

AAMS Elects New Executive Committee



The Armenian American Medical Society convened its general assembly on January 29, 2020. During the assembly, the AAMS Executive Committee was elected for the 2020-2021 year.

2020-2021 AAMS Executive Committee

LEADERSHIP:

Kevin Galstyan, MD, FACOG President	Vicken Sepilian, MD, FACOG Vice President (re-elected)
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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Boris Bagdasarian, DO	Oganes Karapetian, DDS*
Garni Barkhoudarian, MD	Jenia Jasmine Tahmasian, PharmD*
Rami Apelian, MD, MPH*	Elizabeth Zoryan, RN*

**Newly elected members*

Back row, left to right: Oganes Karapetian, DDS; Silva Karchikian, MD; Boris Bagdasarian, DO, Jenia Jasmine Tahmasian, PharmD; and Rami Apelian, MD, MPH. Seated: Elizabeth Zoryan, RN, Vicken Sepilian, MD, FACOG; Kevin Galstyan, MD, FACOG; and Garni Barkhoudarian, MD.



A Year in Review: Looking Back at 2019

The Armenian American Medical Society had a banner 2019. Here's a look back at some of our highlights from the year.

A Message from Outgoing President Dr. Armond Kotikian



For the past two years, I have been truly privileged to lead the AAMS. As I look back at all we have accomplished together, I am so grateful for your enthusiastic support and dedication.

There is more to do, as we encounter new needs and unexpected challenges in serving our community—both here and abroad. I know that Dr. Kevin Galstyan, the new

president; and the entire AAMS organization are up to the task.

This isn't a farewell. I have been a part of this wonderful organization for many years and will continue to participate and contribute in every way I can to further our mission in the years ahead.

Armond Kotikian, DDS, MD, FACS

FEBRUARY 2, 2019 **MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION EVENT**



The AAMS Annual Membership Appreciation and Networking Event was held at The Loft at Eden on Brand, Glendale. The evening's highlight was special guest Dr. Thomas Catena, a world-renowned physician, and missionary. Dr. Catena is a recipient of the second annual Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity. He was honored for his dedication and selfless service as the sole practicing surgeon operating in the war-torn and famine-ravaged town of Gidel in the Nubian Mountains of Sudan since 2008. Dr. Catena's presence was an inspiration to all in attendance at the event.



FEBRUARY 13, 2019 **VALENTINE'S DINNER PARTY**



One hundred AAMS members and friends attended the fun and informative evening of LOVE, in celebration of Valentine's Day. Held at the Glen Arden Club, the event featured guest educator, cardiologist Harry Balian, MD, FACC, FSCAI presenting a timely talk on, "Tips and Tricks to Maintain a Healthy Heart for Your Valentine."

Cupid's Couples of the Year Awards were received by Dr. and Mrs. Beno and Sonia Nersissian, Dr. and Mrs. Vagharshak and Silva Pilosssyan, Dr. and Mrs. Michael and Taline Aznavour, and Drs. Andrew and Marine Harper for their outstanding service to the community.



APRIL 6, 2019 34TH ANNUAL GALA

The AAMS held its 34th Annual Gala, *Stand by Me*, at the Universal Sheraton. The event raised funds for the City of Smile— an Armenian foundation that provides support to children with cancer and hematological diseases. Mrs. Anna Hakobyan, spouse of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia is the board chair for the organization. The black-tie event featured a cocktail reception, dinner, and an evening of music and dancing.

Mrs. Hakobyan was the evening's keynote speaker. She told of the need for comprehensive, state-of-the-art cancer treatment for children in Armenia, regardless of a family's ability to pay.

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 for his humanitarian work.

The evening's entertainment was provided by The Armenian Pops Orchestra, under the direction of Greg Hosharian, noted composer and conductor.



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MAY 4, 2019 16TH ANNUAL AAMS CME & CDE VEGAS GETAWAY

The always-popular AAMS Annual CME and CDE Las Vegas Getaway didn't disappoint in its 16th year. Held at the Bellagio Hotel, the weekend featured CME and CDE programs as a way for our members to stay up-to-date with the latest advances in their field and ultimately to improve the quality of care in our community. This event provides important professional development and a chance to unwind and have fun!



