

## **Eric W. Cholack**

### **Wayne County Circuit Judge**

Wayne County Circuit Judge Eric W. Cholack is assigned to the Domestic Relations division of the Wayne County Circuit Court, where he handles matters involving divorce, custody, child support and personal protection orders. He was appointed to the court in December 2008 and elected in 2010 and 2016. Judge Cholack was an attorney for 18 years before his appointment to the court. He served almost six years as an Assistant Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney, where he conducted over 50 jury trials and hundreds of bench trials, as well as handling special community outreach projects.

He also spent twelve years in private civil practice, with an emphasis on labor and employment law and mediation of disputes. A trained mediator, Judge Cholack mediated over 100 cases for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission before his appointment to the court.

Judge Cholack is also an adjunct professor at Wayne State University, University of Detroit-Mercy and Thomas M. Cooley Law Schools, where he teaches courses in counseling and negotiation. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Wayne County Dispute Resolution Center, a non-profit organization that provides mediation services in Wayne County.

Judge Cholack is a AHEPA District 10 Educational Foundation scholarship recipient, earned his law degree from Harvard Law School and his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan.

His Comments on AHEPA District 10 Educational foundation:

"How marvelous that AHEPA District 10 is now giving scholarships to the children of its scholarship recipients. What a wonderful testament to the long-term, enduring commitment that this organization has to our community's young people and what a wonderful tribute to this community and the value it places on education.

When I received the AHEPA scholarship almost 40 years ago at a scholarship banquet, I remember at that time feeling various emotions. Certainly, there was happiness, pride and gratitude. But as I sat in a room full of people who supported the scholarship program, I remember the wonderful feeling that an entire community was supporting me, believing in me, inspiring me, helping to push me to a different level. I knew that I had the support of my parents, my family and my friends, but this was much different, much larger. And how appropriate that it was the Greek-American community that was the basis for that feeling, because our Greek heritage has always valued education and particularly higher education. The AHEPA District 10 organization shares with its scholarship recipients the support and confidence of an entire community that cherishes wisdom and education and believes in their pursuit of those goals and in the deeds that they will accomplish in the future. What a tremendous gift that this organization gives and keeps giving!"

**Efthimia S. Valiotis**  
**Sr. Attorney United States Office**

Efthimia S. Valiotis has served as a Senior Attorney with the United States Office of Special Counsel for 15 years. Prior to this position, she worked at the Department of Justice as a Trial Attorney for the Civil Division's Office of Immigration Litigation and was appointed as an Attorney Advisor through the Attorney General's Honors Program to the Executive Office for Immigration Review's General Counsel's Office.

She obtained a Juris Doctor degree and a Comparative and International Law Certificate from the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the University of Michigan.

Testimonial:

"My AHEPA Scholarship had an extraordinary impact on my life. I used my AHEPA scholarship monies for educational pursuits at the University of Michigan. While studying at the University of Michigan I gained an excellent education and immeasurable life skills. I also developed a devotion to public service that propelled me into a career as an attorney. Service to my country is one of my greatest accomplishments. None of this would have happened without my AHEPA scholarship. I was also inspired to excel and maintain high standards in my education after receiving an AHEPA scholarship. I am incredibly thankful for the scholarship I received from the AHEPA Educational Foundation and for all of your hard work. You make it possible for students to achieve their goals and for them to make valuable contributions to our communities."



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DISTRICT COURT  
SIXTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

February 17, 2021

**RE: AHEPA District #10 Educational Foundation (Michigan)**

Dear Trustees of the Stavros Niarhos Foundation,

I am writing to endorse the grant application by the AHEPA District #10 Educational Foundation to your prestigious foundation. As a Greek-American, I was reared by a strong Ahepan father, and my mother is a former President of the Michigan Daughters of Penelope. My husband and I have firmly raised our children in the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Muskegon, Michigan. Both of our daughters received generous scholarships from AHEPA #10 Educational Foundation, our oldest for medical school; our youngest for the College of Engineering at the University of Michigan. The scholarships are coveted by the Michigan Greek-American community -- and the application very rigorous. Unfortunately, even though the pool of students are almost all highly qualified, many applicants do not receive a scholarship because of AHEPA #10's current annual principle.

