albanian language.
- Establish fellowship.
- Develop friendships.
- Instill pride in our roots.

TRUMBETA SHQIPTARE

The Trumbeta Shqiptare is the official AANO publication mailed to all AANO members. Through it, members exchange news and events from chapter to chapter. The Trumbeta also includes ethnic songs, recipes, historical and educational articles regarding language and literature and much more.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Our youth is our future. The education of our youth is of the greatest importance. For this purpose, the AANO Scholarship Fund was founded in 1950 to support the educational pursuits of students of Albanian descent.

ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

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2021 – 2022

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aanophila@gmail.com



Chairman's Address
74th A.A.N.O. Inc. Convention

Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue
Philadelphia, PA
August 5 - 7, 2022



It's been three years since we last gathered. It's great to be back! I'm sure everyone feels the same. We come to Philadelphia with renewed energy. We have a reinvigorated Philadelphia Chapter. The outlook is promising. This year we are dedicating the convention in the memory of our most recent President, John Lulgjuraj who died last year. We will honor him with a tribute of his life.

Through the hard work of our members in the Philadelphia area and the National Board we have put together a program of events and tours. We hope you have an opportunity to get out and see the historical sites that are in Philadelphia. With the convenient location of the hotel you will have the opportunity to easily travel to Philadelphia City Center and see Independence Hall, Liberty Bell, Founding Fathers Historical Walk, Museum of the American Revolution. The list is endless. Take advantage of the hop on and off bus tours. If you're into shopping a mall is nearby.

We have a full plate of entertainment for you this weekend. For Friday and Saturday night we have Albanian music performed by Kujtim Shehu & Kristina Marku with electric organ by Bujar Qato and clarinetist Pashko Marku.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the head of committees that helped organize this convention under the leadership of Lea Bitta for coordinating meetings and making sure assignments were being completed. Iris Maluka, Nilda Salavachi, Jana Foundos and Julia Black coordinated the music. Olga Titos and Ariana Jaupi handled our Ad Journal. Iris Maluka and Nilda Salavachi took on the assignment of reservations. Jana Foundos took take care of the silent auction. Julia Black headed up our cultural display. Lea Bitta and Olga Titos ran our publicity. Metat Idrizi, Iris Maluka and Julia Black developed the John Lulgjuraj tribute.

Thank you, the supporters of the Albanian-American National Organization! Without your attendance and generosity for the Scholarship Fund this organization would not exist.

My sincere best wishes to all of you over this convention weekend and hope to see you again in the future.

Lea Bitta Richard Rafail

Co-Chairpersons

National President's Message



Where will you be August 5, 6, and 7, 2022?

Hopefully at the 74th Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.'s National Convention, in Philadelphia, PA.

Hope that you have heard the good news*…… the Philadelphia Chapter was reactivated in March 2022.* **The Convention Hotel is the Philadelphia Hilton City Avenue.** This marks a milestone for the Albanian-American National Organization, Inc., because it is the 74th National Convention but in reality, it's the 76th year of our existence. And here we are back in Philadelphia, where the very first Convention took place in 1947 after its conception in 1946!

On behalf of the National Officers, Board of Governors, Scholarship Application and Fund Chairpersons, Public Relations Chairperson, Appointed Webmaster, Trumbeta Editor, and City Chapters of the Albanian-American National Organization, Inc., it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this 74th Annual National Convention.

I wish to extend a warm thank you to the Philadelphia Chapter for their support and cooperation and to the many friends of this Organization throughout the United States and Canada who have honored us by attending this Convention during Covid-19 and the loss of our late President, John Lulgjuraj. We are deeply grateful to the Albanian-American Community of Philadelphia for their efforts to make this Convention a success and thank them very much for reactivating the Chapter.

Besides the obvious of our striving to perpetuate this Organization through our Heritage, Language, History, Customs, Music, and Dance. Another important goal is helping students through, our Scholarship Fund. We must

continue to support and provide "Dollars for Scholars." A portion of the 50/50 Raffle this weekend will go to the Scholarship Fund. Those of you who wish to honor your loved ones, can also donate a Scholarship in their memory. Seek out one of the Officers for more information if you are interested in honoring the memory of a loved one and thereby also helping our Albanian students to achieve their educational goals.

Ju Falenderojmë për pjesmarrjen tuaj në këtë festë and for **"Helping us Help the Next Generation of Albanians"** and lastly for renewing and joining the Albanian-American National Organization, Inc. in an available City Chapter, starting a Chapter in your community or as a Member-at-Large.

Lea Bitta

Lea Bitta
National President
Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.

AANO National Queen's Message

Gëzuar!

I would like to thank all our board members, the hard work they put in to make this year's convention possible, and all our members who have contributed. I encourage you all to continue supporting our mission: to preserve our heritage, culture, and language and to promote higher education for our youth through our Scholarship Fund.

I am grateful to have had the support of AANO in the early years of my undergraduate degree, allowing me the opportunity to continue pursuing my academic endeavors and to network with other successful Albanian-Americans. The AANO Scholarship Fund is one avenue that can provide support for our youth during their higher education journey.

Thank you again for your continued support!

-Klea Gjonaj, AANO Queen



ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

AANO National Presidents

Year	Name	Year	Name
1946 - 1947	Vincent L. Theodos	1984 - 1985	Richard Rafall
1947 - 1948	Thomas Detskas	1985 - 1986	Richard Rafall
1948 - 1949	Thomas Detskas	1986 - 1987	Luan Banka
1949 - 1950	Dr. Augustus Valauri	1987 - 1988	Luan Banka
1950 - 1951	Castor Notskas	1988 - 1989	Luan Banka
1951 - 1952	Piro Spiro	1989 - 1990	Andrew Tanacea
1952 - 1953	Piro Spiro	1990 - 1991	Andrew Tanacea
1953 - 1954	Thomas Detskas	1991 - 1992	Andrew Tanacea
1954 - 1955	Castor Notskas	1992 - 1993	Andrew Tanacea
1955 - 1956	George Vasil	1993 - 1994	Andrew Tanacea
1956 - 1957	Peter Mallios	1994 - 1995	lrene V. Lepi
1957 - 1958	Piro Spiro	1995 - 1996	Jonathan Michael
1958 - 1959	Peter Borzuku	1996 - 1997	Jonathan Michael
1959 - 1960	Peter Theodos	1997 - 1998	Mary Anastas Tona
1960 - 1961	Peter Theodos	1998 - 1999	Julia Black
1961 - 1962	Demetri Plasari	1999 - 2000	Julia Black
1962 - 1963	Demetri Plasari	2000 - 2001	Philip Christo
1963 - 1964	Demetri Plasari	2001 – 2002	Philip Christo
1964 - 1965	R. Norman Peters	2002 - 2003	Philip Christo
1965 - 1966	R. Norman Peters	2003 - 2004	Philip Christo
1966 - 1967	James Lukes	2004 - 2005	Julia Black
1967 - 1968	James Lukes	2005 - 2006	Julia Black
1968 - 1969	Paul Costa	2006 - 2007	John Lulgjuraj
1969 - 1970	Louis Foundos	2007 - 2008	John Lulgjuraj
1970 - 1971	Louis Foundos	2008 - 2009	Harry Merty
1971 - 1972	Constantine Pillary	2009 - 2010	Harry Merty
1972 - 1973	Constantine Pillary	2010 - 2011	Ferit Nazarko
1973 - 1974	Constantine Pillary	2011 - 2012	Ferit Nazarko
1974 - 1975	Louis Pero	2012 - 2013	Ferit Nazarko
1975 - 1976	Louis Pero	2013 - 2014	John Lulgjuraj
1976 - 1977	Louis Pero	2014 - 2015	John Lulgjuraj
1977 - 1978	Nicholas Leacu	2015 - 2016	Julia Black
1978 - 1979	Paul Apostol	2016 - 2017	Julia Black
1979 - 1980	Paul Apostol	2017 - 2018	John Lulgjuraj
1980 – 1981	Paul Apostol	2018 – 2019	John Lulgjuraj
1981 - 1982	John Anas	2019 – 2020	John Lulgjuraj
1982 – 1983	John Anas	2020 – 08/2021	John Lulgjuraj
1983 - 1984	Richard Rafail	08/2021 – 2021	Lea Bitta
		2021 - 2022	Lea Bitta

ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

AANO National Queens

2019	Klea Gjonaj	Chicago, IL
2017	Georgya Borova	Chicago, IL
2013	Anxhela Mila	New York, NY
2010	Blerina (Vila) Lumaj	Detroit, MI
2007	Zamira Aliko	Detroit, MI
2004	Gabriella Aquilino	New York, NY
2001	Alexandra Liolin	New York, NY
1998	Lirika Mestani	London, Ontario Canada
1995	Alexandra Ahmet	Toronto, Ontario Canada
1992	Michelle (Pero) Vasil	Worcester, MA
1989	Laura Giantris	Worcester, MA
1986	Alexandra (Bendo) Fiss	Aston, PA
1982	Lisa V. Tasi	Easton, CT
1980	Sandra (Dimitri) Bisceglia	Worcester, MA
1979	Marlene (Koltse) Catanese	Niles, IL
1977	Barbara (Kelapire) Filis	East Williston, NY
1975	Cindy (Nicholas) Marcinkowski	Mt. Prospect, IL
1973	Cynthia (Vange|) Bradbury	Worcester, MA
1969	Cathy (Nicholas) Balinski	Mt. Prospect, IL
1966	Chrys Slider	Stamford, CT
1963	Nancy (Peters) Dhoku	Burlington, MA
1961	Pamela (Stavrou) Dove	Frederick, MD
1957	Barbara (Steffon) Clayton	Manasquan, NJ
1951	Dolores (Vishnja) Obert	Akron, OH
1949	C. Gloria (Lambert) Kesler	Worcester, MA



ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

AANO National Conventions

Year	City, State	Year	City, State
1947	Philadelphia, PA	1975	Albany, NY
1948	New York, NY	1976	Philadelphia, PA
1949	Worcester, MA	1977	Sturbridge, MA (Worcester)
1950	Bridgeport, CT	1978	Boston, MA
1951	Jamestown, NY	1979	Chicago, IL
1952	Philadelphia, PA	1980	Detroit, MI
1953	New York, NY	1981	White Plains, NY (New York)
1954	Boston, MA (Southbridge)	1982	Worcester, MA
1955	Bridgeport, CT	1983	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
1956	Hartford, CT (Worcester)	1984	Albany, NY
1957	Rochester, NY	1985	Cherry Hill, NJ (Philadelphia)
1958	Philadelphia, PA	1986	Boston, MA
1959	New York, NY	1987	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
1960	Boston, MA	1988	Rye Brook, NY (New York)
1961	Cleveland, OH	1989	Clearwater, FL
1962	Rochester, NY	1990	Cape Cod, MA (Worcester)
1963	Philadelphia, PA	1991	Stamford, CT (Bridgeport)
1964	Chicago, IL	1992	Detroit, MI
1965	Boston, MA	1993	Washington D.C.
1966	New York, NY	1994	Chicago, IL
1967	Washington D.C.	1995	Cambridge, MA (Boston)
1968	Albany, NY	1996	Cape Cod, MA (Worcester)
1969	New Haven, CT (Bridgeport)	1997	Tamiment, PA (Philadelphia)
1970	Hyannis, MA (Worcester)	1998	Chicago, IL
1971	Boston, MA	1999	Rye Brook, NY (Bridgeport)
1972	Chicago, IL	2000	Dearborn, MI (Detroit)
1973	New York, NY	2001	White Plains, NY
1974	Toronto, Ontario, Canada	2002	Boston, MA

Year	City, State	Year	City, State
2003	White Plains, NY	2013	New York, NY
2004	Clearwater, FL	2014	Naples, FL
2005	Schaumburg, IL (Chicago)	2015	Boston, MA
2006	Tirana, Albania (New York, Clearwater)	2016	Tirana, Albania
2007	Las Vegas, NV	2017	Dallas, TX
2008	Philadelphia, PA	2018	Washington, D.C.
2009	Worcester, MA	2019	Rosemont, IL (Chicago)
2010	Washington D.C.	2020	Cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
2011	Detroit, MI	2021	Cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
2012	Oak Brook Hills, IL (Chicago)	2022	Philadelphia, PA



ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

AANO Lifetime Members

Paul Apostol
Feti Batoya
Lea Bitta
Carolyn Boria
Barbara (Kelapire) Filis
Albert Foundos
Jana Foundos
Phillip Foundos
Louise K. George
Mary Hassan
Ruth Karchenes
Georgianne Kasuli
Richard Kasuli
Douglas Kosta Kotti
Arjan Kushta
Irene Lepi
James Liolin
Christina Liolin
Brian Matty
Virginia Phostole
Richard Rafail
Angela Ropi
Robin Ryan
George Taho
Lisa Tasi
Nina Tasi
George Vasil
William Vasil
Valerie Vasil
Yllidi Zyko

ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

AANO Inc. Memoriam Scholarship Fund

Honoring their life story for years to come:

Elnor & Louis Apostol
Albert & Joan Foundos
Luan Demirali
Bill Gounaris
Frances Selfo
Darren Kokolari
Eleni & Spiro Bitta
Perry Pero

Take advantage and contribute to the AANO Scholarship Memorial Fund to Honor a Loved One, who made a lasting impact on your life and the community. The influence of your scholarship will be immeasurable to the Albanian-American scholarship winners. The legacy of your loved one will continue as students benefit from what you provide to them and your loved one will make a lasting impact on the students' world.

Benefits of the AANO Scholarship Memoriam Fund:

- Aid the academic pursuits of the Albanian-American students
- Keep the memory of lost loved ones alive
- Donations are tax deductible.

ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

Scholarship Chairperson's Message

It is our pleasure to address you as the AANO Scholarship Fund Chairperson and the AANO Scholarship Application Chairperson.

The AANO Scholarship Fund has been in existence since 1950 and is the longest standing Albanian Organization in North America providing "Dollars for Scholars" for over 70 years.

This year, there were many exceptional qualified students. The problem is that we are seeing today's students having to struggle as the cost of college continues to rise.

Though we have helped hundreds of students, we have not as an organization reached our desired goal. In the past, many have supported the Scholarship Fund and we are grateful to you who have donated. We cannot reach our goal without your generous donations and we thank you.

We are pleased to announce the 2022 scholarship winners tonight. Since we did not convene for two years, we would like to acknowledge the past recipients from 2020 and 2021 also. Over $10,000 will be awarded to the six (6) 2022 scholarship winners. While this is outstanding and we as an Organization are proud, we are capable of doing much more with your help.

There is another way of raising "Dollars for Scholars" and we want to welcome you to establish a Memorial Scholarship. Here is a special way you can honor your loved ones, their heritage and perpetuate their roots by establishing a fund in their name.