JUNE 1, 2019 OC NETWORKING EVENT



The first Armenian American Medical Society Orange County Membership Appreciation and Networking Soirée was held in June, as the AAMS extended its reach beyond Los Angeles County. Attendees had the opportunity to network and socialize with fellow healthcare professionals, south of the LA border, while enjoying the incredible hospitality of the Monarch Beach Resort and its spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean. We look forward to holding functions more frequently in Orange County and all across Southern California.

JULY 4, 2019 5TH ANNUAL MEDICAL CONGRESS OF ARMENIA

The 5th International Medical Congress of Armenia (IMCA) was held this past July in Yerevan, Armenia. More than 400 healthcare professionals from various countries participated in the congress' scientific and organization efforts. Members of the Armenian American Medical Society (AAMS) actively participated in the event—many of them serving on committees and participating in lectures and seminars. AAMS Past President Armond Kotikian, DDS, MD, FACS, gave a lecture on medication-related osteonecrosis of the jaw. Past President Raffi Tachdjian, MD, MPH, FAAAAI, led an afternoon satellite program on Allergy, Immunology, and Pulmonology and also moderated four other speakers. Vicken Sepilian, MD, FACOG, AAMS Vice President, and Past President, currently serves as president of the Armenian Medical International Committee, which organizes the ICMA.



JULY 4, 2019 MEMBERS OF THE AAMS VISIT JUVENILE DIABETES CAMP IN ARMENIA

During the Medical Congress, AAMS members visited the KATIL 2019 Summer Camp for the children with juvenile diabetes. The children spoke of their dreams and regaled the members with Armenian songs. Members of the AAMS delegation were introduced to camp life and witnessed first-hand how the camp impacted the lives of these children living with juvenile diabetes, giving them the chance to have a normal, healthy life. The AAMS has been actively supporting the camp for many years. Campers learn about nutrition and insulin administration to effectively manage their disease while enjoying activities such as games, music, and art.



JULY 4, 2019 AAMS LAUNCHES FELLOWSHIP FOR INNOVATIVE HEALTHCARE

The AAMS launched The Armenian American Medical Society/Impact Hub Yerevan Fellowship. This fellowship supports entrepreneurs who develop a project or enterprise to tackle a health-related issue in Armenia. Armond Kotikian, DDS, MD, AAMS past-president, and board member Silva Karchikian, MD, met with the three fellows whom the AAMS has chosen to support this past summer. The fellows are:

- Davit Dadalyan-Patient Advocacy and Patient Rights: Monitoring funds allocated to the government for supporting health clinics in the regions.
- Ruben Stepanyan-Smoking Cessation: Raising awareness on the negative effects of smoking as a means of combating the high rate of lung cancer in Armenia.
- Lucy Nazanyan-Telemedicine: Creating an application which will be a valuable information resource and helpful tool for all things health-related.



LUCY NAZANYAN



RUBEN STEPANYAN



JULY 5, 2019 OPENING CEREMONY OF HOMELAND DEFENDER'S REHABILITATION CENTER LIBRARY

AAMS members had the opportunity to attend the opening ceremony of the library at Homeland Defender's Rehabilitation Center while at the Medical Congress. The AAMS actively raised funds for the renovation of the library donating \$100,000 to the cause. The library is vital to train specialists and develop rehabilitative medicine to aid the wounded soldiers of Artsakh. The new facility not only houses the library, but also includes a conference hall and other amenities to create a comprehensive training center. This valuable resource will not only benefit the recovering soldiers but will enhance the lives of all Armenians in need of rehabilitative services. Yerevan State Medical University Rector Armen Muradyan expressed his gratitude to the AAMS for helping to make the medical library a reality.



JULY 26, 2019 THE AAMS WELCOMES PROFESSOR ARMEN MURADYAN, MD



The AAMS welcomed Professor Armen Muradyan, MD, who discussed AAMS' current and future collaboration with the Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU). Professor Muradyan shared with our members, information regarding YSMU's 100th anniversary in Yerevan in May of 2020. Dr. Muradyan also expressed his gratitude to the AAMS for recently funding the renovation of the Yerevan State Medical University's Homeland Defender's Rehabilitation Center Library.



