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## *Worcester Fraternal Organization to Honor Immigrants and Celebrate 100 Years in America*

More than 300 people are expected to attend a series of events during the Columbus Day weekend (October 10,11 and 12) to celebrate the centennial of Worcester's St. George Hellenic Benefit Society of Tsamantas, Inc., a fraternal organization founded by Greek immigrants from the village of Tsamantas in Northwest Greece in 1908. The events also honor Greek-America immigration and examine issues of identity and belonging for all immigrants.

The Consul General of Greece Constantine Orphanides, Rep. James McGovern (D-MA) and Mayor of Worcester Konstantina Lukes are scheduled to attend the festivities.

The events and activities include a reception at the Worcester Art Museum with ethnic food and music Friday, October 10, a commemorative symposium at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Worcester, MA Sunday, October 12 and, most importantly, an academic conference on immigration to be held at Hellenic College in Brookline, MA, Saturday, Oct. 11.

Several international scholars from the UK, EU and the US will present papers, provide insights and spark discussion on immigration issues. Among the speakers are George Tselos, Archivist at Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, Professors Alexander Kitroeff of Haverford College near Philadelphia, PA, and Dimitrios Konstadakopulos of the University of the West of England, Bristol, UK.

Charles Keratsis, president of the St. George Society, explained that the Society has spent the past 100 years helping friends and neighbors in Worcester, MA, and Tsamantas, Greece in a variety of ways.

“The Society built a school in the village in 1928 and today funds scholarships for the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the original immigrants to America. We also believe it is time for the larger American community to learn about these immigrants’ contributions. It is also time for the Greek American community to remember what their ancestors did.”

Other activities include the following:

1. The exhibition of the documentary, *The Journey: The Greek American Dream*, which recounts the arrival and settlement of the Greeks at the turn of the twentieth century, their gradual assimilation into American society and the revival of Greek ethnicity in the 1970s.

2. The visit of the Abbott of Holy Monastery of Giromeri to Worcester, MA. The Holy Monastery is situated near the village of Tsamantas. The Abbot will bring holy relics and other religious objects that will be exhibited at St. Spyridon's Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Worcester, MA. The Abbot will also lead the liturgy at the Sunday Service and speak at the commemorative symposium at the Cathedral Sunday, October 12.

3. The translation and publication by Hellenic College of a Monograph of the Epirote village of Tsamantas written in 1926 by Nikos Nitsos, a Greek scholar. The monograph will be distributed to colleges and universities throughout the U.S., Europe and Australia.

Mr. Keratsis explained that the events and activities honor the great success of all Greeks in diaspora all over the world. "As a Society we are proud of our ancestral home and the success of Greeks in America. We are deeply grateful to the United States for providing the opportunity for this success."

For more information on the events and activities, visit the website, [www.100yearsinamerica.org](http://www.100yearsinamerica.org).

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