



The 2009 HPST Scholarship Recipients



(From left to right) Petro Yuanidis (HPST Scholarship Chair), Constantine Checkles, Brooke Youngblood, George Evangelatos, Georgia Lagoudas, Lina Mountziaris, Nikolaos Soultanidis, Eleni Sgouritsa, Gina Katsaros (HPST President).

Constantine Raynard Checkles was born and raised in Houston. Currently at the top 3% of his graduating class at Klein Collins High School, he has been admitted to the Mechanical Engineering program of the University of Texas at Austin for the Fall of '09. As with his studies, Constantine has been very focused on extracurricular activities, exhibiting his leadership, organizational and teamwork skills. He has been a member of the National Honor Society, a delegate to Texas Boys State and a member of his high school's Academic Integrity Committee. A great athlete, he has been chosen to the Academic All-District and All-State football teams. He has also founded his school's Table Tennis Club.

Georgia Kerasia Lagoudas grew up in College Station, Texas. A National Merit Scholar, she ranked as first in her class throughout her high school years at A&M Consolidated High School, and received numerous academic achievement awards and scholarships. While still in high school, she worked on scientific research projects in the departments of Biochemistry and Aerospace Engineering at Texas A&M University and at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. A lover of music, she plays the saxophone and the piano, participated school's Marching Band and held the position of head drum major during her senior year. Currently a freshman at Rice University's Bioengineering program, Georgia plans to graduate in 2012 and continue on to graduate school to become a faculty member at a top engineering institute. She is an active member of the Rice Student Volunteer Program.

Robert N. Seidel was born in Boston, Massachusetts. Home schooled during his high school years in Arizona, he spent the next two and a half years at the Holy Archangels Greek Orthodox Monastery in San Antonio, Texas. Proud of his Greek heritage, he taught himself the Greek language. In 2006 he enrolled at Central Arizona College on a full academic scholarship, where he was elected Physical Sciences Student of the Year and Honors Student of the Year. In 2007 he transferred to University of Texas at Austin where he is currently pursuing a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering. At UT he quickly rose to the top as well, becoming a member of the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honors Society and Omega Chi Epsilon Chemical Engineering Honors Society. As he considers education as part of life, Robert plans to obtain a PhD and pass on his knowledge to others.

Brooke Katherine Youngblood grew up in Spring, Texas. Though not of Greek heritage, Brook has shown an intense interest and appreciation towards the Hellenic history, language and culture. She is currently a sophomore in University of Texas at Austin, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Classical Archaeology. As she is particularly interested in the progression of Greek language from ancient to modern, she is currently enrolled in Linguistics, Ancient and Modern Greek courses. This past summer she participated in University of St Louis' Iklaina Archaeological Project in Pylos, Greece, an excavation at a late Bronze Age Mycenaean site. She plans to pursue a PhD to become a professor of Archaeology, Greek language or History.

Georgios Ioannis Evangelatos was born in Athens, Greece. He received his Bachelor's degree from the National Technical University of Athens (EMP) in Civil and Structural Engineering. While there, he ranked at the top 10 of his class. In 2007 he was admitted to Rice University's graduate program of Civil and Environmental Engineering. His academic interests lie mainly in the area of non-linear dynamics. Regarding his future, he is equally fascinated and attracted towards the academia as well as the industry. An avid chess player, Georgios is highly praised by his professors.

Paschalia Maria Mountziaris was born in Princeton, New Jersey. She graduated as an AP Scholar with Distinction from Williamsville East High School in Buffalo, NY, and was admitted to Princeton University where she majored in Chemical Engineering, earning a BS and two minor degrees: in Engineering Biology and French Literature. She graduated magna cum laude from Princeton, and was admitted to the highly selective M.D./Ph.D. program at Baylor College of Medicine and Rice University. Since the summer of 2007, Paschalia has been pursuing her Ph.D. at Rice University, under the supervision of Professor Antonios Mikos. Her research focuses on bone tissue engineering and joint drug delivery, and is already producing new and original results that are being published in prestigious journals.

Eleni Sgouritsa. A native of Athens, Greece, Eleni graduated from the Department of Informatics and Telecommunications of the University of Athens in 2007. Her thesis was focused on Mammographic Image Analysis and Automated Diagnosis. Since this past January, she has been pursuing her Ph.D. in Computer Science at the University of Houston under the supervision of Professor Ioannis Kakadiaris. Working at the university's Computational Biomedicine Lab on her dissertation, "Computer-Aided Planning of Endovascular Treatment of Aneurysms," she has been developing algorithms that have shown very promising results. Her software will be used at the St. Luke's Hospital and will provide marked improvement in the planning and implementation of highly specialized medical procedures, performed by neuroradiologists and neurosurgeons.

Nikolaos Soultanidis. A native of Thessaloniki, Greece, Nikolaos is a Masters/PhD student in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at Rice University. He joined the program at Rice in 2006 after completing his B.S. in Chemical Engineering at the Aristoteleion University in Thessaloniki. Nikolaos' main research focus is in the area of catalysis for energy and environmental applications. Having gained his chairman's confidence in his abilities, Nikolaos was given the assignment to represent his research group on a federally funded project on nanostructured metal oxide catalysis between Lehigh University and Rice University. He has participated in a number of prestigious conferences on catalysis and is a co-author on a 2008 published paper (in the journal Topics in Catalysis), and is working on two manuscripts (one as first-author, the other as a co-author). In addition to his native tongue of Greek and English, Nikolaos is also fluent in German and Spanish.

