Welcome to Wine Country

The hills of Armenia are calling wine lovers of the world
Mission
To promote the prosperity and well-being of all Armenians through educational, cultural, humanitarian, and social and economic development programs, projects and initiatives.

Annual International Budget
Forty-six million dollars (USD)

Education
24 primary, secondary, preparatory and Saturday schools; scholarships; alternative educational resources (apps, e-books, AGBU WebTalks and more); American University of Armenia (AUA); AUA Extension-AGBU Artsakh Program; Armenian Virtual College (AVC); TUMO x AGBU

Cultural, Humanitarian and Religious
AGBU News Magazine, the AGBU Humanitarian Emergency Relief Fund for Syrian Armenians; athletics; camps; choral groups; concerts; dance; films; lectures; library research centers; medical centers; mentorships; music competitions; publications; radio; scouts; summer internships; theater; youth trips to Armenia. Armenia: Holy Etchmiadzin; AGBU Children’s Centers (Arapkir, Malatya, Nork), and Senior Dining Centers; Hye Geen Women’s Centers; Sevan Theological Seminary; Ultrasound Center. Republic of Artsakh: Artsakh Chamber Orchestra

Districts, Chapters, Young Professionals, Centers and Offices
Argentina: Buenos Aires, Córdoba; Armenia: Charentsavan, Gyumri, Talin, Vanadzor, Yeghvard, Yerevan; Artsakh: Stepanakert; Australia: Melbourne, Sydney; Austria: Vienna; Belgium: Brussels; Brazil: São Paulo; Bulgaria: Burgas, Dobrich, Haskovo, Plovdiv, Russe, Sliven, Sofia, Yambol; Canada: Montréal, Toronto; Cyprus: Larnaca, Nicosia; Egypt: Alexandria, Cairo; Ethiopia: Addis Ababa; France: Lyon-Rhône Alpes, Marseille, Nice, Paris, Valence, Vienne; Germany: Frankfurt; Greece: Athens, Thessaloniki; Iraq: Baghdad; Italy: Milan; Lebanon: Amanos, Antelias, Beirut, Sin el-Fil, Zahlé; The Netherlands: Almelo, Amsterdan; Russia: Moscow; South Korea: Seoul; Spain: Barcelona; Switzerland: Geneva; Syria: Aleppo, Damascus, Kamishli, Kessab, Latakia, Yacoubieh; Turkey: İstanbul; Uruguay: Montevideo; UAE: Dubai; United Kingdom: London; United States: Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Fresno, Greater New York, Glendale, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Orange County, Pasadena, Philadelphia, San Fernando Valley, San Francisco, Scottsdale, Silicon Valley, Washington, D.C.
One week after hundreds of AGBU members and friends convened in Paris for the AGBU 90th General Assembly, the sad news of former AGBU President Louise Manoogian Simone’s passing brought new perspective and weight to the many accomplishments celebrated and luminaries honored throughout the three-day proceedings.

Since then, we have contemplated just how historically significant a figure Louise Simone was—for AGBU and the Armenian world. She was called by destiny to steer the organization in a new direction during a transformative time when seminal events like the Armenian Earthquake, the Artsakh Liberation Movement, and the rebirth of an independent Armenia helped usher in a new era in Armenia-Diaspora relations.

Thirty years later, the stamp of Louise’s fearless embrace of change, which allowed her to meet the urgencies of the moment while launching groundbreaking initiatives, has withstood the test of time.

As this issue of AGBU News Magazine goes to press, we also cannot help but reflect on how this publication was her brainchild—a Louise Simone original and labor of love that exemplify her resolve to educate, inform, engage, and inspire the Armenian people with stories that enrich their identity and expand their understanding of contemporary Armenian issues and themes.

It was the first platform for keeping the Diaspora plugged into news from Armenia and its continued success and evolution are perhaps the most tangible manifestations of AGBU’s desire to touch the lives of all Armenians in relevant and meaningful ways.

The world and Armenia are far different places since the first publication of AGBU News Magazine in 1991 and the contents of this issue bear vivid evidence of that. We start with an in-depth cover story on the rebirth of the wine industry in Armenia and Artsakh. Long in the making, the time has come to tell the world about the ascent of Armenia as a world class producer of superior wines and what this newfound status and prestige imply for the image of the country, its contemporary culture, and its economic outlook, given the allure of wine as a tourist attraction and lucrative export.

Coinciding with this issue is the one year anniversary of Armenia’s Velvet Revolution. As the fairly elected and newly installed Armenian government is just now diving into the intricate business of implementing a new and ambitious agenda, we will report back to you as newsworthy developments unfold.

We believe that Louise Simone, incurably modest and humble as she was, left this world with a certain satisfaction that her can-do spirit helped bring our reborn homeland out of its darkest early years and into the light of a promising future.

May her example help guide us all through this exciting new period of progress, innovation and opportunity—words that aptly describe Louise Manoogian Simone’s tenure as the distinguished sixth president and first female leader of AGBU.

Berge Setrakian
President
Born in Detroit in 1933, Louise Manoogian Simone would become the sixth president of AGBU, the first woman at its helm since the organization’s founding in 1906. Meticulous by nature, with an innate ability to perceive and nurture human potential, Simone was instrumental in the development of the modern Armenian nation as we know it. With grace, optimism and the philanthropic zeal which she inherited from her father Alex Manoogian, AGBU’s 5th president, she took on projects that would impact millions of Armenians across the world, shaping a new narrative of Armenian reality through her visionary leadership.

Early Links to Armenia
Growing up in a family committed to seeing the Armenian people prosper, Simone was never far from dedicating her time and efforts to the Armenian community. After playing an active role in local civic affairs both within and outside the Armenian community of Detroit, she moved to the New York area in 1975, serving on the Council of the Eastern Diocese and St. Nersess Armenian Seminary Board of Directors, raising much needed funds for the seminary. Then, in 1982, she embarked on her first trip to Armenia, an experience that would broaden her view of what was possible for the future of Armenians worldwide. This first trip would be far from her last. Upon her return, Simone was elected to the AGBU Central Board of Directors. During her subsequent trips to Armenia, she worked both individually and through AGBU to establish new relationships with her homeland, often inviting others to join her in connecting and engaging with the republic in meaningful ways.

Call to Action
On December 7, 1988, everything changed. Armenia was ravaged by a deadly earthquake. The disaster left the country in critical condition with 25,000 people dead and countless more homeless. Vice President of AGBU at the time, Simone didn’t think twice. Just three days later, she boarded a chartered USAID cargo flight to Armenia and within a week, she organized a distribution center for food, medicine and clothing to help survivors. In the aftermath of the earthquake, AGBU took on many more projects...
to restore and rebuild not only infrastructure, but also morale. From establishing the Center for Personal Injury and Plastic Surgery to treat severe trauma victims to coordinating a medical aid program throughout Gyumri, AGBU was guided by Simone’s steady hand and keen insight with each initiative.

A year later, Simone would assume her position as AGBU President, at a pivotal time in the Armenian nation’s history. The first years of Armenia’s independence were enmeshed in seemingly insurmountable challenges and traumas. Lack of electricity and water was met with widespread hardship and hunger compounded by war. The beginning of Simone’s presidency coincided with the dramatic changes in the Armenian World and the dawn of a new era in AGBU priorities—earthquake relief and recovery, the independence movements in Artsakh, the fall of the Soviet Union, the influx of refugees from neighboring Azerbaijan, the Liberation War and the subsequent blockade. In order to coordinate humanitarian operations in Armenia effectively and report on progress, Simone established permanent AGBU representation in Yerevan. Well beyond humanitarian aid, this presence on the ground and Simone’s astute outlook on the developing nation shifted the perception of Armenia’s potential.

The Consummate Executive Planner
Endowed with the gift of acute foresight, Simone always seemed to be ten steps ahead of any potential problem, quickly finding practical solutions down to the last detail.

In April 1990, the AGBU, with Simone at its helm, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Ambassador of the USSR to the International Organization in Vienna signed a contract for the construction of a cold food storage plant in Gyumri designed to preserve meat, chicken,
produce and butter to provide food in the harsh winter months of Armenia’s northern region.

On her very first trip to the earthquake zone, Simone had the presence of mind to bring along two fax machines from the States, recognizing it was the most efficient way for those working on the ground to communicate with the Central Office back in New York. This way the office could respond to urgent requests swiftly and accurately.

Redefining Armenia

When the infrastructure of then Soviet Armenia dissolved, disruptions in correspondence throughout the new nation were common. Under Simone’s leadership, AGBU stepped in to support the foundations of the new Armenian state, providing all ministries and agencies with desktop computers. These focused, direct efforts to fill in the gaps exemplified the type of actions Simone organized.

The AGBU Clinic for Ultrasound

Radiology and the AGBU Ultrasound Center of the Yerevan Medical University were established in partnership with the Jefferson Ultrasound Research Center and Educational Institute located in Philadelphia to train professionals and provide care.

Through AGBU patronage, the Armenian Philharmonic was revived to keep the

Pride of Place

An international capital like New York City was the only logical place for a global organization like AGBU to establish a permanent presence. Simone aimed high in her quest to find just the right location for the AGBU Central Office and her long search was over when she identified 55 East 59th Street, prime commercial space in mid-town Manhattan, just steps away from the French Institute Alliance Francaise, Central Park, Tiffany’s, the General Motors Building, the Plaza Hotel and Madison Avenue. The AGBU Central Office quickly became the hub of Armenian cultural life, with ample space for board meetings, lectures, presentations, community gatherings and art exhibitions, as well as to greet dignitaries from the nearby United Nations, foreign missions and members of the AGBU family from around the world. Simone also made an astute financial decision when she made a donation to AGBU to pay for the purchase of the entire floor, making a home for the organization in perpetuity.
artistic heritage and talent thriving in the country, while at the Matenadaran, employee salaries were expensed to preserve priceless Armenian historical assets. In addition, when Armenia’s public schools could no longer afford to provide extracurricular classes to its students, AGBU established numerous children’s afterschool centers in Yerevan in collaboration with the Mother See so that thousands of youth had access to enriched learning opportunities in all forms of the arts.

AGBU Senior Dining Centers were also incorporated on children’s center premises to tend to the most vulnerable, providing warm nutritious meals and community connections.

By the time the ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan was announced in 1994, a significant portion of Artsakh had been destroyed or remained underdeveloped. To help revitalize the region, Simone funded a rest home for seniors, chess clubs and schools for children and housing units for those left homeless, primarily widows of fallen soldiers. She mobilized AGBU chapters around the world to follow her lead and raise funds to help rebuild the entire towns of Norashen and Parashen in southern Artsakh.

When Gyumri’s seismology center was demolished after the 1988 earthquake, plans to rebuild a new center in Yerevan emerged. However, with Armenia’s independence, these plans soon evolved into establishing a university in the capital, based on the American model, that could provide a competitive education in the global market.

Known for being forever committed to the potential of Armenia’s best and brightest, and wary of the braindrain prompted by widespread financial hardship, Simone was approached by two earthquake engineering professors to establish the graduate university. She embraced the idea of such an institution and collaborated in the partnership between AGBU, University of California (UC), and the Armenian government to bring Western teaching methods to academia in Armenia.

The American University of Armenia opened its doors in 1991 to train government officials and nurture new generations of leadership. The university would soon after expand to offer quality education in business administration, political science, international relations, and public health. Long after her tenure at AGBU, Simone generously supported AUA through the Manoogian Simone Foundation. The university would become the first and only higher education institution in the region with U.S. accreditation—something Simone personally advocated for, giving thousands of educated professionals the mobility to affect change in the homeland and throughout the world.
Simone also recognized the need to ensure that Armenia’s institutions of higher learning would stay afloat over the long term. This prompted her to focus on generating university endowments. The success of this strategy has allowed the AUA and other top universities in Armenia to meet the needs of every generation and increase the scope of their offerings.

**Uniting the Armenian Nation**

As much as Simone worked to support the new Armenian state and its citizens, navigating relations with the first sovereign Armenian state in centuries, she was also keenly aware of the needs of Armenians around the world. She pushed for initiatives that opened the breadth and reach of the Armenian community, knowing that the insular nature of many diaspora projects would fail to engage new generations. In 1995, she led the launch of the Young Professionals, with the first group formed in Los Angeles, which has since expanded worldwide into a network of 36 groups to date. In addition, Simone helped introduce Armenian culture and history to the wider non-Armenian public by funding several documentaries about the Armenian people, among them: *Armenian Americans, Enemy of the People* and *Armenians: A Story of Survival*.

In the same vein, Simone founded the *AGBU News Magazine*, a publication that would serve to connect the Diaspora around the world, educating and enlightening with every issue. She envisioned the magazine providing unparalleled access to reporting directly from Armenia, while also illuminating the realities of diverse Armenian communities globally. To make sure the publication reached as many Armenians as possible, she painstakingly gathered a mailing list of over 90,000 names. Evolving beyond AGBU community news, to include international themes relevant to the times, the magazine remains the largest printing of any Armenian Church finally had an opportunity to restore its worldwide spiritual leadership from the Mother See. Responding to the need for well-educated priests, Simone appealed to AGBU donors to finance the construction of a dormitory and chapel at the Vaskenian Seminary in Sevan and several monasteries around Armenia. She even advocated for funding for priests and theology students attending universities outside of Armenia to help them serve as educated clergy with a global perspective.

**An Inspiring Legacy**

Simone looked past geographies and governments in her efforts to unite Armenian people anywhere and everywhere. A hallmark of her leadership was her decisiveness in times of urgency and her thoughtfulness in times of peace. She worked ceaselessly to sow the seeds of a unified community and culture around the world. Her initiatives—humanitarian, educational, cultural—all met an immediate need but were designed to achieve lasting impact across generations. In 2002, she stepped down from her position as AGBU president but never abandoned her work, always supporting wherever and however she could and contributing to the *AGBU News Magazine*.

Louise Manoogian Simone passed away on February 18, 2019. For AGBU and those whose lives she touched around the world, she will continue to be celebrated as a fierce advocate for the disenfranchised, a champion of the innovative and the personification of strength through unity.
How AGBU keeps its commitments to Armenians worldwide

Annual giving is key to continuity and progress.

Education. Culture. Humanitarian Relief. Socio-Economic Development. These are the core pillars of activity on which the AGBU mission stands. And each year, they need a new infusion of funds to continue delivering high quality programs and services to our diverse constituents and beneficiaries.

Your donations to the new AGBU Opportunity Fund ensure that AGBU will meet its commitments—year after year, program by program, person to person.

For more information and to make an annual donation, go to agbugiving.org/opportunity or send your tax-deductible check made payable to AGBU:

AGBU Central Office, 55 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022
212-319-6383 or giving@agbu.org
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Preparing for the traditional crushing of the grapes ritual at the Artsakh Wine Festival.
A rich blend of historical mystique, agricultural bounty, and Armenian ingenuity is putting the country on the world wine map

By TAMAR HOVSEPIAN

A sk any wine enthusiast to name the countries that produce the world’s most sought-after luxury labels and, chances are, you will hear the familiar shortlist—Italy, France, Spain and the United States. However, ask any of the over 50 registered winemakers who have planted a stake in the viticulture (cultivation of grapevines) industry in Armenia and Artsakh, and they will tell you that the list will soon be out of date.

Ever since 2007, when the Areni-1 cave complex was discovered by a team of Armenian and Irish archaeologists in the Vayots Dzor province of Armenia—bearing evidence that wine was made there as early as 6,100 years ago—the rush is on to reinstate Armenia to its original glory as a winemaker’s paradise.

After all, according to Genesis, it was Noah who planted the first vineyard in Armenia in the foothills of Mt. Ararat. There are also historical accounts that in the 5th century BC, Armenians transported wine down the Tigris-Euphrates rivers. Grapevines often adorn the pages of ancient Armenian illuminated manuscripts, and carvings of them appear on churches and khachkars. The Blessing of the Grapes, an annual religious ceremony that relates to the Feast of the Assumption of Virgin Mary, is derived from a pagan custom of sacrificing the first grape harvest to Goddess Anahit.

Historical mystique notwithstanding, the overwhelming scientific and visual evidence points to Armenia as not only the birthplace of viticulture but also the future of a robust premium wine industry on a global scale, thanks to a type of soil and climate that yield a wide variety of rare and superior indigenous grapes.

Ask the Experts
At a press conference held in Armenia in 2013, Renée Payan, the now former dean of the oldest wine institute in the world, the Université du Vin—Suze la Rousse in France, aptly noted, “If France is one of the biggest wine producers today, then Armenia is the cradle of winemaking, and it should restore the traditions, re-establish its image and take its rightful place on the global viticulture (winemaking) map.”