To date we have Memorial Scholarships for Louis and Elnor Apostol; Luan Demirali; Joan and Albert Foundos; Bill Gounaris; Darren Kokolari; Frances Selfo; Eleni and Spiro Bitta; and Perry Pero. The families of these Memorial

Scholarships are very proud and honored to have their loved ones remembered this special way.

Thank you and we look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy Capstick
Scholarship Fundraising Chair
65 Lake Avenue
Unit #824
Worcester, MA 01604

Gayle Orlow
Scholarship Application Chair
31057 Rivers Edge Ct.
Beverly Hills, MI 48025





Congratulations 2020 AANO Scholarship Recipients

Kyle Bramson
Key Biscayne, Florida
Attending Florida State University or University of Michigan
Majoring in Finance and Minoring in Jazz Studies

Togay Atmaca
Middle Village, New York
Attending University of Chicago
Majoring in Economics and Political Science

Caroline Rumani
Elmwood Park, Illinois
Attending University of California, Berkeley
Majoring in Computer Science

Vanessa Shehu
Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania
Attending Bryn Mawr College
Majoring in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Eliza Alushi
Livonia, Michigan
Attending University of Michigan
Majoring in Biopsychology, Neurosciency and Minoring in Bussiness

Klea Ahmet
Birmingham, Michigan
Attending Michigan State University, Lyman Briggs College
Majoring in Neuroscience and Minoring in Sociology or Nutrition

Congratulations 2021 AANO Scholarship Recipients

Isabella Kostallari
Pearl City, Illinois
Attending IOWA State University
Majoring in Bachefor of Science and Veterinary Medicine

Daniel Shkëmbi
Chicago, Illinois
Attending Purdue University
Majoring in Engineering

Vanessa Shehu
Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania
Attending Bryn Mawr College
Majoring in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Sonola Burrja
Mamaroneck, New York
Attending Fordham University
Majoring in Bilogy; Minoring in German Language

David B. Taullahu
Wheaton, Illinois
Attending DePaul University
Majoring of Arts

Joseph Da Silva
Bevery Hills, Michigan
Attending Michigan State University
Majoring in Business Administration

Congratulations 2022 AANO Scholarship Recipients

Klea Ahmet
Attending Michigan State Universite
Lyman Briggs Honor College
Majoring in Human Biology and Physiology
Minoring in Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Leadership of Organizations

Drina Agojci
Attending Vanderbilt University
Majoring in Medicine and Minoring in Business

Sonola Burraj
Attending Fordham University
Majoring in Biology and Minoring in German

Isabella Kostallari
Attending Iowa State University
Majoring in Animal Scienes (Pre Veterinary Medicine)

Shtile Shuaipaj
Attending Yale College
Majoring in Architecture and Minoring in French

Geri Bakushi
Attending Cleveland State University
Majoring in Computer Science and Minoring in Mathematics



ALBANIAN-AMERICAN NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

AANO Scholarship Award Winners
1955 - 2022

Year	Name
1955	Nicholas C. Pano Dr. James L. Philip
1956	Diane G. (Chala) Michael Elene J. Pappas
1957	Dr. Theodore Lambert Dr. James L. Philip
1959	James Michael
1960	Joanne Spiro Pamela (Stavrou) Dove
1961	Mary Naum
1962	Barry D. Stavrou
1963	Pamela Apostol Paul (Doukas) Mahon
1964	Louis r. Pero
1965	Michael Christopher Richard Detskas Carol (Naum) Fotos
1966	Dr. Peter Anas Thomas Christo Michael Christopher Dennis Ginosi
1967	Thomas Christo Pamela (Apostol) Kukla Stephen P. Stefani
1968	John Anas Cheryl (Christo) Hemenway
1969	Catherine (Nicholas) Balinski Beverlee Vissar
1970	Catherine (Nicholas) Balinski Angela Ropi
1971	Robert Arthur Roberta (Christo) Alera
1972	Margarita (Boyatzi) Dempsey Nancy (Pepi) Capstick Kevin Christo
1973	Robert Arthur Diane Boria Diane Jance Carol Laska Carol Nache
1974	Nancy (Pepi) Capstick Patrice Dudula Karen Ann Michael Paul Mina
1975	Stephen Burdumy Dr. Ted Burdumy John Gusha Kathleen Kane Deborah (Kerxhalli) Creedon Dickson Sheh

Year	Name
1976	Dr. Ted Burdumy Keith Costa Dr. Dennis Dimitri Agim Demirali Sandra Dionis Joseph Harris Cynthia Theodos
1977	Stephen Burdumy Dr. Dennis Dimitri Mark Dionis Linda Herzog Vera Nako Dr. Barbara (Kelapire)Filis Valerie Kerxhalli
1978	Elez Biberaj Linda Herzog Vera Nako Wendy Scott Elizabeth (Themel) Horn Diane Wilan
1979	Barbara E. Biagas Linda Herzog Michael Kane Audrey Kerxhalli Laura Michael Vera Nako
1980	Dr. Carol (Arthur) Cola Patrice Dudula Linda Herzog James Robo
1981	Dr. Carol (Arthur) Cola Christopher Costa Robert Hadges Michael Kelapire Kola Mato Laura Michael Nina Tasi Gregory P. Vasil
1982	Donna Ann Bacon Christopher Costa Patrick G. Gallo Robert Hadges Doreen D. Katsis Laura Michael William H. Shomos Ericka Wasso
1983	Paul Costa Susan Joseph Christopher Costa Donna Ann Bacon David Prifti Elizabeth Vrato William J. Harris Gregory P. Vasil Deborah Sedares
1984	Donna Ann Bacon Elizabeth Dove Dr. Barbara (Kelapire) Filis Susan Quamo Deborah Sedares Kendra Tanacea Gregory P. Vasil Elizabeth Vrato
1985	Paul Dindy Dr. Barbara (Kelapire) Filis Michael Norman Steffon Victoria Vissar Elizabeth Vrato
1986	Dhuart Ali Michael Gregory Deborah Sedares Michael Steffon Victoria Vissar
1987	Paulette Mallios Callas Leslie Mallios Contoudis Laura Giantris Michael Gregory Stephen Nowmas Susan Quamo Kendra Tanacea

Year	Name
1988	Christa Anastas Paulette Mallios Callas Leslie Mallios Contoudis Amanda Dove Laura Giantris
1989	Alexandra Bendo Paulette Mallios Callas Leslie Mallios Contoudis Neki Demirali Amanda Dove Kristin Giantris Laura Giantris Michael Gregory Frank Lescas
1990	Laura Giantris Jennifer Gregory David Kukla Stephen Laska Beth Payton Michelle Pero John Sedares Catherine Sotir
1991	Andre Bendo Katherine Dove Mark Doku Lisa Gregory Michael Gregory Paul Laska Frank Lescas John Sedares Catherine Sotir
1992	Sophia Bell Andre Bendo Marc Bendo Sharif Chocol Amy Giantris Richard Haxhi Geraldine Idrizi Paul Laska Frank Lescas Susan Pando Stephanie Pero
1993	Andre Bendo Paige Cokos Katherine Dove Michael Gregory Stephanie Kosta Gregory Makeski Sarah Matto Catherine Sotir Emina Zagonjori
1994	Andre Bendo Jeanne Davidson Nadia Chochol Laura Giantris Geraldine Idrizi Haneme Idrizi Geralinda Kica Susan Pando Stephanie Pero Christian Telly Emina Zagonjori
1995	Paige Cokos Arian Giantris Geraldine Idrizi Adelina Kabashi Stephanie Kosta Emily Liolin Robin Metaj Stephanie Pero Peter Themel Arlinda Shtuni
1996	Brad Bardy Marc Bendo Kuitim Beqiri Paige Cokos Jason Costa Arian Giantris Shpresa Idrizi Stephanie Kosta Medija Muslimi Amanti Xhafaj
1997	Amir Qazim Arifi Brie Cokos Michael Duro Stephanie Kosta Tara Malick Nicole Pappas Michael Rouvina Peter Themel

