

## **THE ARMENIAN AMERICAN MEDICAL SOCIETY 34TH ANNIVERSARY GALA RAISES MUCH NEEDED FUNDS TO HELP TREAT ARMENIAN CHILDREN WITH CANCER**

*Mrs. Anna Hakobyan, spouse of the Prime Minister of Armenia, and Serj Tankian, lead singer of the popular band System of a Down, highlight a remarkable evening of giving.*

Los Angeles, CA - The Armenian Medical Society (AAMS) and their community of supporters gathered together at the Sheraton Universal Hotel on April 6, 2019, to celebrate the work of the organization and honor the achievements of two extraordinary individuals. The sold-out event featured a cocktail reception, dinner, and an evening of music and dancing, while raising funds for City of Smile - an Armenian foundation based in Yerevan, Armenia, that provides support to children with cancer and hematological diseases.



Keynote speaker, Mrs. Anna Hakobyan, noted journalist and spouse of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, is the board chair for City of Smile. Mrs.

Hakobyan spoke of the importance of having the capabilities to provide comprehensive, state-of-the-art cancer treatment for children afflicted with cancer in their homeland, and to receive this care regardless of the family's ability to pay. Mrs. Hakobyan noted that in less-developed countries, such as Armenia, cancer is often equal to a death sentence, but with proper treatment and resources, it can be overcome. "We are gathered here today to support these children," said Mrs. Hakobyan.

"Together we can fight for every child with cancer and it is our obligation to not let them lose the fight due to lack of resources. City of Smile Foundation was established to change their lives, to move them in a positive direction, and to bring a smile to the face of these children and their families. We are starting it by saving one smile at a time. Tonight, there are hundreds of people present which means so many people are standing by the sides of these children and their parents and giving a piece of hope and a hand of support."



President's Remarks by Dr. Armond Kotikian

Armenian American Medical Society President, Armond Kotikian, DDS, MD, FACS, was thrilled with this year's response to the need. "Our partnership with City of Smile created an opportunity for our organization to make a real and meaningful impact the lives of children suffering from oncological and hematological diseases in the heart of Armenia," he said. "Seeing how so many people opened their hearts to the foundation and generously gave so that these children can receive the care they so desperately need was truly remarkable."



Serj Tankian, singer, poet, songwriter, visual artist, activist, composer and the voice of System of a Down, was honored with the AAMS lifetime achievement award. Humble in his acceptance, Serj noted the importance of working together to provide the basics for students, patients, veterans, and the most disenfranchised in the homeland. "We need to find more ways to help organizations, such as City of Smile, reach their objectives in our new, free, independent, and hopeful Armenia," remarked Serj.



Master of Ceremonies Dr. Vicken Sepilian

Vicken Sepilian, MD, AAMS board member and former AAMS president was the event's Master of Ceremonies. His enthusiastic appeal for donations on stage helped spur attendees to make donations throughout the evening, boosting the event's total proceeds. "The AAMS has touched all of our lives in one way or another, through one of its many programs that elevate the health of our community, in the United States, and in our homeland," said Dr. Sepilian. "Tonight, our members and friends have touched the lives of Armenian children with cancer and their families. Their generosity exceeded our expectations."



The evening's entertainment was provided by The Armenian Pops Orchestra, under the direction of Greg Hosharian, noted composer, conductor, and musician, who played a variety of selections throughout the evening. The crowd was also treated to a dance by the Zvartnots Dance Ensemble.



Welcoming Remarks by Gala Chair Dr. Kevin Galstyan

"The Armenian American Medical Society is grateful to our members, friends, and sponsors who made this event so special and so successful, said AAMS Gala Chair, Kevin Galstyan, MD, FACOG. "Through their support, City of Smile is that much closer towards realizing its goal of helping children in Armenia with cancer to conquer their disease. It was also an honor to celebrate Mrs. Hakobyan and Serj Tankian, whose humanitarian work is so closely aligned with the mission of our organization. We couldn't have asked for a better evening."

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AAMS Executive Board with Mrs. Anna Hakobyan

The AAMS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and presently has over 500 members from around California whose areas of practice cover the entire spectrum of allied healthcare. The AAMS is the largest Armenian medical society in the Diaspora and its directory of practitioners is a vital resource for patients seeking care in various health-related disciplines and specialties. The AAMS is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), ensuring that AAMS members maintain their competence of new medical knowledge through Continuing Medical Education activities to improve quality care for patients and their communities.

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