Renowned Californian winemaker Paul Hobbs, who is a partner in Armenia’s Yacoubian-Hobbs Winery, had this to say upon taking the first sip of the Areni wine that he and his partners Viken and Vahe Yacoubian created in collaboration with Vahe Keushguerian of WineWorks.

“The Areni red was quite intense and perfumed, very spicy and surprisingly elegant—it had a lot of the characteristics of very good wine. The even bigger surprise, however, was how good the white wines were. They really speak of the land where they are grown and that was very exciting. At that moment, we knew we could pursue this commercially.”

When they brought the wines to the United States, the reaction was highly favorable. “We sold out very quickly,” reported Hobbs, “and were even able to place the wine in many top restaurants around the country. To achieve that phenomenal success is very gratifying. There have only been a few times in my entire career where I experienced that kind of feeling.”

Making Up for Lost Time
Ironically, until winning its independence, Armenia had lost its historical identification with wine. As a Soviet

Grape and vine motifs on the 10th century Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Akhtamar Island (Historic Armenia.)
were semi-sweet or sweet and used only when vodka was considered inappropriate, such as for wedding ceremonies in churches.

When Armenia became a sovereign state in 1991, many diaspora Armenians, visiting for the first time, were optimistic about the future of their ancestral homeland. Feeling a connection to the land, they were compelled to contribute to its rebirth through economic development. A few visionary pioneers from the West, some being of Armenian descent, brought their expertise from wine countries like Argentina, Italy, and the United States. They were determined to turn professional winemaking in Armenia into a serious and sustainable enterprise. Planting vineyards and establishing wineries, these risk-takers are the forerunners of more than 150 labels of Armenian wine today, with globally recognized names like Karas, Zorah, Van Ardi, Golden Grape ArmAs, Takri, Kataro, and others. (Their stories and contributions appear on pages 22-23 and 24-29).

**Armenia's Wine Comeback**

Without the love for the land and
ambitions to put Armenia on the world wine map, these early winemakers could not have achieved the success they are experiencing today. With no modern winemaking facilities, equipment or expertise, they mostly had to start from scratch, often inviting foreign experts to help them build their facilities and train staff.

Karas Wines brought winemakers and other specialists from Argentina and France, among them Michel Rolland, an internationally recognized winemaker. ArmAs Estate, similarly, had 35 Italians living in Armenia during the two-year construction period and

Van Ardi’s Varuzhan Mavradian overlooks his vineyard in Ashtarak, Armenia.

Nature’s Gifts to Armenia
The trifecta of earth, air, and altitude

Many of the early pioneers of Armenia’s wine renaissance, such as Eduardo Eurnekian, Zorik Gharibian, and Vahe Keushgeurian, as well as Swiss winemaker Jakob Schuler and American wine legend Paul Hobbs, were fascinated that such a small, landlocked country like Armenia was abundantly endowed with indigenous grape varieties unique to its highlands. The high-altitude vineyards and volcanic and limestone soils were ideally suited for growing high-quality grapes for winemaking. With the perfect terroir and indigenous grapes, previously unknown to even the best winemakers in the world, Armenia could carve out an unrivaled niche for itself in the wine world. Gharibian, the founder of Zorah Wines, explains, “Internationally we have no competitors, simply because we are too niche. Armenia doesn’t belong to any category yet, and, as the Italians say, we are a ‘mosca bianca’—a ‘white fly,’ a rarity.”

Such excess of natural riches extends across eight of the 10 regions of Armenia: Armavir; Ararat; Aragatsotn; Vayots Dzor; Tavush; Syunik; Kotayk; and Lori.

According to the wine industry report published by the American University of Armenia (AUA), most of the vineyards in Armenia are situated between 850 and 1,400 m altitude and some are more than 1,700 m high. Due to the altitude of the vineyards, there is a high-temperature range during the maturation process, which allows for thicker and better berry skins. This is one of the advantages Armenia enjoys and may leverage as a winemaking country.

The other advantage is the wealth of the indigenous grape varieties. Areni is known for red and Voskehat for white wines. Haghtanak, meaning “victory,” and Kakhet, are other promising red wine varietals, while Kangoun, meaning “standing,” is the variety known for making white wines. According to Keushguerian of WineWorks, there are hundreds of indigenous grape varietals in Armenia, of which only about 30 are used in winemaking. The most notable autochthones are Areni, Kakhet, Voskehat, Khatun Kharji, Movuz, Sireni, and Chilar, widely used in Armenian wines. International grape varieties, such as Merlot, Malbec, Syrah, Tannat, Chardonnay, Viognier, Muscat, and Cabernet Franc, are also grown and used in Armenian wines. Some regional grapes, like Saperavi and Rkatsiteli, are cultivated in Armenia and used by Armenian winemakers as well.
dozens continued to visit for specialized works throughout the years.

Located in many remote regions of Armenia and Artsakh, the wineries created essential jobs for locals, and, in turn, rely heavily on them as a ready workforce. Many workers leave their villages for better opportunities in the cities or the capital, making it difficult for wineries to find qualified employees for the vineyards and wineries. Karas Wines employs about 500 people around the year. “We treat our employees very special,” Juliana Del Aguila, CEO of Karas Wines explains. “We provide homemade lunch every day, made with the organic produce that we grow on our farms. This is not just about making wine, it is about creating a sense of community.”

With the success of Karas, which quickly became the most popular Armenian wine in both Armenia and the Diaspora, the perception that Armenia could not produce quality wines was debunked. The momentum continued, when in 2012, the label Zorah Karasi appeared on Bloomberg’s top 10 list of world wines. In her piece entitled “Top 10 Wines of 2012 from Burgundy to Armenia to Sonoma,” Elin McCoy mentioned the 2010 Zorah Karasi, saying, “I was wowed by my first-ever taste of an Armenian wine, this stylish red made from Areni noir grapes and aged in traditional clay amphora. I also savored the thrill of

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**Armenia’s Wines: A Growing Industry**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN-COUNTRY CONSUMPTION</th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>Increase in per capita consumption from an average 1.2 liters to 2.6 liters from 2017 through 2018.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPORTS</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Increase in the number of Armenian wine exports in first half of 2017 versus the same period in the previous year.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOP 10 FOREIGN MARKETS**

Out of the 30 consumer markets that import Armenian wines, as of 2016.

- Russia
- United States
- Lithuania
- Italy
- Ukraine
- France
- Switzerland
- Belgium
- Netherlands
- Sweden

Sources: Armenia Ministry of Agriculture, from 2016-2018; UN Comtrade Database and American University of Armenia study: The Development of Armenian Wine Cluster

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Many of the wineries are located in remote regions of Armenia and Artsakh and help to create essential jobs for locals.
drinking history.” Armenian wines continue to receive medals and awards at various competitions and tastings. Armenian wines continue to receive medals and awards at various competitions and tastings.

A Tourism Tipping Point
With the recognition and success of the industry, wine tourism has naturally gained traction in Armenia. The first wine bar, In Vino, opened in Yerevan in 2012 followed by several others, thereby evolving the society into a wine culture. More restaurants are now offering an elaborate wine list featuring both domestic and international wines. In 2012, In Vino sold about 600 different types of wine, of which about 20 were Armenian. Today, it has over 850 types of wines and more than 100 Armenian wines from about 27 wineries. Mariam Saghatelyan of In Vino observed, “New wines are emerging very fast; that is why we have a group of winemakers and wine enthusiasts who must try all of the new wines and decide"If France is one of the biggest wine producers today, then Armenia is the cradle of winemaking, and it should restore the traditions, re-establish its image and take its rightful place on the global viniculture map.”

From right: Renowned California winemaker Paul Hobb with his Armenian partners Vahe and Viken Yacoubian.
which are well-made, balanced, and adhere to their price-to-quality ratio in order to be presented on our shelves. We wouldn’t sell anything we don’t drink ourselves."

"Today, winemaking is one of the fastest growing industries in our country and the fact that such a significant presence is ensured already speaks volumes."

Wine tasting events are popular at In Vino and all major wineries have their own tasting rooms and organize tours and events. Wine festivals have become popular and well-attended events that take place in Yerevan, the Vayots Dzor region where the archeological site of the first winery was found, as well as in Stepanakert in Artsakh. Armenia also started to appear on various travel lists, such as the 2017 CNN list of best wine tours and trails and the National Geographic list of ten places that deserve more travelers.

Most recently, Armenian wines were proudly presented at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington D.C., giving thousands of visitors a chance to sample Armenian wines.

To help develop wine tourism in Armenia and support boutique wineries, a tasting room called WineCube was built in the vineyard of local winemakers Narine and Nver Ghazaryan, producers of Momik wines.

The Areni Wine Festival takes place in Areni Village, near the Areni-1 cave complex.
Armenia’s Indigenous Grapes by Region

**Aragatsotn**

- **White**
  - Chilar
  - Voskehat

**Tavush**

- **Red**
  - Sevanush
  - Sev Achk’eni
  - Kaputkeni
  - Koghbeni

- **White**
  - Banantz
  - Lalvar
  - Jrali Kara
  - Jrjruk
  - Lkeni
  - Nosrhat
  - T’avrizeni

**Artsakh**

- **Red**
  - Khndoghni (Sireni)
  - Marandi
  - Sev Achk’
  - Gandzaki
  - Sharabi

- **Rosé**
  - Knot
  - Amiri
  - Garan Achk’

- **White**
  - Amirk
  - Garan Achk’

**Armavir**

- **White**
  - Garan Dmak
  - Mskhali

- **Rosé**
  - Vardaguyn Yerevani

**Ararat**

- **Red**
  - Kakhet
  - Sev Aygeni
  - Karch Mat
  - Sev Ginuk
  - Garni
  - Yeraskeni
  - Vagheni
  - Sev Sateni

- **White**
  - Spitak Arakseni
  - Spitakene
  - Sarmashak’ar
  - Arevar
  - Ararat

**Vayots Dzor**

- **Red**
  - Areni
  - Seyrak
  - Movuz
  - Shaheni
  - Movsesi

- **White**
  - Nazeli
  - Mormor
  - K’rdi Chakat
  - Khatun
  - Khatouni

**Syunik**

- **Red**
  - Chragi Yerker
  - Karimir Koteni
  - Sveni
  - Dghleni
  - Itsitseni
  - Sevuk
  - Hastakot

- **White**
  - Arevik
  - Ambari
  - Shahangyul

PREVIOUS PAGES: ALEXEI FATEEV / ALAMY; VAN ARDI; KARAS WINES; ZORAH WINES; TIGRAN HAYRAPETYAN/PAUL HOBBS WINERY; WINEWORKS SOSSI MADZOUNIAN/RALPH RINZLER FOLKLIFE ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
“Whatever we’re doing, this will stay with us forever. First, because no one has soil like ours. Secondly, you cannot outsource winemaking because it’s not a brain product. It’s a soil product, and it will stay for a very long time.”"
The list of Armenian wine labels grows with every vintage, offering something for every taste and preference.

**Red**
- Alluria 2016 Reserve
- Alluria 2017
- Alluria Grand Reserve 2015
- Apartený 2015 Dry Red
- Arba Reserve 2014
- Ariats Amaroné Reserve 2015
- Ariats Areni Sweet Kakñakan 2015
- Ariats Garoun Hakhtanak 2017 Red
- Ariats Ripasso Style 2016 Dry Red
- Ariats Ripasso Style Reserve 2014
- ArmAs Areni 2012
- ArmAs Areni Reserve 2012
- ArmAs Dry Red 2013
- ArmAs Karmrahut Reserve 2013
- Armenia Wine Takar Areni 2016
- Armenia Wine Takar Reserve Areni Saperavi 2015
- Armenia Wine Tariri Dry Red 2016
- Armenia Wine Yerevan Areni Karmrahut 2015
- Avetsyan Kataro 2015 Reserve
- Avetsyan Kataro Red 2016
- Berdashes Khindogni 2017
- Berdashes Khindogni 2017 Barrel Aged
- Getnatoun Areni Noir 2015
- Highland Cellars Koor 2016 Red
- Highland Cellars Koor Reserve 2014
- Hin Areni Red 2015
- Hin Areni Reserve 2015
- Karas 2016 Red
- Karas Areni Khndoghni 2016
- Karas Reserve 2014
- Karas Syrah 2015
- Manukyan Wine Kouash Red 2016
- Maran Bagratuni Reserve 2015
- Maran Special Areni Rouge 2010
- Momik Red 2017
- Noyan Tapan 2015
- Noyan Tapan Areni 2016
- Old Bridge Red 2014 Reserve
- Old Bridge Red 2015 Reserve
- Oshin Areni 2017
- Partez 2013 Red
- Qotot Red 2016
- Rikars Wine Arag Amphora Wine 2017 Red
- Rikars Wine Davit 2017 Red
- Samvelyan Red 2017
- Sarduri Historical Vintage 2015
- Takri 2015 Red
- Takri Reserve 2014 Red
- Trinity 6100 Red 2016 Areni Noir
- Trinity E Areni 2015
- Trinity JA22 Red 2017
- Trinity Khachmeruk Areni Cab. Sauv.
- Trinity Khachmeruk Areni Syrah
- Tushpa Red 2015
- Van Ardi Areni Reserve 2016
- Van Ardi Kakñet Areni Hakhtanak 2017
- Van Ardi Syrah Kakñet Reserve
- Vanand Red 2017
- Voskeni 130 Reserve Areni
- Voskeni Areni 2016
- Voskeni Areni Dry 2015
- Voskeni Dry White 2015
- Voskevaz Areni 2013 Dry Red
- Voskevaz Dry Red
- Voskevaz Hakhtanak 2015
- Voskevaz Karasi col. Areni 2015
- Voskevaz Katarine 2006
- Voskevaz Nuras 2016
- Voskevaz Vanakan
- Yacoubian-Hobs Red 2014
- Yacoubian-Hobs Sarpina 2014
- Zara Wines Hakhtanak
- Zara Wines Saperavi
- Zarm 2012
- Zart Red 2017
- Zorah Karasi Areni 2015
- Zorah Yeraz Areni 2013
- Zulal Areni Reserve 2017 Red
- Zulal Koghbieni 2017

**White**
- Ariats Garoun Kangoun 2017 White
- ArmAs Dry White 2012
- ArmAs Kakan 2012
- ArmAs Voskehat Reserve 2013
- Armeni-Champagne Brut
- Armeni-Champagne Semi-Sweet
- Armenia Wine Muscat 2012
- Armenia Wine Takar Extra Brut Sparkling 2014
- Armenia Wine Takar Kangun 2016
- Armenia Wine Takar Rosé Sparkling 2017
- Armenia Wine Tariri White 2016
- Armenia Yerevan Kangun Rkatsiteli 2017
- Armenia Yerevan Sparkling Brut
- Armenia Yerevan Sparkling Semi-Sweet
- Getnatoun Voskehat 2015
- Highland Cellars Koor White 2017
- Highland Cellars Koor White Reserve 2015
- Hin Areni Voskehat 2016
- Hin Areni Voskehat Reserve 2016
- Karas Duyutches Sweet Sparkling Wine
- Karas Extra Brut Sparkling Wine
- Karas Muscat Sweet 2018 White
- Karas White 2017
- Keush Blanc de Blanc 2013
- Keush Origins Brut
- Manukyan Wine Kouash White 2016
- Maran Special Khatun Khariji Blanc 2010
- Momik White 2017
- Noyan Tapan Rkatsiteli 2016
- Oshin Voskehat 2017
- Qotot White 2016
- Samvelyan White 2017
- Sarduri Historical Vintage 2015
- Sarduri Sweet Muscat 2011
- Seraphim White Sparkling
- Trinity E Voskehat White 2016
- Trinity JA22 White 2017
- Tus 2017 White
- Tushpa White 2017
- Van Ardi Dry White Mskhali 2017
- Van Ardi Kangun med. sweet 2017
- Vanand White 2017
- Vankazar White 2015
- Voskevaz Karasi col. Voskehat 2016
- Voskevaz Muscat Rozali 2009
- Voskevaz Urzana 2016
- Voskevaz Voskehat 2015
- Zulal Koghbieni 2017
- Zulal Nazeli Cuttings 2017
- Zulal Voskehat 2017 White

**Rosé**
- Ariats Areni Rosé 2018
- ArmAs Rosé 2015
- ArmAs Voskehat Dry 2012
- Armenia Sparkling Rosé Semi-dry
- Armenia Wine Takar Areni Rosé 2017
- Armenia Wine Yerevan Rosé 2016
- Avetsyan Kataro 2015 Rosé
- Hin Areni Rosé 2016
- Karas Rosé 2017
- Maran Noravank Rosé 2017
- Momik Rosé 2017
- Noyan Tapan Areni Rosé 2016
- Qotot Rosé Dry 2016
- Sarduri Rosé 2015
- Trinity 6100 Rosé Estate Bottled 2016
- Van Ardi Rosé 2017
- Voskeni Siro Rosé 2017
- Voskevaz Rosé Dry 2017
- Zart Rosé 2017
- Zulal Areni Rosé Extra Brut

**Type**
- All wines are dry unless otherwise noted.
- Sweet
- Semi-Sweet
- Semi-Dry
- Sparkling

*Most labels listed here are offered by In Vino, the first wine bar in Yerevan.*
The Wines of Artsakh
Patience, perseverance, and history in every vintage

By LAURA L. CONSTANTINE

The wine-friendly regions of Armenia extend far beyond official borders to embrace the pristine mountain air and mineral-rich earth of Artsakh, a land on which life is lived on the edge of tomorrow, while patience is measured in decades, if not centuries. The mystique of Artsakh takes on deeper dimensions as it experiences a wine renaissance of its own, thanks to a one-of-a-kind grape called Khndoghni, also known as Sireni, which is characterized by a powerful, deep and rich complexity.

