

AGBU

## AGBU-YPNC's "Winter Gala Getaway" Huge Success

SAN FRANCISCO—The AGBU Young Professionals of Northern California, now in its third year, held its second annual Winter Gala on Saturday, February 3, 2001.

Due to the success of last year's Winter Gala, the YPs decided to extend the Gala into a "Getaway Weekend." 400 people from ten

Anserian, impressed by the AGBU-YPNC's achievement, commented: "It was particularly inspiring to see so many young people enjoying themselves while lending their support to the AUA, an institution that is truly paving the way for the future of a new generation in Armenia. I hope such



From left to right Annette Kevranian, AGBU-YP Athletic Chairperson, Kimberly Bardakian, AGBU-YP Chairperson, Anita Anserian, Director, AGBU Central Boards Projects- NY, Aline Ekmejji AGBU-YP Membership Coordinator, Ashken Mouradian, Oakland AGBU Chairperson and Ara Oghorian, AGBU-YP Treasurer.

states and from as far away as Beirut and Dubai gathered to enjoy each other's company. This year's contribution from the Winter Gala was sent towards the donations for scholarships, textbooks and computers

successful events will become a tradition for the AGBU-YPs across the country."

The festivities continued on Sunday with the Farewell Brunch, held at the picturesque Fisherman's Wharf. Guests gathered to share



Dancing continued until the early morning hours

at the American University of Armenia (AUA).

The Weekend opened with a Friday night mixer, held in conjunction with the San Francisco Armenian Professional Society, at the Gold Coast Bar and Restaurant, downtown San Francisco. The evening was spent catching up with old friends and meeting new people. Saturday afternoon guests toured "the city by the bay" and saw the local attractions including the trolley cars, ferry to Alcatraz, the Golden Gate Bridge etc. The highlight of the weekend, the sold-out Winter Gala, was held in San Francisco's Veteran's Memorial Building, in the elegant Green Room. Fr. Mesrob Sarafian of St. Vartan Armenian Church, Oakland, CA opened the evening with a prayer.

AGBU-YP Chairperson Kimberly Bardakian welcomed the guests and introduced Anita Anserian, Director of the AGBU Central Board Projects, and Ashken Mouradian, Oakland AGBU Chairperson and one of the original founders of the Young Professional group.

The Gala featured hors d'oeuvres, dinner, a host bar, and dancing. Guests mingled on the balcony, facing a luminous City Hall, and danced to live music by Mixed Nuts.

the final few hours and exchange contact information, while seated along the balcony and windows overlooking beautiful San Francisco's Bay.

Guests from the weekend are still talking about their weekend in the Bay. Natalie Teperdjian, who traveled across the world from Dubai to attend the Gala, hopes to come back again next year. "I've been living in Dubai for months and had yet to meet any Armenians and was suffering from withdrawal symptoms. The weekend didn't disappoint. Over three days, in a city that was totally new to me, I met so many new friends. I felt like I'd come home."

"The weekend was filled with activities that kept me smiling the whole time. We're coming out next year," said Shant Petrossian, who flew in from New York. Plans are already underway for next year's weekend.

Upcoming AGBU-YP events include: Golden State Warriors vs. Seattle Supersonics Basketball game, March 18, and a Lake Tahoe Ski Weekend, March 23-25.

To receive further information about upcoming event, e-mail Aline Ekmejji, Membership Coordinator, at aleeop@aol.com.

PILGRIMAGE

## Youth Pilgrimage to Armenia in Summer 2001

A Youth Pilgrimage to Armenia will take place from July 7-22, 2001. The Pilgrimage is aimed at creating a bridge between the youth in Armenia and the Diaspora and is a means of connecting the youth to their roots.

The Youth Pilgrimage organizing office was initiated by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, to coordinate the July youth pilgrimage and organize a long-term pan-Armenian youth structure. This unprecedented event will be the founding structure of a permanent pan-Armenian youth movement, which will be a lasting structure of cooperation of youth organizations working under the auspices of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The program consists of one-day short pilgrimages to religious and cultural sites in Armenia — such as Oshakan, Sartarabat, Zvartnots, Garni-Geghart, Tzaghatgor-Gecharis, Sevan peninsula-Sevan monasteries, Dilijan-Haghartsin-Goshavank-Jukhdak monasteries, Yerevan-Erebuni-Matnadaran-Museums — and a three-day Khor Virap-Yerevan-Etchmiadzin pilgrimage on the 14, 15, and 16 of July, 2001. Some 10,000 people from Armenia and the Diaspora are expected to take part in the pilgrimage.