Year	Name
1998	Brie Cokos
	Emily Prudente
	Nicole Pappas
	Suzanna Agolli
	Arthur Cane
	Brad Bardy
	Krista Tona Anastas
	Flori Prifti
	Monika Shehi
1999	Stephanie Kosta
	Brie Cokos
	Timothy Vasil
	Timothy Pappas
	Dina Wieland
	Alketa Hysenbegasi
	Mentor Mustafa
2000	Tom Elezovic
	Stephanie Kosta
	John Vukelj
	Gerti Tashko
	Brie Cokos
	Zheni Gjoka
2001	Allyson Themel
	Daniel Kristo
	Omela Rora
	Erinda Begeja
	Tana Lala
	Nik Gjurashaj
	Stephanie Kosta
	Alex Ivezaj
	Nicole Nelson
	Iris Bakllamaj
	Lindita Bresa
2002	Jondi Prifti
	Omela Rora
	Jennifer Rouvina
	Raina Filip
	Alex Ivezaj
	Danielle Masek
	Haneme Idrizi

Year	Name
2003	Alban Merepeza
	Alex Ivezaj
	Allyson Themel
	Nemi Nick Emini
	Nicole Nelson
	Danielle Masek
	Gjina Junacaj
	Erinda Begeja
	Faton Bislimi
	Petraq Treko
2004	Faton Bislimi
	Betim Deva
	Jonela Toci
	Travis John D'Angelo
	Roze Uka
	Gjina Junacaj
	Laret Rusha
	Klementina Sula
	Ana Bashi
	Nicole Nelson
2005	Andrew Stergio
	Michele Nelson
	Danielle Masek
	Nicole Nelson
	Juliana Basko
	Blerta Mandro
	Erisa Panajoti
	Arjon Bala
	Margarita Sumbulla
	Diana Djurasevic
	Anxhela Mile
	Bebka Gjoksi
	Sebastian Berisha
2006	Lidia Bardhi
	Ershela Durresi
	Endri Hoxha
	Alida Hysenllari
	Michele Nelson
	Alba Topallaj
2007	Zamira Aliko
	Fiori Alite
	Aldo Marini
	Mirlinda Caton
	Blerta Shtino
	Fiorela Canaj

Year	Name
2008	Michele Nelson Iris Mile Helena Bala Anela Zekiri Noela Leka
2009	Ermal Rapaj Alba Lika Rialda Kuc Elina Katro Helena Bala
2010	Cveliva Popa Erblina Koci Ana Dede Adam Nicholas Caroli Caroline Collo
2011	Kimberly Oswald Beltina Gjeloshi Linda Camaj Livia Marku Xhilda Xhemali
2012	Anxhelo Dhimitri Henris Zaimaj Helena Sumbulla Rebecca Barolli
2013	Eliada Zraj Anxhala Mila Kein Bejko Iliria Camaj Iva Hoxa Ferdeza Zekiri
2014	Wendi Guraziu Eliada Ziraj Adela Lilollari Atdhetare Ame Elio Daci Ekaterin Gjonaj
2015	Eneida Ziraj Margarita Sumbulla Diana Djurasevic Anxhela Mile
2016	Eneida Ziraj Arianita Krasniqi Evangelica Louis Purdy Nancy Gjata Edi Mosheqaj
2017	Deni Hoxha Klea Gjonaj Angela Kristo Romina Lilollari Gabriela Vukaj Lia Idrizi Gergji Camaj
2018	Albion Zogaj Albana Gllareva Kevin Fiss Vanessa Shehu Matthew Mrnacaj
2019	Cole Premtaj Vanessa Shehu Xhorxha Hoxha Sarah Bunjaku Ardit Breznica
2020	Kyle Bramson Togay Atmaca Caroline Rumani Vanessa Shehu Eliza Alushi Klea Ahmet
2021	Isabella Kostallari Daniel Shkembi Vanesa Shehu Sonola Burrja David B. Taullahu Joseph daSilva
2022	Klea Ahmet Drina Agojci Sonola Burraj Isabella Kostallari Shtile Shuaipaj Geri Bakushi



AANO Basketball Tournaments

Year	Host Chapter	Champions	Year	Host Chapter	Champions
1954	Worcester	Worcester	1978	Bridgeport	Bridgeport
1955	Philadelphia	Worcester	1982	Boston	Bridgeport
1956	Worcester	Worcester	1983	Waterbury	New York
1957	Bridgeport	Worcester	1984	Bridgeport	New York
1958	Boston	Worcester	1985	Worcester	New York
1959	Philadelphia	Worcester	1986	Philadelphia	Bridgeport
1960	Worcester	Worcester	1987	Philadelphia	New York
1961	Worcester	Worcester	1988	Waterbury	Bridgeport
1962	Philadelphia	Worcester	1989	Worcester	Bridgeport
1963	Bridgeport	Southbridge	1990	Boston	New York
1964	Philadelphia	Worcester	1991	Philadelphia/ NY	New York
1965	Worcester	Worcester	1992	Waterbury	New York
1966	Bridgeport	Worcester	1993	Worcester	New York
1967	Worcester	Worcester	1995	Bridgeport/NY	Worcester
1968	Philadelphia	Worcester	1996	Detroit	New York
1969	Worcester	Worcester	1997	Boston	New York
1970	(No tournament was held.)		1998	Albany	Detroit
1971	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	1999	Worcester	Detroit
1972	New York	Philadelphia	2000	Boston	Detroit
1973	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	2001	Waterbury	Detroit
1974	Worcester	Worcester	2002	Detroit	New York
1975	Philadelphia/ NY	New York	2003	Worcester	New York
1976	Worcester	Worcester	2004	National	Detroit
1977	Boston	New York			

74th Annual A.A.N.O Inc. Convention
Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue
Philadelphia, PA
August 5 – 7, 2022

Committees

Chairpersons	New York – Richard Rafail Chicago – Lea Bitta
Treasurer	New York – Richard Rafail
Executive Assistant	Chicago – Debra Manika
Publicity	Chicago – Olga Titos
Entertainment	New York – Jana Foundos Philadelphia – Nilda Salavachi Washington D.C. – Iris Maluka
Ad Journal	Chicago – Olga Titos Chicago – Ariana Jaupi Chicago – Lea Bitta
Reservation	Washington D.C. – Iris Maluka Philadelphia – Nilda Salavachi Chicago – Olga Titos
Cultural Room	Detroit – Julia Black New York – Jana Foundos
John Lulgjuraj Memorial	Washington D.C. – Iris Maluka Clearwater – Metat Idrizi Detroit – Julia Black
Sunday Night	Philadelphia – Nilda Salavachi New York – Richard Rafail
Band	Washington D.C. – Iris Maluka New York – Jana Foundos Philadelphia – Nilda Salavachi Detroit – Julia Black
Cafe	Philadelphia Ladies
50/50	Detroit – Julia Black New York – Richard Rafail