Leveraging the expertise of WineWorks, a wine incubator in Armenia, three wine companies operating in Artsakh have already launched two successful labels—Kataro and Takri. In 2019, Aran Wines will release its first vintage, serving as one more reminder that, in Artsakh, all good things are worth the wait.

Speaking of patience, the story of Kataro Wines is one that spans the generations, as well as revolutions, blockades and wars. Established by the Avetissyan family, natives of Artsakh, to revive the once thriving vineyards of their homeland before their decline beginning from the 15th century, the name Kataro steadily climbed the charts as one of the best wines in the country. Domaine Avetissyan owns 10 hectares of vineyards planted on the rolling hills of Togh village, with an elevation ranging from 600–700 meters and the enviable clay soils from which the Khndoghni grapes flourish.
childhood dream of one day reviving the family tradition on Armenian soil. With thriving businesses in New York and Switzerland, as well as a long record for his humanitarian initiatives in Armenia, Kaprielian took a leap of faith and planted a stake in Artsakh on 30 hectares of land in Banadzor village near the south-eastern province of Hadrut. His long-held dream came true a century later with the first vintage of Takri, which fittingly means “roots” in the Artsakh dialect, symbolizing Kaprielian’s return to his ancestral origins.

In 2015, Takri produced its first ever reserve and intends to add white, rosé and sparkling wines to its product line by 2020. “The quality of our wines keeps improving,” says Kaprielian. “We harvest in late fall and although this lowers the quantity of grapes, waiting allows us to produce higher quality wines.” With tourism a key industry for growing a sustainable, self-sufficient economy in Artsakh, Kaprielian has plans to open a restaurant and wine tasting room where Takri will be available for purchase.

**Wine and Tourism Pair Well**

Along with three other co-founders, Armenian-American Alex and Talar Sarafian built the Shushi Grand Hotel at a time when investment, access and infrastructure in Artsakh were daunting propositions. In 2005, they planted five hectares in eastern Askeran, in the village of Ughtasar, on what was once fertile but now dormant fields. After years of selling their grapes to other wineries and distilleries, they recently decided to create their own label with its first vintage ready for market in late 2019. “Our goal is to make interesting and distinctive wines in Artsakh,” explains Sarafian. “For example, in addition to the more traditional full-bodied reds, we are the first winery that I am aware of to produce a rosé style wine from the Sireni grape.”

**Harvests of Hope**

Every autumn, winemakers from Armenia and Artsakh gather in Togh village for the Artsakh Wine Festival, an annual event that draws local crowds and foreign tourists alike, featuring traditional music, dance and local cuisine, along with the best of Armenian and Artsakh wines. Guests interact with local winemakers, discover the secrets of their craft, and bring their authentic experiences back to their home countries, raising the image of Artsakh as a vibrant wine culture brought back to life.

**Inset:** Avetissyan’s grandfather working the vineyard in Togh village. **Below:** The Artsakh Wine Festival draws crowds of people from around the world.
With over 50 registered winemakers in Armenia to date, the prospects for a thriving wine industry are clearly on the horizon. But Armenia’s ascendancy to wine royalty will be forever rooted in the vision of the groundbreakers of Armenia’s momentous wine comeback. These bold and daring individuals planted their stake in a nascent industry early, wisely and passionately. Each brought a unique attribute influenced by their backgrounds and experiences in other countries, eventually building an end-to-end wine industry with the capacity to change the fortunes of an entire nation.

After more than a decade since they took a chance on Armenia, the verdict is in—Armenian wines are in a rarified class by themselves, just like these game-changers who saw Armenia’s future through a wine glass half full.

With any seminal discovery of a precious commodity, be it gold in California, diamonds in Africa, oil in the Middle East, or the first high tech company in Silicon Valley, the lore is rife with cautionary tales about how an industry can be a powerhouse for national prosperity or a case study in human and environmental exploitation. Fortunately, each of the winemakers who shared their stories with us agreed that, at the core of the wine business, is a respect for the land and a commitment to follow responsible agricultural practices—always with a mind for generating local jobs and sustaining a growth economy.

The integrity, creativity, and ingenuity of these extraordinary visionaries will serve Armenia well as it completes its transformation into a wine capital of the world.

REPORTING BY TAMAR HOVSEPIAN
One of the best-known names among Armenian wine labels, Karas Wines was conceived by a name synonymous with nation-building in Armenia—Argentine business magnate Eduardo Eurnekian. His early investments in the infrastructure of the homeland reflect on his instincts for identifying national imperatives with uncanny timing and investing in their successful implementation. “Everything that Eduardo touched, every investment and project he got involved in had one main objective—to create bridges between Armenia and the world,” observed his niece Juliana Del Aguila, to whom Eurnekian fully entrusted the Karas enterprise as its Chief Executive Officer upon purchasing the land in the Armavir region of Armenia.

Eurnekian’s vision to transform Zvartnots International into a world-class airport not only upgraded the country’s first impression on visitors and tourists but also connected Armenia to the outside world during a period of national isolation when fledging independent Armenia, surrounded by hostile enemies on two of its borders, was struggling to survive. With the huge success of the airport, Eurnekian then set his sights on the next big bet on Armenia’s future—its agricultural potentials. He purchased 100 acres of land in Armavir and began planting grapes and other crops as his first order of business.

Today, Karas Wines lays claim to over 500 acres of land and employs over 500 people. Its vineyard grows both indigenous Armenian and foreign grape varieties from Italy and France. “Every grape we grow in Armenia has a distinct character, due to the unique terroir of our vineyards,” explains Del Aguila. “Even the Italian varieties like Montepulciano or Ancellotta taste and feel different in Armenia.”

Now, Karas has ventured into growing organic grapes to meet the rising demand for organic wines in the international market. With a current capacity to produce and bottle over 2,000,000 liters of wine, Karas projects an increase to 3,500,000 liters in the next few years, to be aged in its state-of-the-art local wine cellars. Fully committed to growing Armenia’s economy, Karas chooses to purchase its bottles and labels from Armenia and hire locals to work in their vineyards. Del Aguila acknowledges, “Our project is quite ambitious. We are not only trying to make good wine but also looking to enhance people’s lives.”

Karas Wines has won numerous international awards and is a best seller in Armenia and the Diaspora. The brand is available online from several online wine sellers, as well as in wine shops in Los Angeles, New York, and New Jersey, to name a few. Visitors to Armenia can tour the picturesque Karas vineyards, located in the lush Ararat Valley, a location Eurnekian had chosen intentionally. There is also a tasting room in which visitors can sample the variety of wines under the Karas name—red, white, rosé, and sparkling.
Italian-Armenian Zorik Gharibian, the founder of Zorah Wines, has a simple secret to success: to make wines he believes in. His artisanal products reflect his philosophy, as well as the heritage, culture, and land from which they originate. Working exclusively with native Armenian grapes grown in his vineyard in Rind, Gharibian shields his winemaking process from both human and technological intervention as much as possible, employing instead ancient Armenian winemaking methods, which involve aging the wine in clay amphoras. Wine critic Henry Jeffreys of Food and Wine magazine appreciates the approach, writing, “I tried a wine last month that stopped me in my tracks. It was a red, aged in amphorae, traditional clay jars, from Armenia.”

With high marks from wine publications and top mentions on wine lists, the Zorah wines continue to delight the “winerati,” although Gharibian doesn’t seem to be focused on ratings and awards. “If I am able to inspire the young generation of Armenian winemakers to believe in the potential of the land and create high quality, interesting wines from indigenous grape varieties, following traditional aging methods, Armenia can become a category in itself and I will have succeeded,” says Gharibian. He firmly believes that Armenia should focus on the quality of wines and that more family-owned boutique wineries should be established so that each winemaker can retain the authentic character of its label.

Aspiring to elevate the status of Armenian wines worldwide, Gharibian admits, “In order to achieve recognition, we have to be aware of the fragility of what we have and act responsibly.” He contends that the Armenian government should help ensure that the wine industry is built on a sound foundation with laws and regulations protecting the land and sparing the native grapes from diseases like Phylloxera—a grapevine parasite that can spread quickly due to irresponsible planting. “We risk losing a patrimony of ancient grapes, which are the heritage of our country and the world at large,” says Gharibian. He also advocates for winemaking in Armenia to be treated as a long-term enterprise and the industry should not aim for quick profits. “Wine is a slow process and patience is key,” he adds. Zorah produces two dry reds, Karasi and Yeraz, and one dry white, Voskì.
There are many boutique wineries in Armenia and one of them is Varuzhan Mouradian’s Van Ardi, located in the unique terroir of the city of Ashtarak in the Armenian Aragatsotn region—a setting with historic dimensions and an undeniable calling for winemaking since the medieval times. Mouradian repatriated with his family from the U.S. to Armenia in 2008, investing entirely in his vineyards. “Our goal is to raise the profile of Armenia as the source of exceptional and exquisite wines that are of high quality and unique character,” says Mouradian. “We are proud to say that in only five years of production we have achieved this goal, now entering our sixth vintage.” The achievement has not only helped polish the impressive reputation of Armenian wines across international markets but also plays a significant role in the wine renaissance of Armenia.

Van Ardi grows five varietals in its vineyards, four of which are endemic Armenian varieties—Areni, Kakhet, Haghtanak, and Kangun. According to Ani Mouradian, her father was the first to disprove the notion that the Areni grape only grows well in Vayots Dzor, where the Areni village and the site of the world’s first winery are located. “He planted Areni vines in the Aragatsotn region, and it performs fantastically,” she says.

Van Ardi produces red, white and rosé wines and offers tours of the vineyard.
A Syrian-Armenian who spent parts of his life in Lebanon, the United States, and Italy, before permanently moving to Yerevan with his family, Vahe Keushguerian is the man behind some of the most esteemed and novel wine labels produced in Armenia. Considered by some to be Armenia’s resident “wine guru,” Keushguerian has mastered all phases of the winemaking process, from growing the grapes to producing, bottling, labeling, marketing and distributing products around the world. He even launched a print magazine called Origins, a visual and verbal celebration of Armenian wine and cuisine.

Along with his daughter Aimee Keushguerian, who manages the daily operations while her father travels far and wide promoting Armenian wines, the two are on a quest to put Armenia on the map by putting its wines on the lists of the world’s best.

Keushguerian’s journey began as a waiter turned restaurant owner, which morphed into a wine manufacturing operation in Tuscany and Puglia. When he arrived in Armenia, his first pursuit was analyzing the potential of indigenous grapes, mostly by experimentation. The first of these experiments paid off with varieties like Chilar and Tozot. Starting with just a few barrels of untried wines, the results were surprisingly positive.

During this time, renowned winemaker Paul Hobbs, dubbed the Steve Jobs of Wine by Forbes magazine, visited Armenia to pursue a joint venture with partners Viken and Vahe Yacoubian of California. They enlisted Keushguerian to collaborate with them, which resulted in their first batch of Yacoubian-Hobbs wine, created at WineWorks.

Given these early successes and his state-of-the-art facilities, Keushguerian established WineWorks, the first and only wine incubator in Armenia. In just four years, WineWorks’ output grew from 30,000 to 200,000 bottles. It currently incubates 14 labels both from Armenia and Artsakh.

WineWorks has special appeal for investors looking to create their own wine label. Once they purchase the land, plant vineyards or harvest existing grapes, they can bring them to WineWorks. Keushguerian takes it from there, producing, aging and bottling the wine under the family name or custom label. The WineWorks client can then market and distribute the stock independently. These limited signature-projects may be as modest as 10,000 bottles. In that case, the wholesale cost to the owner could be as low as $4 per bottle, which includes everything from grapes to aging and bottling the wine. With an efficiently run distribution, the retail price could command twice or triple the amount, yielding a respectable profit. Alternatively, instead of purchasing land and growing the grapes, an investor can source the grapes directly from a local vineyard and develop the product under the aegis of WineWorks.

Keushguerian sees immense potential in Armenian wine to make the country famous while growing its economy with grapes as a major commodity. “Unlike other agricultural produce, wine is the only commodity that can be transformed into a luxury item. The same grapes can make wine that’s $2 a bottle or $500 a bottle, but it’s always that one kilogram of grapes. We have great tomatoes in Armenia, but no one boasts their tomato juice as the best on any list since nobody really cares. But for the wine they do. Only by serving up the highest quality products can we put Armenian wines in the company of wine nations,” Keushguerian insists.

Some notable labels incubated at WineWorks include Yacoubian-Hobbs, Noa, Keush, Koor, Tus, Sarduri, Seraphim, Oshin, and Z’art, to name a few.
Armen Aslanian repatriated to Armenia from California to establish ArmAs Wine Estate in 2007. Two years later, his daughter Victoria Aslanian joined him to continue advancing the ArmAs Estate brand. Sitting on 180 acres of land in the Aragatsotn region, ArmAs is more than a winery. It also runs a distillery and a dried fruits plant, as well as a boutique hotel and a grand tasting room with family-friendly entertainment. A lake, a farm, and a dormitory that is currently under construction, are also part of the estate.

“ArmAs has many plans for the future, all of which not only intend to grow and expand our “business,” which I prefer to call it our vision but also to develop our country’s wine and tourism sectors and the recognition of our country at large,” explains Victoria Aslanian.

ArmAs also organizes many events, including the Wine and Jazz Festival, Blessing of the Grapes ceremony, Laugh and Wine, Summer Nights, and Harvest and Harmony get togethers where locals and tourists alike are invited to pair wine with delicious food and breathtaking scenery. ArmAs produces nine award-winning wines using indigenous Armenian grape varietals.

Back in 2009, first time restauranteurs Hovakim Saghatelyan and partners Vahe Baloulian and Andranik Grigoryan were searching for superior wines to serve at their newly opened restaurant in Yerevan. Not finding anything that suited their palates or menu, they decided to take matters into their own hands, purchasing a plot of land on which to grow their own vineyard and produce their own brand of wine. Trinity Canyon Vineyard, located in Vayots Dzor, the cradle of Armenian winemaking, is the first and only vineyard in Armenia to produce organic wines. “We are a boutique winery expected to increase production to 35,000 bottles this year, most of which will be sold out before it is released,” says Saghatelyan.

He explained that making organic wine in Armenia is an extremely challenging and expensive endeavor. “Everything works against you and unless you have limitless patience and an unwavering dedication to organic principles, it is very tempting to give up and take the easy industrial route.” The trio sells its wines in their wine bar In Vino in Yerevan, as well as their restaurants in Armenia, France and the US. In Vino often organizes tastings for wine enthusiasts to sample Armenian and international wines and learn about the winemaking process.

The Canyon features reds, whites, rosés and sparkling wines under the brand names Trinity Eh, 6100, Areni Ancestors’, JAZZ, and Crossroads.
Intrigued that wine originated in the Caucasus, Swiss winemaker Jakob Schuler, whose family owns boutique wineries in Tuscany and the Canton of Valais in Switzerland, tried to convince his team to start a new venture in the region. They didn’t seem to be interested. In 2012, Schuler decided to explore on his own to see what the land had to offer. The first stop was Georgia to learn more about its famous grape variety Saperavi. Not quite convinced, he took an unexpected side trip to Armenia and stumbled onto Areni. The rest is history.

Today, Jakob Schuler produces NOA–Noah of Areni, using indigenous grape varieties while watching his business grow. In response to our question about the one thing about his experience that he would like people to know, Schuler replied, “I just want to emphasize that I am very happy to have started this very interesting venture/adventure in Armenia.”

