



The Armenian American Medical Society Raises Proceeds for the People of Artsakh as the Lifeline of Hope Fundraising Campaign Kicks Off



Left to right: Drs. Vicken Sepilian, Sherwin Hariri, Jenia Tahmasian, Gami Barkhoudarian, Ms. Elizabeth Zoryan, Ms. Ellina Abovian, Dr. Harry Balian



Lifeline of Hope Volunteers and AAMS Members.

On May 6 and May 7, 2023, the Armenian American Medical Society (AAMS) and its dedicated community of members and supporters united for a meaningful cause: to generate funds to procure essential life-saving medications and healthcare supplies for the people of Artsakh.

The weekend's events, a gala, and telethon, launched an ongoing fundraising campaign, Lifeline of Hope. Nearly \$300,000 has been raised so far between the gala and the telethon, the proceeds of which will be used to purchase medications and medical supplies for the Armenians in Artsakh. This campaign was spurred by Azerbaijan's blockade of the Lachin corridor, which has been rendered inaccessible since December 12, 2022. As a result, the 120,000 residents are isolated, without access to essential goods and services, including life-saving medication and healthcare.

"Our priority is to ensure the well-being of our people in a region that is presently landlocked and under blockade," emphasized Garni Barkhoudarian, MD, FAANS, president of AAMS. "Our aim is to provide the necessary support to maintain the health of Armenians in Artsakh. The more

resources we can obtain, the longer we can sustain the availability of vital medications and supplies crucial for their survival."



Garni Barkhoudarian, MD, FAANS, President of AAMS

The first event of the weekend, the AAMS 38th Anniversary Gala, was held May 6, 2023, at the spectacular Jonathon Club in downtown Los Angeles. The gala drew 250 attendees.

Armand Dorian, MD, MMM, FACEP, FACHE, and George Melikian, MD, MPH, both received the AAMS Lifetime Achievement Award for their significant contributions in assisting Armenia and Artsakh during the challenging times of COVID and the Second Artsakh War. Their remarkable efforts were recognized and celebrated as they shared inspiring words, emphasizing the importance of continued dedication and collaboration.



Drs. Jenia Tahmasian, Vicken Sepilian, Sarmen Sarkissian, Armand Dorian, George Melikian, Garni Barkoudarian, Sherwin Hariri and Ms. Elizabeth Zoryan.

Elizabeth Zoryan, RN, BSN, PHN, AAMS Executive Committee member and secretary, and gala chair, offered the evening's opening remarks and a somber reminder that the evening was about more than awards and recognition. "As we unite to honor our peers, we need to also reflect on the humanitarian crisis in Artsakh," she noted. "The blockade has continued for nearly five months, cutting off our Armenian brothers and sisters from Armenia and the rest of the world. Through the generosity of our members and supporters, we can provide desperately needed humanitarian assistance. We can be their lifeline of hope."

Emmy Award-nominated KTLA reporter Ellina Abovian presided over the gala as Mistress of Ceremonies. Ellina also co-hosted the Lifeline of Hope telethon, Sunday, May 7, sharing hosting duties with Vruyr Tadevosyan of Horizon Armenian TV and Armine Amiryanyan of USArmenia TV.



The televised fundraiser aired live for a total of 12 hours on Horizon Armenian TV, ARTN TV, and USArmenia TV. Members of the AAMS Executive Committee, AAMS members, and a host of local healthcare professionals rallied viewers throughout the day to support this worthy cause.

"The 120,000 Armenians in Artsakh this Sunday may not have electricity, fuel, or the security of knowing they can feed their family today, let alone tomorrow," remarked AMIC President and AAMS executive board member Vicken Sepilian, MD, FACOG, during the telethon. "We are survivors of a genocide, but today, our brothers and sisters in Artsakh are still fighting to survive. We are here to send them the message, 'We are here with you.' We must speak out and provide them with aid so they know they are not alone."

The fundraiser is ongoing and open for donations through the [AAMS website](#), [Paypal](#), and [Venmo](#). With every contribution, we can make a world of difference in the lives of those affected by this crisis.



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