

Biography

Evangelos Mantoulidis

Evangelos Mantoulidis was born in 1938 in Alonia, Perias. He was born during a time of great difficulty in Greece. Only two years after Evangelos was born the country was plunged into the nightmare of World War II, leading to death, destruction and poverty unprecedented in modern Greek history. In 1942, at the tender age of four, Evangelos lost his father Dimitri to tuberculosis. An honorable man and highly respected in his community, the elder Mantoulides provided for his family by working as a barber. At the age of 33, the road led Dimitri Mantoulidis to Patra, shortly thereafter, he fell ill and passed away, leaving behind his wife, Paraskevi, and three young children.

The now widowed mother of three children, Valentini, Eleftheria and the youngest, Evangelos, remained in their village. In 1946 rebels fighting in the Greek Civil War commanded the village's school. Mrs. Mantoulidou took the bold decision to move her family to Thessaloniki. There, the eight-year-old Evangelos entered the first grade of elementary school.

The early years in the city proved to be more than difficult for young Evangelos as he courageously assumed the role as "the man of the family". His mother toiled endlessly cleaning the homes of wealthy people and helped make ends meet by accepting handouts from her employers. During the Christmas, Easter and Summer breaks the family returned to their native village. There, they could enjoy a bounty of milk, butter and fruit. The three young siblings worked in the tobacco fields during the summer months in order to save money for clothes and shoes for the upcoming school year. After several years, Paraskevi Mantoulidou found work in a factory that produced rubber and canvas shoes. Things began to improve for the family. At the same time, Evangelos, in order to earn a modest daily wage, sold "koulouria" during the day and attended the fourth grade in the evening. At this time the family remained in Thessaloniki during the hot summer months. The young man busied himself carrying ice to residents of the city where the ice was used to cool products in an ice box (electrical refrigeration had not yet come to Greek households).

As a diligent student living on minimal resources, Evangelos finished elementary and high school by borrowing books from wealthier classmates. His two elder sisters gained employment at the same shoe factory as their mother and the years of poverty and hunger seemed to be in the past. In his second year of high school Evangelos decided to attend a private institute as a means to prepare

for university entrance exams with the goal of studying Philology and Law. But in time, the money ran out and he saw no choice but to leave the institute. Recognizing the dedication and hard work Evangelos put into his studies, and knowing the financial hardships of the family, the owner of the institute, Vassilis Konstantinidis, allowed Evangelos to continue studying at no expense.

In 1958 he was accepted by both the schools of Philology and Law. He chose Philology. In 1963 he was conscripted into the Greek infantry and worked as a clerk at a base in Evros. One year later, the guardian of his family was honorably discharged from the service and shortly thereafter Evangelos began his career as a teacher. Initially, he worked at a private school in Langadikion, a village outside of Thessaloniki then over the next few years he taught at Delliou Private School in Thessaloniki. In October of 1965 he was hired as a teacher at Anatolia College. The state Ministry of Education selected him for transfer to Epeiros, but because of his obligations to his widowed mother and single elder sister he remained in Thessaloniki.

While teaching at Anatolia he worked in partnership at an institute preparing students for university entrance exams. The experiences he gained as both an employee and employer proved invaluable.

In 1973, Evangelos wedded Ekaterini Pattakou, an English teacher from Crete. They had a daughter, Evi, and two sons, Dimitris and Christos-Apostolos.

In 1976 Evangelos decided to leave Anatolia College and work exclusively at his private institute.

In 1978 Evangelos Mantoulidis founded and opened the present day kindergarten and elementary schools and embarked on his epic journey of creating Mandoulides Schools. But the journey was not without difficulties because of heavy loans and overly burdensome interest rates. But his pioneering genius and ability to overcome and adapt led to an exponential rise in the fledgling school's academic success and its recognition for quality education.

In 1991 he went on to found and open the junior and senior high schools. The new schools immediately gained the trust of parents throughout Thessalonki. The Second Junior and Senior High School opened as a consequence of rapidly increasing enrolment. In the Spring of 2007, Evangelos Mantoulidis unexpectedly departed this world. His family remains steadfastly dedicated to his work and

vision.