



ARIT

NEWSLETTER

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Bay Area Friends of Armenia reached a new milestone—the completion of its tenth year in helping the people of the Republic of Armenia. In this issue of ARIT, the BAFA Board of Directors presents a comprehensive ten-year account of how your donations have supported projects in health, education and welfare. We thank you for continuing to be a faithful “Friend of Armenia.”

This past year BAFA was pleased to welcome Anahid Yeremian, as its newest board member. She serves as the Champion for Armenia’s Cosmic Ray Division in order to help preserve its standing as one of the world’s top scientific organizations.

One of the most rewarding accomplishments we witnessed this year was the completion of the reconstruction of the Norashen ‘Michnagarg’ School. The cooperative program between the Armenian Social Investment Fund and BAFA, culminated in a brand new facility that now replaces the makeshift building that was used for the past 14 years. In this issue of ARIT, board member, Julie Kulhanjian, shares her heartfelt thoughts on her participation in the opening celebration of the renovated school.

In this issue of ARIT, we also feature the amazing grandmother and granddaughter team who have made a real difference in the lives of children of

Armenia. I offer a profile of Lorraine Caven, who singularly helped fund most of BAFA’s share of the reconstruction of Norashen ‘Michnagarg’ School. In turn, Lorraine Caven profiles her own wonderful 12 year-old granddaughter, Mary Kate Tengler, who following in her grandmother’s footsteps, raised funds to support children in Armenia.

Finally, Francois Antounian, who has done so much to improve the health of the people of Armenia, reviews the progress in healthcare that we have witnessed since independence.

As Executive Director of BAFA, I thank each one of you for your unrelenting support to BAFA programs, and encourage and urge you to continue to help us assist our less privileged and very needy ‘Hayrenageetzner.’

John Haleblian

Bay Area Friends of Armenia—A Ten -Year Activities Report

You have been a faithful supporter of the Bay Area Friends of Armenia (BAFA). As in previous years, we are pleased to provide you a comprehensive report on how your donations have been used in advancing the health, education and welfare of the Republic of Armenia.

I. Welfare Projects

The issue of welfare of the elderly has been the primary concern of BAFA since its inception. As the attached Table indicates, BAFA has raised and transmitted \$577,500.00 for its Soup Kitchens program during the past ten years of operation. Presently, the program serves almost 900 retirees and orphans, one meal a day for five days a week, in four Soup Kitchens located in Norky Massif and Erebuni areas, Yerevan, Nor Hadjn, Ashtarak, and auxiliary location of Charbach. The staff of “Fund for Armenian Relief,” manages the Soup Kitchens. Currently, a twenty-two-member kitchen crew cooks and serves food at the various locations.

According to Ministry of Statistics of Armenia, 16 percent of the population is extremely poor, the amount of social security checks received by the elderly, 4,000 drams (US\$7.00), buys only less than a loaf of bread per day. So you can see how our Soup Kitchens go a long way in filling the critical need in the basic survival of the elderly.

II. Support to Schools

This year we celebrated the reconstruction of the Spitak earthquake-damaged Norashen ‘Michnagarg’ School. Our five years of relentless efforts were well rewarded. The renovation of Norashen School was a collaborative micro-project

Bay Area Friends of Armenia is a tax exempt, charitable organization with the sole purpose for promoting the health, education, welfare, and scientific excellence for the people of the Republic of Armenia.

with the Armenian Social Investment Fund (ASIF), whereby BAFA raised 10% of the \$144,000.00 reconstruction project. After spending 14 years in one of the most deplorable physical buildings we have ever seen, over 250 students can finally claim a beautiful and new learning environment.

It is important to note that Armenia's educational system continues to be in real crisis. The Ministry of Statistics of Armenia, in its March 2001 Republic of Armenia – Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, reports that the annual government expenditure per student is equivalent to \$40.00. It also indicates that the monthly salaries of teachers range from \$10.00-30.00, and that in most cases, they are paid with a two- to six-month lag time. Furthermore, no funds are allocated for the upkeep of schools, which are deteriorating due to lack of repair, and there are no funds for school supplies.

