



INSIDE AUA

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SUMMER 2005

ADDING A COMPETITIVE EDGE

“Armenia is undergoing rapid educational reform. Among the many changes being implemented is a move towards a trilingual society with English becoming increasingly important as the third language, after Armenian and Russian,” said **Dr. Marianne Celce Murcia**, Dean of the AUA Department of English Programs. “There is a growing need at all levels for well-qualified teachers of English, who are fluent and well-versed in current teaching methodologies, to ensure that the people of Armenia can effectively converse in English with their professional counterparts world-wide.”

The Department offers a Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) as well as a Certificate.

“At AUA, I learned about contemporary teaching methods and techniques,” said **Hranush Ginosyan** (MA TEFL 2003) who works at the European Regional Academy in the Caucasus (ERAC), European Regional Institute of Information and Communication Technologies in Armenia (ERICITA). “My classroom is learner-centered. Students are involved in pair and group work, and cooperate with each other and practice the language all the time.” According to **Naira Teknejyan** (CITEFL 2003), also at Armenia’s European Academy, her students respond well to the skills she acquired at AUA. “Teaching is my life and I am devoted to my profession,” added Teknejyan.

“Armenia is undergoing rapid educational reform. Among the many changes being implemented is a move towards a trilingual society with English becoming increasingly important...”

~ Dr. Marianne Celce Murcia,
Dean of the AUA Department
of English Programs

Established in 2003, AUA’s new Center for Research and Development in Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching, will become a vibrant venue for academic development and exchange serving not only AUA, but also the wider community of Armenia and the region. **Dr. Jo Lewkowicz**, who recently joined the faculty as Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, remarked, “The Center aims to facilitate interaction

between our faculty and their counterparts in other educational systems, develop research projects that train and support TEFL students, and educate TEFL professionals for academic and leadership positions.”

The Center for Research and Development in Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching is already

working on small-scale projects to help Armenian language educators. For example, it is investigating common errors in English among Armenian students with the long-term view of producing a handbook for teachers. Members of faculty associated with the Center are working with the Armenian English Language Teachers Association (AELTA), disseminating their research findings throughout Armenia and promulgating good teaching practices.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As this newsletter goes to press, the AUA is a beehive of activity.

In January, a generous donation from Trustee Vartkes Barsam made it possible for the University to acquire the Hye Business Suites. This facility in downtown Yerevan will continue to be used as a hotel, as well as for faculty and student residences.

In February, we broke ground for the new Paramaz Avedisian Building that will provide the most modern facilities for graduate education in the region. We will soon start to see the physical structure of this unique building, and the day when students and faculty will be using their new classrooms, laboratories, and offices is getting closer.

We are seeing a larger number of applicants from outside Armenia, with a new recruitment officer streamlining this process. Also, our applicants are coming to us with significant improvements in their English language competencies. Much of this improvement is probably due to our graduates from the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) program who teach in other universities and colleges in Armenia.

In September, the College of Health Sciences will host the Annual Meeting of the European Schools of Public Health in Yerevan and for the first time in an NIS country. This international meeting will attract over 200 participants from Europe, and from the neighboring and Middle Eastern countries.

AUA is a very exciting institution that is evolving to a standard of excellence comparable to the best international universities. Students and faculty are very proud for being members of the AUA family.

Haroutune Armenian

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FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Haroutune Armenian, President of the American University of Armenia (AUA), was decorated with Lebanon's National Order of the Cedar medal in December 2004.



Dean of the Department of English Programs (DEP), **Dr. Marianne Celce-Murcia**, presented a paper at the International Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) 2005 Convention, in San Antonio, Texas.



Dr. Lucig Danielian, Dean of the School of Political Science and International Affairs, has been asked to serve as a member of the Advisory Council for the Caucasus Research Resource Center, funded by the Eurasia Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation.

The University of Tehran, selected AUA Dean of Engineering, **Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian**, as a distinguished alumnus of the Faculty of Engineering of Tehran University, Iran in December 2004.



