



NEWSLETTER FALL/WINTER 2006

Outgoing President's Message

Dear Friends,

Now that my term as president comes to a close, I would like to share with you some of the exciting developments happening within the Armenian Studies Program (ASP) at UC Berkeley. Dr. Stephan Astourian, as Executive Director of the Armenian Studies Program and Adjunct Assistant Professor of History, has established a successful year long program offering ancient and modern Armenian history. His enrollment continuously increases with students of varied backgrounds and interests. He has supervised graduate students in their research as well as several undergraduate students writing a senior honors thesis on Armenian related topics. He continues to be available to as a resource on campus to students as well as his academic colleagues. The Armenian language course continues to hold steady enrollment with two levels of Armenian presently being offered. The goal is to increase to three levels of Armenian language in the near future.

Campus activities dealing with Armenian topics continue to enrich the Berkeley community. On Sunday March 5, 2006 the UC Berkeley Armenian Alumni and the Armenian Studies Program hosted a roundtable discussion entitled "Perspectives on the Armenian Genocide and Freedom of Speech". The featured speakers were Ragip Zarakolu, director and owner of Belge Publishing House and human rights activist; Ronald Suny, Professor of Political Science and History University of Michigan; Harant Dink, the editor-in-chief and publisher of the Armenian-Turkish weekly *Agos*; and Stephan Astourian.

This was followed by a symposium on April 21, 2006 entitled "New Research into Armenian-Turkish Relations (1908-1923)". The panelists presented the following papers: Dr. Stephan Astourian, "The 1909 Adana Massacres", Dr. Dikran Kaligian, "The Relations between the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Committee of Union and Progress on the Eve of WWI", and Dr. Vahram Shemmassian, "The Reclamation of Captive Armenian Genocide Survivors in Syria at the End of World War I".

There also was a noon Brown Bag Talk on May 1, 2006 given by Dr. Razmik Panossian, Director of Policy, Programs and Planning International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Montreal, Canada, entitled "The Armenians: From Kings and Priests to Merchants and Commissars". Lastly, Nouritza Matossian, Biographer of Iannis and Arshile Gorky, presented a lecture entitled "Why Arshile Gorky Changed His Name: A Case of Mistaken Identity".

In addition to these lectures, The Armenian Alumni organized an afternoon presentation and book signing on October 15, 2005 of Markar Melkonian's book *My Brother's Road: An American's Fateful Journey to Armenia*. On April 30, 2006 we held our third annual Armenian student picnic, honoring the graduating seniors. The new incoming Bay Area students were also invited to this barbeque and get-together held at El Cerrito Park. Alumni and students had a chance to visit and play backgammon and volley ball.

Our major event was the Gala on March 25, 2006. This successful and well-attended event brought the Armenian Community members together to launch the \$2 million campaign to help fund the expansion and enrichment of the ASP at UC Berkeley. This fundraising campaign, under the chairmanship of Mr. Adam Kablanian, hopes to build the ASP into the leading contemporary Armenian Studies Program in the US. In the future and with the help of our community partners, the ASP at Berkeley will flourish and perpetuate the Armenian language and culture.

UCBAA is an important link to the University and we urge our alumni to take an active role in this group. We always foster your support and ideas and we hope to encourage new and active members to join and participate in UCBAA.

I look forward to the exciting developments and activities of the year ahead. It has been a pleasure to serve you these past two years as UCBAA president.

Sincerely,
Christina Moughamian

Bay Area Armenian Community Comes Together To Support the UC Berkeley Armenian Studies Program

SAN FRANCISCO – The San Francisco community “dressed to the nines” to show their support for the UC Berkeley Armenian Studies Program at a Benefit Gala held on Saturday, March 25 at The Olympic Club.

With an attendance of over 250 people, the evening raised \$250,000, bringing the total raised for the William Saroyan Endowment since the beginning of the \$2M Campaign to \$700,000.

“The excitement from this event shows just how committed this community is to keeping Armenian Studies thriving at Berkeley” states Rachel Nadjarian, Co-Chair of the Gala. “The Bay Area demonstrated its support by celebrating what Dr. Astourian has accomplished by establishing such a fine program.”

