



A Happy and Productive Year to all of you from all of us at PAMEMMAZI! The cutting of our Vasilopita (our New Year's cake) took place, family style, on Wednesday, January 12th, in our center at Agioi Anargyroi Hospital.

Volunteer voices

We have continued our conversations with PAMEMMAZI activity leaders and are happy to share some highlights with you. Sophia Kordits, Psychologist-Dance Therapist, directs a monthly program called "Dance Expression," a favorite among our participants. We asked Ms. Kordits: **What do you find most fulfilling in your volunteer engagement?** She said, *"I am touched by every smile in the faces of dance therapy participants, every sigh of relief, every look of gratitude I see; every comment that shows me that, even just this once, the beneficial results of dance*



therapy are visible." We asked Ms. Kordits: **How would you encourage a potential volunteer to participate and contribute to PAMEMMAZI? What would volunteer engagement offer to the volunteer?** *"PAMEMMAZI is a pioneer organization in Greece that supports patients in important ways. Through his service, the volunteer learns a great deal, feels emotionally fulfilled, and enriches his psyche."* Kateriana Georgiou directs our program "Creating Stories" along with Ms. Konthilia Gavri. We asked her: **What fulfills you most in your volunteer service?** She said, *"The thought that I can help someone fill her time forgetting where she is."* We asked her to share an experience that touched her most. She said, *"Someone thanked us that we made his day. He told us that he was afraid of the hospital, but when he participates in our activities, he feels like he is on vacation."* Lillian Tsiavou, Coach and Master in the Psychoanalytical Approach to Literature and Film, who leads our program "Film and Discussion" **offered this wish to PAMEMMAZI:** *"To become sustained and institutionalized!"*

Optimistic messages from
our wonderful students
who are empathetic and
without prejudice

Every year, the French IB section of Moraiti secondary school, a group of students especially sensitized on issues of health and psychological support, organizes the "Bake Event" and other similar philanthropical activities. This year, these students decided to support PAMEMMAZI by donating craft and painting materials. We welcomed them in the PAMEMMAZI room at Agioi Anargyroi Hospital. They told us about their philanthropic activities, and we asked them why they decided to support PAMEMMAZI. Here is what they said:

"...we were inspired by the story behind the organization, the efforts of its participants, and the optimism that is finally becoming reality."
Electra

"...the love of people who work together in harmony for a tremendously worthy and admirable cause and mission..." Amalia

"Cancer is a scourge...I recognize that the psychological component is very important. I believe that PAMEMMAZI contributes in a unique and very productive way..." Aris

"...such organizations must be supported more..."
Chis

"...it is important to support people who need us...to help them go through this ordeal as well as possible." Fanny

"...it is impressive how easy it is for someone to help such an organization, and how much it means to provide that help." Irene

"we are doing something that will prove to be beneficial for those around us, but will be good for us as well, because we will feel great about contributing to an issue that concerns our whole society."

The visit concluded with warm and welcoming words from Ms. Maria Haritou, Director of the General Oncology Hospital whom we met in her office. For us at PAMEMMAZI, the biggest reward came in the words of the students' teacher Ms. Psaroudaki: "In one hour, you demystified for us all the heavy stereotypes around the words of 'hospital' and 'illness'. Your smile and warmth brightened and lightened these sensitive concepts with light and kindness.



PAMEMMAZI honored by Alma Zois-manager of the Race for the Cure

The very first initiative Emma chose to build awareness around cancer and the need to promote prevention, support research and fight stigma was the establishment of the team Untouchables that participated in the 2014 Marathon of Alma Zois. Untouchables is now the PAMEMMAZI marathon team that continues to run for Emma. On January 21, 2018, Alma Zois honored PAMEMMAZI in the context of the cutting of vasilopita to celebrate the New Year. Moving words were spoken during this beautiful celebration about Emma's courage, her wish to contribute to her fellow human beings and to society. This award for Emma and all those she inspired will continue to inspire others to run with the team Untouchables in future years.



PAMEMMAZI team receives the award on behalf of the Untouchables team from the President of the Board, Ms. Kleopatra Gavriilidou (right) and the Vice President of the organization's Board, Ms. Paraskevi Michalopoulou (left).

Medical and nursing staff said

PAMEMMAZI has almost daily communication with the day clinic of the Hospital. In spite of their responsible and demanding work, the nursing staff always finds a kind word and an encouraging smile for our volunteers; they always encourage patients and their companions to visit us and try out our programs. In fact, lately, we decided to organize special activities in the space of short-term therapy, with encouragement from the Department Head Ms. Chrousoula Kouloukoura who exudes quiet strength and offers immediate and practical solutions to the many issues that arise daily. When we asked her about PAMEMMAZI, she said: "[PAMEMMAZI makes] a valuable contribution of knowledge, capabilities, experiences combined with psychological fortification for patients and their families." Describing her encounter with a patient who had visited the PAMEMMAZI room in the Hospital, she reported that he said to her: "It helps me not to forget the power hidden inside me...and the confidence that all will be well." Ms. Kouloukoura believes that the presence of such programs is positive because "they strengthen patients who are fighting for their life. Your contribution is invaluable. May you continue with the same commitment and enthusiasm for many years to come."



Healthy eating tips by our volunteer nutritionist, Dimitris Athanassiades, at the day clinic

Second Panathenaikos Trophy

PAMEMMAZI was hosted by the Second Panathenaikos Trophy and the First Athens Trophy, the major swimming celebration that took place on 19-21 January at OAKA stadium which gathered an audience of 10,000 and 2,000 athletes. Our participation aimed to build awareness about our activities and goals, and to invite them to contribute to our cause. In the photo below, young swimmers and trophy winners of the Panathenaikos Swim Team of Greece Yro Papadopoulou and Marilia Drasidou declare their support for PAMEMMAZI.