In May, **Bruce Janigian, Esq.** was appointed Acting Dean of the Law Department. Bruce has 30 years of experience advising government and business leaders on their global interests, as well as in education. A former Fulbright professor of law and USAID attorney, he earned his J.D. from the UC, Hastings College of Law, and LL.M. in International and Comparative Law from the National Law Center of George Washington University.



Department of English Programs (DEP) faculty (left to right): Elisa Kekejian, Dr. Jo Lewkowicz, Liliana Edilian

In Montreal, Canada, **Elisa Kekejian**, Assistant Dean of the DEP, presented the AUA during a monthly meeting of the Armenian Relief Society and was interviewed in their HOM-i LRADOU publication.

Dr. Jo Lewkowicz, Associate Professor in the DEP, presented a paper at TESOL's Arabia 2005 Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and at the University of Warsaw, Department of Linguistics and Foreign Languages.

Liliana Edilian, Lecturer in the DEP, presented a Poster Session at the TESOL Arabia 2005 Conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Harvard graduate, **Dr. Renee Richer**, was appointed to direct AUA's Environmental Research and Conservation (ECRC) Center and to serve as Assistant Professor.



IN MEMORIAM



AUA's students, alumni and faculty will dearly miss Visiting Professor **Dr. Sarkis Zartarian**, who passed away in December 2004. Dr. Zartarian taught in the Computer & Information Science program in the College of Engineering. He was a popular professor, well liked by all of his students and colleagues, and respected for his innovative work. In memory of he and his wife, the Zartarian Foundation established a \$10,000 endowment to fund student scholarships.

EXPANDING CAMPUS FOR GROWING NEEDS

AUA is deeply grateful to **Mr. and Mrs.**

Vartkes Barsam. Through their generosity,

AUA acquired the Hye Business Suites

Hotel in Yerevan.

Together with the AUA Baghramian

Building, the AUA Business and Conference

Center, and the Paramaz Avedisian Building

currently under construction, AUA is

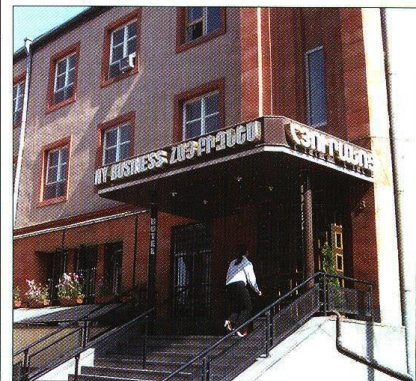
expected to be a flagship institution

offering state of the art educational,

research, and housing facilities, attracting

the most qualified students from within

Armenia and internationally.



SERVING THEIR ALMA MATER

AUA is proud of the core cadre of alumni who work for their alma mater in various management positions finding in its own graduates excellence in leadership and service. "Working at AUA and by contributing to Armenia's future, we are directly investing in Armenia's future," said Shahandoukht Aboshyan, AUA MBA Alumna, Class of '02, who recently joined this dedicated group as AUA's newly appointed International Recruitment Coordinator. Several graduates have also taken on faculty positions, teaching AUA's second generation of students. In its research centers, AUA provides excellent opportunities to students and graduates to gain first-hand practical experiences in their field.



Giving back to AUA takes on new meaning for several AUA alumni who are pursuing challenging professional careers within their home institution. Here are some of those alumni.

Top row: Armen Petrosyan, Associate Director of Administrative Services (MBA '95, MCLS '05); Sargis Zeytunyan, Facilities Engineer (M. Eng. '99); Vigen Kesoyan, Facilities Manager (M. Eng. '99); Nikolay Gerasimenko, Accountant / Supply Manager (M. Eng. '00); Hayk Manasyan, Alumni and Career Development Office Coordinator (MA '03); Varduhi Kherolyants, Senior Accountant (MBA '96); Artak Hambaryan, Associate Director of College of Engineering and Engineering Research Center (M. Eng. '94); Arina Bekchyan, Personnel Coordinator / Top Management Executive Assistant (MBA '98); Suren Khachatryan, Director of Instructional Computing Unit (M. Eng. '96); Alla Khosrovyan, Computer Information Science Operations Coordinator (MS '03) **Bottom row:** Anahit Ordyan, Director of Administration (MBA '93); Diana Danielian, Institutional Research Manager / Accreditation Coordinator (MA '02); Diana Manukyan, Public Relations Coordinator (MCLS '01); Shahandoukht Aboshyan, International Recruitment Coordinator (MBA '02)