Q: What inspired you to start a winery in Armenia?
A: As a winemaker, I knew that wine had its origins in the Caucasus and that interested me greatly. In 2012, I traveled to Georgia but was disappointed by its autochthone grape variety Saperavi. Then someone mentioned Armenia and I decided to investigate. Yet I was disappointed once again with the big modern wineries that made Cabernet-Sauvignon, Merlot, etc. To me, it was just more of the same as every other wine industry in the world. It was only during the last two days of my visit that I discovered the very fascinating autochthone grape varieties Areni and Voskehat. I was amazed and knew I had found what I had been searching for.

Q: Where is your winery located and what kind of wine do you make?
A: We produced our first two vintages in cooperation with an existing winery in the Areni Valley. They produced Areni wine for us, following our instructions to prune the vines more aggressively and delay the harvest. It worked out well, but I felt that there was even more potential. We decided to purchase vineyards to
better control the entire production from pruning to harvest. This vinification is conducted in cooperation with a partner for whom we financed some of the cellar equipment. The fermentation and edification of the young wine are there and our partner Arman, a very good winemaker, oversees the process.

We don’t have our own cellars yet, but it’s what we have planned for 2021. Until then, we will continue developing and improving our vineyards. Our goal is not to create as large a winery as Karas or Armenia Wine. Instead, we will always be a niche player with very special products of the highest quality. We have 50 hectares of vineyards and 30 hectares of nude land on which we want to plant more vines. Our vineyards are in Rind and Aghavnadzor [in the Vayots Dzor region]. We have been producing NOA Red Classic and Red Reserve since 2017 and NOA White since 2018, as well as a few bottles of Rosé.

Q What makes Armenia unique and appealing to foreign winemakers?
A I believe Areni is the oldest grape variety. Our vineyards in Armenia are 1,200-1,500 m above sea level with very high day temperatures and cool nights, allowing berries to ripen with a unique aroma. We can make wine in Armenia that we cannot make anywhere else. This opportunity to cultivate something exquisite is very appealing.

Q What were the initial challenges as well as the opportunities for establishing a vineyard in Armenia?
A This project in Armenia was challenging in every possible way. Yet it was also extremely satisfying. We worked with good people who were eager to learn and work hard to achieve our goals.

Q What is your overall vision for your brand?
A We do not want to become the biggest, we don’t even want to be big. However, we do try to be the “Best in Class.”

Q What are your measures for success?
A When the customer comes back for more. That’s what we consider success. The first time a customer orders a bottle of our wine in a restaurant or at a wine shop may be out of curiosity. When they buy it again, it shows that we have succeeded. Repeat business is critical for us.

Q What differentiates you from your competitors in Armenia and elsewhere?
A Maybe that NOA–Noah Wines are the first Armenian wines produced by a non-Armenian. We do many things differently, such as producing barriques with different sorts of woods that are tailor-made to the different origins and varieties of grapes and we run Vinalytic, quality control, and a research center. Although these are rather difficult things to do, we believe they will allow us to realize our full potential.

Q What is your marketing strategy?
A We all work and live for our customers. Satisfying or even fascinatting our customers is our goal. The rest will follow.

Q What does Armenia need to do to put its wine on the world wine map?
A Armenia is on the right track. Only a few years ago Armenia produced only sweet, semi-sweet and aromatized wines mainly for the Russian market at cheap prices. Today the country is going to great lengths to achieve the desired varieties and terroir. Compared to the big wine producers in the world, Armenia is a small wine country. The only chance for it to succeed is to focus on the quality of its wines. Leave the mass production at low prices to Chile, Australia, and others.

Q Do you envision a time when Armenia will join the ranks of other locations that are universally famous for wines?
A Absolutely. The potential exists and many young, ambitious winemakers are working toward this objective.

Q Do you have any new wines that are ready to go to market?
A Unfortunately, our wines are not sold in Armenia. As of today, all our wines have been exported, sold and served in Switzerland and Germany. The 2017 vintage will be the first to be sold also in Armenia, China, and Russia. This wine is still aging in the barriques and has not yet been bottled.

Q What is your personal favorite wine in the world and why?
A The world of wine is so fascinating that it would be wrong to designate a favorite. I have many preferences. However, since I am closely involved with Armenia, NOA is certainly one of my favorites.

Currently being aged in barriques, Schuler’s 2017 vintage will be the first sold in Armenia.
EXPLORE VAYOTS DZOR
Home to Armenia’s renowned wine region
The esprit de corps of hundreds of participants from across the globe was on full display as the AGBU 90th General Assembly weekend proceeded with a program of events from February 7 to 10, 2019. Over three momentous days and nights, the atmosphere was infused with optimism, perspective, gratitude, and pride, punctuated by the element of surprise for some of the unsuspecting individuals honored for their distinguished service and support.

“The sheer presence of so many luminaries in our midst—from public servants, thought leaders and community heroes to legendary philanthropists and dedicated volunteers—spoke volumes about how far we have advanced as a people and as an organization,” observed AGBU President Berge Setrakian. “Such an exuberant show of solidarity from all corners of the AGBU network affirms the special role Armenians can play as global citizens.”

From as far as Australia, Uruguay and Japan, Armenia and the Americas, AGBU faithful and friends joined their European counterparts to engage in stimulating interactions and panel discussions by day and social networking and cultural performances by night, culminating with the formal session of the 90th General Assembly, followed by a spectacular Gala finale.

As an added attraction, all had the opportunity to experience the magic that is forever Paris. Thanks to the efforts of AGBU France, each event was hosted in a unique Parisian landmark venue—from the iconic Eiffel Tower to the futuristic Station F. Other period venues included La Salle Wagram, Les Jardins de Saint Dominique, and the grand spaces of Le Pavillon Ledoyen.

This special section recaptures the many unforgettable moments of this highly anticipated biennial occasion in which the global AGBU family gathers under one roof—a vivid representation of the timeless wisdom of AGBU’s founders: “In unity is strength.”
AGBU Delegates’ Leadership Meeting

As a lead up to the official program of events, formal representatives from across the global AGBU network, including chairs of AGBU districts, chapters, schools, and young professionals, convened with AGBU Central Board members and staff for an exchange of ideas, presentations, best practices, and institutional next steps.

The morning session opened with introductory remarks by AGBU President Berge Setrakian, who laid out the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for Armenians and outlined AGBU’s unique role and responsibilities in managing a rapidly changing world. This was followed by presentations from Central Board members and executive staff. They spoke to issues of governance, outreach and development, and best-practice communications strategies, as well as new developments in AGBU programs, including AGBU Armenian Virtual College (AVC) ebooks, AGBU language and heritage apps, and the new AGBU Atlas, which connects users to a wealth of online resources on Armenian subjects.

Afternoon breakout sessions challenged teams to develop the next big idea in AGBU programs, with a lively pitch battle that revealed the out-of-the-box creative thinking within the ranks of the AGBU global network.

The all-day gathering sparked constructive dialogues and a spirit of collaboration through face-to-face interaction among peers, many meeting each other for the first time.

Welcome Reception at the Eiffel Tower

International delegates, members and friends kicked off the General Assembly weekend with an elegant evening at Salon Gustave Eiffel atop the iconic Eiffel Tower, which boasts spectacular nighttime views of the City of Lights. The lively interaction among friends and acquaintances, old and new, helped set the upbeat and congenial tone of the entire weekend.

Global Leadership Conference at Station F

Entrepreneurship, new technology innovation, leadership, and women’s empowerment were the themes of this all-day conference at Station F—the world’s largest space for incubator startups. AGBU representatives and attendees were exposed to the penetrating views and insightful perspectives of internationally renowned experts and distinguished panelists who explored the new paradigm shifts in science and technology that will have broad sweeping impact on the world. They also surveyed the current business environment in Armenia, and examined the unique virtues of women that are essential to national progress.

Introduced by Stéphane Petrossian of AGBU France, the main thesis of the morning session was the dawning of the Quantum Age. Keynote speaker Robert Vassoyan, Senior Executive Vice President of Atos S.E., asserted that governments, corporations, communities and organizations like AGBU must prepare for the coming wave of far-reaching change, both to seize opportunities presented by science and technology and to manage the challenges posed by counter forces in cyberspace. Vassoyan concluded his insightful presentation focusing on Armenia’s future and the tremendous opportunity for start-ups, young talent and women, characterizing Armenia as an “eState”
and stressing the value of putting citizens at the center of this new way of looking at nationhood.

As moderator of the first panel discussion on entrepreneurship in the context of Armenia, Central Board member and President of AGBU Armenia Vasken Yacoubian posited that the entrepreneurial spirit is central to Armenia’s capacity to grow economically. Panelists included Tatul Ajamyan, Founder of Wakie and IT startups, Aline Kamakian, Entrepreneur and Founder of Mayrig restaurants, and Vahe Keushguerian, Entrepreneur and Co-Founder of Impact Hub Armenia. Each provided deep insight on the issues surrounding starting a business in Armenia and the importance of promoting cultural
AGBU Central Board member Arda Haratunian moderated a candid discussion among high profile female leaders in various fields: Astrid Panosyan, Entrepreneur and Politician (LREM); Emma Arakelyan, Author and NYU Professor; Valérie Toranian, Director of *Revue des deux Mondes* and former Editor-in-Chief of *Elle Magazine* in France; and Isabelle Capron, Vice President of Icicle Shanghai Fashion Group.

While the panelists had starkly different backgrounds and experiences early in their careers, their success stories shared tolerance between Diaspora and Armenia, as well as integrating female entrepreneurs into the Startup economy.

The afternoon session expanded on the topic of women as
common themes, including having a vision for their career, the will to pursue it, and the values to be a true leader. Two panelists pointed out that they didn’t highlight their “Armenian-ness” until much later in their careers, choosing rather to “blend in” from the time they were young. Now as established leaders, they recognized that the desire for justice as it relates to the Armenian story compelled them to advocate for what was right in their careers, as well as their communities. There were also contrasting views about whether the female predisposition to nurturing and caring creates stronger leaders because of or in spite of these qualities. Several panelists highlighted the value of having and being mentors, noting that women don’t ask for favors as readily as do their male counterparts.

The following panel, moderated by Stéphane Petrossian, focused on how AGBU is supporting female entrepreneurs in Armenia, many of them from the rural areas. Entrepreneur and Founder of Hyetech Europe Armen Verdian spoke about his experiences in developing the tech industry in the country, while Digital Transformation Lead at Brenntag Haik Khanamiryan highlighted AGBU Europe’s Goriz Leadership program, designed to help young leaders collectively represent the Armenian identity as global citizens. AGBU-Armenia Executive Director Talar Kazanjian outlined the AGBU Women’s Empowerment initiative, which includes the Women’s Enterpreneurship (W.E.) program in support of enterprising women in Armenia looking to scale up or start a small business.

Picking up on the many threads of ideas and concepts that emerged throughout the conference, special guest President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian took to the podium to describe his vision of Armenia in light of the rapid succession of what he considers smaller “evolutions” that are cumulatively transforming the socio-economic landscape of Armenia in ways previously unimagined. He cautioned that, at the end of the day, these quantum leaps of technological wonders must be mastered to remain consistent with national morals and values.

Charles Aznavour Tribute Concert
The life and legacy of global entertainer, Armenian statesman at large, and longtime friend of AGBU Charles Aznavour was artfully captured on the intimate stage of La Salle Wagram, conjuring the bygone era of cabaret society in post-war Paris—where the lyrical genius became the toast of the torch song genre. The tribute opened with a powerful medley of Aznavour’s best-loved ballads, performed by his esteemed accompanying pianist Erik Berchot and collaborating jazz singer Joana Mendil.

In line with AGBU’s long tradition of fostering rising Armenian talents, contemporary vocalists Narine Dovlatyan, Iveta Mukuchyan, Hayk Petrosyan, Sona Rubenyan, Srbuhi...
Sargsyan and Gor Sujyan, dazzled the audience with their stylistic tributes. Documentary footage chronicling Aznavour’s illustrious career and worldwide impact on society was interspersed throughout the program, recalling cherished memories and moments of one of the few cultural figures who instinctively knew how to connect with the masses.

Among the distinguished audience members was Aznavour’s son Nicolas Aznavour, co-founder of the Aznavour Foundation. “It was a great pleasure for us to honor my father’s memory with the AGBU family in Paris,” Aznavour remarked. “This concert marks the beginning of many collaborations between AGBU and the Aznavour Foundation. Charles Aznavour has brought so much joy and pride to our lives. It is our collective duty to keep alive his artistic and humanitarian legacy.”

**AGBU 90th General Assembly**

A public forum to address the vital interests of the AGBU, assess accomplishments of the previous two-year cycle, reaffirm commitments to programs and initiatives, announce changes in governance, present the AGBU financial report for the years 2016 and 2017, and recognize champions of the AGBU mission, the 90th General Assembly official session convened at Les Jardins de St. Dominique, with ample meeting spaces to accommodate the over 300 attendees from over 20 countries.

With AGBU President Berge Setrakian and Central Board members presiding, a number of significant announcements and resolutions were incorporated into the official record, including an amendment to the AGBU by-laws that redefines
the qualifications of membership as anyone who considers themselves a friend of AGBU, without regard to nationality or religion. This change demonstrated AGBU’s expanded scope as a global non-profit organization with a responsibility to address global issues of relevance to Armenians by forging strategic partnerships with institutions and organizations with universal missions.

“Our reputation and open-minded approach have allowed us to develop strategically aligned partnerships with world class institutions and incomparable organizations like the United Nations, the EU, USAID, the Smithsonian and most recently, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York,” President Setrakian noted in his official speech. “Our chapters and offices have also taken important steps to collaborate with regional NGOs and cultural institutions, once again building bridges between cultures and elevating the Armenian voice into the mainstream conversations.”

AGBU Young Professionals were recognized as permanent entities of AGBU, with language reflecting their new status in the by-laws. The measure is intended to continue to facilitate the expansive growth of the YP network worldwide. The effort began that same weekend with two YP events featured in the weekend program: a forum on Leadership with Professor Emma Arakelyan, after the General Assembly; and a workshop held at the Alex Manoogian Cultural Center, the following day. Elections were also held for four new board members, all unanimously voted into office.

Haig Ariyan (New York), the president and CEO of Alex Brown and head of Raymond James Global Wealth Solutions. He is a member of the board of trustees of the Diocese of the Armenian Church and St. Nersess Seminary. He also sits on the board of the Dadourian Foundation.

Ari Libarikian (New York), a senior partner with McKinsey & Company and the leader of the Digital McKinsey Northeast location. He previously held positions at Nortel Networks and Bell Labs. He currently serves on the board of the Children’s Aid Society in New York.
Nadia Gortzounian (France), who enjoyed a long career in the pharmaceutical industry at Merck & Co., in France. Appointed President of AGBU France in 2015 and AGBU Europe in 2016, she spearheaded the development of strategic objectives for the region. Gortzounian is also the treasurer and general secretary of the Coordination Council of Armenian Organizations in France (CCAF) and a member of the board of the Bullukian Foundation in Lyon.

Vartkess Knadjian (United Kingdom), current CEO of Backes & Strauss and President of AGBU Belgium from 2002 to 2005. Closely involved with Armenia since 1993, he is a partner in the Lori Diamond Factory in Nor Keghi, Armenia. He is also the co-founder of the Armenian Jewelers’ Association and the Armenian Jewelers Foundation.

For the final segment of the session, President Setrakian presented awards to a select group of individuals, starting with the presentation of the Boghos Nubar Award, AGBU’s highest honor bestowed on community members who elevate others and work tirelessly in service of society. This year’s honoree was French politician Patrick Devedjian. Celebrated as a universal role model and global Armenian citizen for his advocacy, Devedjian was also honored for his unrelenting pursuit of justice in relation to the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, which led to the passage of a 2016 extension of the current French holocaust law, making the denial or trivialization of all events classed as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or slavery punishable crimes.

The next group of honorees were caught off guard when they were invited to the podium to accept their awards. Tamar Khabadian from Syria, Monica Nalbandian from Brazil, Maral Tchorbadjian from Australia, and Hermine Duzian from France were each celebrated for their valiant efforts in serving and maintaining the spirit of AGBU.

The AGBU Buenos Aires Chapter was also recognized for its community outreach, with particular reference to its Armenian Restaurant initiative. Open every weekend to the Armenian and general population, the money raised by AGBU youth restaurant staff goes directly to fund their annual youth trip to Armenia. To date, over 900 youth from Buenos Aires have visited the homeland thanks to this unique initiative. AGBU Buenos Aires Chair Ruben Kedikian accepted the award on behalf of the chapter for its impeccable dedication to excellence and community outreach.