Through your support, we have been helping 'Michnagarg' schools by contributing approximately \$1,000.00 to each. This sum amounts to about 15% of the annual budget of many village schools. During the last several years we have visited 36 schools, and transferred to their principals the sum of \$81,175.00 to be allocated to supplement teachers' salaries and purchase school supplies.

We also funded the breakfast program for children at Melik Kyugh 'Michnagarg' school helping them to concentrate on their schooling rather than on their hunger.

III. Medical Projects

BAFA trained physicians, Dr. Haig Avagyan and Dr. Vigen Markarian, continued receiving periodic shipments of materials, supplies and books. They also continued to have access to Bay Area physicians for consultations on specific problem cases and plans of treatment. We are thrilled that both physicians have earned the reputation of being the best-trained orthopedic surgeons in Armenia. Consequently, they have been invited to attend and present at conferences in Armenia. They have also been invited to seminars in various European countries,

the most recent in Austria. As part of our medical projects, we continued to use the Internet for x-ray and scan exchanges. Our board members have also visited and operated with the physicians. Finally, our eye/vision care program served the children and teachers at ten schools in the Aragatsoth Marz.

Your unwavering support has made this evolutionary progress in the health care arena feasible. We look forward to expanding our collaborations with our colleagues in Armenia, reaching and helping them, one at a time. As always, your continued help will make this possible.

IV. Advanced Science

An urgent and critical problem faced by Armenia today is its brain drain. The future generation, whom we so diligently educate and nurture, is forced to leave Armenia due to lack of employment opportunities and living wages. As a result, BAFA has decided to take a proactive approach in saving one of Armenia's most vibrant scientific organizations, the Cosmic Ray Division (CRD). The CRD employs about 100 personnel including Ph.D. candidates, and recent postdoctoral scientists from Yerevan State University. The CRD is striving to achieve self-reliance by attracting funding from international scientific organizations. In the meantime, BAFA has committed to fill-in the gaps. In support of this endeavor, we sponsored a benefit concert for the CRD in October 2002, which helped raise \$30,350.00. These funds will be used to help cover CRD's overhead expenses in maintaining the High Altitude Stations on Mt. Aragats. They will also provide for a slight salary supplement for the scientists and technicians who are severely underpaid, yet demonstrate their dedication through their outstanding performance.

The CRD, with its innovative data analysis methods, is one of the top five countries in the world leading in the field of space weather forecasting. This is especially important since developing a forecasting system to warn of the arrival of damaging solar radiation has become a high priority

for all nations. As a result of their breakthrough work, the CRD was invited to make the keynote presentations at two international conferences in 2002. Additionally, one of the young CRD scientists received a grant from Hewlett-Packard to present his innovative neural-networking data analysis techniques at an international workshop

As indicated in the attached Table, since BAFA's inception, you have contributed a total of \$860,200.00 of which \$804,100.00 'dollar for dollar,' have been used to support health, education, welfare to advance science related projects in Armenia.

Understandably, you have often asked: "How can you manage to transmit 'dollar for dollar' all of the donations to Armenia? Don't you have operational expenses in the U.S.?" The answer is yes. BAFA employs a part time secretary. BAFA Board members cover operational expenses (personnel and office-related) incurred in the U.S., and in the past ten years, have donated \$128,800.00. Board members pay their own travel expenses to Armenia to supervise the BAFA sponsored projects.

None of the achievements of BAFA would have been possible without your generosity. BAFA Board members sincerely appreciate you for being a true and dedicated 'Friend of Armenia' over the past ten years. Your support at this juncture in the life of the Republic of Armenia has profound effects. We thank you for your continued and enthusiastic support.

