

9. [MGSA-L] Demokritos SA Founder and President Professor Michael C. Geokas to be awarded honorary doctorate at the University of Athens

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I am pleased to announce that Founder and President of Demokritos Society of America, a Think-Tank, Professor Michael C. Geokas, MD, PhD, (καθηγητής Μιχάλης Γκιόκας), Emeritus Professor of Medicine and Biological Chemistry at the University of California (UC), Davis, School of Medicine, will be awarded an honorary doctorate (Doctor of Philosophy Honoris Causa) by the Faculty of Medicine of the National and Capodistrian University of Athens, for his lifelong meritorious contributions to the fields of Medicine (Gastroenterology), Biochemistry and Medical Education.

The ceremony will take place on June 1st at 7:00 p.m. at the Central University Building on Panepistimiou Street in Athens.

Professor Geokas, a medical graduate of Athens Medical School, pursued a "meteoric" career in Academic Medicine and Biomedical Research, first receiving a PhD at McGill University in Montreal, and subsequently holding numerous postgraduate and faculty appointments at McGill, USC, UCLA and UC, Davis. He has published 112 full length articles mainly in basic science journals. As an enzymologist and researcher, Dr. Geokas distinguished himself as an expert in diseases of the pancreas, with pioneering work in the determination of pancreatic enzymes in the serum using, well ahead of his time, innovative radioimmunoassay methods. His painstaking work on Acute Hemorrhagic Pancreatitis constitutes a solid and lasting contribution to the field of Gastroenterology.

As a teacher and mentor, he is known for his professional rigor and remarkable oratorical and interpersonal skills so much so that many of his students and colleagues have called him the "New Demosthenes." An area of major contribution by Professor Geokas has been his visionary Mentoring Program for High School Seniors and College Students, especially from underrepresented minority groups, for gaining admission to Medical School. For the past 30 years Professor Geokas has mentored successfully hundreds of students who pursued their studies in United States Medical Schools.

A description of Prof. Geokas' innovative and highly effective Premedical Science Program was introduced into the Congressional Record three times, by Members of the House George Miller of Martinez, Robert Leggett of Sacramento and Barbara Boxer of San Francisco. The curricular and organizational structure of Prof. Geokas' Premedical Program was also spelled out in a peer reviewed article published in the highly reputable _Annals of Internal Medicine_ (1999;111:433-436).

For his extensive and tireless Mentoring work, as meritorious Community Service on behalf of Minority students and Women, Professor Geokas was nominated for the Presidential Medal of Freedom during the Carter Presidency.

After his retirement, in 1990, Professor Geokas devoted his efforts to the study of low non-replacement fertility rate in Greece and other European Union countries. In this regard, he has lectured extensively in Greece and abroad. He spoke at the European Parliament in Brussels in 1997 and published his analysis in the _Journal of Political and Military Sociology_ (1997;25:353-362); the full length article can be accessed in www.demokritos.org.

Professor Geokas' comprehensive proposal for tackling Greece's Demographic Problem of low Fertility has been submitted to three successive Prime Ministers of Greece.

See Prof. Geokas' interview with journalist Liana Kaneli, Member of the Hellenic Parliament in April 1997 (MEGA TV) <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7965781771291239232#>

Another important contribution by Professor Geokas is in the area of Traffic Safety in Greece. As President of an ad hoc Task Force for Traffic Safety in Greece he responded to an invitation by the Greek Government and presented his strategic plan at a Symposium at the War Museum in Athens (June, 2001) ahead of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. Since then, Dr. Geokas has been working tirelessly on this serious public health problem in Greece.

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<http://www.demokritos.org/boardprofiles.html>