

The National Herald

Greek Community Responds to Estia Zafeiraki's Tragic Death

By Eleni Sakellis January 21, 2018



Estia Zafeiraki. Photo LinkedIn

NEW YORK – As soon as the members of the Greek community learned of the [tragic death of Estia Zafeiraki](#), there was an outpouring of grief and shock.

The National Herald spoke with members of the community who knew her and for whom she had designed logos. Olga Alexakos the founder and president of AGAPW the Association of Greek American Professional Women spoke with TNH, noting how devastated she was to hear the news and adding that Estia was “a beautiful, loving and giving person.” Alexakos told TNH, “She loved her family and the Greek community. This is a loss for all of us. Estia was a brilliant designer, a brilliant human being, everything she did she did it from her heart. She designed AGAPW’s logo and did it pro bono because she loved the organization and its mission.”

Alexakos continued, “Her work was very important to her, she took it very seriously. She put herself through school and it’s not easy, graduating from Vakalo in Greece and earning two master’s at Pratt which is one of the top schools in the country. She was doing great work and we should acknowledge her achievements.”

“It’s very important that we learn some lessons from Estia’s passing,” Alexakos noted, “There are many Greeks coming to the United States today on their own to work and we should be there for them as a community and not turn our backs. Sometimes, we Greeks are too proud to ask for help, but we need to be more mindful of each other. We might be too absorbed in our lives with work and other things, but we should reach out to people.”

The thought that 20 days passed before her body was found was particularly shocking and tragic, as many TNH readers noted. Alexakos observed that “it is troubling” to think about, especially when she thought of Estia “like family” adding that “the least we can do now is see that she is sent home to be buried in her native Crete.”

To that end, a GoFundMe campaign has been set up to raise \$20,000 for the return of Estia Zafeiraki’s body to Crete. So far about \$2,000 has been raised by members of the Greek community and especially the members of the Cretan Association. The link has been shared on social media but as Alexakos said, more

help is needed for the expenses. More information on the GoFund Me campaign is available online: <https://www.gofundme.com/estia-zafeiraki>.

As noted on the fundraising page, “Our beloved Estia Zafeiraki was taken from us so suddenly and the heartache is being felt by everyone. Anyone who knew Estia knows that she had a huge heart and would help anyone who needed it. Please consider helping her family in their time of need. As you can imagine, they are grieving right now and the last thing we want them to worry about is finances. Funeral expenses are only the beginning for this family. Kindly donate to assist in covering the expenses that will be needed to send Estia Zafeiraki back to Crete where she can be taken care of by her family and where she was born. All of the donations will be used to settle the expenses for getting her from New York back to Rethymno, Crete and then ultimately for her memorial which will be held in Rethymno. Should there be anything left, her family will get the remaining funds in full to decide its use. Please donate as much as you can so we can give the family closure.”

Concerned community members have written comments on the GoFundMe page that Zafeiraki “will be missed” and Alexakos wrote, “May the light and love that filled Estia’s heart give her family and friends comfort and courage to endure her loss and remember her beautiful smile.”

Estia Zafeiraki, 37, was found dead in her apartment in Long Island City, 20 days after she died, according to information obtained by TNH.

The 114th Precinct would not comment on the exact cause of death at this time but there was apparently no evidence of foul play, and Zafeiraki likely succumbed to an illness.

Zafeiraki, who worked as a freelance communications designer, lived alone and had no immediate family in New York. Her family in Crete was contacted about her death, including her sisters Roula and Georgia Zafeiraki. Her funeral is expected to be held in Crete.

Zafeiraki was a native of Rethymno, Crete, born June 3, 1980, and was living in New York City and working as a designer and visual artist. The companies that she created designs for included Alma Bank and the Association of Greek American Professional Women (AGAPW) designing the visual identity and developing a new engagement model for the non-profit association, among other companies, according to her LinkedIn profile.

TNH contacted Alma Bank for comment and spoke with Panos Stogioglou, SVP Chief Banking and Marketing Officer, who said he had only met once and was surprised to hear that she had passed away since she was so young.

According to her biography on coroflot.com, she graduated in the field of Communication and Graphic Design from the prestigious Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York and from the Vakalo School of Art and Design in Athens, Greece, magna cum laude.

May her memory be eternal.