BAFA Board of Directors
December 31, 2002

**Distribution of BAFA Funds for Health, Education, Welfare & Advanced Science
In Republic of Armenia 1993 - 2002 (x \$1,000)**

Distribution	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total 93-02
Soup Kitchens	43.5	66	58.2	47.4	52.5	57.5	54.6	54.3	69.9	73.6	577.5
Medical Projects	0.5	10.6	0.9	12.2	4.1	16.2	1.6	10.0	15.9	0.8	72.8
Support to Schools	0.0	1.4	4.2	6.5	11.5	12.0	15.6	15.9	31.3	30.4	128.8
Advanced Science										25.0	25.0
Total Annual Distribution	44.0	78.0	63.3	66.1	68.1	85.7	71.8	80.2	117.1	129.8	
Total Distribution 1993-2002											804.1
Additional Unused Funds on 12/31/02											56.1
Total Funds Collected											860.2
Board Donations to Cover Office Expenses	18.8	11.8	11.2	10.3	12.6	12.6	11.3	12.8	12.4	15.0	128.8

Sireli BAFA Members,

As someone who has always had a deeply spiritual connection to my Armenian heritage, I freely admit that my October 2002 trip to Hayasdan was, to say the least, well overdue! Compared to the many Diaspora Armenians who travel regularly to Armenia, I have no profound or unique socio-political, cultural, or economic insights to share with you. When John Haleblian asked me to write an article for ARIT, I thought I would just share with you my humble experience at the pre-opening ceremony of the Norashen School. The courage, character, patience and resilience of our 'Hayrenageetznar' can never be recognized too often.

This story begins with the reminder that the reconstruction of Norashen School in Norashen village, at the base of Mt. Aragats, was financed by the wonderful Armenian Social Investment Fund (ASIF) through its "nine to one" matching program. The village received \$14,400 from BAFA to provide its 10% share of the costs, and ASIF kicked in the remaining \$144,000. This program was created to assist in the rehabilitation of social and economic infrastructure of Armenia. Thankfully, other schools and communities, like Norashen, have also benefited from this program. Norashen is south of Spitak, and the 1,000 people of the village have been waiting patiently for a school since the Soviet times. The condition of the road to Norashen (10 feet deep craters every 10 feet) is so bad that it's a miracle anyone has made his or her way to any school.

For the past few years, they have been courageously conducting classes in the cold, old 'domeeks' behind the construction site.

When John Poochigian, Leonid Manukyan, and I arrived at Norashen, many people in the village were assembling for a specially organized 'opening ceremony' in our honor. The



Children of Norashen School in front of reconstructed gymnasium



Opening celebrations of reconstructed Norashen School

school is almost complete (to be completed in January 2003) and is a very large and attractive structure, more attractive than my kids' schools in Piedmont. (The people of Norashen couldn't believe this when I told them.) This ceremony was particularly humbling because the school is not yet finished and the 'pre-opening' program was, therefore,

organized just for us. The kids will have to perform again, the speeches will be repeated, and the women will somehow prepare another huge feast without big beautiful kitchens, double-ovens, Sub-Zero refrigerators, dishwashers, Costco and Whole Foods.

Shortly after our arrival, we met the old and new principals and the mayor. John and I began to worry when we asked about a 'tarkmaneech' (translator) and were told that they thought we were bringing one. Not to worry, Hayastanseez always say, we'll find someone who can do it! Since no one spoke English, and John's Armenian may not be any better than mine, I knew we were in trouble. On rare occasions, I am able to mysteriously speak basic conversational Armenian to elderly women who remind me of my grandmother, to drivers on long road trips in Hayasdan, and to anyone in Armenia after I have had cognac and vodka. Since it was still early in the morning, and the cognac had not yet been poured, I was not very fluent.

After some moving speeches by the principals and various officials in front of the new front steps, the children performed many wonderful songs and dances. Then we all danced, and then everyone looked at me. Still no 'tarkmaneech.' I looked at Leonid, who doesn't speak English well, and then tried to tell him the gist of my prepared remarks. While speaking, I stopped frequently to let him translate. I know enough Armenian to know that he wasn't saying anything that I was saying, but the audience was listening intently and seemed to be happy!

Somewhere between Leonid's words and mine, we did convey to the people that

Mrs. Lorraine Caven, born Siranoosh Kanchelian in Reedley, California, donated the major portion of the BAFA funds for the construction. (See accompanying profile on Mrs. Caven) She wished to travel to Hayasdan and to share in Norashen's happy occasion in person, but she couldn't at this time. She was and is there, however, in spirit.

