

## CYSCA Participates in Cambridge Science Festival

In April, CYSCA hosted the CEO of a fuel cell company, and a member of the Ministry of Education of Armenia to experience the Cambridge Science Festival. On April 29th, as part of the festival, Agassy Manoukian participated in a panel discussion with two Massachusetts fuel cell company executives at the Cambridge Public Library. The interaction was informative, not only for the audience but also for the participating panelists. CYSCA also hosted Gayane Poghosyan, of the Armenian Ministry of Education, whose role was to experience the various activities of the festival and meet with key organizers, with the intention of presenting a similar science festival on a smaller scale in Yerevan this coming fall. The Cambridge Science Festival is an annual event that takes place throughout the city for 10 days, hosting over 200 events and attracting more than 30,000 visitors.



## CYSCA Trains Social Workers From Armenia

In Spring 2009, CYSCA concluded another successful Community Connections training project for social work professionals from Armenia. Ten social workers from Armenia spent three productive weeks in the Greater Boston area immersed in the American system of social work. They visited 26 different sites and met with over 50 presenters. Subjects ranged from education and licensure, to social work in different areas such as elementary schools, hospitals, foundations, domestic violence organizations,

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## CYSCA Alumni Produce Two Business Guides

In Fall 2009, CYSCA announced the release of a second edition of a business guide titled, "Easy Use Guidelines for Armenian Entrepreneurs." This guidebook is written in simple everyday Armenian and English for use by entrepreneurs in Armenia to guide them through the steps to establish, finance and run a business in Armenia.



The principal contributor and driving force for this guide is Mkrtych (Misha) Tadevosian, an executive of the Anelik Bank, who had participated in our "Community Connections" entrepreneurship training program in 2004. Following his return to Armenia Mkrtych collaborated with other alumni of the CYSCA training program, Irina Belubecyan, Gegham Petrosyan, and Marine Ghaghramanyan, to produce a guidebook for inexperienced entrepreneurs in Armenia, the first of its kind, sponsored and funded by CYSCA.

This first guidebook was so popular that it was soon out of print and required an updated second edition. In 2009 Misha and his team updated and published a second edition, followed by an English translation, also sponsored and funded by CYSCA.

CYSCA obtained the support of the U. S. Peace Corps English language experts in Armenia to assist in the editing of the English version. During his visit to Armenia in September 2009, CYSCA board member Jack Medzorian accompanied Misha Tadevosyan and former CYSCA board member Saro Khachikian to present 25 copies of the newly printed 2nd edition to Ms. Lee Lacy, country director of the U. S. Peace Corps, for use by Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs). She stated, "We thank Misha, his co-authors, and CYSCA for producing the booklet, which will be an invaluable tool in helping our PCVs in Armenia assist entrepreneurs in the villages, where business knowledge and experience are frequently lacking."

Medzorian commented on the booklet, "This project helps us fulfill our ultimate goal in the training of professionals from Armenia, which is to follow-up and implement the

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## About CYSCA

**C**YSCA was established in 1987 by the Cambridge City Council through an official Sister Cities Agreement with the City of Yerevan, Armenia, as a non-profit citizens' organization dedicated to fostering friendship, mutual trust and dynamic interaction between the peoples of Yerevan and Cambridge as well as their neighboring regions; to build links between them, to promote public awareness of issues of mutual concern; and to appreciate and

accommodate the various manifestations of diversity in these communities.

Since 1987, successful and ongoing people-to-people exchanges representing the arts, business, and political fields have brought the two cultures closer. Humanitarian aid has also been provided to numerous institutions, and financial assistance given to schools in Armenia.

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## President's Message

Dear CYSCA Friends and Members,

**T**his year has been very productive and gratifying. The CYSCA Board, members, and dozens of volunteers have worked tirelessly to bring several meaningful projects to fruition.

Right after last year's annual meeting, CYSCA's Community Connections hosted a social workers' group for three weeks here in Boston. Since social work is in its infancy in Armenia, the group learned a great deal of new information which they took back with them to apply in their work. This was possible thanks to the many volunteers who helped to schedule, house, transport, train, give American cultural insights, and provide social interaction with and entertainment for these visitors. Thank you so much to all of you who gave your time and your hearts to this major undertaking especially those at Middlesex Community College who were central to the program. I hope your participation was as meaningful to you as it was to us on the CYSCA Board and to those Armenians who came here to improve their knowledge of social work.

