

## Armenian Bar Association & American University of Armenia Launch Legal Clinic

Glendale, CA – The American University of Armenia (AUA) and the Armenian Bar Association (ArmenBar) joined forces to sponsor a new Technology and Innovation Legal Clinic at AUA's campus in Yerevan through two receptions in California, led by David Balabanian, Esq.

The Golden State Bank in Glendale hosted the Los Angeles metro area gathering and the law offices of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, LLP in San Francisco, with Balabanian as host, served as the engaging settings for legal professionals, AUA leadership and supporters who came together to learn more about the ArmenBars partnership with Armenia's leading university and its innovative projects for current and future students.

Balabanian, the first chairman of the ArmenBar, welcomed guests and highlighted the significance of raising dialogue about the role of legal education in Armenia by creating stronger ties between the Diaspora and the homeland. Through his work with the ArmenBar, Balabanian has brought continued awareness to critical legal issues in Armenia, which is now at a crossroads thanks to the Velvet Revolution and a newfound respect for the law.

"We are experiencing a new era in Armenia," said Balabanian, who practices commercial litigation. "We hope to expect rule of law and as lawyers we have a special obligation to ensure the safeguarding of the legal system."

Launching in the Fall of 2018, the Technology and Innovation Legal Clinic, whose operating costs will be sponsored by the ArmenBar, will be made available to the student community through AUA's Master of Laws (LL.M.) program.

The clinic, which Balabanian noted as a "valuable resource," will be the first in Armenia to address the needs for professional legal counseling in rapidly growing fields, including technology, which is experiencing a 20% growth in Armenia.



*Dr. Michael Kouchakdjian, Marianna Achemian, Vanna Kitsinian, Esq., Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian, David Balabanian, Esq., Gerard Kassabian, Esq., Aline Barsoumian, Saro Kerkonian, Esq. and Zaven Akian*

Selected AUA students will gain hands-on experience working and providing counseling to IT and engineering startups in relation to a wide range of legal issues, from company registration to contracting to intellectual property rights protection.

The legal clinic is one of the many projects Balabanian has spearheaded for the legal community over the years. In addition to his impactful work with the ArmenBar, he has served as chairman of the California State Bar Conference of Delegates, lawyer delegate to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, trustee of the Practising Law Institute, and a member of the Harvard Law School Visiting Committee. As an instructor, he has taught more than 150 continuing legal education courses and written extensively on law-related topics.

During his remarks, AUA President Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian shared with attendees important updates about the University, including the recently signed bill that provides free law school tuition to the University of California, Hastings College of the Law for AUA graduates who are residents of California.

"The signing of this bill by Senator Anthony Portantino shows the confi-

dence that the state of California and UC Hastings have in the American University of Armenia," said Dr. Der Kiureghian.

He elaborated on the positive changes occurring in Armenia, including the election of a government and a Prime Minister "who respects the law in Armenia and adheres to the principles of fairness and democracy."

President Der Kiureghian noted that the student body and faculty were involved in the Velvet Revolution, choosing to exercise their civic duty and rights. He spoke of the work of AUA's Entrepreneurship and Product Innovation Center (EPIC), which will work in tandem with the Technology and Innovation Legal Clinic, as well as AUA's partnerships with USAID and plans to start an AUA press.

"We have matured as a university," said Dr. Der Kiureghian. "And we maintain our promise of selecting students based on merit and not financial capacity, making sure we attract the brightest minds."

As the director of one of the most creative and effective centers at AUA, EPIC, Dr. Michael Kouchakdjian elaborated on the activities of the ecosystem, which

provides AUA's emerging entrepreneurs with a collaborative space consisting of programs, events and a network of mentors, advisors and investors. In relation to its partnership with the Technology and Innovation Legal Clinic, workshops and seminars will be organized for EPIC and other IT and engineering enterprises and teams. In addition, thanks to the ArmenBar's sponsorship, top quality legal professionals will supervise the activities of the LL.M. program students in order to ensure consistency and quality of service. Touching on the synergy between the Center and AUA, Dr. Kouchakdjian said that through EPIC, the community at large can engage in the startup venture ecosystem, which is becoming increasingly popular in Armenia.