OCTOBER 6, 2019 AAMS MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN STEPANAKERT MEDICAL MISSION

Members of the AAMS joined Chevy Chase Surgery Center, in conjunction with the Armenia Fund USA, to implement a medical mission at the Stepanakert Republican Medical Center. Kevin G. Galstyan MD, Ara Airapetian, MD, FACOG; Mireille P. Hamparian, MD; Stephan R. Grigorian, MD, FCAP; and Edgar Mehdikhani, MD, volunteered for the week-long mission, where they performed a wide range of surgical procedures alongside their Stepanakert colleagues. The experience provided valuable training in the latest techniques and protocols for their Armenian counterparts. The volunteers met with Bako Sahakyan, President of the Republic of Artsakh, during their mission.



OCTOBER 12, 2019 8TH ANNUAL AAMS CME & CDE FALL SYMPOSIUM

The day-long educational symposium, held in Glendale, featured 15 speakers who covered a wide range of medical, dental, legal, and "business of medicine" topics to enhance the practices of our healthcare professionals. The symposium was organized in collaboration with the Armenian Bar Association.



NOVEMBER 2, 2019 **GLENDALE HEALTH FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY**



On November 2 and 3, the Armenian American Medical Society (AAMS) held its 10th annual Glendale Health Festival at the Pacific Community Center. For the second consecutive year, the AAMS partnered with Remote Area Medical, a national non-profit healthcare organization that operates mobile medical clinics to provide free dental, vision, and medical care to more than 600 children and adults.

The 2019 Glendale Health Festival took on special significance as it marked the event's 10th anniversary. The celebration included a tribute to Glendale's multi-cultural community, featuring performances by Mariachi Zacoalco de Pedro Barragan, East LA Taiko, the DMC Aztec Dancers, and an Armenian Traditional Trio.

“Ten years ago, the AAMS helped launch the Glendale Health Festival in response to a lack of access to basic medical services for the area's uninsured and under-insured individuals,” noted Armond Kotikian, DDS, MD, FACS, AAMS President. “Thanks to the continued generosity and support of our local healthcare professionals, hospitals, and organizations, we have been able to expand our services over the years to meet the growing needs of our community.”



Nearly 300 medical professionals and volunteers came together to provide approximately \$129,000 worth of free care for children and adults at the 2019 Glendale Health Festival.





The AAMS Mentorship and Career Development Evening connects medical and other healthcare-related students, residents, and fellows with mentors to help them navigate school preparations as well as guide them in employment opportunities. This year's panel of experts, included Narine Danielian, DDS, Arthur Ohannessian, MD, Raffi Svadjian, PharmD, Zarmine Naccashian, PhD, FNP, GNP, RN, CDE, BC-ADM, and Raffi Tachdjian, MD, MPH, mentorship chair.

Introducing the 2019 AAMS Scholarship Recipients

The AAMS awards scholarships annually to qualified Armenian students enrolled in various healthcare education programs in the fields of medical, pharmacy, dental, physician assistant, nursing or other professional healthcare schools. These scholarships support deserving students who not only strive to be excellent healthcare professionals but are also active community members and humanistic healthcare professionals. The AAMS is proud to introduce the five medical students who were chosen for their exemplary academic achievements and outstanding service to the community.

Congratulations to the 2019 scholarship recipients!



Liana Aslanyan is a second-year dental student at Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, in New York. She earned her undergraduate degree in biology from CUNY Queens

College. Born and raised in Armenia, Liana considers it a lifetime duty to give back to the Armenian community. She was fortunate to participate in a global research program which allowed her to return to Armenia to conduct a study in the prevention of dental caries. Liana plans to continue her work in Armenia to introduce preventive dental services there. She has a passion for community dentistry and hopes to bring oral health improvement among the lives of Armenians as well as the community in New York City.