74th Annual A.A.N.O. Inc. Convention
Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue
Philadelphia, PA
August 5 – 7, 2022

Saturday, August 6th – Banquet Program

4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Reception

6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Cocktails

7:00 p.m. Dinner Program

Anthems

- Star Spangled Banner
- O Canada!
- Hymni i Flamurit

Master of Ceremonies

Welcome

Introduction of Head Table

Recognition of Past Presidents, Queens and award recipients
Speeches

- National President – Lea Bitta
- National Queen – Klea Gjonaj
- Scholarship Award Presentation – Gayle Orlow
- Awards Presentation – Lea Bitta, President
  - ✓ Lifetime Achievement – John Lulgjuraj
  - ✓ Community Service – Vlashi Fili

9:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m. Dancing and music

74th Annual A.A.N.O. Inc. Convention
Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue
Philadelphia, PA
August 5 – 7, 2022

Schedule of Events

Friday, August 5, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Meeting	Bala Room
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Registration	Foyer Room
7:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.	Cultural Room	Merion Room
9:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.	Dancing to Albanian Ensemble	Renaissance Room

Saturday, August 6, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Explore Philadelphia	Hotel Lobby
5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Registration	Foyer
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Cocktail (cash)	Gladwyne
7:00 p.m. – 12:00a.m.	Cultural Room	Merion
7:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.	Banquet	Versailles
9:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.	Dancing to Albanian ensemble	Versailles

Sunday, August 7, 2022

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Closed Meeting	Bala Room
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Open Meeting	Bala Room
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Farewell/Pastries & Cafe	Bala Room

Sunday Night

Bijtë e Shqipes School

2022 Gold Page

Best Wishes to Everyone at the 74th AANO Convention

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved Husband, Father, & Grandfather

PERRY R. PERO

(1939-2022)



Perry was a recipient of the AANO's 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award at the Chicago convention. As the President of the Chicago Chapter continuously from 1975, the chapter flourished. Perry's presence at the national level was strongly felt to foster and preserve Albanian friendships, culture, and scholarships. May his memory be eternal.

Diane Pero
Chicago, Illinois

Alexis Pero, Austin Burroughs, & Audrey Burroughs
Raleigh, North Carolina

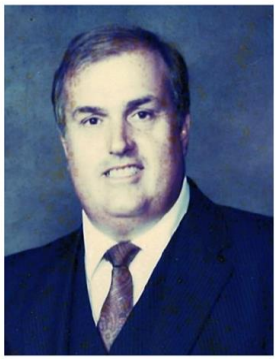
Arthur, Lauren, Ava, & Mila Pero
Oak Park, Illinois

2022 Gold Page

Best Wishes to Everyone at the 74th AANO Convention!

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved Husband, Father, & Grandfather

LOUIS R. PERO
(1945-2020)



Lou was a lifetime member of the AANO, holding many positions in the local Worcester chapter and at the national level, serving as the National President from 1974 to 1977, and awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009. He was truly dedicated to the organization to foster and preserve Albanian friendships, culture, and scholarship. May his memory be eternal.

Barbara Pero
Auburn, Massachusetts

Paul, Michelle, Charlie, and Sophia Vasil
Boston, Massachusetts

John, Stephanie, David, and Matthew Fournier
Colchester, Vermont

Steven Pero
Holden, Massachusetts

2022 Gold Page

We salute AANO on its 74th Convention!

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Congratulations on your 74th Anniversary AANO!

Much success with your Convention in the Birthplace of America!



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When visiting West Florida, don't forget to stop by!

Mirë Ardhshi!

From Mel's Diner Ownership and Staff

2022 Gold Page



John K Lulgjuraj

August 13, 1951 ♥ August 11, 2021

THOSE WHO WE LOVE DON'T GO AWAY, they walk beside us every day. JOHN REMAINS THE UNFORGETTABLE VOICE OF THE ALBANIAN COMMUNITY.

Urimet me te mira per te gjithe anataret e AANO!

THE LULGJURAJ FAMILY

Recipient of the AANO's
"2022 Lifetime Achievement Award"



John Lulgjuraj is being posthumously awarded the Albanian-American National Organization's lifetime achievement award for 2022. John greatly merits this honor because he basically represented all good things that are "Albanian". From an early age and throughout his entire lifetime he promoted the culture and heritage of Albanians and fought tirelessly for causes to do with Albanians regardless of where they resided.

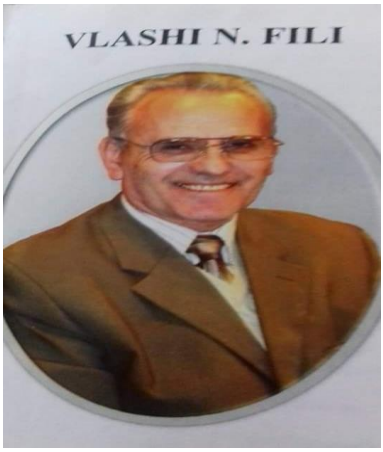
John was an accomplished person academically and in his career. He excelled at both. He started a radio program that focused on the history and culture of Albania in the early 1970's in Michigan. He positively impacted many families with this endeavor. He attended events in Washington, D.C., and dealt with U.S. congressman to fight for human rights in Albania; Kosovo; Montenegro.

Most near and dear to our hearts was the fact that he was at the time of his death the current president of our organization, the Albanian-American National Organization, the oldest one in the United States, which he served tirelessly for a number of years.

For these reasons, and many more we, as an organization, are honored to have John join the ranks of our esteemed lifetime achievement recipients and receive this award of which he is so deserving.

Recipient of the AANO's
"2022 Community Service Award"

Këshilli BIJTË E SHQIPES vendosi që çmimin Community service award ti jepet zotit VLASHI FILI.



Z. Vlashi Fili eshte nje nga themeluesit e shoqates "Bijte e Shqipes" Philadelphia. Z. Fili ka qene sekretar i Shoqates qe nga krijimi i shoqates ne vitin 2002, deri në Shtator 2021. Z. Fili ka dhene nje kontribut te çmuar në ecurine e punes se shoqates dhe te shkolles shqipe "Gjuha Jone" ne Philadelphia.

Z. Fili eshte anetar i Lidhjes se Shkrimtareve Shqiptar ne Bote si edhe i Klubit te Shkrimtareve Shqiptar ne Bote ''Drita'' ne Athine. Gjithashtu Z. Fili eshte edhe anetar i Shoqates se Shkrimtareve dhe Poeteve Shqiptaro - Amerikane me qender ne Nju Jork. Z. Fili ka bashkepunuar me disa gazeta dhe revista ne disa vende te botes si: ''URA'' dhe ''Tema Javore'' ne Prishtine, ''Pegasi'' dhe ''Pelegrin''ne Athine, ''Albanezul'' ne Bukuresht, ''Shqip.Dk'' dhe ''albadansk.dk'' ne Danimarke, ''Fjala e Lire'' ne Londer, ''Tribuna Shqiptare'' ne Montreal, revista ''Kuvendi'' ne Detroit si edhe ''Illyria'' dhe ''Dielli'' ne Nju Jork. Vlash Fili eshte autor i librit teknik ''Shpimi i Puseve te Naftes e Gazit'', i historikut te sporteve ne Kucove ''Naftetari ne vite'', i romaneve ''Guva e Pyllit'', ''Dallget'' dhe ''Zemer Nene.'' Z. Fili eshte autor i disa dhjetra novelave, tregimeve dhe shkrimeve te tjere publicistike ne proze e poezi.

