



## Constantine Papadakis

1946 - 2009

April 9, 2009

Dear Friends:

As you may know, this week was marked with the sudden passing of our University President, Dr. Constantine (Taki) Papadakis. Much has been written over the past few days concerning Taki's life and the transformational work he did during his Drexel Presidency. I encourage you to view the tributes to Taki that can currently be found at [www.drexel.edu](http://www.drexel.edu). You will learn much about him. All of it important and all of it inspiring. Dr. Papadakis is survived by his wife Eliana and daughter Maria, a 2008 Drexel graduate, and our heartfelt condolences go out to them.

I first met Taki in 1998 when I stopped him on Race Street outside the New College Building to thank him. I had arrived in Philadelphia in 1985 to do my medicine residency at the Medical College of Pennsylvania. Years later, there was a health care bankruptcy and Drexel, with Taki in the lead, made a strategic move to manage what had been Allegheny University of the Health Sciences, which included the only School of Public Health in the Greater Philadelphia Region. On that day in 1998, he had just given a presentation to those of us in the medical school. Finally, after a turbulent period of such instability, we were hearing about Drexel's commitment. So I stopped him on the street, introduced myself and thanked him for taking a chance with us. He was his usual animated self - clearly excited at the prospect of another venture. In 2002, when I became interim dean of the School of Public Health, he was clear that he was committed to growing the School. He loved that Drexel had the only such school in the region and he supported our growth. Years later, during our 10th Anniversary Gala at the National Constitution Center, we acknowledged Taki's support and daring commitment to the School. He was thrilled to be honored and we were thrilled to honor him.

Today, we are the only fully accredited School of Public Health in the Greater Philadelphia region and we are thriving. You may have read this week about Drexel's astounding growth under Taki's leadership. We have been a proud part of that with exponential growth in faculty, students, staff and our research portfolio.

Working for a transformational President is an incredibly wonderful experience. You believe anything is possible and you work to make it happen until it does. The impossible is transformed to the possible and the possible becomes a reality. On behalf of the School of Public Health, it has been an honor and privilege to work with Taki and grow the School to be a vibrant part of the Drexel community. We are committed to health and wellness - and we will remember him as we continue to grow, dream and do.

Sincerely,

Dean Marla J. Gold, MD