The people of Norashen were also delighted to receive their first new computer, which the first principal had asked for previously, and which we delivered on the pre-opening day. My son Paul offered his own graphics program, called Hyper Studio, and Nairi and Alexan sent slides from the Hubble telescope, and posters that show Armenia taken from the moon. We then toured the interior of the building. There is a large library, large athletic hall and many bright and cheery classrooms.

Towards the end of our visit, we were treated to a delicious banquet, and the cognac and vodka were poured. When we were just about to leave, a handsome young man arrived and was introduced to us as the 'tarkmaneech'. As it turns out, he understood a little Western Armenian and no English at all, but by then, we had all shared enough smiles, toasts, and vodka, that it didn't matter anymore. We felt connected to them and they to BAFA.

Julie Kulhanjian

A Grandmother With Passion For The Children Of Armenia

Three years ago I wrote in our January issue of ARIT about an extraordinary opportunity for BAFA to help fund, along with the Armenian Social Investment Fund (ASIF), the reconstruction of Norashen 'Michnagarg' School. The school, located in Aragatsotn Marz of Armenia, was damaged during the Spitak earthquake of 1988. Today, I am pleased to report on how this project actually came to fruition.

The government of Armenia launched ASIF in conjunction with the World Bank in order to: "assist in rehabilitation of social and economic infrastructure of the

country, form and develop communities, and solve their most urgent social problems." BAFA's challenge was to raise 10% of the total cost of \$144,400.00 for the reconstruction of Norashen School. Our goal was to provide its 280 students a safe and healthy environment conducive to learning.



Grandmother Lorraine Caven with Granddaughter Mary Kate Tengler with Passion for Children of Armenia

Following our plea to our "Friends of Armenia," BAFA started receiving monthly contributions of various amounts from Lorraine Caven, specifically slated for Norashen School. While we were also receiving contributions from other wonderful donors, Lorraine's checks kept coming in consistently. Last January, when ASIF finally approved the reconstruction project, Lorraine had donated more than two-thirds of the needed funds.

I had not met Lorraine personally, but as a result of a lucky connection made with her daughter, I finally learned more about our incredible and generous donor. Lorraine, who is 80 years old, was born Siranoosh Kanchelian in Reedley, California. Following BAFA's fundraising plea for Norashen School, Lorraine took on a part-time job as an office helper at the middle school near her home, and began to donate the total amount of her varied monthly earnings to BAFA.

Due to one person's generosity, beginning in January 2003, the children

of Norashen return to a brand new school. After 14 years of struggling in one of the worst physical environments that I have ever seen in Armenia, we have reason to rejoice. And indeed, on behalf of the BAFA family Board members, Julie Kulhanjian and John Poochigian participated in the school's pre-opening celebrations in October 2002.

Finally, my wife and I had the pleasure of meeting Lorraine (see photo). She is, undoubtedly, the godmother of the children of Norashen School.

I salute you Siranoosh Kanchelian!

John Haleblan

COMPOUNDING COMPASSION

This is the heartwarming story of Mary Kate Tengler, a 12 year-old seventh grader at San Ramon Valley Christian Academy in Danville, California. One Sunday, the pastor of the church she attends announced the receipt of \$10,000 from an anonymous donor who stipulated that the money be used for Christian outreach. Helping others with the money was the primary objective. The pastor then proceeded to walk through the congregation handing out \$100 bills reminding the recipients that they must be used to help others. Mary Kate received the money, and with it, the challenge to help others.

Mary Kate used part of the money to buy supplies to make salvation bracelets, and she offered them to the children in her school for \$2.00. Through the sale of the bracelets and contributions she accumulated, Mary Kate turned her original \$100 into \$708 dollars, which she donated to BAFA to buy school supplies and bibles for school age children in Armenia. Although she was unable to deliver the items herself as she had hoped, she does want very much to travel to Armenia some day.

Additionally, Mary Kate especially wanted to help children in Armenia's orphanages who may not have anyone to hug at night, and send them stuffed animals. So she decided to ask the kids at

her school to donate the stuffed animals they no longer wanted. The response was overwhelming! For a while, the Tengler and her grandmother's homes bulged with the cutest little animals any child could want. Mary Kate worked with her grandmother to wash the animals and add new ribbons. She delivered over 150 stuffed animals to BAFA to be sent to needy children in Armenia.