Our programs make dramatic impacts time and time again. Misha Tadevosyan, who attended a previous Community Connections program, used seed money from CYSCA to write and publish his latest book, "How to Write a Sound Business Plan." Since attending our program, he has published several books with our help and continues to be a prolific writer. His books are used by universities and the general public to help aspiring entrepreneurs create and manage successful businesses. This is one example of the ripple effect that one simple act can produce.

Last September with help from CYSCA, Helen and Peter Smith traveled to Yerevan to visit School #126, the Morganthau School (named after Helen's esteemed great grandfather) and observed the teaching methodologies there. Helen plans to return to teach writing, using some of the latest techniques in Massachusetts. Sharing these new teaching styles will impact children's learning experiences. Expanding thinking enriches everyone with children being an integral part of the scheme.

CYSCA participated at the Cambridge River Festival for a third consecutive year. The CYSCA display included Armenian items, CYSCA materials, music, and free hand-outs. Our goal is to become better known and understood by attendees; and that continued community outreach will lead to interest in volunteering and/or becoming a member.

Please enjoy this newsletter detailing our recent successes and needs. Being a part of what makes Cambridge so unique, we take pride in bridging cultural differences and making a difference in the world. Consider being a part of this by becoming a member or donating your time and energy to CYSCA.

Sincerely,  
Cheryl Shushan, President  
Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association

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knowledge and ideas gained through our Community Connections training program." Tadevosian added, "We are pleased that we were able to utilize the experience we gained during our CYSCA training program to produce this guidebook, which has proven to be very helpful to entrepreneurs in Armenia in running their businesses."

In March 2010 CYSCA announced publication of a booklet "How to Write a Sound Business Plan" also authored by Mkrdich (Misha) Tadevosyan. This is the second in a series of booklets Misha has produced for Armenia's micro-businesses.

The driving force behind this publication was Misha's observation that while Armenians have an innate talent for establishing and running businesses, they lack the knowledge of raising capital according to Western standards and norms. There are many such booklets written in English



## Armenian School Aid Project Completes Its 17<sup>th</sup> year

**D**uring trips to Armenia in the past 15 months, donations from school sponsors were delivered to schools in Armenia by Eva and Jack Medzorian. This year marks the 17th anniversary of the ASAP project, with some of the original sponsors having faithfully contributed since inception of the project. In 2009-10, a total of \$11,050 of donations was distributed to 21 schools.

CYSCA is able to ensure that the funds are spent for the purpose intended. In recent years we have made a gradual shift towards providing assistance to regional schools, as the needs are greater in villages. School directors prepare a letter of thanks to their sponsor informing them about what is new at the school, state how they spent the previous funds and how they plan to spend the new funds.

CYSCA, the school director and staff, students and parents are grateful to the sponsors who continue to support schools in Armenia with generous donations.

and other languages, but this booklet is the first comprehensive guidebook of its kind written in plain Armenian.

The guidebook serves those who wish to start a business or develop an existing one. It provides a step-by-step process for writing a sound plan that can be used to obtain capital from lenders, attract new investors, as well as to run a successful business. It can also be used as a textbook by educational institutions. It has been prepared for the Armenian business environment and contrasts western-style and Armenian business plans. An appendix shows examples of actual business plans of Armenian companies representing several sectors, including manufacturing, retail and service companies.

Commenting on his new booklet, Misha stated, "The goal of this booklet is to provide Armenian entrepreneurs with answers to their frequently asked questions, help them develop knowledge and skills, attract investments, obtain loans and improve their efficiency in running a business."