Both YP Greater New York and YP Northern California were also celebrated for over two decades of galvanizing the newest generation of leadership in the Armenian world with their dynamic spirit of service and activism. The awards were accepted by YPGNY Chair William Nazarian and YPNC Chair David Ojakian.

While the Assembly celebrated past achievements, members were also encouraged to look to the future. “We’ve been called upon to navigate uncharted waters that require flexibility, ingenuity, vision and above all, unity. Finding a solution is no simple task. But one part of the answer is clear,” President Setrakian noted. “We, here in this room are in a position to provide. We...”
must provide opportunity. We must provide a forum for growth. And we must provide a means to engage all Armenians across the globe and speak to the interests of the new generation.”

As the 90th General Assembly came to an end, participants left Les Jardins de Saint Dominique with evidence that AGBU is evolving with its community, embracing progressive definitions of Armenian identity, while honoring its centuries-old tradition of empowering Armenians worldwide.

AGBU Gala Finale
Saturday evening brought participants to the spectacular AGBU Gala at Le Pavillon Ledoyen, one of the oldest restaurants in Paris. Central Board member Ani Manoukian and London Trust Member Camilio Azzouz served as emcees. During the dinner portion of the evening, two distinguished couples were surprised to learn that they were being honored for their decades of active support of AGBU and the global Armenian community: Sarkis and Seta Demirdjian; and Vatche and Tamar Manoukian. Both couples were presented with tribute videos and a special award bestowed on them by AGBU President Berge Setrakian.

Building on the storied legacies of their parents, prominent figures in the AGBU communities of Lebanon and Syria, Sarkis and Seta Demirdjian have continued to expand their philanthropic mission, encouraging new generations to follow their lead. It was the Demirdjians, including Sarkis’ brothers Avedis and Hagop, who, after the Lebanese Civil War, committed to creating a community center that would welcome the broader Lebanese community, making AGBU the first Armenian organization to create such a powerful medium of solidarity in the country and a model of social enterprise. Beyond investing in education through the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School in Canoga Park, CA, the couple also supports the arts through their work with the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra and numerous national music festivals. Committed to excellence, the Demirdjians were honored for their relentless efforts in bettering not just the Armenian world, but society at large.

In the same vein, Vatche and Tamar Manoukian continue to be pillars of the AGBU community, ceaselessly supporting initiatives that empower Armenians throughout the world. Investing in the Diaspora by founding such educational facilities as the Vatche and Tamar Manoukian High School and arts programs like the Performing Arts Center in their name, they also support programs that uplift the Holy See of Etchmiadzin and the people of Armenia. They have attracted investors like Bristol-Myers Squibb, Coca-Cola, and HSBC to contribute to the economic development of the republic. Through their work with other global non-profit organizations like UNICEF and the Elton John AIDS Foundation, the Manoukian’s generosity toward the most marginalized communities has helped elevate the Armenian image on a global scale. His Royal Highness Charles, Prince of Wales characterized their impact on his Dumfries House project, expressing his congratulations by saying: “I hope that you know how much you
are appreciated for all that you have done in the United Kingdom. I would’ve called you a national treasure, but with your scope and breadth of work, it would be more accurate to describe you as an international treasure.”

As the General Assembly weekend concluded, participants prepared to leave Paris with a broader understanding of just how much the Armenian world is empowered by, and in turn, inspires the rest of the world. “After four full days of thoughtful reflection, stimulating conversations, celebrations, and recognition of so many exemplary individuals,” President Setrakian said, “there is no doubt that AGBU is ready to take the next big leap into the future as a united force for good—across our communities, in Armenia, and throughout the world.”

1 Charlie’s Angels ensemble performs during the Gala after-party.  
2 Emcees Ani Manoukian, Central Board member, and Camilio Azzaouz, AGBU London Trust.  
3 Violinist Lucia Nocentini performs during the Gala festivities.
We are grateful for the continued generosity of those who believe in our mission. The collaborative efforts of our communities around the globe, the commitment of our donors and the dedication of our volunteers and staff enable AGBU to enrich the lives of hundreds of thousands of Armenians.

The below contributions were made to the AGBU Central Office in New York in support of our various worldwide cultural, educational, humanitarian, religious and youth initiatives. This report does not include contributions made directly to various local chapters around the world.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to the many individuals and families for their generosity and thoughtfulness in designating memorial gifts or special occasion contributions for the programs of the AGBU.

Due to limited space, only individual gifts of $1,000 or more are listed. For the complete list of donations, please visit www.agbu.org.

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Elizabeth Caroglanian Golden was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1922. She was a woman with an incredible dedication to empowering those in her life and though she was not fond of grand gestures or attention, she made those around her feel unique, seen, accepted and supported.

As the youngest of three in her family and the only girl, Elizabeth was committed to providing for her parents throughout their lives. She was a dutiful and devoted daughter. Her parents, Markar and Avedis, had immigrated to the United States from Western Armenia but they seldom spoke of their lives outside of the country. Fully integrated into the fabric of American life, the family would live through the Great Depression, surviving as best they could. During World War II, they sent their two sons, Anthony and Harry abroad to fight. Despite feeling American, the Caroglanians maintained a prominent Armenian heritage, speaking the language and preparing traditional food at home.

Admiring her brothers’ service and following their example, Elizabeth spoke frequently about enlisting in the military. In the end, she decided not to join in order to continue to care for her parents. Having graduated from Commerce High School with impressive secretarial skills in 1939, Elizabeth went on to work at a number of local companies. From Table Talk Pastry Co. to the United States Post Office, where she worked directly with the Deputy Post Master General until her retirement, her career was a manifestation of her meticulous, thoughtful and whole-hearted approach to living life.

Elizabeth was dedicated to those she cherished most, and her selflessness was renowned in the family. “Auntie Betty was so committed to taking care of all of us,” her nephew Larry White explains, “she made sure we never doubted how important we were.” Having married later in life, she found herself a caregiver to her late husband. Larry recalls how, having never learned how to drive in her youth, she got behind the wheel in her late 60s to get her license. Her husband fell ill and she knew he would need to be driven to doctors so she forced herself to overcome her fear. For the next thirty years, Elizabeth would drive everywhere.

Proud of her ancestral roots, Elizabeth was an active member of St. Mark’s Armenian Church in Worcester, where she was admired by her many friends. She would look forward to cultural events and supported the church initiatives to engage the local Armenian community. Elizabeth was very conscious of the loss of life during the Armenian Genocide, was hopeful for international recognition of the injustice and cared deeply about the independence and prosperity of Armenia.

In 2017, Elizabeth passed away. During her life, she established a trust she hoped would enrich and benefit the Armenian culture, illuminating new paths to our ancient heritage. Her gift is consistent with her ceaseless support of the Armenian people through her life. “She was so selfless,” Larry says. “She didn't think she made a difference in this world, but she made all the difference.”

ELIZABETH CAROGLANIAN GOLDEN

A Steady Presence Who Made All the Difference
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Mr. Alexander Sarian, NY 5,000 Mr. Aram Sethian, NY 2,000
Mr. Michael Sarian, NY 5,000 Prof. Peter Sourian Bequest, NY 2,000
Mrs. Sally Shishmanian, CA 5,000 UGAB Buenos Aires Chapter, Argentina 2,000
Mr. Ruben Vardanyan and Mrs. Veronika Zonabend, Russia 5,000 Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Yotnegparian, CA 2,000
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Mrs. Maral Kazanjian Sebelle, NJ 4,960 Dr. and Mrs. Simon K. Simonian, CA 1,600
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Anserian, NJ 4,220 JP Morgan Chase Foundation, MA 1,585
Daughters of Vartan- Zabelle Chapter, MI 4,189 Oppenheimer and Co. Inc, FL 1,540
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Ms. Ann Marie Kohligian, CA 4,000 Dr. and Mrs. Minas R. Apelian, PA 1,500
Ms. Isabelle Basmajian, Canada 3,998 Ambassador Richard W. Bogosian, MD 1,500
AGBU Satamian Theatre Company, CA 3,890 Mrs. Lucille Carmody, RI 1,500
Mr. and Mrs. Vatche Bechakjian, Canada 3,850 Dr. Hagop Gulekjian, CA 1,500
Dr. and Mrs. Philip Balkian, CA 3,600 Mr. and Mrs. Jacob E. Hagopian, CA 1,500
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Ms. Isgouhi Kassakhian, CA 3,400 Dr. Laszlo Osvath, NY 1,500
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry N. Misk, NJ 3,200 Mr. and Mrs. Viken Peltelkian, WI 1,500
Mr. and Mrs. Steven R. Nargizian, NJ 3,100 Mr. and Mrs. William B. Pindler, CA 1,500
Mr. and Mrs. JeanAltounian, Switzerland 3,000 Mrs. Annie Totah, MD 1,500
Ms. Pamela Barsam Brown and Mr. Stanley Brown, CO 3,000 Mr. Fredrick Danelian, CA 1,300
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Earl Dorsey, AZ 3,000 Mr. and Mrs. Vasken Yacobian, Armenia 1,300
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Karakashian, CA 3,000 Dr. and Mrs. Raymond Alexanian, TX 1,250
Flora Manavian lived a long and inspired life dedicated to nurturing others—be it her sons and grandchildren, the flowers and trees in her garden, or new generations of Armenian students looking to launch their careers. While the circumstances of her life took her across oceans, her inner compass always pointed in the direction of home and family.

Born in 1925, the oldest daughter of Minas and Arus Alagiagian, Flora was raised and educated in the Mediterranean coastal town of Tripoli, later moving to the Libyan capital of Benghazi for a position at a British based shipping company. There, she met and married George Manavian, who returned from World War II, having served as an interpreter with the British troops. While George pursued a business career working for the British Embassy and Barclay’s Bank, Flora turned her attention to raising their three boys—John, Ed, and then Yervant. Three months after Yervant’s birth, the Manavians moved to Los Angeles, California close to Flora’s paternal aunt, an orphan of the Armenian Genocide. Two years later, their youngest son George was born, making Flora and George the proud parents of four boys. The couple’s final move was to Anaheim Hills, California, where they lived out their lives cherishing and cultivating their family ties.

As their eldest son John tells it, Flora was beloved by the entire family, especially her grandsons, granddaughter, and a great-grandson. She was the ultimate homemaker, well known for her Mediterranean and Armenian dishes. Thanks to her miracle green thumb, she was able to grow grape leaves in her back yard so that her dolma would always be fresh. John recalls the care with which she tended her garden. “She took great pride in her flowers, plants and fruit trees. I have two huge fig trees in my backyard that started as a twig my mother brought from her garden and helped me plant. Gardening is tedious. There’s no fanfare, just satisfaction in seeing the labor of your efforts come to fruition. As a mother and grandmother, she made certain that we remained grounded in our family traditions and love for one another.”

When Flora’s husband passed away in 2007, relatives and friends helped establish an endowment to support the AGBU New York Summer Internship Program, an initiative they learned about in the AGBU News magazine, to which George and Flora had long subscribed. When Flora passed away nine years later, just short of her 91st birthday, family and friends raised additional funds to the endowment that now includes Flora’s name. Since its establishment, the George and Flora Manavian Endowment for the AGBU New York Summer Internship has made it possible for many students to gain valuable work experience in one of the great business capitals of the world.

Around the time of Flora’s passing in 2016, the family celebrated its 50th anniversary as naturalized U.S. citizens. John reflects on what becoming a U.S. citizen meant to Flora. “I still remember how, as an 8th-grade student, I would drill my mother at the kitchen table, asking her questions about American history. She worked so hard to pass the test. Thanks to her and my father, we all became proud U.S. citizens.” He added that what his parents loved about America was the opportunity. “So, we thought an endowment giving young Armenians from across the world the chance to gain work experience in the U.S. was the best way of honoring our parents’ achievements as Armenian-Americans.”
JOHN F. MIRABELLA, SYLVIA A. TUFENKJIAN-MIRABELLA AND LOUISE TUFENKJIAN BARKHUFF

Family and Community First

Sylvia A. Tufenkjian-Mirabella and older sister, Louise Tufenkjian Barkhuff were the only children of Harry and Vahida Tufenkjian, who emigrated from Aintab, Turkey to the United States. They met and married in New York City in the 1920’s, later settling in Poughkeepsie, NY. Growing up first generation Americans of modest means, the Tufenkjian sisters negotiated their identities with grace, facing a number of challenges as members of one of the few immigrant families in their small city. Though the pressures to assimilate could have pushed them away from their heritage, Sylvia and Louise remained connected to the Armenian community throughout their lives. “Through personal relationships, local clubs, national organizations like the AGBU and their favorite dishes, they engaged with their identity,” Louise’s son Stephen Barkhuff recalls. “They were always comfortable with who they were.”

After high school, Sylvia pursued her interest in healthcare, first obtaining a Registered Nurse degree from Mount Sinai and, later, a Ph.D. in Psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology. “Sylvia had a passion for self-actualization—she was constantly setting new intellectual, spiritual, and physical goals for herself,” Barkhuff recalls about his aunt. “After her passing, I would find handwritten notes in her office, pocketbook, car, and kitchen, reminding her of things she wanted to work on and achieve.”

She would stay in California for the rest of her life, working as a clinical psychologist. She specialized in Jungian psychotherapy. While working in central California, Sylvia met and married John F. Mirabella. They married in 1977. John was born in San Francisco, the second of four children of Joseph and Josephine Mirabella, who were of Sicilian heritage. He grew up in Monterey, CA, and, right after high school, joined the U.S. Army and trained as a medic. He served for 20 years, including combat service in Korea and Vietnam. Upon retiring from the Army, he earned his bachelor’s degree in teaching from California State University. “John’s values were quietly conveyed in his desire to pass on good advice to younger people, both in and out of the classroom,” Barkhuff reflects. He became a high school physics and math teacher in Modesto and was later a teacher at a state youth correctional facility, proud to help the young adults earn their high school diplomas. John and Sylvia settled in Ceres, enjoying a private and quiet life with John staying active with his passion for investing, while Sylvia enjoyed the arts, gardening, and tending her koi pond.

Louise remained in the Poughkeepsie area after high school. In the 1950’s, she was selected to be a Community Ambassador with the Experiment in International Living, travelling to Egypt and India. “My mother had a gift for relationship-building,” Barkhuff says. “She was able to foster relationships with many people from different backgrounds, who were taken with her caring attitude, hospitality, and openness to new things.” Upon her return, she gave many presentations on her experiences to local organizations. Soon after, Louise became activities director of theYWCA in Poughkeepsie and met Earl D. Barkhuff at a church event. They married in 1960 and raised three sons, Peter, David, and Stephen. She later enjoyed working as a librarian and participating in local homemakers’ and bridge clubs.

Despite living on opposite coasts, Sylvia and Louise remained very close throughout their lives, even venturing to Armenia together in the 1980s. In 1996, Louise passed away at age 67 and is survived by her three sons and three grandchildren. In 2017, Sylvia passed away at age 85. A year later, in 2018, John passed away, at age 85, survived by his son and granddaughter. John and Sylvia established the Tufenkjian-Mirabella Trust to benefit the many programs of AGBU, on behalf of themselves and Louise.
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To mark the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, AGBU continued its commitment to the UN’s mandate of genocide prevention through education. AGBU hubs in various locations worldwide organized observances including a panel on contemporary conflicts in the Middle East, a book talk on ancestral histories and an AGBU sponsored concert.

Brussels
“The way we chose to narrate the history of the Middle East is very problematic because it doesn’t help us understand our past,” began Vicken Cheterian, a political analyst from Geneva’s Webster University. “It is central to look at Ottoman history from the beginning of the 19th century to understand what is happening in the Middle East now.” Speaking in Brussels, Professor Cheterian was joined in discussion by Professor Uğur Ümit Üngör of Utrecht University on the panel “Mass Violence in the Middle East Today.” Aude Merlin, a Lecturer of Political Science at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, moderated the panel, which gathered a diverse audience, including academics, students and representatives from governmental and nongovernmental organizations alike on December 13, 2018.

The presentations sought to address the continuity between past and present geopolitical conflicts in the Middle East and how the suppression of history in the post-Ottoman world potentially perpetuates patterns of violence. While Professor Cheterian tackled the implications of the inadequate way scholars have studied recent history of the Middle East since the end of WWI, Professor Üngör examined the creation of “cultures of victory, defeat and resistance” and the episodic violence they influence now. In order to recognize how these violent conflicts manifest in contemporary times, Professor Üngör explained that when we look to the past, “we have to think about the lack of transitional justice, after all that violence, the lack of political institutions, civil societies and empowerment of minorities.”