Does Mary Kate think what she did was special? No, she simply wanted to help others and appreciated the opportunity to do so. We're glad she did!

Lorraine Caven

BAFA Helps Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division Maintain Its Standing As One of the World's Top Scientific Organizations.

Armenia's resource is its brainpower, however, Armenia is losing this resource because of its current economic difficulties. Can we imagine a stable, economically healthy Armenia without its intellectuals? My answer is that I don't even want to imagine it. I want to work towards the goal of educating our children, and then providing them with opportunities to stay in Armenia.

Scientists who are analytical thinkers and problem solvers, and who can introduce creative solutions in difficult situations, are an essential part of nation building. As history has shown repeatedly, the practical application of scientific research has tremendous positive economic potential. Consequently, supporting Armenia's scientific community is critical, and retaining its top scientists requires substantial funding of their work—the kind of funding that Armenia cannot afford today. If Armenia loses its scientists, it will be nearly impossible to recover from the loss in the future.

Does this seem like an irresolvable dilemma? Not really. There is a solution

and it relies on helping Armenian scientific organizations, particularly those that are continuing research of world-class caliber, and attracting international funding because of the quality of their work. One such organization is the Cosmic Ray Division (CRD) of the Yerevan Physics Institute. The CRD is an advanced scientific organization that has placed Armenia among the top five countries in the world in the study of cosmic rays, solar physics, and space weather forecasting.

The extensive research facilities of the CRD on top of Mt. Aragats at 10,500 ft. and at 6,500 ft. are a gift left from the affluent Soviet era. Today, Armenia could never afford to build such an expensive infrastructure, however, for a modest annual budget, Armenia can continue to maintain these facilities and preserve its top international status while attracting research funding from abroad. Approximately 100 Armenians (scientists, technicians, and support personnel) staff these stations all year round in three-week shifts. Shift changes take one-and-a-half hours in the summer, and more than 11 hours in the winter when mountain weather conditions are treacherous. Yet, the dedicated personnel of the CRD persevere, making break-through research resulting in numerous invitations to share their discoveries with colleagues at international scientific forums.

Professor Chilingarian, the visionary head of the CRD, recognizes the key role that the future generation of scientists will play in Armenia's development. He teaches physics at the Yerevan State University and has several students who conduct their thesis research at the stations on Mt. Aragats under his CRD scientists', and his own watchful tutelage.

Because of its world-renowned reputation, the CRD secures 85% of its current funding through international scientific partnerships. However, this funding is still less than half of the needed budget. The scientists and technicians, who have persevered for the past 12 years remaining in Armenia and continuing their quality research, are severely underpaid and continuously encouraged by the international community to relocate.

Many of the CRD's projects have very high potential for future practical

applications and revenue generation. This past year, the CRD made great progress in the area of space weather forecasting. This is a very important area of research in safeguarding satellites and astronauts in space, and protecting airline passengers from dangerous levels of solar radiation on over-the-poles flights. Because of this breakthrough work, Prof. Cilingarian has been invited to make keynote presentations at the European Cosmic Ray Conference in Moscow, and the Space Weather Workshop in Japan. He has also been invited to teach at the European High Energy Physics School during its two-week session to be held in Armenia this year.

Each year the CRD's funding from international scientific partnerships increases thanks to the quality and importance of the research it conducts for the international community. It will not be very long before the CRD can become self-supporting. In the meantime however, the CRD needs us, the Diaspora Armenians, who recognize the importance and future economic implications of preserving such a strong and vital scientific organization to continue its work in Armenia.

In 2002, the BAFA board of directors voted to adopt the CRD as one of its projects and as a logical extension of its commitment to help Armenia in its developmental phase. Our main focus in 2002 was to educate our local community about the CRD by making many presentations to Armenian community organizations, and fundraising. In October, we sponsored a sold-out benefit concert by the world-renowned violinist, Ani Kavafian, and pianist Shahan Arzruni.

We thank you, the community, for your generous response to the challenges faced by Armenia's scientists. It would be impossible to make progress without your support. For more information about the CRD, please visit the website

<http://www.crdfriends.org>.