Sosi Dzhugarian was born and raised in Southern California. She combined her interests in medicine, physiology, and physical activity by obtaining her Bachelor's degree in

kinesiology – exercise science from California State University, Northridge. Sosi is in her second year of medical school at Touro University California College of Osteopathic Medicine. Over the years, she has volunteered for the Armenian Relief Society, among other non-profit Armenian organizations. Attending events such as the 2019 AMA Annual Conference has motivated her to think more critically about health policy. She hopes that her experiences and education will allow her to better serve the Armenian community.



Alec Ohanian is a first-year medical student at the UCSF School of Medicine. He hopes to pursue a career in vascular surgery or robotic-assisted cardiothoracic surgery, as well as earn a

Master of Public Health. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from CSU, Long Beach with majors in molecular cell biology and physiology, and minors in finance and chemistry. Prior to medical school, Alec focused on research, publishing papers in the fields of stem cell biology and developmental physiology. His most impactful experience was volunteering in Armenia at various hospitals and schools. This shaped his intense focus on global health, with the ultimate goal of giving back to Armenia by serving its people and improving the state of its healthcare.



Anais Stepanian is a second-year medical student at Loyola University Chicago-Stritch School of Medicine. She completed her bachelor's degree in neurobiology, physiology, and behavior at

UC Davis. She recently spent time in Armenia as a coordinator for The Paros Foundation SERVICE Armenia program, which inspired her to return to improve access to healthcare. Anais plans to pursue a career in academics. She currently teaches anatomy review lectures for first-year medical students. Anais plans to specialize in OB/GYN, followed by a fellowship in reproductive endocrinology. She wants to give back to Armenia as well as to empower other Armenians to pursue a career in medicine.



Alin Megerdichian is a third-year medical student at California Northstate University College of Medicine. She graduated Cum Laude from UCLA with a B.S. in physiological

sciences. Prior to medical school, she conducted research at Jules Stein Eye Institute where she became passionate about ophthalmology. In 2018, she joined the Armenian EyeCare Project (AECPP) Observership Program for a trip to Yerevan where she had the opportunity to serve and connect with the people in the remote villages of Armenia. It is her dream to return to her community as an ophthalmologist where she not only hopes to serve the Armenian population in Los Angeles but also as a member of the AECPP during their annual trips to Armenia.

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AAMS CREATES SCHOLARSHIP FOR UCLA MEDICAL STUDENT

In 2019, the AAMS created a scholarship for a David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA student who is pursuing a project in the area of medicine and public health in the Glendale or Little Armenia communities and demonstrates leadership and humanism in a community service role. The inaugural scholarship recipient is Miani Giron. Miani, who grew up in foster care in South Los Angeles, overcame great odds to attend Syracuse University and entered UCLA's medical school in 2016, where she recently completed her third year of clinical rotations as a top scholar. Miani is committed to compassionate care and mental health. This past summer she embarked on a research year with the Saban Community Clinic to focus on behavioral health, where she works with the vulnerable populations in and around Little Armenia. She plans on practicing in underserved communities, upon graduation.



DECEMBER 4, 2019 ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AND SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION



The AAMS kicked off the holiday season with its annual Christmas Celebration and Scholarship presentations, at the Glen Arden Club, in Glendale. A total of six scholarships were presented to medical students chosen for their exemplary academic achievements and outstanding service to the community. Nick Ghazarian, DO, orthopedic spine surgeon, presented a brief CME. The evening also featured dinner and entertainment and lots of holiday cheer.

DECEMBER 7, 2019 WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH HONORS ANDRE PANOSSIAN, MD



Armenian American Medical Society member Andre Panossian, MD, was one of seven distinguished professionals honored by the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church at their 16th Annual Christmas Ball. The annual Christmas ball heralds the launch of the holiday season, celebrates community leaders, and is an occasion to reflect the accomplishments. The honorees were chosen for their successful careers and devoted service to both the Armenian and American communities. His Eminence Archbishop Hovnan Derderian congratulated the honorees for their dedication and diligence in their professional lives; that through their achievements they serve as an inspiration for future generations and bring pride and recognition to the Armenian community. The AAMS congratulates Dr. Panossian for this well-deserved honor!

The AAMS would like to thank our members, sponsors,
and supporters, who made 2019 such a success.

Your contributions make the difference.

You are the heart of the AAMS!