The panel, which highlighted the challenges of rehabilitating history and how a global community begins to do that, was organized and hosted by the Belgian Collective for the Prevention of Crimes of Genocide and Against Negationisms in partnership with AGBU Europe, the
AGBU WebTalks
To complement the dynamic global onsite programming, AGBU published three French language WebTalks featuring Dr. Bernard Coulie, a professor of Byzantine Studies, Armenian and Georgian Studies, and European Culture and Identity at the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) in Belgium. In the videos, Dr. Coulie details the phases of genocide, explains the history of the Assyrian and Pontic Greek Genocides coinciding with the Armenian Genocide, and discusses the process of genocide recognition in Belgium. With the intent of genocide prevention through education, AGBU WebTalks are made to be accessible to the global public.

research unit on political life of the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Cevipol), the International Roma Youth Network (Ternype) and the European Union Jewish Students (EUJS). The Belgian Collective is composed of associations linked with communities that have suffered genocides.

Yerevan
As part of the Global Forum Against the Crime of Genocide in Yerevan, the third such forum organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, AGBU sponsored the opening night concert featuring the State National Academic Choir of Armenia and the Armenian National Philharmonic Orchestra on December 9th, 2018. The forum’s programming was focused on genocide prevention through accessible public education. “Given the history of the Armenian nation, it is our obligation to shine the light on the horrors of all genocides, as well as the ongoing injustice of genocide denial in the face of well-documented history,” said AGBU Armenia President Vasken Yacoubian, with Armenia’s Acting Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan at his side. “AGBU is proud to help carry the mantle of human rights advocacy by organizing and participating in international symposia and panel discussions in major capitals like New York, Paris and Beirut. Today, we can do so not just as survivors of genocide but as champions of humanity.”

Los Angeles
Across the Atlantic, in Los Angeles, The Promise Institute for Human Rights, spearheaded by AGBU Central Board member Dr. Eric Esrailian, hosted a book release event for Congo Stories, written by American activist John Prendergast and Congolese activist Fidel Bafilemba, with photographs taken by actor Ryan Gosling, at UCLA’s Fowler Museum on December 10, 2018. The book details the history of exploitation of the Congolese people and their natural resources in the heart of Africa. A deep discussion with Prendergast, Bafilemba, Gosling and afterward writer Chouchou Namegbe, was followed by a Q&A session with the audience. The panel event, attended by AGBU Western District staff, emphasized the importance of active allyship in and outside of international conflict zones.

Toronto
In Canada, AGBU Toronto invited the local community to explore the heroic history of Talas in Western Armenia. “Sharing the Journey,” an event on the night of November 28, 2018, was dedicated to discussing the book Grit And Grace In A World Gone Mad: Humanitarianism In Talas, Turkey 1908-1923 with author Wendy Elliott. The book retraces the steps of a remarkable, yet little known group of Canadian and American missionaries and relief workers in Talas in the dying days of a post-WWI Ottoman Empire. Elliott discussed how the group saved thousands of Armenian, Greek and Turkish orphans from starvation and disease, and how these ordinary people shifted the course of history through their service. The event was especially touching because many who attended were themselves descendants of Armenians from Talas, exploring the city of their ancestors through Elliott’s curated archival media. The following week, AGBU Montreal hosted Elliott with similar success.

Thanks to a partnership with the City of Paris and the Paris Region, AGBU France was able to organize the first-ever open air Armenian festival over the weekend of March 22-24, 2019, on the Place du Pantheon. The 50,000 euros awarded by the Paris Region made it possible to showcase the rich Armenian cultural heritage and folk arts, as well as promote Armenia and Artsakh as tourist destinations, all under the theme, “Armenians, Shapers of Peace.”

Anouch Dzagoyan, the executive director of AGBU France, explained the choice of themeline as an effort to raise public awareness of the geopolitical dynamics faced by Armenia and Artsakh.

“We wanted general audiences to better understand the situation in the Armenian homeland and the solidarity of all Armenians behind the people’s struggles. That is why we referred to ‘Armenians’ in our slogan. We consider ourselves one Armenian global nation, no matter where we live.”

The program began on Friday evening with a conference organized in partnership with the Nouvelle d’Arménie magazine on the topic of the conditions of minorities of the South Caucasus and in the Middle East. Discussants included: Hovhannes Guevorkian, the representative of the Republic of Artsakh in France;
Berivan Firat, the representative of the Kurdish Women’s Movement of France; Patrick Karam, the vice-president of the Paris Region and president of the Eastern Christians Coordination in Danger (CHREDO); and Guillaume Perrier, writer, journalist, and former correspondent of the Le Monde in Istanbul.

The Village was arranged into dedicated spaces, such as an all-day food stand serving authentic Armenian cuisine, a presentation of Gyumri ceramics by the Muscari Association, a khatchkar demonstration, and a display of traditional Armenian instruments. The organizers also managed to create a small-scale version of the famous Vernissage Street Fair in Yerevan, for the sale of such items as crafts, jewelry, candles with Armenian scents, locally-made products, and wines of Armenia. A tourist booth was set up to present the attractions of Armenia and Artsakh. A giant chess game, Armenia’s national pastime, was also part of the varied program.

During the weekend, the City Council of the 5th arrondissement of Paris hosted an art show featuring the works of the celebrated French-Armenian photographer Antoine Agoudjian, the artist Apo Baroudjian and renowned sculptor Raffi Sarkissian. Saturday evening, AGBU France presented an Armenian music and dance event in the Town Hall of the City Council. On Sunday, the Koghtan choir of AGBU Paris performed in the Town Hall after an open-air concert of traditional Armenian music in the Village square by the Navasart Orchestra. “The entire weekend successfully introduced the general public to Armenian culture in all its dimensions, and we were very pleased to collaborate with AGBU France to make this weekend event engaging, memorable, informative, and inspiring,” remarked Florence Berthout, Mayor of the City Council of the 5th arrondissement of Paris.
During the four month run of the Armenia! exhibition at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, 230,000 visitors and media outlets from around the world had the opportunity to discover Armenia as a major contributor to world culture. The high-profile, groundbreaking event in the world art community was largely made possible with the support of various institutional and individual donors. None, however, went to the great lengths to bring the experience of ancient Armenia to life as did AGBU.

In keeping with its tradition of showcasing Armenian culture to diverse audiences through educational and cultural events, AGBU sponsored a diverse program of exhibition-related concerts, multimedia events and children’s activities, organized by The Met leadership in collaboration with AGBU Performing Arts Department (PAD). All events took place on museum premises, augmenting the overall experience for global visitors discovering medieval Armenian art for the first time.

In November 2018, Syrian-Armenian visual artist Kevork Mourad illuminated the journey of the Armenian people from the fifth century onward at The Met’s Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium with a multimedia work called The Sound of Stone. Mourad featured his own live drawings and a new musical composition by the esteemed Armenian composer and pianist Vache Sharafyan.

Over two nights in December 2018, the sounds of ETHEL and Friends: The Secret Trio filled the space of the Balcony Bar of the Met’s majestic Great Hall, treating audiences to the genius of acclaimed oud player Ara Dinkjian, along with Ismail Lumanovski (clarinet), and Tamer Inarbasi (kanun).

In celebration of Armenian Christmas in January 2019, the international ensemble Axion Estin Foundation Chanters returned to The Met with special performances in the galleries, including chants and carols from Armenia and Eastern Orthodoxy.

Youth Discovery Activities
For children from 3 to 11, an engaging Family Afternoon—Global Community event was held at The Met’s Ruth and Harold D. Uris Center for Education. Families from around the world participated in storytelling, crafts and other Armenia! spin-off activities, including carving khatchkars and drawing distinctive Armenian motifs found in illuminated manuscripts. Another activity called Art Explore provided teens from 11 to 14 with the opportunity to draw inspiration from the exhibition to create original art of their own.
CANTERBURY, UNITED KINGDOM

AGBU Helps Bring a Piece of Armenia to Canterbury

More than 200 representatives from the Armenian community in the United Kingdom flocked to witness the unveiling of a khachkar at Canterbury Cathedral on March 2, 2019. Joining Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, were the Dean of Canterbury Robert Willis, the Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Great Britain Hovakim Manukyan, the Armenian Ambassador to the United Kingdom Arman Kirakossian, and members of the community. They gathered at the Cathedral’s Memorial Garden to commemorate the end of WWI and remember the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

AGBU London was instrumental in supporting the creation of the stone cross and sponsoring the welcome ceremony and reception for the several hundred guests.

The ceremony began with vespers service, held in the Main Cathedral on the day of the dedication. Presided by the Archbishop Welby, with the participation of Bishop Manukyan, the church service was followed by the consecration of the khachkar with holy muron from Echmiadzin.

At a striking two metres tall, the khachkar was crafted in Canterbury, the work of Brigadier John Meardon, who retired from his role as Receiver General at the Cathedral in 2016, and Vartan Moskofian, an electronics engineer. The half ton of rich tufa stone, made from compressed volcanic ash, was especially imported, traveling for three weeks to make it from the quarry in Armenia to Dover.

“The idea behind the stone was two fold,” Meardon explains. “It was to mark the centenary of the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians and to act as a symbol for reconciliation between peoples.” He worked with Moskofian diligently to craft a design that incorporates traditional Armenian liturgical symbology: a wheel of infinity; two peacocks; and steps representing the ascent to heaven. The khachkar also bears the year 301 in Armenian letters (ՅԱ), a reference to when the Armenian King Drtad III converted the nation to Christianity, and the inscription “Ու ես կ’երթամ դէպ ի աղբիւրը լոյսին” [And I go towards the source of light] from Taniel Varoujan’s poem, “Լոյսը” [The Light].

The khachkar found a particularly suitable home at the Canterbury Cathedral because Archbishop Randall Davidson, the man at the head of the institution from 1903-1928, was a very public advocate for the Armenian cause at the end of WWI. He gathered and published British materials on the Armenian Genocide. He also played a significant role in the adoption of the resolution on the Armenian issue and the extension of financial assistance provided by the League of Nations to the First Republic of Armenia. After the stone cross was blessed, Davidson’s contributions to the Armenian Cause were emphasized as clergy led community members to the cloisters to lay a wreath on his tomb.

The ceremony was concluded with a reception at the Chapter House. Amidst music and poetry, craftsmen Meardon and Moskofian, historian Ara Sarafian, Bishop Manukyan, and Ambassador Kirakossian addressed all those present, reflecting on solidarity, survival, justice, and reconciliation in times of war and peace.
AGBU Armenia Organizes Convergence: A Collective Fine Art Exhibition

On March 15, 2019, AGBU Armenia opened its gallery doors to *Convergence: A Collective Fine Art Exhibition* for an evening of artistic exploration and discovery.

The exhibit, open through March 30, featured seventeen young Armenian artists with a shared education from the State Academy of Fine Arts of Armenia and a propensity toward experimentation with different techniques, styles and subjects. Some 300 art enthusiasts attended the opening ceremony.

More than 50 artworks were showcased during the exhibit.

Anna Gargarian, Curator and Cultural Projects Advisor at AGBU Armenia and curator of the exhibit, described *Convergence* as "a dialogue where different approaches intersect and merge—sometimes in conflict and other times in harmony."

Hakob Vardanyan, a sculptor whose works—*Dream* and *Dream 2*—mix divergent materials like oil, glass and wood, shared Gargarian’s view that “everyone spoke a different artistic language” during the exhibit, but added that “each work had something of the other” despite their disparities.

Vardanyan was also very impressed with the AGBU team’s professional approach—a first for many of the participants, according to the sculptor. “We felt like we were at a foreign exhibit. Everything was so well organized. Honestly, I’d love for more galleries in Armenia to take cue from AGBU,” said Vardanyan. 

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**YEREVAN, ARMENIA**

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The exhibit, open through March 30, featured seventeen young Armenian artists with a shared education from the State Academy of Fine Arts of Armenia and a propensity toward experimentation with different techniques, styles and subjects. Some 300 art enthusiasts attended the opening ceremony.

More than 50 artworks were showcased during the exhibit.

Anna Gargarian, Curator and Cultural Projects Advisor at AGBU Armenia and curator of the exhibit, described *Convergence* as "a dialogue where different approaches intersect and merge—sometimes in conflict and other times in harmony."

Hakob Vardanyan, a sculptor whose works—*Dream* and *Dream 2*—mix divergent materials like oil, glass and wood, shared Gargarian’s view that “everyone spoke a different artistic language” during the exhibit, but added that “each work had something of the other” despite their disparities.

Vardanyan was also very impressed with the AGBU team’s professional approach—a first for many of the participants, according to the sculptor. “We felt like we were at a foreign exhibit. Everything was so well organized. Honestly, I’d love for more galleries in Armenia to take cue from AGBU,” said Vardanyan.
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NEW YORK, UNITED STATES
AGBU Organizes Second Armenian Spirituality Retreat

Over the weekend of March 8-10, 2019 more than 30 young professionals gathered at AGBU’s Central Office in New York to participate in the second annual Armenian Spirituality Retreat, modeled after the success of the first retreat organized in 2018 by opera singer Solange Merdinian, educator Michelle Nahabedian, and journalist Lara Setrakian.

This year, participants were challenged to ponder a broad range of themes with a program of live presentations, panels and guided meditations. On Friday evening, Arpi Nakashian, Assistant Director of Christian Education at the Diocese, opened the session by leading an “Adult Sunday School.” She presented a brief course on Armenian theology, which served as a primer for the following day in which more in-depth perspectives would be considered.

On Saturday, Father Mesrop Parsamyan began with an exploration of themes used in Armenian prayer and led a guided meditation. This was followed by an enthralling lecture by Dr. Roberta Ervine, Armenian Studies Professor at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, who spoke about “How Armenians See Immortality.” She referred to how popular Diaspora media examined concepts of immortality and opinions around them immediately after the Armenian Genocide.

Later, philanthropist and former CEO of Synceor Arev Tavitian spoke about his Armenian faith and how it has supported him through both his successes and failures on his personal journey, while Harvard doctoral student Julia Hintlian shifted the discussion in her lecture “The Legacy of Cultural Exchange: Zoroastrianism and Armenian Faith.” She illustrated the geopolitical pressures and the theological environment in which the Armenian nation adopted Christianity and how Zoroastrian and Manichaean thinking influenced how Armenians negotiated their conversion to Christianity at this point of transition.

Presenters joined the Youth Ministries Associate at the Diocese Kathryn Ashbahian on a panel discussion about future of the Armenian Church. Moderated by Setrakian, panelists shared perspectives on how to keep the teachings and traditions of Apostolic Christianity relevant, while considering what those teachings and traditions represent. An emerging theme was how the Armenian Church evolved into the institution it is today, and how the theology at its core has impacted Armenians throughout the world.

Quoting Father Daniel Findikyan, Primate and Bishop-Elect of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church, Setrakian urged, “We must remember that what survived of the Armenian Church is what our ancestors, survivors of the Genocide, were able to grasp with their own hands,” emphasizing that the lost traditions, beliefs and practices have yet to be restored. The Saturday sessions concluded with a healing service performed by Deacon Eric Vozzy and Father Mesrop.

Participants were also invited to St. Vartan’s Cathedral the next day for a Sunday Badarak and fellowship lunch.

YEREVAN, ARMENIA
AGBU Armenia Discussion Series on Civil Society

AGBU Bridge for CSOs has launched a series of “Civil Society Talks,” a platform that will bring together representatives and stakeholders of diverse backgrounds to voice the challenges facing their fields, discuss possible solutions and put forward constructive proposals and projects for addressing the issues.

The first event in the series of #CivilSocietyTalks was devoted to Mass Media, with emphasis on improving media quality, journalistic responsibility, media objectivity, and property rights. Issues pertaining to the cooperation between media and the government were also discussed.

The panelists included Maria Titizian from EVN Report, Karen Harutyunyan from CivilNet TV, Liana Savadyan from Hetq, Nourneh Sarkissian from Media Initiatives Center, Bella Karapetyan from the office of the RA Prime Minister, and Daniel Ioannisyan from Union of Informed Citizens.

The event was moderated by Tatshat Stepanyan the team leader of AGBU BRIDGE for CSOs and took place on February 28, 2019, at AGBU Armenia Hall with a live stream on YouTube.