Anahid Yeremian



Shift change to the high altitude Cosmic Ray Division Stations at 10,500 ft. on Mt. Aragats take approximately 10 hours and can be treacherous and dangerous in the winter.



Opportunities for the younger generation to conduct high-level research at the CRD research stations on Mt. Aragats is of high priority. From left to right: Arther Reimers, first-year Master's student; Prof. Chilingarian head of CRD and physics professor at YSU; Gayane Kostanyan, post-graduate scientist; Melanya Ulikhanyan, post-graduate scientist, Ruben Petrossian, first-year Master's student; Arsen Sogomonyan, first-year Master's student; and Nerses Gregorian, last-year PhD candidate.

Armenia's Health Care System A Progress Report

Much has happened since the 1988 earthquake in Northern Armenia—the Karabagh movement toward independence resulting in the war with Azerbaijan and the collapse of the Soviet Union, followed by the precipitous independence declared officially in September 1991. These monumental events converging all at once, over the span of a mere few years, will take time to absorb and resolve. They have impacted all facets of life in Armenia including its health care system. Needless to say, given the previously centralized, Moscow-controlled healthcare delivery system with all its limitations and quality issues, coupled with the tremendous stresses of Armenia's new challenges, the outcome was a system bound to collapse under its own weight.

Immediately after the shock of the earthquake was felt around the world, groups such as MDM (Medecins du Monde) and MSF (Medecins Sans Frontieres) rushed to Armenia with the aim to save lives and support the suffering and the homeless. This was followed by the haphazard arrival of physicians, pharmacists, and psychologists and their friends from the Diaspora. Although initially there was no structure that could make good use of all the good-intentioned efforts, local medical personnel did benefit mainly from psychological assistance. Progressively however, beyond the immediate and tangible support they received, local Armenian physicians began to make important contacts with colleagues across the world. This would prove to have long-term impact on Armenia's health care system. Through these contacts, they became aware of international medical standards and methods. They gained the kind of knowledge that the iron curtain had barred from their horizons and daily realities. And so began the journey to improve the health care system of Armenia; and thus, we are now all obliged to help bring this vision to reality.

In the Bay Area, one of the organizations poised to be of help in the

medical field was the APS (Armenian Professional Society) whose then president, Suzy Missirian-Antounian, set up a subcommittee to provide assistance to Armenia which included a medical component. Ultimately, BAFA (Bay Area Friends of Armenia) dedicated to solely assisting Armenia, started its activities by initially supporting soup kitchens that were already opened by Boston-based, Dr. Nora Necessian. BAFA then expanded its reach to include medical and educational projects. BAFA's medical programs have since been instrumental in improving the health care system, and its achievements have been palpable.

The following are some of BAFA's noteworthy achievements to date:

1. Conducting personal visits by BAFA members and supporters to Armenia to operate, examine, treat and advise patients (started in 1989).
2. Supplying facilities with medications, surgical implants and supplies (since 1989).
3. Facilitating the training of Armenian physicians in the US (since 1993, have trained 5 physicians in Orthopedic and Trauma Surgery).
4. Providing ongoing medical case consultation via the Internet to local Armenian physicians.
5. Soliciting supplies from donor companies, institutions and individuals for shipment to Armenia.
6. Advising the medical committees of national sports organizations in Armenia.

Of course, many other individuals and organizations have also made significant contributions toward the improvement of health care in Armenia. Following is a summary of various such successful endeavors.

At first, help came in the realm of psychological health to deal with post-traumatic syndrome cases following the earthquake. Later, the AGBU funded and supported a hospital for plastic and reconstructive surgery that initially treated victims of the earthquake and the war, and later, patients needing all types of reconstructive surgeries. Dr. Gagik Stamboulsian from Yerevan, trained in the US, now heads that unit.

Dr. Hrair Hovakimian, a cardiac surgeon from Oregon State, began training physicians and nurses, and he himself,

living in Armenia six months of the year. He now runs a state-of-the-art open-heart surgery center that attracts patients from outside Armenia including Russia, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. His training was so effective and his team so competent, that when he himself had a heart attack, his trainees performed his open-heart surgery in his Yerevan cardiac center.