Dr. Stephan Astourian is Executive Director of the Armenian Studies Program at UC Berkeley and Adjunct Professor in History. Since the Program’s inception, many courses have been added and the depth and breadth of the coursework, particularly in the Armenian language, has expanded. A year and a half ago, a fundraising committee was established to support a \$2M Campaign for the William Saroyan Endowment that funds for ASP in order to help continue the expansion of the Program and sustain its future.

“This is an incredibly viable Program and its continuance and expansion is critical for the next generation of Armenians,” says Adam Kablanian, Chairman of the Endowment Fundraising Committee. “The success of the Gala has helped us make a huge leap in the Campaign and garner further support from our community. We look forward to seeing this continue.”



The Benefit Gala was an evening filled with entertainment. Andrew Goldberg addressed the audience as guest speaker and presented two video clips from his film *The Armenian*

Genocide which aired on PBS stations during the week of April 17th. Goldberg touched upon the ironies of Turkish genocide denial and showed footage of Raphael Lemkin – the inventor of the word “genocide” and its legal definition – in a 1949 interview on CBS in which he refers to the Armenian massacres as rationale for such a concept.

Following Goldberg’s presentation, guests were treated to a very entertaining Live Auction with long-time Bay Area resident Ed Vasgerdsian as auctioneer. Vasgerdsian kept bidding at a fast pace as he fancied people with such gifts as

two weeks in a 3,500 square foot apartment in Yerevan, a week at a ski lodge in Meribel, France, and an original painting of the Armenian alphabet by Zarmine Aghazarian of the East Bay. Guests continued to exude their energy and excitement for the remainder of the evening while dancing to the music of Arthur Apkarian and Armenian Band from Montreal.



No less exciting than the live auction and dancing was the Silent Auction and Diamond Champagne Raffle that occurred during the cocktail hour. Outstanding gifts had been donated from the community, including a yellow diamond ring, a framed print of one of Sumbat Der Kiureghian’s paintings, and a 49ers hat signed by Steve Young.

Rachel Nadjarian

2006 Scholarship Recipient

This fall, the Hrayr Terzian Armenian Alumni Scholarship was awarded to UC Berkeley student Khatchadour Khatchadourian. Khatchadour, a double major in Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies, maintains a strong academic record at Cal with hopes to eventually attend graduate school and earn a Masters in Middle Eastern Studies and PhD in Anthropology.

He also demonstrates great commitment to Armenian studies through his teaching of a De-Cal class on campus titled *Genocide: Causes, Consequences, and Possible Prevention*. The 1-unit course incorporates open discussion, documentaries, and guest lectures and addresses various genocides through different themes. The UCBAAs is proud to award Khatchadour this scholarship and we look forward to hearing more about his future pursuits and activities.

The Hrayr Terzian Armenian Alumni Scholarship is offered yearly to a current UC Berkeley student of Armenian descent and is in the amount of \$1000.

For more information, contact us at www.ucbaa.com.



Alumnus Among Us: Elise Kazanjian

An impulsive request rocketed Elise Kazanjian into a media star in China this summer. Photos, features splashed across the national press. Radio and TV interviews followed. She was front-page news for four days. The crux of all the commotion was a photo. Elise, scheduled to speak at an international conference in Tianjin, her childhood home, fired off a young picture of her long ago Chinese friend to the officials with a message: “Can you find her?” The press pounced. Picture of the little girl and story of the American woman, who after more than 50 years, was coming to China to find her flashed across the country. Two hours after the newspapers hit the streets, Elise’s friend was found. Unable to meet, Elise and her friend chatted by phone and made a date for next year.

At the conference, centered on the foreign influences of architecture and business in Tianjin, Elise described her father’s professional life, the operation of his rug factory, then recalled memories of her young life in China. She’s honed those memories into elegant essays, which appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Born in San Francisco’s St Joseph’s hospital (now condos), Elise was less than a year old when she arrived in Tianjin with her older sister Mary and her parents, Hagop and Alice Shabas, Viennese-Armenians, who made their home in China.