The Civil Society talks will be held every month and will cover a wide spectrum of topics over the years, including Media, Girls and Women Empowerment, Social Protection, Arts and Culture, Tourism, Public Health, Education, Environment/Ecology, and Community Development.
AGBU Young Professionals

The AGBU YP is a dynamic and growing network of like-minded young leaders between the ages 22 and 40 who serve their local communities and collaborate globally to uphold the Armenian heritage. The YP movement began in 1995 with the first group in Los Angeles. Since then, the network has expanded to include chapters and partnerships in North America, South America, Europe, and the Middle East. Today there are 35 YP groups across the globe, including our two newest in Frankfurt, Germany, and Seoul, South Korea.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
YP Northern California 19th Annual Winter Gala and Fundraiser
Between February 15-17, 2019, 300 young professionals from California and across the country gathered in San Francisco to participate in the “Leave Your Heart in SF” weekend. During the three-day festivities, the group also managed to raise significant funds in support of the AGBU Women’s Empowerment (W.E.) Program, an initiative designed to help women in Armenia gain fuller participation in the life of the country as independent entrepreneurs.

The weekend began with a welcome reception on Friday evening at the Redwood Room of the Clift Hotel, followed by Lounge Night at The Redford. The next day included a walking tour of San Francisco, featuring breathtaking views of the Golden Gate and visits to Crissy Field and Alcatraz. Later that evening, guests assembled at the San Francisco Design Center Galleria for the Winter Gala dinner-dance, with special guest Irina Mkrtchyan, a fellow at UC Davis who had participated in the AGBU W.E. pilot project in Armenia. A winner of its mini-grant competition, she spoke about the benefits and importance of the experience.

Sunday began with the customary tour of the Gloria Ferrer Winery in Sonoma and ended with the launch of a new weekend finale—Salsa Night at Cigar Bar and Grill. Guests enjoyed salsa lessons and dancing, as well as a custom AGBU cocktail to be sold by the establishment all month long with proceeds donated to the AGBU W.E. program.

Earlier in the month, AGBU Central Board member Dr. Yervant Zorian presented the YPNC Committee with the AGBU Outstanding Service Award, an honor originally presented at the AGBU 90th General Assembly in Paris.
NEW YORK, UNITED STATES
**YP Greater New York Annual Silent-Auction Fundraiser**
On January 26, 2019, AGBU Young Professionals of Greater New York (YPGNY) held its 18th Silent Auction & Cocktail Party at Current at Chelsea Piers, raising over $50,000 in behalf of the AGBU Children’s Centers in Armenia. The much anticipated annual event attracted over 200 young professionals from across the U.S. and abroad. Co-sponsors included: Tito’s Handmade Vodka; Diageos; Manhattan Beer Distributors; and Haworth Wine and Spirits. Guests were treated to the music of DJ GLO, Greg Stepanian, as they entered their bids for an array of gifts, luxury items and services from global brands: Dior; Hermès; Prada; Alex & Ani; Gregg Emery; Shakmat Brandy; among others. In his remarks, YPGNY Chair William Nazarian announced that, “2018 was the first year of our group’s three-year $150,000 commitment to the ‘Afterschool Reimagined’ fundraising campaign in support of the AGBU Children’s Centers.” He also stated, “With this year’s donation of $50,000, we are now two thirds of the way to reaching our goal,” noting the impressive level of support by the YP community for Armenia’s youth. Together with the 2019 proceeds, YPGNY has raised over $375,000 for AGBU projects to date.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
**YP Chicago Annual Christmas Brunch**
In what has become a holiday favorite, many young professionals and community members of the Chicago area spent the morning of January 5, 2019 together, preparing a home cooked meal for the families at the Ronald McDonald House near Lurie Children's Hospital. This center supports the needs of families whose children are receiving treatment at the hospital and other area clinics. The group served brunch to over 60 individuals, followed by a tour of the facilities by the Meals From the Heart volunteer coordinator. Many participants expressed how gratifying it felt to help uplift the spirits of families who could not spend the holidays at home.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
**YP Boston Christmas Party and Fundraiser**
On January 12, 2018, more than 130 young professionals from across the Greater Boston Area gathered on a blustery night in the city’s Seaport District to show their support for Artsakh. This first-of-its-kind fundraising event was held at the Society of Arts and Crafts, a unique venue that added to the dynamic and festive holiday atmosphere. The evening succeeded in generating nearly $5,000 to benefit the AGBU Fund for Artsakh, thanks to a wide array of quality items donated to the Silent Auction, including Shakmat Brandy, original artwork, specialty cigars, Red Sox tickets, and high-end jewelry.
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

YP Buenos Aires Celebrates 10th Anniversary

YP Buenos Aires (YPBA) had much to celebrate upon reaching its 10th year milestone. YPBA reflected on its growth and the participation of its members, having engaged in such activities as talks, workshops with recognized experts, and inspired youth experiencing the satisfaction of volunteering to serve in Armenia. They also promoted the AGBU Summer Internships in various locations worldwide and organized art exhibitions and after-work gatherings, in addition to welcoming YP members from across the AGBU network, sharing stories and exchanging ideas. On November 22, 2018, the 10th Anniversary was officially celebrated at the AGBU Scout House with a Food and Wine event attended by nearly 80 guests who had contributed to the success of the group over the past decade. Speakers, volunteers and sponsors were thanked for their efforts and assured that the YPBA would continue supporting all the young professionals in the community.

LUXEMBOURG

YP Luxembourg Evening With Georgia Paphiti

At the invitation of YP Luxembourg, CFO of UBS Europe and SE Luxembourg Georgia Paphiti shared advice and wisdom with an eager audience of young professionals in the first guest speaker event organized by the YP group. During the evening, she shared stories of amazing career path and the principles she followed in achieving her goals. She also recounted inspiring stories from her life that helped advance her career, stressing the importance of being brave enough to progress to the next step rather than getting stuck in one’s comfort zone and not asking for more.

NICOSIA, CYPRUS

YP Cyprus Discussion on Effective Stress and Time Management

“Don’t Worry, Be On Time” was the focus of a panel discussion, organized by YP Cyprus on November 28, 2018. The panel explored the various schools of thought and techniques for dealing with stress and time management. Panelists included: Demetris Hadjisofocli, a martial arts student and teacher, and the Managing Director at the Center for Social Innovation, Ltd.; Tatev Petrossyan, a life coach with a background in mental health, including psychology, hypnotherapy and NLP, who recently opened the Coaching Hub, which focuses on one-on-one coaching sessions and workshops; Gaurav Vohra, a registered yoga teacher who shares the therapeutic aspects of yoga as a Teacher of Indian Culture at the High Commission of India in Cyprus. The session was moderated by Hasan Haj, who, alongside his day job in finance, is a certified mental trainer with a master’s degree in Educational Leadership. The discussion offered insightful and interesting perspectives, followed by an engaging Q&A session.
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
YP Amsterdam Evening with Leadership Expert Emma Arakelyan
On February 15, 2019, over 40 young professionals gathered at the Atelier Schinkel in Amsterdam to draw inspiration from AGBU program alumnus, professor and seasoned business professional Emma Arakelyan, author of *The Business Caring Formula: Building Your New Leadership Lifestyle*. Arakelyan spoke about best practices in building productive and successful leaders based on her more than 20 years of experience in business at top global organizations. She stressed such practices as inclusivity, in which the caring leader takes others on their journey, as well as action-driven leadership. She also addressed issues surrounding female empowerment and leadership, the global theme adopted by the AGBU YP worldwide network for the year 2019.

FRANKFURT, GERMANY
YP Frankfurt Launches First Group in Germany
From economists and lawyers working in the financial industry to artists, philologists, political scientists and psychologists, the cross-section of professions and industries represented in YP Frankfurt came together to set the course for the new group. Over many months, members worked together to develop a strategy for addressing the many factors that impact the Armenian diaspora in Germany. Proud to be part of the AGBU global network, YP Frankfurt looks forward to applying a wealth of talent, skill and enthusiasm toward achieving common goals, guided by shared values.

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA
YP South Korea Celebrates Launch
On November 3, 2018, after three months of preparations, the Armenian community of South Korea came together to mark the inauguration of the new AGBU Young Professionals group. The evening was primarily social, giving attendees an opportunity to meet new people, share in engaging conversations, and exchange ideas for how YP South Korea can achieve its mission to be the connecting platform for all of the Armenians who live, study, work, or visit Korea while helping to promote and preserve their Armenian heritage. Another goal is to help Armenian and Korean relationships grow stronger by facilitating economic, cultural and educational partnerships. The event left the guests with their hearts filled with hope and their creative spirits energized as they look forward to tackling exciting projects in future meetings and gatherings.
YEREVAN, ARMENIA

YP Yerevan Panel Discussion for International Volunteers Day

On December 5, 2018, YP Yerevan organized an engaging panel discussion on the subject of volunteerism and its importance in Armenia. Over 150 people of different professional backgrounds and interests attended.

Co-hosted by the Armenian Progressive Youth NGO, the distinguished panel members included: AGBU YP Yerevan Chairman Haykaz Nahapetyan; APY President Grigor Yeritsyan; representatives from the Armenia ministry of education and science as well as the ministry of sport and youth affairs; along with a volunteer from Peace Corps of Armenia. Fellow YPs Gayane Virabyan and Anna Tovmasyan served as moderators. The insightful discussion addressed issues around volunteerism specific to Armenia, with speakers sharing their experiences and opinions on how to solve them. A Q&A session followed.

As an adjunct to the panel, Armenian Public TV hosted an interview with Haykaz Nahapetyan, in which he spoke about AGBU’s longstanding tradition of volunteering and how the organization has passed on the volunteering spirit to new generations of Armenian citizens over the past decade, adding an important new dimension to the national culture.
NEW YORK, UNITED STATES
AGBU Book Event with Author Avedis Hadjian
In October 2019, AGBU New York organized a presentation and signing of Avedis Hadjian’s new book—Secret Nation: The Hidden Armenians of Turkey. Hadjian first learned of these “secret Armenians” living in the Anatolian mountains when he was just a boy in the 1980s. Eight years ago, he decided to embark on a journey to Turkey, traveling to towns and villages once densely populated by Armenians. The book tells the stories of their survival and discovery and takes the reader to the heart of these hidden communities for the first time, unearthing their unique heritage and identity.

The event was moderated by Raffi Khatchadourian, a staff writer at The New Yorker since 2008, and co-sponsored by the Armenian Radio Hour of New Jersey, St. Leon Armenian Church, and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS
AGBU New England Evening with Author of Home Again
The AGBU New England District and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) co-sponsored a talk by Prof. Mari Firkatian of the University of Hartford on February 21. Prof. Firkatian presented her book Home Again: Armenian Recipes from the Ottoman Empire, at the AGBU New England Center in Watertown, where NAASR has its temporary offices during the construction of its new building in Belmont, MA.

Prof. Firkatian gave an engaging talk that touched on different aspects of the book and her research on the food culture of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire and their descendants, as well as her personal experiences in preparing and enjoying these dishes. Firkatian emphasized the important role these traditional recipes play in connecting us to our ancestors and to ancestral lands, which contained a wealth of regional variations. She noted that the essence of cooking was the use of fresh ingredients that were in season—a traditional approach that in recent years has become once again very much in fashion. She made it clear that there is no one single thing as “Armenian cooking,” and that the variety and diversity of Armenian culinary traditions should be celebrated.

Following her talk, Prof. Firkatian engaged in a spirited question-and-answer session with the audience and signed copies of her book.

CANOGA PARK, CALIFORNIA
Academic Decathlon Winners
On January 26 and February 2, students of the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School (AGBU MDS) Academic Decathlon team, under the guidance of their advisor Taleen Hasholian-Newberry, competed in the Academic Decathlon, the only annual high school academic competition organized by the United States Academic Decathlon Association, a non-profit organization. The competition consists of seven multiple choice tests, two performance events, and an essay. Students competed in ten categories: math; science; social sciences; literature; essay; interview; speech; music; economics; and art. More than 60 schools participate in this competition with this year seeing the largest turnout of over 450 students. AGBU MDS participated with two teams of 19 students. They won 41 medals, including 19 gold, and both teams placed second in their respective divisions.
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA
AGBU Western District Concert Honoring Arno Babajanyan
On Saturday, February 2, 2019, the AGBU Western District hosted the first classical music concert of its scale, “A Classical Evening in Honor of Arno Babajanyan” performed at the brand new AGBU Vatche & Tamar Manoukian Performing Arts Center (PAC). The sold-out concert was planned around the 35th anniversary of the composer’s passing and what would have been his 98th birthday. With the help of his son Ara Babajanyan, the Western District was able to put on a spectacular concert with all-star performers. Talented artists took to the stage to pay homage to the world-renowned composer by performing many of his classical and popular pieces. Among the 600 concert attendees were, His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian; His Excellency Consul General of the Republic of Armenia, Armen Baibourtian, the Honorable State Senator Anthony Portantino; the Honorable Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian; and the Honorable Mayor of the City of Pasadena Terry Tornek.

Master of Ceremonies Gayane Avetisyan, welcomed the audience and shared a brief biography about Arno Babajanyan’s life. Western District Chair Talin Yacoubian welcomed the guests to the new PAC and presented a short video on the life of Arno Babajanyan, from being discovered by the great composer Aram Khachaturyan at the age of five to becoming a prominent and influential composer of his time.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
Argentina Exchange Program
During the month of January, the students of AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School (AGBU MDS) opened their doors and their hearts to 10 exchange students from a sister school in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The students spent two and a half weeks in Los Angeles, living with their host families, and taking art, Armenian dance, physical education, English language, Armenian language, Armenian History, and American History classes. Alongside their academic program were frequent excursions to some of Los Angeles’s most iconic sites: Hollywood; Disneyland; and Universal Studios.

This program, which began over 15 years ago, allows Armenian students living in different hemispheres to connect and create friendships that last a lifetime. This exchange is the brainchild of Mrs. Miriam Bogossian, who has been spearheading the program from UGAB Buenos Aires and has found her Los Angeles counterpart in Mrs. Houry Khechoumian, who teaches 3rd grade at AGBU MDS yet finds time to make this program operate harmoniously. Next summer, it will be the turn of AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian students to head to Buenos Aires to visit their friends. Both schools are committed to continuing this program for many years to come.

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA
AGBU Presents Art of Ruben and Alexandra Manukyan
On Friday, February 22, 2019, the AGBU Pasadena-Glendale Chapter hosted the opening of its second art exhibition featuring the works of the father/daughter duo Ruben and Alexandra Manukyan. The weekend-long show was a resounding success with many patrons in attendance. Guests enjoyed wine and hors d’oeuvres while viewing paintings combining classical and modern elements deployed with unique color palettes.
TORONTO, CANADA
AGBU Toronto Celebrates Appointment of Armenia’s Honorary Consul

On January 30th, AGBU Toronto hosted a cocktail reception honoring the Republic of Armenia’s newly appointed Honorary Consul in Toronto, Mr. Van Lapoyan. In attendance were community leaders, representatives of the church, organizations, and schools. AGBU Toronto Chair Mihran Egavian served as emcee, commenting that, “these are the events that bring our community together and provide a platform to work closely with each other.” Invited speakers and guests included Rev. Archpriest Fr. Zareh Zargarian, Vicar of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church Diocese of Canada; Ara Mkrtchian, Consul of Armenia; Hon. MPP Aris Babikian; Councillor Jim Karygiannis; Arsiné Khanjian; and Armen Ontario President Berge Papazian. They congratulated Lapoyan and praised him for his charitable work, love of education and active support of the Toronto Armenian community and its organizations. Councillor Karygiannis presented Lapoyan with a scroll congratulating his appointment. Mr. Lapoyan spoke about his objectives in his new position and his commitment to providing support to the community. He also acknowledged the AGBU scholarship he received as a university student.

CANOGA PARK, CALIFORNIA
AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian 43rd Annual Gala

On March 2, 2019, AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School (AGBU MDS) held its 43rd Annual Gala, their largest fundraising event of the year. With the generosity of the community, over $215,000 was raised for educational and capital investment projects.

Through hard work and dedication to their vision, the Gala Committee, chaired by Dalida Karatas, transformed the Nazarian Center into a beautiful setting in which over 420 attendees gathered to enjoy the dance performances by students and alumni from the school’s dance department. During the Gala, the Alumni Association unveiled its new logo.

TORONTO, CANADA
AGBU Toronto Dedicates Art Exhibit to Earthquake Victims

Dedicated to the victims of the 1988 Earthquake in Armenia, a group art exhibition was organized by AGBU Toronto Center from December 5-7, 2018. The works of David Arathoon, Garo Mardirossian, Naz Toroyan, and George Der Ghazarian were displayed, covering a range of styles and subjects.

Toronto-based artist David Arathoon has achieved national success with numerous solo and group exhibitions in many private and public spaces in Canada, U.S., Australia, Hong Kong, and other countries. Garo Mardirossian was born and raised in the Holy Land and his paintings portray his journey growing up in an unstable part of the world. From Armenia, Naz Toroyan moved to Canada in 2015 and started her career as an artist. George Der Ghazarian, born in Tehran, Iran immigrated to Canada in his early twenties widening his exposure to nature and scenery. Now retired, he has focused on painting, resulting in his first public exhibition.