Besides promoting education and excellence, perhaps the greatest gift the Ahepa #10 Scholarships give is the promotion of Hellenic heritage. I remember, in 2017, when my daughter, Mary's, scholarships were announced to the graduation audience, unbeknownst to our family, the school's very "Anglo-Saxton" principle did some research on AHEPA scholarships. In announcing Mary's receipt of the AHEPA Scholarship, the principal revealed to the community the meaning of AHEPA and stated famous Greek-American recipients like George Stephanopoulos! It was such a proud moment -- one that in places like Western Michigan is important because the Greek-American population is dwindling, so promotion is critical.

A grant to AHEPA #10 allows our heritage to continue to thrive. The rigorous, careful and attuned process here will ensure every penny of a Niarhos grant will be used thoroughly and tremendously. Thank you for your consideration and, with that, I respectfully endorse the AHEPA #10 application for grant to your monumental foundation.

Truly yours,

*Maria Ladas Hoopes*  
Maria Ladas Hoopes

## **Lena Gionnette**

### **Attorney**

Lena Gionnette is an attorney with Nixon Peabody LLP practicing in the area of employee benefits/ERISA. Prior to her current firm, Lena was an associate at two regional firms in Cincinnati and Michigan for 6 years.

Lena also chairs the Employee Benefits Committee of the Tax Section of the State Bar of Michigan and is an active member of her local Greek Orthodox community.

She credits the AHEPA Educational Foundation with lessening the financial burden of her undergraduate education and inspiring her to focus on Hellenic studies and activities at the University of Michigan, where she graduated with a degree in Modern Greek, history, and English. She obtained her law degree from the University of Cincinnati School of Law, magna cum laude, in 2014.

## **Christina Vallianatos, Ph.D.**

### **Genomics Educator, The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine**

#### Bio:

Dr. Christina Vallianatos works as a Genomics Educator at The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine in Farmington, CT. As a genetics education specialist, she focuses on the design, development, and implementation of courses and programming in genetics, genomics, and computational techniques for many learner types.

Christina earned a BS with dual concentration in Neuroscience and Modern Greek Studies, and a PhD in Human Genetics with certificates in International Teaching and Translational Research, all from the University of Michigan. Her PhD thesis research examined the genetic origins of a neurodevelopmental disorder caused by histone demethylase gene KDM5C, and lead to the foundation of the KDM5C Family Support Group, in which she continues to participate as a patient advocate and scientific liaison. During her graduate studies she also founded Michigan DNA Day, an educational outreach group that connects scientists with high school classrooms across the state.

Christina loves combining her passion for outreach and engagement with her content expertise in genetics to make science and STEM careers accessible and inclusive for all.

#### AHEPA endorsement:

Receiving an AHEPA scholarship was one of the first outside supports of my education. To have a group of people outside your family believe in you and support you is no small thing. The AHEPA represents a community, united by a shared heritage, who are a constant source of support. Their investment in education goes beyond the dollar amounts of each scholarship; those who earn AHEPA awards are forever a part of this network, carrying the mission of AHEPA with them as they make their marks on the world.

## **Stephanie Gryebet**

### **PharmD**

Degrees: Doctorate of Pharmacy from Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences of Wayne State University, Bachelor of Science In Health Sciences from Oakland University, Graduate Certificate in Business Administration from Wayne State University Mike Illich School of Business.

Bio: Stephanie Gryebet graduated from Wayne State University with her Doctorate in Pharmacy and is currently completing a PGY-1 Pharmacy Practice Residency at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital in Clinton Township, Michigan.

Her interests lie in Emergency Medicine and Management and she hopes to pursue these interests as a clinical pharmacist in the future. She is also pursuing a Master in Business Administration from Wayne State University.

She holds much gratitude to the AHEPA District #10 Educational Foundation for their constant financial, spiritual, and personal support of her studies throughout the years.