They resided in the posh British section of the seaport city. Elise learned English with a British accent, spoke Mandarin Chinese with the non-English speaking servants. When she was about 3 ½ years old, she struck up a friendship with the cook. She persuaded him to take her along on his about-the-town jaunts. She has memories of stepping down into a dark room, shadowy figures lying on thin palettes smoking. “It had a distinctive smell. I thought it was tobacco. Cook would buy some, shove it in his pocket and we’d leave. It wasn’t until years later I figured it out that we were in opium dens,” Elise says shaking her head. Other days, they were spectators at motorcycle races, Elise perched on cook’s shoulders.

Her life crashed in 1943 when the Japanese marched in and occupied Tianjin. They were prisoners of war. “I remember

being so hungry. We had no food,” she says. One night in 1945 the U.S. Marines landed with troops, tanks, convoys. “Everyone rushed out to greet them,” she recalls. “I was in my pajamas.” A young Marine hoisted her onto his tank for a victory ride. Her dad tagged along.

In December 1946, Elise and her family set sail for San Francisco. She was 11 years old. She’d devoured stories about the Barbary Coast. She imagined a wild, wild west. Three days after the family had settled in, she sobbed, “I want to go home.” Her Mandarin dialect was incomprehensible to the Cantonese Chinese who populated Chinatown. Her school, Marina Junior High, was a disaster. She didn’t fit in she says. She wasn’t the all-American girl. Her hair flamed out, she wore thick glasses, her teeth needed braces and she spoke with a British accent. She endured for a year, until her father, unhappy with the education system, enrolled her at Presentation High. The Americanization of Elise took three years. She tamed her hair, braced her teeth, lost her accent, found lifelong friends and went on to win a journalism degree in 1958 from UC Berkeley. She married Ralph Kazanjian, reared two daughters, Anna and Christina, and in the late 1980s returned to school, studying Mandarin at S.F. State.

“I felt I was losing the language and I wanted to reconnect,” says Elise. In 1990, her professor urged her to study in Taiwan the best place to master Mandarin. She spent an intense semester, and two years later in 1992 she was offered a job in Beijing as foreign editor of the Chinese-English China Central Television studio. She stayed a year editing their English copy.

These days Elise continues to write about her Chinese experiences. The Chinese culture, she says, is her spiritual home. “There’s a lot about the new China I dislike,” she says. “It’s the old China I remember, and it always pulls me back.”

Marian Zailian

Recent Graduates

We would like to congratulate the following recent grads (partial list) from Cal:

Nare Avagyan (Glendale)
Kristina Bedrossian (Walnut Creek)
Julie Brovko (Rosemead)
Mariam Danielyan (Los Angeles)
Naira Der Kiureghian (San Francisco)
Emin Issakhanian (La Crescenta)
Naeiri Khachikian
Nareg Oknaian (Las Vegas)
Jasmin Tokatlian (Los Altos)

Munushian Trust Bequest \$20,000

BERKELEY – The University of California Armenian Alumni are pleased to announce a \$10,000 bequest from the Jack Munushian Charitable Trust. Jack also bequeathed \$10,000 to the Berkeley Armenian Students Association. Jack, a UC Berkeley alum, received his PhD in physics in 1954.

He was born in Rochester, New York on September 6, 1923 where he later attended the University of Rochester receiving a B.S. in physics in 1948. He had served in the Army in WWII. In 1954 he moved to Southern California where he eventually played a major role in the development of the University of Southern California Viterbi School of Engineering. “To an extent few people realize, we at the Viterbi School live in a house that Jack built” said the USC Viterbi Dean Yannis Yortsos. “Our eminence in computer science and distance education grows directly out of his hard work and foresight.”

Educated as a physicist, Munushian began teaching at USC’s School of Engineering while he was still working at Hughes Aircraft Co. where he eventually became the head of the Applied Physics Division. Jack became a fulltime USC assistant professor in 1967 and was an emeritus professor at the time of his death on May 29, 2005.

Munushian had a vision for a new way to educate engineers by using television. He persuaded the Olin Foundation to help the School of Engineering establish the Instructional Television Network (ITV) in 1972. State of the art for its time, ITV beamed graduate lectures directly from USC to numerous specially equipped classrooms located at aerospace company offices and factories throughout Southern California. This arrangement enabled working engineers to continue their careers, a concept that continues today in the Viterbi School’s Distance Education Network (DEN). “We no longer use television”, said DEN executive director Kelly Goulis, “but we still honor Jack Munushian’s insistence that distance education be in every respect on a par with instruction on campus”.

