

With 400 degree students enrolled in its sixth year of academic programs and with an eye to future strengthening and expansion, the American University of Armenia, one of AGBU's major projects in the Republic of Armenia, has announced an Endowment Fund Drive to provide a solid financial base for the years ahead.

Notice of the drive was made public in early February and was marked by announcement of a pace-setter gift of \$1.5 million to the Endowment from an anonymous donor who is a long time supporter of projects in the Republic of Armenia. The grant will support a Chair in Conservation and Environmental Management at the University.

The Endowment Fund drive was announced by Dr. C. Judson King, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of AUA and Provost of the University of California with which AUA is affiliated and which provides the University in Yerevan with academic guidance and support.

In revealing plans for the multi-year drive to develop an additional \$20 million dollar Endowment Fund, Dr. King said: "We have come this far on the basis of the generous support of our founding sponsor, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, as well as substantial grants from the U.S. government, the Lincy Foundation and individual donors.

"This support cannot be expected to continue indefinitely. A substantial Endowment Fund is essential for the future of the University. As our annual budget grows to the three and four million dollar level in the next few years, the AUA Trustees have determined that our financial needs should be met on a formula of approximately 50% Endowment Fund interest, 25% from annual grants and donations and 25% from tuition fees."

Both President Levon Ter Petrossian and Prime Minister Armen Sarkissian have paid tribute to the importance of AUA as have a large number of other public figures and officials. AUA graduates are already working in government, business and international agencies in Armenia and making contributions to development of the country. President Ter Petrossian has said: "The American University of Armenia is one of the notable educational and scientific institutions in our Republic." And recently, Prime Minister Sarkissian added; "We look to AUA to help us find the talent for the future development of Armenia."

The campaign announcement comes in the midst of changes in the leadership of AUA. Dr. Haroutune Armenian of Bal-



AUA Announces \$20 million Endowment Fund Drive

timore, a distinguished Professor of Epidemiology at the world-famed Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and former Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the American University of Beirut, became President of the University on January 1. Dr. Mihran Agababian, PhD, of Los Angeles, CA, the founding President, who set the course for AUA during the five initial years, is now President Emeritus.

Dr. Agababian's close identification with the University will continue in his new role. Dr. Agababian will be the primary AUA representative involved in the Endowment Fund campaign. He will be supported by a University Board of Trustees Development Committee under the Chairmanship of Trustee Barry Zorhian of Washington, DC.

In recognizing the need for the Endowment Drive, AUA's new President, Dr. Armenian, paid tribute to the progress which has been made in developing AUA into one of the primary educational institutions in Armenia. He said, "AUA is indebted to Dr. Agababian and the AGBU for their initiative and tremendous contributions over the past five years in bringing AUA to its present state. I and my associates in the University hope to continue on the path they have developed and I know that we can succeed only if we continue to provide AUA the support needed for its future development through the establishment of a substantial Endowment Fund."

The AGBU support in the first five

years has been the essential financial factor in the development of the university. AUA began in 1991 with 101 graduate students and a budget of \$1 million provided by the AGBU to support the initial program. Critical to this beginning and still a very significant part of the operations of the University is the highly visible AUA building in the center of Yerevan donated by the Armenian government. The Armenian government also provides additional local assistance and actual governance of the University is the responsibility of a joint American-Armenian governing board.

Since that beginning year, AUA has expanded the programs of the two initial schools, Business Management and Engineering, and established three more colleges: the College of Political Science and Public Policy, the College of Health Sciences and, most recently, the College of Law. All five schools grant degrees at the academic Master's level. The core Colleges have been augmented in each case by Research Centers to undertake research projects of specific use in the development of Armenia. In addition, Extension Courses have been offered in a variety of fields to provide non-degree training and courses. The University also provides a Certificate program for teaching English as a second language.

AGBU President Louise Simone, a member of the AUA Board of Trustees, noted: "The plans for expansion of the University's Master's Degree programs and its Extension Courses, which are now

servicing more than 900 participants over the course of the academic year, require substantially increased resources. Expanded departments and enrollment will provide Armenia human resources which are essential to its economic, social and political future. Like any University in the United States, AUA must establish a solid financial base for the years ahead."

Including the anonymous gift announced at the start of the Endowment Fund campaign, AUA has a \$5.5 million endowment within overall AGBU funds. These funds have been generated by gifts from individual supporters of AUA. Income from this current endowment will continue to be part of the AGBU support to the University. These funds, as well as additional amounts gathered through AGBU annual appeals, will be allocated to AUA operations and for scholarships. The new Endowment Fund

drive will constitute an additional resource.

The University is presently expanding its physical plant. Construction was started recently on an AUA Center on Alex Manoogian Street in Yerevan, separate from the prominent

AUA headquarters on Bagramian Street. The new facility will provide a business center, conference rooms, class rooms and facilities for visiting business and academic personnel. The building is being constructed with funds from the U.S. Agency for International Development and a grant from the late Krikor and Astghik Shishmanian, long-time AGBU members. It is expected that this new facility and tuition fees will produce additional income.

These and other planned facilities at the University as well as existing operational elements provide an opportunity for potential donors to the Endowment Fund to memorialize their parents, family or selves by placing names on individual physical units. Endowed chairs for professors and faculty members, individual Colleges and other academic programs are also prospects for potential donors.

A special Advisory Council of prominent public figures who support both the concept and the operations of the University is being established to reflect the support and appeal of the University. Members of this Council as well as Endowment campaign donors will be announced as the campaign progresses.

Potential donors interested in further details of the campaign and in the list of possible academic activities and physical units for sponsorship should address their inquiries to Armenian General Benevolent Union, AUA Endowment Fund Campaign, 31 West 52nd Street, New York, NY 10019-6118, USA. □