Me shkrimet, poezite dhe librat e tij ka pasuruar dhe ndikuar në rritjen e vlerave kulturore e artistike te kombit tone.

Congratulations to the A.A.N.O.

Best Wishes to the A.A.N.O. for a Successful 2022 Convention

Për Shumë Vjet!

Remembering John Lulgjuraj, Louis Pero and Perry Pero for their many contributions to the success of the A.A.N.O.

I Përjetshëm Kujtimi i Tyre!
May Their Memories be Eternal!

The Worcester Chapter
of the
Albanian-American National Organization



Gëzuar and Faleminderit AANO National
for hosting a memorable 74th AANO convention!

Our congratulations to the 2022 Honorees
and Scholarship Recipients.

Our enthusiasm and
Albanian/American spirit
remain strong.

The New York Chapter
of the

Albanian-American National Organization

Thank You Philadelphia for Hosting the 2022 Convention!

Happy 74th Anniversary AANO!

We wish all the AANO members and guests a

Fun Time

in Philadelphia and a successful Convention

The Sunshine Chapter
of the AANO
Clearwater - Florida



CONGRATULATIONS To The AANO

The Convention is back!

The 74th convention is being hosted by the National Board

In Philadelphia, the site of the AANO's first convention in 1947.

The AANO Albany Chapter wishes continued success to the AANO!



Congratulations to the Philadelphia Chapter hosting the Albanian-American National Organization AANO 74th National Convention

All the best from the AANO DC CHAPTER

THE CHICAGO CHAPTER

WISHES THE A.A.N.O.

A SUCCESSFUL 74TH NATIONAL CONVENTION

IN PHILADELPHIA, P.A.



**Don't forget to make plans now to celebrate the 75th next year.

We wish to express our gratitude to the A.A.N.O Board for your efforts during an extremely difficult period of time.

Our past experience with Philadelphia has been excellent and we look forward to another memorable, happy experience.

Rroftë Shqipëria!

The Detroit Chapter of AANO



Congratulations on the 74th AANO National Convention! Thank You for your continued work and dedication to the Albanian-American Community!

The Philadelphia Chapter.



Looking forward to a great 74th Convention after
two years of postponement

Richard Rafail

Samantha and BJ Gobena
Quinn, Damien and Jordan
Stephanie and William Angarano
Valentina and Giavella



"Urime" to the AANO on celebrating
its 74th National Convention!

Thank you, Philadelphia Chapter, for being
our gracious host. It's always a pleasure to reunite
with friends made over the years.

Congratulations to this year's Honorees and
Scholarship Winners. You deserve to be recognized.
Our community is very proud of you.

Për Shumë Vjet, Gëzuar!

THE FOUNDOS FAMILY

New York and California

Lou, Linda, Steve and Lauren
Mark, Amy, James and Evan

Wishing the AANO a successful 74th National Convention in the Brotherly Love City of Philadelphia.



Spiro and Eleni Bitta

The **Bitta** and **Nicholas** families thank the **AANO** for the many years our parents had at the Conventions.

Për shumë vjet!

The Regency Korçë Hotel
Here to Serve You...



We are inspired by your dedication, enthusiasm and spirit with which you embrace your heritage.
Gëzuar as you celebrate your
74th National Convention in Philadelphia!

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Korçë, Albania
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GEZUAR PERVJETORIN!

CONGRATULATION TO AANO ON THEIR 73RD ANNIVERSARY

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Congratulations to the A.A.N.O.

celebrating the 74th Anniversary National Convention

in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Best Wishes for a

Successful Convention

Olga & Victoria Titos



AANO, Congratulation on Your 74th National Convention.

With Our Best Wishes for a Successful Event.

St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church
126 Morris St., Southbridge, MA

Villa Italia Pizzeria: A Slice Of Italy In Largo

Villa Italia Pizzeria is a family-owned and locally-operated pizzeria. The Italian magic is created in a cozy and family-oriented atmosphere, making it very welcoming to local families and tourists alike. Villa Italia Pizzeria offers a large range of food, from pizzas to salads, and even delicious sandwiches. There is something for every taste… as long as you are fond of Italian cuisine!



Award Winning Pizza

Come try their award-winning pizzas, with a discount for all members of AANO Inc!

Best Wishes for a Successful 74th Convention

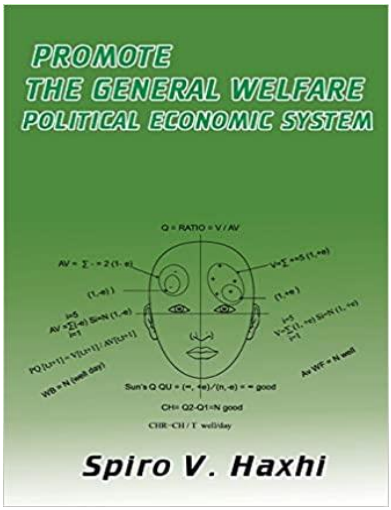
Spiro V. Haxhi



Spriro Vangjel Haxhi was born in 1944, in Tirana, Albania. After graduating in mechanical engineering, he worked in manufacturing and assigned the task of technical and economic management. Later he worked in research and design, mainly in the field of quality control of products and services.

From 1984 – 1994, he worked at the Institute for Military Research and Design in Tirana. In 1996, he emigrated to the USA to develop his quality theory.

We congratulate him on his recent publication of his book "Promote the General Welfare Political Economic System"





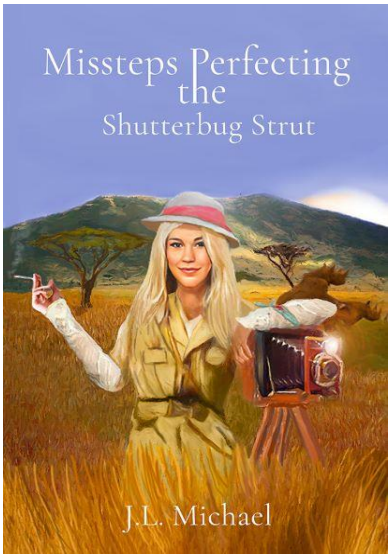
CONGRATULATIONS ON THE AANO'S

74TH CONVENTION

"THANK YOU FOR BRINGING US TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE OUR HERITAGE"

PER SHUME VJET GEZUAR

Jim & Paula Bendo
Alexandra, Robert, Andrew, Caroline, Kevin Fiss
Marc, Christi, Liam, Maddie, Aidan Bendo
Andre, Christine, Lauren, Allison Bendo



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Rroftë A.A.N.O.

J. Michael, AANO National President, 1995-1997.



Urime ardhjen e Konventës së 74-te AANO dhe përjetësimin e gjuhës, traditave dhe trashegimisë Shqiptare!

Mirë se Vini në Filadelfia!

Dr. Geroge Zeo

Gëzuar 76 - Vjetorin AANO!
Enjoy the City of Brotherly Love!



Metat and Emine Idrizi

Thank you AANO for providing our family with many beautiful memories and friendships.
Edhe 100 vite të tjera me sukses dhe lumturi

Congratulations for a successful 74th Convention in Philadelphia!