Though he was trained as a materials scientist, Munushian organized the Department of Computer Science and served as its Chair from 1972 to 1976. Professor George Bekey paid tribute to Munushian’s modesty and his skill in putting the new unit together and creating a home for it with a new building, the Henry Salvatori Computer Science Center. I saw him take it from idea to reality, and then quietly step aside. Jack worked in the background and did not seek the limelight.”

While at Cal in the late 40’s and early 50’s, he participated in many of the Armenian Student Club activities. During his years between his move to Southern California and his death, Jack never lost touch with close friends from his Berkeley days. He attended UCBAAs reunions from time to time. He believed in supporting our goal for an Armenian Studies program at UC Berkeley.

Jack will be remembered for his sense of humor, his kindness and generosity of spirit. At the time of his death, the USC Daily Trojan wrote, “Jack was a great person to work for and work with. His students really looked up to him.”

Evelyn Boyd

Fall Courses at UC Berkeley

History 177B – Armenia

This survey course will cover the period from the incorporation of most of the Armenian plateau into the Ottoman Empire to the resignation of President Levon Ter-Petrosian in February 1998.

The history course is taught by Professor Stepan Astourian.

Eurasian Studies 1A Beginning Armenian

This course is for students who have little or no previous knowledge of Armenian. Proficiency in the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing is developed.

Modern Western Armenian is taught primarily, but students who would like to learn Eastern Armenian are also accommodated. Armenian is taught as one language. The commonalities are highlighted and the differences recognized and taught.

Eurasian Studies 101A Continuing Armenian

The purpose of this course is to further develop students’ Armenian proficiency in all four language skills, using discussions, oral presentations, written assignments and a variety of readings (literature, non-fiction, folklore, newspaper articles, etc.) chosen for their cultural significance and based on student needs and interests.

Particular skills (e.g. reading) are emphasized. Three hours of class per week. Course may be repeated for credit.

The language courses are taught by Santoukht Mikaelian.

**William Saroyan Endowment Donations
August 2005 to October 2006**

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Ashken Mouradian

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Dues are due and remember, you don't have to be a UCB Graduate to join us!

Your membership to UCBAA is welcome. While only UCB graduates can be elected to serve on the Board, we invite community members to join as Associate Members. We are constantly in the process of improving our mailing list, and wish to expand our network through email. Use the envelope provided in the newsletter and the forms below to send us your email and/or change of address.

We have over 500 "alums" on our mailing list, yet we receive dues from fewer than 50. The dues become part of our General Fund which covers our operating expenses, including mailings, printing, honorariums and travel expenses for guest speakers, and much more. Remember, only dues paying members are allowed to vote in our elections. Annual dues are a small fee of \$35.

You can reach us: Via Mail: UCBAA, P.O. Box 10113, Berkeley, CA 94709, Email: ucbaa@hotmail.com, Telephone: Evelyn Boyd: 925-946-9320. And check out our website at: www.ucbaa.com.

Ways to Give to the UCBAA and the Armenian Studies Program at the UCB

UC Berkeley Armenian Alumni

Donation – support our activities and services to the Armenian Studies Program

Membership - become a member and have a voting voice

William Saroyan Endowment Fund

Donation – The most immediate way to show your support

Memorial Donation – In memory of a loved one in lieu of flowers

In Honor of – Birthdays and Anniversaries

Matching Gift Program – Double your contribution by taking advantage of your employer's matching gift program

Wills and Trusts – Remember the UC Berkeley Armenian Studies Program (William Saroyan Endowment or the UC Berkeley Armenian Alumni) in your will

Life Insurance, Brokerage Accounts, Retirement Plans – Name the UC Berkeley Armenian Studies Program (William Saroyan Endowment or the UC Berkeley Armenian Alumni) as **beneficiary**.

For more information, please contact Cynthia Avakian at (415) 566 1120 or cpavakian@yahoo.com

UCBAA Contribution Form

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California Alumni

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