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**AGBU Chapters**

**SOFIA, BULGARIA**

**AGBU Sofia Presents Series of Cultural Events**

Over the months of February and March 2019, AGBU Sofia organized three events covering the fields of poetry, music and humanistic endeavors. On February 20th, the poetry of Armenian literary greats Sayat Nova, Paruyr Sevak and Vahan Terzian were presented by lecturers Karina Gevorgyan and Lilit Matevosyan at the AGBU Sofia office. On March 8, the local community was invited to engage in “The Women’s Beginning” project, which is part of the international “Open Doors” program. On March 23rd, well-known pianist from Spain Sofya Melikyan performed at the Armenian Community Center along with fellow pianists Alexander Bötter and Ruzanna Tashchian, both of Bulgaria. The program included works by Gehuni Chitchyan, Rachmaninoff, Chopin and Al Artunyan.

**BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

**Mobilizing Minority Youth**

The TernYpe International Roma Youth Network, in partnership with AGBU Europe, the European Union of Jewish Students, and the Youth of European Nationalities, organized a five-day seminar entitled, “Minority Youth & the European Parliament Elections” in the European Parliament, during the Anti-Racism Week/EU Roma Week of March 17-21. Fostering cross communal voices and intersectional perspectives, the seminar focused on networking and coalition-building among minority youth activists and various youth organizations. “My goal is to not only increase tolerance between communities,” participant Lilian Babayan of the UK explained, “but to increase the appreciation communities have of one another, by recognizing the unique parts of their respective cultures.” Organized intentionally ahead of the EU elections of May 2019, the forum gathered members of minority communities, including Armenians, who are actively mobilizing against racist rhetoric and policies.

**TORONTO, CANADA**

**AGBU Toronto Annual Musical Talent Show**

In what has become an annual tradition, the AGBU Toronto's musical talent show is an event that brings together young music students, their families, and teachers for a delightful musical afternoon. In addition to newcomers and first timers, a good number of the participants are regulars who return every year, tackling increasingly challenging pieces and drawing enthusiastic applause from a supportive audience. The show took place on Sunday afternoon, March 3, 2019 at the Babayan Hall of the Alex Manoogian Center. The 34 budding musicians, ages 4 to late teens, offered a varied musical program showcasing piano, violin, guitar, and vocals with selections ranging from beginner level to very advanced. A few young artists displayed a true mastery of their instrument, both technically and artistically. Executive Director of AGBU Toronto Salpi Der Ghazarian congratulated all participants and their teachers and presented each performer with a certificate of participation.
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

AGBU Europe Partners With Bozar on Film Festival

AGBU Europe has partnered with Bozar-Centre for Fine Arts to conceive and promote an Armenian film program for the 2nd edition of “Bridges: East of West Film Days,” which focuses on the cinema of countries bordering Eastern Europe. This time, Armenian film was represented with a selection of works curated in close partnership with AGBU Europe. Two feature-length films and four short films were shown in the presence of their directors, during the run from January 16 to January 20, 2019.

After the Cinémathèque Française in Paris and The Eye in Amsterdam, David Safarian was in Brussels to present his latest work *Hot Country/Cold Winter*, set against the energy crisis in Armenia in the early 1990’s. Harutyun Khachatryan, co-founder of the Golden Apricot International Film Festival (GAIFF), introduced his 2009 film *Border*, a poetic reflection on the consequences of the war in Nagorno-Karabakh. Short films by a young generation of filmmakers were screened, with Seda Grigoryan, director of the road-documentary *Way Back Home*, featuring Arsinée Khanjian and Atom Egoyan, in attendance. The festival also included past cinematic treasures from the region, including a restored version of Parajanov’s short film *Hakob Hovnatanyan* about the 19th century painter from Thili.

Promoting Armenian films abroad is a meaningful way for AGBU Europe to pursue the ongoing initiatives and projects in Armenia (Cinethink, C2C Platform), led by GAIFF Pro and supported by AGBU Armenia, to help foster the careers of emerging directors and develop co-productions in the region.

ROSTOCK, GERMANY

HAIK-AGBU Celebrates 10 Years of Partnership with Concert

On November 25, HAIK German-Armenian Students Club organized an event devoted to the 10 year anniversary of its partnership with the AGBU in Rostock, Germany. This was the occasion to celebrate a successful collaboration that has positively contributed to developing the life of the Armenian community in Germany, as well as to strengthen the bonds of friendship between Germans and Armenians.

The main objective of HAIK is to build a network of Armenian and German students, young professionals and academicians to forge educational, professional and cultural relationships between the two nations. It aims at strengthening the current and future potential of Armenians, in Armenia and in diaspora, through various projects in order to support and develop the huge potential of Armenians.

The anniversary concert, which took place at the Chamber Music Hall of the University of Music and Theater in Rostock, brought together five AGBU Scholarship recipients to perform on the same evening: Nora Shekyan (violin), Ruben Mirzoyan (clarinet), Shushan Ghazaryan (guitar), Karo Chatschaturyan (tenor), Marianne Uzankichyan (piano).

The program included musical pieces of Armenian composers, such as Komitas and Khachatryan, and works of non-Armenian world-famous composers, such as Schubert, Brahms, and Paganini.
BEIRUT, LEBANON

Welcome Reception for Newly Appointed Armenian Ambassador

On March 4, 2019, the AGBU Lebanon District Committee hosted a welcome reception in honor of His Excellency Vahagn Atabekyan, the newly appointed ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Lebanon. The event took place at the AGBU Demirdjian Center and was attended by religious figures, members of parliament, representatives of leading organizations, AGBU benefactors, members and friends. Among the attendees were: Archbishop Nareg Alyementian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese in Lebanon; Rev. Father Soghomon Kilaghbian, representative of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East; MP Jean Talouzian; Benefactor Sarkis Demirdjian; Benefactors Mr. & Mrs. Hrayr Sarkissian; Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon Dr. Haroutiun Samuelian. Arine Ghazarian, the programs coordinator and communications director of AGBU Lebanon, welcomed the guest of honor and attendees. She gave an overview of the mission of AGBU and the numerous educational, cultural and humanitarian programs it runs. Ghazarian highlighted the Ambassador Atabekyan's achievements and mentioned that on December 19, the Ambassador presented his credentials to the President of Lebanon H.E. General Michel Aoun. Ambassador Atabekyan expressed his gratitude to the AGBU leadership for the warm welcome and hospitality. He also thanked AGBU Lebanon President Gerard Tufenkjian and the benefactors for their continuous support not only to the Embassy of Armenia in Lebanon but also to the Lebanese Armenian community.

BEIRUT, LEBANON

AYA Tribute to Community Leader Hratchya Setrakian

On February 1, 2019, AYA's Central Committee organized a book signing event and tribute to Maître Hratchya Setrakian at the AGBU Demirdjian Center. Organized under the patronage of AGBU Lebanon District Committee, numerous distinguished guests were among the 250 people in attendance, including: Leonard Abajian, Consul of Armenia to Lebanon; Bishop Nareg Hedjianian, Representative of Archbishop Nareg Alyementian; President of AGBU Berge Setrakian and Vera Setrakian; President of AGBU Lebanon Gerard Tufenkjian; MP Arthur Nazarian; Sarkis and Seta Demirdjian; Avedis and Rita Demirdjian; representatives of political and cultural associations; the chair and members of the District Committee of AGBU Lebanon; and AYA Central Committee member Kevork Santourian. Keynote speaker and Chairman of AYA Vicken Tchertchian highlighted the significance of Setrakian's works and spoke of his contribution to the ranks of AGBU and AYA, as well as Lebanon. Dr. Zaven Messerlian, veteran AGBU member who served for many years as director of the Armenian Evangelical College, introduced the book Maître Hratchya Setrakian Martin Ou Kordze, written by Baroury Aghbashian. The book was published with the financial support of AGBU President Berge Setrakian. Baroury Aghbashian later shared with the audience the painstaking process of collecting archives, writing, and editing the book. The event concluded with remarks by AGBU President Setrakian, who emphasized the important role Hrachya played during the repatriation of Armenia between 1946 and 1948, and how stories of community leaders like him can inspire future generations as part of Armenian history preservation.
AGBU Armenia Supports 2018 PR Awards

Supported by AGBU and Beeline Armenia, the Armenian PR Awards is an initiative of the Armenian PR Association. It bases its nominations on scientific research and independent expert opinion. “Research shows that public relations are valued in Armenia by industry professionals and the leadership of the public and private sectors,” noted President of the Armenian PR Association and Associate Professor of the Department of Journalism at Yerevan State University Dr. Astghik Avetisyan. “Clearly, PR Awards is adding value with its accurate research that captures current developments and predicts upcoming processes.”

In 2018, at the suggestion of AGBU Armenia, two new awards were added to the existing 14 categories to include Woman of the Year and Diaspora Media. “AGBU joins forces with the Armenian PR Association to promote the value of transparent and responsible public relations,” stated AGBU-Armenia President and Central Board member Vasken Yacoubian. “Our goal is to foster well-informed and better-engaged citizens to facilitate healthy dialogue between different groups in Armenia and the Diaspora.”

YEREVAN, ARMENIA

Poster Exhibition at AGBU Gallery

An exhibition of posters co-curated by Zack Demirtshyan and Arthur Atayan and coordinated by Nare Ziroyan opened at AGBU Armenia’s Gallery space on January 15, 2019.

“A New Yerevan is Rising” featured an array of posters from the late 19th century to the present, produced in and dedicated to the city of Yerevan. By the best examples from different time periods, the exhibition aimed to show the evolution and trends in poster art of the past century. Pre-Soviet theater and concert bulletins, as well as a variety of Soviet-era posters addressing subjects from social and “citizen education,” to film announcements and city posters, were featured together with examples of contemporary Armenian poster art.

Of particular interest were posters which focused on the cultural and social spheres of Armenia’s capital. They directly related to the city’s history and cultural vitality, highlighting the everyday life and cultural tastes of Yerevan residents.

The exhibition was initiated by the Culture and Art for Peace Educational NGO and organized with the support of the RA Ministry of Culture and AGBU Armenia.
A Concise History of the Armenian People
Item Number: 258 $35.00
This revised 7th edition is a concise survey of the political history of the Armenian people from their origins to 2018. Included are specially designed historical maps, time-lines, illustrations, new photographs and bibliographical guides.
Author: George A. Bournoutian
Publisher: Mazda Publishers
Format: Paperback

Treasured Armenian Recipes
Item Number: 101 $20.00
Arranged according to categories, from appetizers to desserts, these recipes will conjure up memories for many and awaken others to the pleasures of Armenian cooking.
Author: Marie Manoogian
Publisher: AGBU
Format: Paperback

SECRET NATION: The Hidden Armenians of Turkey
Item Number: AVE1 $35.00
It has long been assumed that no Armenian presence remained in eastern Turkey after the 1915 massacres. As a result of what has come to be called the Armenian Genocide, those who survived in Anatolia were assimilated as Muslims, with most losing all traces of their Christian identity. In recent years, a growing number of “secret Armenians” have begun to emerge from the shadows.
Avedis Hadjian has travelled to the towns and villages once densely populated by Armenians, recording stories of survival and discovery from those who remain in a region that is deemed unsafe for the people who once lived there. This book takes the reader to the heart of these hidden communities for the first time, unearthing their unique heritage and identity.
Editor: Avedis Hadjian
Publisher: I. B. Tauris
Format: Hardcover

Raffi: The Prophet from Payajuk
Item Number: 016 $16.00
Raffi: The Prophet from Payajuk is the first comprehensive English language biography of iconic Armenian writer Raffi (Hakob Melik-Hakobian). Featuring nearly 500 references from 80 sources, author Murad A. Meneshian spent a collective 10 years on this project. This is an account and analysis of the life and works of Raffi, describing little-known aspects of the man, his times, and his enduring significance in modern Armenian literary and political history.
Author: Murad A. Meneshian
Publisher: Mayreni Publishing
Format: Hardcover

NEW
Home Again: Armenian Recipes from the Ottoman Empire
Item Number: MAR1 $45.00
Home Again combines a collection of Armenian recipes from the Ottoman Empire with a memoir of a family of immigrants who kept certain recipes close to their hearts as a means of preserving their cultural heritage. The author examines the relationship between history and cuisine, between displacement and memory, between the individual and their ancestors.
Author: Mari A. Firkatian
Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
Format: Paperback

NEW
GIVE COLOR GAIN LIFE: Adult Coloring Book, Stress Relieving Patterns
Item Number: 034A-1, 034A-2, or 034A-3 $15.00 Each
Twelve patterns of Armenian ornamental art designed by Armen Kyurkchyan, printed on superior quality paper suitable for watercolor, pencil, crayon, marker and ink.
Choose from three different books with specific patterns: Continuous 034A-1, Armenian Rosettes 034A-2, or Armenian Floral Patterns 034A-3
**Historic Armenia After 100 Years: Ani, Kars and the Six Provinces of Western Armenia**

*Item Number: 010  $40.00*

Author Matthew Karanian celebrates the Armenia that has avoided destruction: its monuments, churches, and people—the hidden Armenians who have persevered in the face of persecution.

For the first time since the Armenian Genocide, the cultural wealth of the Armenian nation in Western Armenia is presented in one readable and beautifully illustrated volume.

*Author: Matthew Karanian*

*Publisher: Stone Garden Productions*

*Format: Paperback*

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**The Hundred Year Walk—An Armenian Odyssey**

*Item Number: 022  $25.00*

Nominated for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, *The Hundred Year Walk* alternates between Stepan’s saga and another journey that takes place a century late. Reading this rare firsthand account, his granddaughter Dawn MacKeen finds herself first drawn into the colorful bazaars before the war and then into the horrors Stepan later endured. Inspired to retrace his steps, she sets out alone to Turkey and Syria, shadowing her resourceful, resilient grandfather across a landscape still rife with tension.

*Author: Dawn Anahid MacKeen*

*Publisher: Mariner Books*

*Format: Paperback*

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**Check out our favorite children selections**

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**My First Armenian Songbook**

*Item Number: 038  $35.00*

In this unique songbook, English-language songs are presented along with their Armenian translations in order to celebrate both traditions. This comprehensive edition includes original translations of traditional songs from English to Armenian and one from Armenian to English. The book is ideal for children who are learning Armenian or are being exposed to Armenian culture. The rich English texts and the colorful original illustrations make it appealing to children of all backgrounds.

*Author: Karenn Chutjian Presti*

*Publisher: Natabella Press*

*Format: Paperback With CD*

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**Armenian Magnetic Letters by Toot Hoot**

*Item Number: MAG1  $29.99*

This set of wooden Armenian magnetic letters, is both educational and fun. (Magnetic board not included).

Product info: Designed to encourage fine motor and visual perception skills. They encourage letter identification in a fun and engaging way. They allow children to learn and grow in a fun and exploratory way.

*Developer: Toot Hoot*

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**My Book of Armenian Words—2 Issues**

*Item Number: 259, 259A  $18.00 Each*

- **My First Book of Armenian Words**: A wonderful way for children to learn Armenian. Colorful pictures accompany each word with English, Armenian and English transliteration letters.
- **My Second Book of Armenian Words**: This book, a follow-up to My First Book of Armenian Words, has streamlined pronunciation guides and covers words associated with everyday activities.

*Author: Ani Gigarjian, Linda Avedikian*

*Publisher: Gigarjian, Avedikian Publishing*

*Format: Hardcover*
Jewelry by NARINÉE

Gold Peacock Necklace
Item Number: NAR1 $155.00
This elegant necklace depicts two interlacing birds facing a peacock, symbol of angels and immortality in the Armenian cultural belief. Finish: 18k gold plating.

ARAZ Earrings
Item Number: NAR5.1 $95.00
Handcrafted from high quality 18K gold plated brass, these earrings reveal motifs delineated from Noravank’s architectural stone-carved patterns, dating back to the 13th century in Armenia.

‘NOUR’ Pomegranate Brooches
Item Numbers: NAR1, NAR3, NAR5 $50.00 Item Numbers: NAR2, NAR4, NAR6 $65.00
Nour 1, 2, 5 & 6 brooches reveal motifs delineated from Partzrakash’s 12th century stone-carved patterns of Dsegh, Lori province, Armenia. Nour 3 & 4 reveal motifs delineated from Sevanavank’s 12th century stone-carved patterns of Sévan, Gegharkunik province, Armenia. NARINÉE is a contemporary jewelry collection inspired by Armenian architectural and cultural heritage. 18K gold plated brass.

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