Another interesting success story involves an Indian-Armenian physician from Africa. Soon after independence, he, his African wife, a nurse, and children moved to Meghri (Southern Armenia bordering Iran on the Arax river), and opened a private hospital. Since the early 1990's, he has been providing general surgery and OB/GYN surgical care.

Other projects addressing medical care, include the Medical Outreach for Armenia headed by Dr. Vartkes Najarian on the West Coast, and Dr. Carolann Najarian on the East Coast. The West Coast outreach focuses on surgery since its lead physician is an orthopedic surgeon who has been going to Armenia even before independence. The East Coast outreach focuses in primary care since its lead physician is an internist.

In the ophthalmologic arena, Dr. Roger Ohanesian has been instrumental in making a major contribution to the field of eye care. He was the reason why ORBIT, an airplane with operating rooms, landed in Armenia. He now has a program that provides direct help by sending surgeons to Armenia, and provides indirect assistance by training eye surgeons and physicians in prestigious US centers. In addition to the training, he tools the physicians with equipment when they return to Armenia.

In the field of Urology, leading players include Dr. Garo Tertzakian from Orange County in the USA, and Dr. Kepenekian from Lyon in France. Their unrelenting efforts have brought forth major advances in Urology since before independence. Now, the level of surgery in urology is such that it includes kidney transplants.

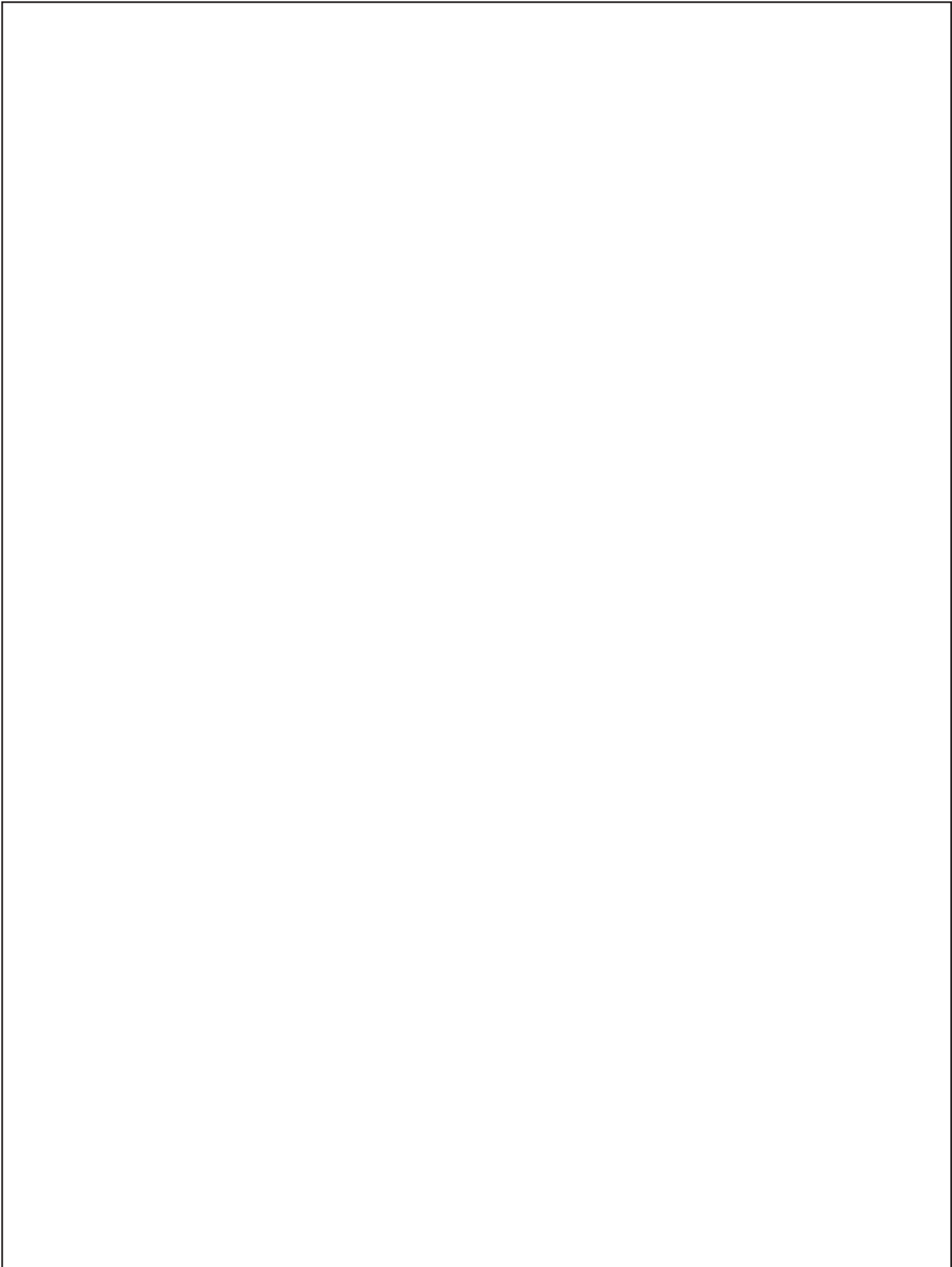
In the field of Women's health, Dr. Nora Necessian, and her Harvard team established a center in Yerevan, and provided it with laboratory testing equipment, supplies and medications, and training for physicians. They have

