

R.S.V.P. – YES! Kevork Toroyan

Pledges \$10,000 to AUA

The invitation is out—and everyone has been invited. A black-tie-ball? A motion-film screening debut? An elite dinner party? Hardly close.

The Board of the American University of Armenia (AUA) is building for its future, and has invited all its friends to participate in an endowment campaign—with a goal set for \$25 million.

"AUA has become the symbol of a new era in Armenia," says AGBU President, Louise Simone. "The atmosphere is progressive and open. Besides offering graduate students specialized studies, AUA is teaching modern technical skills, quality performance and independent thinking. AGBU donors have already established endowments totaling \$6 million for AUA. But still, we must raise \$800,000 a year until the endowment and tuition income reach a level which will permanently secure the future." With a pledge of \$10,000, Kevork Toroyan is now amongst the many who have helped give the campaign a boost. Along with his gift of \$2,500 this year, Mr. Toroyan will make contributions over three years to complete his entire pledge.

"I think that a liberal education is the most powerful tool to empower individuals and help them make a difference to their environment," says Mr. Toroyan. "It has certainly been a key ingredient in my life. I came from a modest background and couldn't afford an education. But after several organizations, including AGBU, gave me financial assistance, I was able to attend the American University of Beirut (AUB) in Lebanon.

"I have always been a believer that an American liberal education can act as a

model in Armenia to create competition with other institutions. Some people argue not to support AUA because students are leaving Armenia. In my opinion, their concern of immigration is one that is faced by every developing nation. That doesn't mean that we should stop helping."

Born in Lebanon, Mr. Toroyan has since lived all over the Middle East and Europe. Having completed his degree in architectural engineering at AUB, Mr. Toroyan accepted a position with Consolidated Contractor Company (CCC)—a major international construction company to the oil industry. At the time when he joined, the firm was a small family-operated business. But as the company grew, Mr. Toroyan became a key player and moved all over the world, including Kuwait, Iraq, Abu-Dhabi, Greece and England. Nine years ago, Mr. Toroyan and his wife, Pamela, and their three daughters, Seta, Tamitza and Aleen moved to the United States where Mr. Toroyan began overseeing a subsidiary of CCC called Morganti Group. Last year, Mr. Toroyan relinquished his executive position in Morganti but serves on the CCC board of directors and travels to Greece and the Middle

East regularly.

Currently, Mr. Toroyan is a partner overseeing two U.S. companies: Delma Properties—a property investment company formed with Middle-Eastern partners who invest across the U.S.; and Delma Power—an independent power development company that pursues privatized power generation projects internationally, with particular emphasis to the Middle East. Delma Power is actively pursuing two small hydro projects in Armenia where they would arrange the construction, finance, operation of two hydro power stations and sell power to the Armenian authorities.

For his extensive involvement in the Middle East, Mr. Toroyan served on the Executive Committee of Builders for Peace, a U.S. organization formed at the initiative of the Vice President of the

United States, Al Gore, to encourage investment in the West Bank and Gaza to help solidify the peace in the Middle East. "A group of us were sent by Airforce Two to attend the Cairo Peace signing ceremony," says Mr. Toroyan. "Unfortunately, the change of government in Israel killed the momentum of the peace process and stalled all related initiatives."

Today, Mr. Toroyan relaxes by golfing, playing the saxophone, and reading history books. With three daughters participating in the AGBU Internship Program in New York, Mr. Toroyan has been associated with AGBU and has been a regular donor to the President's Club. However, his major commitment has come with his recent donation. "There are many things that Armenia needs—but I think that education is the priority." ■

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Mr. Kevork Toroyan with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

MARSEILLE MEMBERS REVITALIZE AGBU SOUP KITCHEN

The AGBU Marseille Chapter, contributing \$30,000 for the renovation of AGBU's new Nork Children's Center Soup Kitchen in Yerevan, arrived in Armenia in full-force to inaugurate the opening. Touring the new facilities, which included a new kitchen, dining hall and restrooms, and joining the 200 pensioners and orphans who receive a daily meal, the chapter had an opportunity to personally see the results of their generous contribution. The Soup Kitchen diners, one and all, expressed their gratitude to the Marseille members.

The AGBU Central Board extends their appreciation to the Marseille Chapter for their enthusiasm and wonderful support of this humanitarian project. LMS

Members of the Marseille, France AGBU Chapter during a visit to another AGBU project, the American University of Armenia.

