



December 18, 2018

Robert W. Allison, President,
The Mount Athos Foundation of America, Inc.
45 N. Saunders Rd., Greene, ME 04236

First Annual End of Year Report – 2018

On April 30th of this year, a long-awaited vision of the American membership of FoMA became a reality. On that date, the American Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued its official approval of our application for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status for our new Mount Athos Foundation of America. The Board of Directors of the Foundation worked hard through the preceding year to realize this goal. We are especially grateful to board member Wade Kolb, a life member of FoMA, and his colleagues at Wyche PA, for their persistence and thoughtful guidance in seeing our application through to a successful conclusion.

MAFA's Mission is to advance its charitable purposes, as stated in its Articles of Incorporation, namely, to advance an understanding of, and provide benefit to, the monastic community of Mount Athos in a variety of ways:

- Providing assistance in the restoration and preservation of historic buildings, monuments and artifacts
- Fostering knowledge and study that will increase understanding of the monastic communities
- Supporting the operations of the 20 monasteries and their dependencies in times of need

As a non-profit tax-exempt organization, MAFA provides Americans with an opportunity to make donations to advance these charitable purposes for the benefit of Mount Athos and also to benefit from tax deductions, which will encourage donations and bequests.

MAFA's Organization is quite different from FoMA's. It is a charitable public-benefit corporation consisting of a board of directors responsible for carrying out the mission for which it was created. FoMA, by contrast, is an **international charitable society** – i.e., a membership organization – which is registered in England and has an international membership of over 1700, but works toward the same goals.

The members or “directors” comprising MAFA's board, initially numbering eight, form several committees whose work is to carry out its mission. Board members are members of FoMA, and we have established the practice of including on the board one voting member of the FoMA Executive Committee, reciprocated by FoMA's including on its Executive Committee one member from the board of MAFA. MAFA's board members include:

Robert W. Allison, president
James Peters, vice president
Roger McHaney, treasurer
Nicholas Lamb, secretary

Chris Mellen, director
Wade Kolb, member, registered agent
Simon Jennings, member
(2 positions currently open)

Two original members, Robert Rible, our first treasurer, and Laurie Carver Estes, who played a large role in the early stages of our effort to form the corporation, have retired for health reasons.

Accomplishments since our incorporation, aside from establishment of the corporation and approval of IRS charitable status, and implementation of its website, are already impressive.

- MAFA raised \$18,582, \$10,000 of it the generous contribution of one of our board members to provide startup funding
- Issued its first two annual \$1,000 scholarships and announced scholarships for the coming year
- Voted to support FoMA's Axion Estin Appeal by issuing a grant to FoMA for \$2,000.
- Formed a strategic alliance with the Agioreitiki Estia in Thessaloniki which will provide logistical and other support to our scholars. Collaboration between the two organizations will advance MAFA's educational objectives through cooperation in bringing AE exhibitions and events to the United States which may at the same time provide fund raising and awareness opportunities for MAFA

The **Website Development Committee**, chaired this year by Nicholas Lamb worked with our web designer, Dionne Katinas and developer Tinetrix, Inc. to produce the beautiful and well organized website that is now online:

www.mountathosfoundation.org.

There you will see represented the several major areas of MAFA's activity – our explanation of our mission, our scholarship and grants programs, our fundraising efforts and our call to “get involved,” and the beginnings of our efforts to build a network of partnerships that will help us carry out our mission.

The **Grants Administration Committee**, chaired by MAFA Vice President, James Peters, also a life member of FoMA, got us off to a great start on very short notice, announcing our first annual scholarships. The committee developed a unique program which supports our scholars to assure their acceptance on the Holy Mountain through our alliance with the Agioreitiki Estia. We invite you to read about them and their projects on our website.

Mount Athos Liaison Committee chairman, Chris Mellen, made a trip to Mount Athos, meeting with elders at several monasteries to introduce MAFA and establish working relationships with those monasteries.

The **Development Committee** under the leadership of chair, Chris Mellen and working with website designer, Dionne Katinas, developed and produced a promotional MAFA brochure which we are circulating to the FoMA membership, to the Athonite monasteries to be made available to American pilgrims at the point of registration, and to events conducted by the Agioreitiki Estia.

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