markedly advanced the health care and disease prevention in Armenia, becoming a model for the entire ex-Soviet world to be emulated. Also, Mrs. Rita Balian lobbying on behalf of the Armenian American Mammography University Center, gained the support of founding BAFA board member, Dr. Julie Kulhanjian, in securing BAFA funds to purchase equipment needed for developing the X-rays.

All these are just examples, and by no means represent a comprehensive list of all that has been done or is ongoing in the medical field. While some initial projects in Armenia were one-time or short-term efforts, many are ongoing endeavors. Some are highly extensive programs and others are low-key, but persistent on a smaller scale. The scope of each program depends on the time its champions/leaders can invest, and the resources available to them. It is important to note that at this juncture, an area of improvement would include better coordination of efforts, elimination of duplication, better time management, and increased support from well-intentioned, large benevolent organizations. Unfortunately, today organizations are themselves so understaffed that it is difficult to decide which of the many worthwhile projects should be funded, let alone determine the processes to secure that funds are effectively spent.

In summary, the past 10 years have been quite eventful in the healthcare sector of Armenia. For the most part, the outlook for our Armenian colleagues has improved. Armenia's medical standards are becoming increasingly comparable to international standards. Through their interactions with colleagues in the Diaspora, Armenia's medical professionals are making great strides in their careers, and are directly and positively impacting the quality of patient care for the Armenian public.

François Antounian





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Yes: I wish to make a Tax-Deductible donation to B.A.F.A.

Dear Bay Area Friend of Armenia,

To support the health, education and welfare of the people of Republic of Armenia, BAFA is continuing its major Soup Kitchen program; and is actively enlarging the number of schools it supports.

As we look to the future, we are also expanding to projects, which reverse Armenia's brain drain. We have added the Cosmic Ray Division in Armenia, an advanced scientific organization of world-class caliber to our list of projects. These are programs that make a real difference in the lives of many.

The key to implementing any, and all of these projects, depends directly on your financial commitment. If you wish to make a separate contribution specifically to one, or more of these projects, please mark the box below and return the form with your tax-deductible contribution to the Bay Area Friends of Armenia.

BAY AREA FRIENDS OF ARMENIA

P.O. Box 3584

Daly City, California 94015-0584

Phone (415) 681-7148 • Email: info@bafa.org • Website: www.bafa.org

Please Check Applicable Categories

New Supporter:



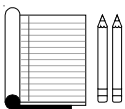
Yes

No



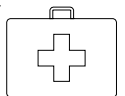
SOUP KITCHENS OF ARMENIA

\$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 Other \$ _____



EDUCATION PROJECT

\$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 Other \$ _____



MEDICAL PROJECT

\$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 Other \$ _____



**COSMIC RAY DIVISION
ADVANCED SCIENCE PROJECT**

\$50 \$100 \$200 \$500 Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____