**Copies of the booklet in Armenian may be obtain by contacting Mkrdich Tadevosian, Ph.D., at [m.tadevosyan@yahoo.com](mailto:m.tadevosyan@yahoo.com) or [mkrdich.tadevosyan@anelik.am](mailto:mkrdich.tadevosyan@anelik.am). Telephone, (37410) 26-60-58 or (37491) 41-13-79.**

## Environmental Scientist Presents Paper

**D**r. Marine Nalbandyan, environmental scientist from Armenia gave a presentation on water quality at the annual conference of the U. S. Society of Civil Engineers held in Providence, RI. The conference was held during May 2010 and was attended by 500 participants. Marine was one of 3 people selected out of 700 applicants to make a presentation at the conference. Marine is an alumnus of the Community Connections environmental specialists program in the year 2000 and has been working since then doing important research on Armenia's water quality and supply issues.

Following her return to Armenia in 2000, she co-produced the first "Environmental Dictionary" in Russian, English and Armenian, a booklet on environmental fairy tales for teaching kindergarten children, and organized an environmental conference, all with the support of CYSCA.

During her recent trip, Marine was hosted by Paul Boyajian and his wife Christine of Natick, MA. Paul had met Marine in 2000 when CYSCA visited Parson's Engineering, organized by Zareh Maserejian. Paul and Zareh arranged visits for Marine to the MASS Department of Environmental Engineering, water treatment facilities, and professors at MIT during her short visit to the Boston area.

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hospice, nursing homes, senior centers, adoption, government, disabled children, the poor and vulnerable population, and universities. The group was very enlightened by everything they learned and planned to implement many aspects of their experiences upon their return to Armenia using CYSCA-facilitated action plans.

The participants represented government agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), and education.

On June 25, 2009, the professionals took part in a panel discussion jointly sponsored by CYSCA and NAASR, at which they presented information on the realities of social work in Armenia today, including the various successes and barriers they encounter in funding, community outreach, and the current global economic crisis, as well as new approaches and methodology they learned in the USA.

Since its inception following Armenia's independence in 1991, social work has been a growing industry. The government now recognizes the need for social services among Armenian people and is working with local NGOs to provide necessary support and assistance to vulnerable populations. However, more work lies ahead. The professionals in this group are well aware that although the foundation has been set and meaningful work has been achieved, there needs to be continuity of care with various individuals and groups in Armenia. Fortunately, the participants in the group represent various geographic areas of the country, allowing them to canvas more areas in their work. They also shared their experiences about their site visits in Boston. Each participant talked about a particular site in relation to his/her action plan and how that visit will be helpful in putting together and implementing action plans upon returning to Armenia. Aftandil Markosyan, regional director of social work in the Tavush region, commented "We are impressed with the work of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) in the USA and plan as a group action to create a similar organization in Armenia". The entire group expressed their gratitude and appreciation for a very full, structured, well-organized program presented to them by CYSCA.

A visit to University of Connecticut School of Social Work (UConn) brought together old acquaintances- teachers and students who are part of an ongoing exchange program with Yerevan State University (YSU), led by Professor Dr. Nancy Humphreys, head of the school of social work at UConn. Since 1991, UConn has had a relationship with YSU, where Dr. Humphreys organized the first curriculum for social work. Arusiyag Safaryan, social work faculty member at YSU, commented, "We are excited that as a result of our visit we have now planned to jointly sponsor an international social work conference at YSU in 2010." Alisa Stepanian, CYSCA project manager observed, "This is exactly what our program is intended to do-connect communities!"

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## **New Partnership Strengthens Social Services Training and Outreach**

### **SUCCESS**

Artak Khachatryan, Head of the Social Work Department at Yerevan State University (YSU), is undertaking major improvements in social work internships for his students. An alumnus of the June 2009 Community Connections Social Work program, Khachatryan spearheaded a first of its kind collaboration between Yerevan State University and the Ministry of Labor and Social Work Affairs. The partnership will diversify and expand existing internship opportunities by providing placements at the Ministry of Labor and Social Work Affairs and its regional social service agencies. In turn, Kachatryan will train social service providers for hosting a college intern. The arrangement is already helping bridge gaps between academia and practitioners, giving interns a strong balance of theory and practice.