In loving memory of our Parents
Gus and Alfreda Gorguze

William and Gayle Orlow, August and Mia
Tom and Diann Gorguze
Amy daSilva, Lucas and Joseph

Welcome 74th AANO Convention to Philadelphia

Celebrating our Albanian Heritage and Family!

Former Scholarship Recipients:
Paige Cokos, Brown University '97
Brie Cokos, Columbia University '01

Always proud to be an Albanian-American!
Cokos Family

Congratulations on the AANO's 74th Convention!

Gëzuar!

Marc C. Bendo
Attorney at Law
Member of PA & NY Bars
1704 Locust Street, Third Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Email: bendolaw@yahoo.com
Tel: 215-790-1220 Fax: 215-790-1133



In Loving Memory of My Parents

Steve & Eleni S. Pero

and

My Brothers

Perry R. Pero & Louis R. Pero

“Best Wishes for a Successful 74th AANO Convention”

Shirley A. Pero

Worcester, Massachusetts



Congratulations to the A.A.N.O. on its 74th Convention!

In Loving Memory of
Our Parents and Grandparents

Thomas and Alexandria Laska

Wife, Mother and Sister-in-Law

Christine Laska

Carol, Robert, Philip, Kevin, and Kerry Laska

Worcester, MA Billerica, MA



Congratulations to the AANO on the 74th National Convention in Philadelphia on August 5, 6 and 7th, 2022!!!

In loving memory of and to honor our family:

Louis (Xheka) Apostol 1903-1992
Born in Vithkuq, Korçë

Elnor (Engwer) Apostol 1919- 1992
Main founder of the AANO Albany Chapter

Dhimitra (Xheka) Kita 1928-2016

Janet (Apostol) Baloglou 1939-2020

Alexandra (Apostol) Lemoine

Paul Apostol

Louise (Apostol) Mabin

A memorial tribute

to past Lifetime Achievement Awardees

in the Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.

Albert Foundos

John Lulgjuraj

Louis Pero

Perry Pero

Well wishes for another successful Convention for the AANO. It has been many years since my many years of involvement but I always have to thank those of you who keep this organization going.
Gëzuar AANO!
Helen & Marc Tomaso



76th Anniversary Celebration of the
Albanian-American National Organization (1946 – 2022)

As we gather at this, the 74th National Convention of the Albanian-American National Organization, Inc. (A.A.N.O.), here at the Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue, in Philadelphia, to celebrate the 76 years of this organization, let us reflect back to the beginning ...

The seeds of the A.A.N.O. we are planted sixty years after the first Albanian, Koli Kristofor, arrived on the shores of the United States of America in 1886.

On Sunday, December 15, 1946, twenty-seven young men and women, coming from nine cities of the United States of America, gathered around in St. Nicholas Church Hall in New York City. They wanted to find out just what the Albanian-American youth most desired in the way of promoting unity among the Albanians of America.

They learned that the people were greatly concerned and interested in the following:(1) To promote good citizenship, good fellowship, social activities, and material benefits; (2) To stimulate cultural and educational relations and to maintain the Albanian traditions; and (3) Plan for greater unity and the betterment of the Albanian people in America. With these objectives, the groundwork was laid, and the A.A.N.O. was formed. The first A.A.N.O. Convention was held on October 18 & 19, 1947 at the Broadwood Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at which time the constitution was adopted (at that time the A.A.N.O. was called the American-Albanian Youth Organization). The first National President was Vincent Theodos of Bridgeport, Connecticut. In that one event, all of a sudden various and diverse Albanian-American groups from New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Worcester, and other cities in the United States found themselves physically present at one function - committed to support the A.A.N.O.

The list of cities in which the annual Conventions were held grew: New York, Worcester, Bridgeport, and on and on. At each new Convention site the numbers grew; Albanians local to the Convention attended, participated and engendered their family's commitment to the A.A.N.O. All Albanian-Americans, many with their own distinct religious heritage transposed from the Balkans to America, many with their various political points of view as to Albania and as to America, learned that the A.A.N.O. was the single, unique, Albanian ethnic organization that deemphasized these differences and, instead, emphasized the sameness of a people, the Albanian people.

In 1950, four years after its founding, the A.A.N.O. extended a strong hand of support to the present and future generations of young Albanian-Americans by establishing the A.A.N.O. Scholarship Fund. Its founding principle was simple, yet expressive of this venture's lofty purpose: "Sa më tepër Shqiptar të edukuar jemi ... Sa më tepër Shqiptar jemi ne." The more educated Albanians there are ... The more Albanians we are." Through this part of the A.A.N.O. experience, the dreams of Koli Kristofor and the thousands of Albanian immigrants who followed him have been realized. The scholarship dollars have served to place the young Albanians not in the factories, kitchens, and stockrooms of our struggling forefathers, but rather to have placed them in the halls of academia, law, medicine, science, and government. The first scholarships were awarded in 1955 to Nicholas Pano of Malden, Massachusetts and Dr. James L. Philips of Worcester, Massachusetts. The A.A.N.O. has truly served to not only meet its goal of assisting to educate more Albanians, but it has also served to strengthen America by its commitment to education. We acknowledge its successes at our 72nd Convention and heartily anticipate the accomplishments that it will foster for generations to come.

The A.A.N.O., chartered in 1951 in the State of New York, currently is composed of ten chapters: Albany, Boston, Chicago, Clearwater, Dallas, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, Worcester and Washington D.C. At one time, the following chapters were in existence: Dixie, Jamestown, Philadelphia, Rochester, Southbridge, Toronto and Waterbury. The A.A.N.O. is an organization that has had volunteerism its hallmark and its strength. From the National President, the National Officers, the National Board of Governors, Scholarship Fund Chairpersons, the National Queen, the Editor of the news publication, the keeper of the national files, local Chapter Presidents, Officers, and Members, thousands upon thousands of hours of unselfish volunteer effort have been invested in this national movement of ethnic reaction and pride. All have served without compensation, most without recognition, but the fruits of their labors have been the repeated successful Conventions, Basketball Tournaments, Queen Pageants, and local chapter activities such as ski weekends, dude ranch weekends, plays, dinners, dances, bingo events, bake sales, cultural events ... and the list goes on and on. All of us have shared in their successes and at our 72nd Convention, we applaud our A.A.N.O. leaders of the past and present and encourage our future A.A.N.O. leaders.

The Annual Convention has been the highlight of the A.A.N.O. year. Few loyal supporters could think of anything else to replace the activities for the first weekend in August. The sites have differed, from the large city hotels of the past with their grand ballrooms to the new city hotels and their contemporary facilities, including resorts such as the site of the 50th Convention -Cape Cod, and then we celebrated our 60th Convention in the capital of our ancestral homeland -Tirana, Albania. The most common Convention complaint by most attendees is simply that the weekend flies by too quickly. Well, the 50th Convention was a 5-day Convention and the 60th Convention was a 4-day celebration, and hundreds extended their visit in

Albania. In many respects, all Conventions are alike ... old friends are seen again, new acquaintances are made and friendships are created, and new points of view presented and heard. The Sunday chit-chat at any Convention always centers around where the next Convention will be held. By the time the last piece of baklava has been eaten at the reception following the annual Convention meeting, plans have already been made for the next event, addresses exchanged with new friends, and old friends reassured that "we'll meet again next year."