Dr. Lawrence Pitts, Chair of the Board of Trustees and former Provost of the University of California system, said AUA has become a transformative university in Armenia and through the support of benefactors, it can become the best in the region.

"AUA is a superb investment in Armenia, like the University of California is a great investment for the state," said Dr. Pitts. "Our students are the future of the country, and AUA works hard to prepare them successfully as employees, researchers and engaged citizens, which is the best way for Armenia to grow and prosper in the coming years."

Founded in 1991, the American University of Armenia (AUA) is a private, independent university located in Yerevan, Armenia, and affiliated with the University of California. AUA provides a global education in Armenia and the region, offering high-quality graduate and undergraduate studies, encouraging civic engagement, and promoting public service and democratic values. For more information about the American University of Armenia and its donor opportunities, please visit [www.aua.am](http://www.aua.am).

## CEC HOLDS ANNUAL BACK TO SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKSHOPS



With the new Sunday school year fast approaching, the Christian Education Council, under the direction of His Eminence Ab. Hovnan Derderian, is once again offering their Back to Sunday School workshops during the month of August. All Sunday school superintendents, teachers, and church leaders have been invited to participate in this always-informative event designed to support and ready our school leaders for the new school year. The workshops are always centered on collaboration across our Western Diocese and consistency within our classrooms. The CEC makes it a priority to support every parish Sunday school so that lessons and programs are Christ-centered, rich in our Armenian culture, and aligned with the doctrines of the Armenian Church and the church's Liturgical calendar.

Our main topic of discussion at this year's workshop is to help generate better parent involvement within our Sunday school programs. Learning to be a good neighbor begins in the home, and who better to teach and model this other than our Sunday school parents. The goal is to give parents the tools necessary to continue the good teachings being taught on Sundays

into their homes so that, together with their children, they may put them to authentic, good use. If church and parents do their jobs well, it truly will be a beautiful day in our neighborhoods!

The workshops are being offered in 3 different locations to best serve our Sunday schools:

St. Peter, Van Nuys – for Southern California parishes

St. Paul, Fresno – for Central California parishes

St. John, San Francisco – for Northern California parishes

The workshops are being led by CEC Board members Gail Chelebian (Chairlady), Fr. Krikor Zakaryan (Clergy Advisor), and Lynn Bedrosian (Teaching Advisor), along with Sevag Derderian. (AACCWD Chair).

We wish to thank all of the host parishes and participants for their love and support of our Sunday schools. We are greatly humbled by the sincere gratitude and hospitality shown at all workshop locations. We look forward to a wonderful Sunday school.

Faithfully,

*GAIL CHELEBIAN, CEC Chair*

## KEN KHACHIGIAN MASTER OF CEREMONIES AMAA CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION BANQUET

LOS ANGELES, CA — Ken Khachigian, distinguished Armenian-American political consultant, speech writer, attorney and veteran of nine presidential campaigns, will be the Master of Ceremonies at the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Centennial Celebration Banquet on October 20, 2018 at the Los Angeles Biltmore Hotel. Highlighting the evening's celebration will be the recognition of AMAA esteemed benefactors John Sheen, Stephen Philibosian, Sirpuhe and John Conte, and Gerald and Patricia Turpanjian. The Centennial Committee is honored to announce Ken Khachigian as Master of Ceremonies.

Khachigian is a senior partner in the Orange County office of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck. He was a longtime aide to President Richard Nixon and chief speechwriter to President Ronald Reagan, as well as senior adviser and principal strategist for Governor George Deukmejian, with whom he had an ongoing friendship.

*JOYCE ABDULIAN*