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South Florida Sun-Sentinel, Monday, October 23, 2006

The American University of Armenia celebrates 15 years

The American University of Armenia (AUA) will be continuing its 15th anniversary year celebrations with a fundraiser reception on Thursday, Nov. 30 in Boca Raton.

The reception will feature University President Dr. Haroutune Armenian and Mrs. Armenian, who recently climbed to the peak of Mt. Ararat. They will meet with the community to recall AUA's achievements and explain the exciting opportunities and challenges ahead.

AUA offers young Armenians graduate education equal to that of the highest quality U.S. university master's degree programs without ever leaving Yerevan. Many of the more than 1,528 AUA graduates today occupy positions of leadership in Armenia's government, judiciary, business, health care and education sectors. Nearly 90 percent have remained in Armenia, attracting

investment and jobs which often require English speaking, western educated professionals.

For many students, AUA is a chance to join the global economy and transform Armenia to a respected regional center of learning, engagement and leadership. By providing teaching, research and public services, AUA, in its 15th year, serves Armenia and the region and provides a positive model in the transition to a market economy and democratic governance. Moreover, following a rigorous review process that relatively few universities can satisfy, AUA is on track to become the first overseas academic institution accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, more commonly known as WASC.

Today, through the continuing generosity of organizations like the

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AGBU and concerned individuals, AUA's educational excellence is being extended across Armenia. The Turpanjian Rural Development and Adult Education Program seeks to expand the benefits of AUA across all of Armenia and Karabagh through a unique economic development project that combines adult education with direct assistance in business development. The program will have a transforming effect on the health and well being of Armenians in many areas previously overlooked.

AUA is now constructing a new, state of the art, academic facility, the Paramaz Avedisian Building. To meet the growing needs of AUA's student body and faculty, and to reflect the increased enrollment anticipated for its new role as an accredited American university, the Avedisian Building will add modern classrooms, laboratories, lecture halls, conference and seminar rooms, an auditorium, a café with a terrace, and even an art gallery.

The expansion will permit enrollment to more than double in critical

fields of political science and law, public health, business, engineering and computer science, and advanced English language studies, as well as expanded academic and professional programs and conferences. Through individual donations, nearly \$8 million has been raised of this \$13 million project.

The Nov. 30 reception will be held at 7 p.m. at Oppenheimer & Co. Inc., 2 E. Camino Real in Boca Raton. The \$75 admission donation includes a catered reception. RSVPs and checks (payable to AUAC) may be sent to attorney Paul E. Ghougasian, 2300 Glades Road, Suite 370 W, Boca Raton, Florida 33431, 561-391-4700, paul@peglaw.com.

Additional information is available from event organizer Manny Kouyoumdjian of Oppenheimer at 561-416-8627, Emmanuel.Kouyoumdjian@opco.com.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Further information about the American University of Armenia is available at its website www.aua.am or through its Oakland office at 510-987-9452. ■