The A.A.N.O. also sponsors Queen Pageants as part of its social program. The first Queen was crowned in 1949 in Worcester, Massachusetts. C. Gloria (Lambert) Kesler of Worcester, Massachusetts was crowned Queen of Shqiptar (as it was known at that time). Since then, a total of twenty-four young women of Albanian descent have worn the crown of the A.A.N.O. Queen. During their reign, they have been the official hostess of the A.A.N.O., welcoming people at National events and also assisting at events. In addition to true Albanian beauty, all have shared a common trait - and unwavering and proud representation of our Albanian ethnic character.

An A.A.N.O. Basketball Tournament was something to behold. Since the first A.A.N.O. Basketball Tournament held in 1954 in Worcester, Massachusetts, with the Worcester team winning the championship that year, the month of February has been witness to a cavalcade of Albanian sports heroes. lf one were to doubt the competitive and fierce nature of the Albanians of history, one need only attend an annual A.A.N.O. Basketball Tournament game to see that *our* national character lives 011. Consistent with the true spirit of athletics, the competitors of the afternoon meet at the evening dinner-dance to become friends. This event provided a means by which the young Albanian-Americans, from different chapters and cities, could meet, compete, and become supporters of the A.A.N.O.

One of the most vital functions of the A.A.N.O. has been the area of its publications. From the early days of the A.AN.O.'s founding up through 1952, the "Shqiptari" was a quarterly magazine with interesting and informative content, a quality of writing and wonderful artwork. After a lull, the A.A.N.O. in 1963 began to publish the "Trumpet," which later became the “A.A.N.O. Journal," then reverted back to the "Trumpet," and now it is the "Trumbeta Shqiptare" which continues today as a well-written, informative link between chapters and individuals.

Through it, we all share in the news of the Organization and the accomplishments of our individual members. All in all, today's "Trumbeta Shqiptare," like the A.A.N.O. publications of the past, is like a letter from one's family, in this case on A.A.N.O. "family." The latest A.A.N.O. information can be found on the internet, www.AANO.org.

The '90's brought us into a new era - the "doors" of Albania opened, and we saw a new influx of arrivals from Albania who are attending and participating in the A.A.N.O. activities. Many have entered colleges and

universities, and the A.A.N.O. is assisting them in their endeavors to succeed by awarding them specific scholarships.

The A.A.N.O. is honored to be the first Albanian-American organization in the United States and Canada to go to its ancestral homeland, Albania.

Over four hundred conventioneers traveled from every major city in the United States and Canada to celebrate the A.A.N.O.'s 60th anniversary, to trace the footsteps of our Illyrian ancestors, to visit historical Krujë (the home of Skënderbeu, our National Hero), and to visit our own ancestral city, town, village, or hamlet.

Our 69th Anniversary was celebrated at The Hub – Boston, hosted by the Boston Chapter.

For our 70th Anniversary we again enjoyed the warmth and the fantastic hospitality of people of Tirana. We were honored by the President of Albania, his Excellency, Bujar Nishani, who was our honored guest at the Convention and as well as the representatives of the American Embassy, led by Deputy Chief of Mission David Muniz and the US Federal Prosecutor, working with the US Embassy, Mr. John Junçaj.

Our 71st Anniversary took us to the great city of Dallas, where we met a great Albanian-American community and started our 10th Chapter. The hospitality of the Albanian-American community of Dallas was extraordinary, where we established many great friendships.

Albanians from across the U.S. descended on Washington D.C for the 72nd Annual A.A.N.O. Convention. This was our first return to Washington since 2011. The weekend was arranged with multiple activities for the attendees. The convention was dedicated in the memory to our national hero, Gjergj Katrioti-Skënderbeu, who died 550 years ago. Of course, being in the nation's capital, we were honored with the presence of the Albanian Ambassador.

Our 73rd Anniversary took us to the great city of Rosemont, Illinois, where we met a great Albanian-American community. Numerous attractions in the area kept convention goers busy when they were not directly involved in the AANO's Convention program. The festivities kicked off Friday night with a reception, cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and Albanian music. Dancers filled the dance floor all night while others established contact with friends and enjoyed the spectacular Cultural Room. Saturday evening began with a cocktail hour followed by a formal greeting from our Grupi Arberia dance group as our guests funneled into the ballroom. All dressed up in Albanian costumes, and ranging in age from 6 to young adults, Grupi Arberia performed later that evening demonstrating valles from four distinct regions in Albania, the performance was spectacular.

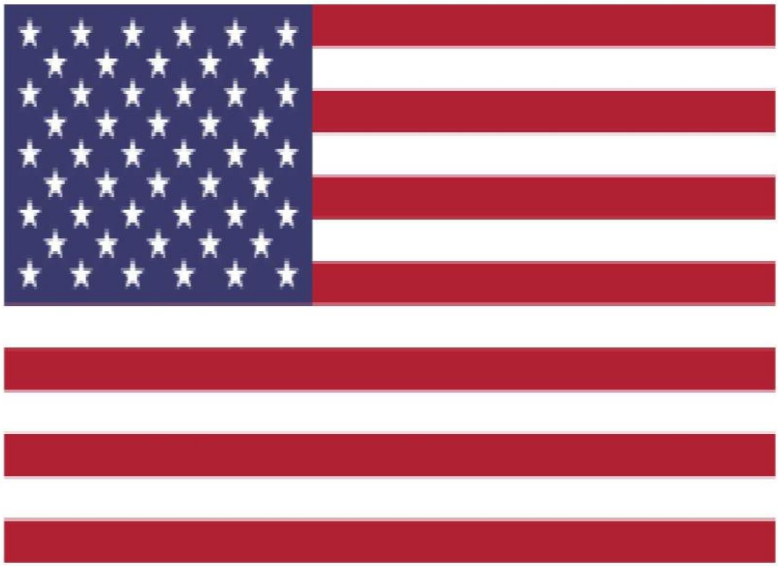
As an organization, the A.A.N.O. continues to be in transition, awaiting the new arrivals' establishment in America so that they may continue the fervor of our ethnic roots to preserve them in the 21st Century with the same goals and aspirations that were formulated seventy-three years ago.

May the A.A.N.O. continue to march forward towards its 100th Anniversary Celebration!

We wish you all a memorable visit in Philadelphia, PA!

(Compiled by the A.A.N.O. Worcester Chapter in 2011 and updated by the A.A.N.O. Chicago Chapter in 2019 and 2022 with acknowledgment to the AANO's Anniversary publications dated 1971 (25th), 1986 (40th) and 1996 (50th) for excerpts.)

God Bless our Troops....



God Bless America!!!

In these challenging time for America and the World, we extend our heartfelt Thank You to Our Troops that are serving throughout the world.

We extend our heartfelt Thank You to their families for their sacrifices they are making to protect our freedom.

National Anthems



THE STAR SPANGLED BANNOR

Oh, say can you see
By the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed
At the twilight's last gleaming.
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
Through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched
Were so gallantly streaming.
And the rockets' red glare
The bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there.
Oh, say does that star spangle banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.



O CANADA!

Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide,
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.



HYMNI I FLAMURIT

Rreth flamurit të përbashkuar
Me një dëshir' e një qëllim,
Të gjith' atij duke iu betuar
Të lidhim besën për shpëtim.
Prej lufte veç ai largohet
Që është lindur tradhëtar,
Kush është burrë nuk frikësohet,
Po vdes, po vdes si një dëshmor!
Prej lufte veç ai largohet
Që është lindur tradhëtar,
Kush është burrë nuk frikësohet,
Po vdes, po vdes si një dëshmor!

Albanian-American National Organization

Thank you for Attending 74th National Convention

See You at the 75th Convention Next Year!

AANO