

GEORGE DIAKOS

New recruit's Odyssey

Twenty-five-year-old George Diakos found it hard to leave his family and his grandmother's home-cooked meals but marching onto the parade ground today he feels the sacrifice has been worth it.

“At the beginning it was pretty tough being away from home – especially missing my grandmother’s food. We are pretty family-orientated but after a while I learnt to deal with it.” George said.

Prior to joining the NSW Police Force, George worked as a mortgage lender and salesperson as he saved to travel to Europe and the USA. As a youngster George had considered becoming a police officer but never gave it serious thought as he was growing up.

“About five years ago, I started to think more seriously about becoming a police officer until I finally decided to join,” the Sydney-sider said.

George’s father, Arthur, has been employed with NSW Police Force for the past three years, as the NSW Police Force’s Chief Financial Officer.

“Dad’s pretty proud of me. He encouraged me and pointed out that if you apply yourself and work hard there are plenty of chances to move within the organisation and improve yourself.

“I definitely wouldn’t have been able to finish without his support.



“My family and friends are so excited about it. In fact I think the whole Greek community is coming down to the Attestation!

“I think having Greek officers is a good thing, and will help the community feel like they have got someone to come to.

“I like to let people know that I am Greek – one look at the name badge will confirm it – but I also have a connection with the Hispanic community through my Chilean mother, Malena. When I’m working I’ll try to be available if there is anything special where I can help both the Greek, and Hispanic communities,” he said.

With plans to one day work in the Police Prosecutions, George has a marvellous career ahead of him.

George will commence his policing duties at Hurstville Local Area Command next week.



16TH GREEK FILM FESTIVAL OF SYDNEY

TICKETS ON SAL NOW!!

9-20 SEPTEMBER

AT PALACE NORTON STREET CINEMAS, Leichhardt

The 16th Annual Greek Film Festival will open with Sydney’s premiere of Christine Crokos’ romantic comedy, *Bang Bang Wedding*.

Starring Australia’s own Alex Dimitriadis, *Bang Bang Wedding* is a fast paced, light hearted and stylish road trip set against a spectacular backdrop in Crete. When Ilias (Alex Dimitriadis) and Marina (Faye Xyla) arrive to the island of Crete to marry, they are eagerly awaited by friends and family. On the way to the reception, however, things start to go wrong... A small, yet important typo on the invitation will send everyone in different directions and transform the celebrations into the unknown.

The two-week festival, starting Wednesday September 9th, will take place at Palace Norton Street Cinemas, will feature an extraordinary assortment of genres to accommodate all tastes, covering everything from comedy, to drama to documentaries and will close on Sunday 20th September with Nia Vardalos’ *My Life in Ruins*. The films are a credit to the diversity of talent in Greek cinema, for both actors and directors.

Festival highlights include; Winner of the Un Certain Regard Award at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival, Yorgos Lanthimos’ *Dogtooth* which sees a desperate father try to protect his three grown children from becoming contaminated by the outside world by confining them to a surreal domestic fantasy land.

Winner of numerous awards (including Audience Award and FIPRESCI Prize) at the International Thessaloniki Film Festival PVC-1, Spiros Stathoulopoulos’ gripping directorial debut is inspired by a true story about a pipe bomb improvised explosive device that was placed around the neck of an extortion victim.

Meanwhile *Strella: A Womans Way* pushes the boundaries in it’s depiction of an extraordinary and spell binding relationship, in the glowing nights of Athens; and lies are unravelled in Panos Karkanevatos’ *Well Kept Secrets: Athanasia*, which won the critics’ FIPRESCI Prize at last year’s Thessaloniki Film Festival.

Australia provides a hearty mix of short films including *Bombshell*, directed by Kim Farrant and starring Tony Nikolakopoulos and Zoe Carides; AFI Award Winning *Spike-Up*, directed by Anthony Maras; *Pontos* by Peter Stefanidis in which a Pontian farmer suffers an attack by a Turkish soldier that kicks off a catastrophic chain of events; while *Sotiris Dounoukos* provides us with 2 strong shorts *Mona Lisa* and *Paper and Sand*.

All festival films are restricted to persons aged 18 years over with the exception of the hilarious *First Time Godfather*, which has received an exemption to the censorship laws regulating film festivals and can be viewed by a younger audience, as can *My Life in Ruins*.

The full program is available and tickets are on sale now through MCA Ticketing by calling 1300 306 776 or online at www.greekfilmfestival.com.au.

The Greek Film Festival of Sydney is an event of the Greek Festival of Sydney, and an initiative of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW. For more information visit www.greekfilmfestival.com.au / www.greek-festivalofsydney.com.au.

It's All Greek to Katerina!



A desire to better communicate with her grandmother has led Santa Sabina College student Katerina Xenos to receiving a 2009 Minister’s Award for Excellence in Student Achievement – Community Language Schools.

The Year 7 student has been studying Modern Greek for six years at the Burwood Parish of St Nectarios.

Katerina’s teachers nominated her for her proficiency in reading, listening, speaking and writing in Modern Greek. Katerina has also displayed an appreciation of her cultural background and demonstrated intercultural understanding.

“I was very excited when I heard I was going to receive an award as I wasn’t expecting it at all”, says

Katerina. “My family was really happy and proud of me, especially my yiayia (grandmother) who wasn’t even aware I had been nominated”.

Katerina will be presented with her Highly Commended certificate at an awards ceremony on Friday 4 September by the Honorable Verity Firth MP, Minister for Education and Training at the University of NSW.

Santa Sabina College students have a long standing tradition of achieving outstanding results in Languages Other Than English (LOTE). In the 2008 HSC Christina Calgaro was placed first in NSW in Italian Beginners, Maria Oh was placed first in Japanese Extension and Kathleen Pereira third in Portuguese.