### **OVERVIEW**

During the CC program, Khachatryan and nine social work professionals from Armenia were hosted by CYSCA in Cambridge, MA. Participants met with experts in the field to learn new methods of management and delivery of social services. Of particular importance were visits to the Simmons College School of Social Work and the Children's Hospital in Boston, where a dedicated team of skilled social work interns from Simmons College help patients and families deal with a range of psychological issues. The partnership between the two institutions ensures valuable internship placements for students and free services to the hospital's patients. The collaboration inspired Khachatryan and two fellow group members from the Ministry of Labor and Social Work Affairs to initiate a similar program between Yerevan State University and the Ministry. The program provides opportunities for YSU students to serve as interns in the Ministry. Khachatryan's counterpart in the Ministry is Greta Mirzoyan, Deputy Head of the Social Assistance Department and an alumna of the same CC group. "These are just the first steps of the initiative, but I am sure we will soon see positive outcomes," noted Khachatryan. "The trip to the US not only helped us gain new knowledge and skills, but also spurred cooperation between different agencies involved in social work in Armenia, which is a prerequisite for success," he said.

## CYSCA Community Connections Theatre Manager's Success Story



## CYSCA Receives A Certificate of Appreciation from USAID

CYSCA received a Certificate of Appreciation from the US AID (Agency for International Development) for its outstanding training of 180 professionals from Armenia under 18 Community Connections projects in many diverse fields since 1998. CYSCA is grateful to the many host families, training organizations and many other volunteers who have worked hard to make our projects a success.

Community Connections alumnus Armen Harutyunyan, Deputy Director of the Yerevan State Institute of Theater and Cinema, initiated a comprehensive survey on theater management practices across Armenia in 2009. The survey highlighted the differences between private and state as well as regional and capital based theaters. The findings of the survey revealed important trends in theater management and were highly appreciated by experts and the government, including the Ministry of Culture. The survey offers a number of key recommendations to theater managers and will soon be published and distributed among the theater community throughout Armenia.

"Participation in the Theater Management program not only equipped me with rich cross-cultural experience, but also expanded my knowledge and expertise in theater management. We were able to adapt some US practices despite the differences in how we run theaters in Armenia and the US," said Harutyunyan.

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Reflecting on this CYSCA Community Connections program, the 18th since 1997, its Program Director Jack Medzorjian, said, "We are proud to have been chosen by the USAID to implement this most important program and are convinced that our group, with their enthusiasm and newly acquired knowledge about social work in the USA, will 'make a difference' in Armenia."



## The Community Connections Program

The Community Connections Program, managed by the Bureau for Europe and Eurasia at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and administered by World Learning, is designed to promote public diplomacy through the exchange of cultural ideas and values among participants, U.S. families and local community host organizations. It seeks to establish and strengthen links between U.S. communities and communities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.



For the third consecutive year, the Cambridge Yerevan Sister City Association was represented at the 2010 Cambridge RiverFest, the annual one day celebration on the Charles River. Many people stopped to say hello and learn more about us at the Community Tables area of the festival, where CYSCA exhibited the culture and heritage of Armenia, as well as explained our recent achievements and projects with Yerevan.

## More Host Families Needed!

CYSCA is seeking future host families for groups of Armenian professionals who will be coming to the Cambridge area for professional training in Fall 2010. Homestays are generally about three weeks. The visitor's

day is very full with a planned program, but evenings and weekends provide time to form bonds and true community connections. CYSCA is privileged to be chosen by USAID to provide this unique experience. If interested or for more information, **please contact Armine Medzorian at 781-883-4470**

## Yes, I will be a 2010 CYSCA supporter!\*

Basic Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	Name: _____
Family Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	Address: _____
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I am interested in working in the following areas:

I can translate in:  Fundraising  Business/Economic Development Projects  Community Connections Project  
 Armenian  Newsletter  Armenia School Aid Project  Art and Music Exchanges  
 Russian  Publicity  Environmental Projects  Youth Exchanges  Other

\*The membership year begins April 1st.

Please make check payable to CYSCA and send to CYSCA Treasurer Arax Badalian P.O.Box 382591, Cambridge, MA 02238.  
 Donations are deductible for federal income tax purposes.

**Thank you!**

## Cambridge-Yerevan News

Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association  
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