On July 14, all the participating pilgrims will head to the Khor Virap monastery at the foot of Mount Ararat. The youth arriving from the diocesan exchange visits, will head to the church to participate in the candle lighting service. There will be an open-air sacred music concert outside the church complex. There will also be a multimedia presentation of highlights of Armenian history. The programs will conclude with a common prayer service and chanting, after which a "torch-bearing rally" will commence through the villages and to the main highway where buses will be waiting to take the pilgrims toward Etchmiadzin.

The pilgrims will be dropped off close to Etchmiadzin and a procession with lit torches will lead the pilgrims to the Mother Cathedral of Etchmiadzin. At dawn, when the youth pilgrims reach Etchmiadzin, a Sunrise Service will be held in the Mother Cathedral. Afterwards, His Holiness the Catholicos will address the youth from an open-air altar build for this occasion.

A program on religious and popular rituals — such as a wedding ceremony, birth and baptism of a child, Feast of St. Sarkis, Christmas, Transfiguration, Vavavar and others — will be presented. The audience will take part in the circle dances and festivities related to these rituals.

At the completion of the program, the pilgrims will be transported back to their lodging places in Sevan, sometime in the afternoon, for rest, meals, reflection and exchange of thoughts.

At night, the pilgrims will travel to Yerevan and visit Tziternakabert, the monument dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide. There they will pay tribute to the memory of the victims and make an oath before God.

Late at night, the opera called "St. Gregory the Illuminator" will be performed at the Cascade in Yerevan for the first-time ever. The open-air opera will be performed by a cast of 70 artists with music backdrops.

The three-day pilgrimage will conclude with a midnight festival at Independence Square in Yerevan, called "My love, my faith, my Armenia", which will connect the youth with the new Armenian state and the Church. During the festivities the President of Armenia and youth representatives will address the crowd. The festival will continue until dawn with fireworks and dancing.

Plans are underway to mark the 1700th Anniversary Youth Pilgrimage with a khachkar-fountain monument.

The Pilgrimage is open to individuals 18-35 years old, who apply to their local dioceses and local youth pilgrimage coordinating committees. In addition, interested individuals, both in Armenia and abroad, may apply by visiting [www.holyetchmiadzin.am](http://www.holyetchmiadzin.am) and completing the application form. The deadline for applications is May 1, 2001, thereafter, the schedule of fees and prices might change. Apply before May 1 for the best package.

For all inquiries related to accommodation, transportation, and stay in Armenia, please contact:

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ARTS COMPETITION

## Armenian Allied Arts Association 61st Annual Competition

The Armenian Allied Arts Association has launched its 61st Annual Competition, and applications are available upon request. There will be a total of approximately \$10,000 in cash awards for those who excel in various categories.

The competition endeavors to seek our new talent and to encourage artists from Armenian descent. While Armenian Allied Arts is Los Angeles based society, it welcomes participants from any location in the world. Cash awards and trophies are offered in Literature, Art, Drama, Voice, Instrumental Music, and Music Composition. Adjudication is provided by judges who are professionals in their field. To insure objectivity, judges are not Armenian, except for Armenia Language and Drama entries. Awards range from \$50 to \$1000 in various departments in the junior and senior categories. In addition, trophies are awarded to children in all

categories except Vocal Music.

Award recipients will be recognized at a special Awards Program on June 17, 2 p.m., at the Brace Performing Arts Center, 4640 North Maine Street, Baldwin Park, CA. A special Art exhibit will display competition entries, winners of the Music and Drama awards will perform their work, and selected works by winners of the Literature department will be presented.

For submission deadlines contact: Hilda for Art at (323)656-0261 (deadline 3/31); Anne for Literature at (714)879-6395 (deadline 4/1); Anne for Drama at (714)773-0618 (deadline 5/1); Helen for Vocal Music at (949)581-5694 (deadline 5/1); Victoria for Music Composition at (626)303-2023 (deadline 4/30); Mary for Instrumental Music at (626)791-9816.

For more information visit the Armenian Allied Arts Association's website at [www.armenianallegedarts.com](http://www.armenianallegedarts.com).