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HOLIDAY FETES: AGAPW Holiday Loft Party Raises Scholarship Funds

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NEW YORK – The wonderful studio loft of artists Michael and Niki Kapsalis was the scene of the 2105 Holiday Benefit Celebration of the Association of Greek American Professional Women (AGAPW) on December 11 where guests were welcomed by its President and Founder, Olga Alexakos.

People came and went throughout the evening enjoying food, fellowship – and art. The warm space was decorated with the work of Niki and Michael Kapsalis, jewelry, and abstract expressionist paintings respectively. Exceptional paintings grace the walls, but dozens of canvases tucked into the stalls at the end of the huge living room/studio beckoned and some guests said they hoped to see them one day.

The party was also the occasion for raising funds to benefit the AGAPW Excellence Tuition Scholarship fund. Among the items available for auction were photographs by AGAPW Vice President/Community Liaison Aphrodite Désirée Navab. Guests who bought raffles won jewelry created by Niki Kapsalis and designer scarves made by Sophia Alimonos.

Niki Kapsalis has been creating jewelry for a long time, but she made a radical break –literally and figuratively – after a trip to Croatia for years ago, where jewelry making is taught in its schools on a high level.

"I told my sister I wanted everything I saw," and when she returned to Greece she destroyed what she had created up to that point and began anew.

She also makes clothing, which, like her jewelry is both for personal use and commercial purposes. Niki is also passionate about AGAPW and its mission.

"I met Olga by a stroke of luck through a good friend who brought her one day to our loft," she said, and they immediately became close friends. She was thrilled to host the event and looks forward to inviting AGAPW back.

Alexakos told TNH "We were blessed to celebrate another Holiday Season with family and friends! Our generous hosts and supporters Niki and Michael Kapsalis opened their Soho Studio loft for us so we were surrounded by great art!"

She summarized what she called "another active year for AGAPW"—among the many things she said she is thankful for during the holiday season – and has been busy with the Board planning for 2016. It's all about bringing together and helping people. "Our events have become great networking opportunities for women as well as for men, of various professional backgrounds. We share information and support one another," she said.

AGAPW events, Alexakos said, also enable Greek Americans "to connect with their heritage and build their professional relations within the community."

"The Association of Greek American Professional Women (AGAPW) is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt, charitable and educational...and is an independent organization, started by and run by women on a volunteer, pro bono basis. Its mission is to expand career opportunities and promote community and leadership building among Greek-American professional women by forging collaborations among ourselves and establishing partnerships with other organizations," according to agapw.org.