BUILDING BRIDGES WITH LEBANON'S AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

AUA recently sent four of its key staff members, AUA graduates themselves, to Beirut, Lebanon, to learn from and exchange information with their professional counterparts at the Haigazian University, American University of Beirut, and Lebanese American University.

They agreed "as a young institution we face many challenges, but we can learn from the various internal and external obstacles Lebanon's American universities have overcome to succeed and set a model in our own country. The fact that we can compare our 14-year-old University, in its principles of providing an American style of education and American work environment, with 50 to 150 year old universities is essential."



Left to Right: Armen Petrosyan, Diana Manukyan, Arina Bekchyan, Vigen Kesoyan

2005 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED

Established in 1994, the AUA Alumni Association continues to initiate social and fundraising activities to support the AUA.



Members of the 2005 Board (left to right): Khachatour Avaiyan (MBA '03); Erik Kostandyan (M. Eng. '04); Shushanik Ghaltakhchyan (MA '03); Hayk Manasyan (MA '03); Louise Manukian (LLM '04); Aramazd Ghalamkaryan (MA '00); Tigran Aloyan (MA '95); Vahan Danielyan (MBA '03).

ARMENIA'S EMPLOYERS IMPRESSED WITH AUA GRADS

Based on an employer satisfaction study conducted in September 2004, with over 103 employers of AUA alumni, and representing 88 different organizations, overwhelmingly employers believe AUA graduates are "excellent professionals with good market value."

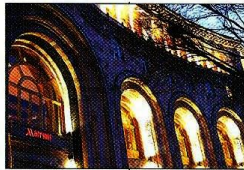
- 83% described AUA graduates as "knowledgeable, hardworking, and punctual," employees who are "highly skilled, team-spirited, and exposed to western professional practices."
- 80% agreed that the AUA graduate contributes to the overall success of the organization and that AUA graduates' performance is higher than that of most of non-AUA graduates.
- 71% of organizations anticipate hiring AUA graduates within the next year.

UPGRADING ARMENIA'S WORKFORCE

QUESTION: What do employees of the Armenia Marriott Hotel and engineers from the Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant have in common? **ANSWER:**

AUA's Extension Program has provided on-site English Language training courses to them, using topics of special professional interest to each group.

Despite increasing competition from other organizations that provide English language courses, AUA's Extension Program has maintained a leading position. For example, after a competitive bidding process that included the British Council in Yerevan, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) of the British Government awarded AUA the contract to provide English language courses to engineers at Medzamor, to managers of the Armenian Nuclear



Regulatory Authority, and most recently to the Armenian Emergency Measures Administration.

AUA's Extension Program's computer offerings, including software application and programming courses, are also extremely popular. "The fierce competition for jobs in Armenia favors those who upgrade their computer and English language skills," stated Dr. Atken Armenian, Dean of the Extension Program. "We do not offer only English and

computer literacy courses, however. For example, we will soon be offering a course in Armenian Business Letter Writing for employees of the Central Bank of Armenia."

Over the past twelve years, the Extension Program has served the needs of over 8,600 people in Yerevan, Gyumi, Vanadzor, Spitak,

and Stepanakert. Based on the need for courses, Extension has offered classes (in Armenian and English) in wide-ranging topics such as Accounting, Marketing, the Armenian Criminal Code, Armenian Labor Legislation, Bar-Coding & Electronic Data Interchange, the Seismic Isolation of Buildings and Structures, and many others.

Working with regional educational institutions, such as Gyumri's State Teachers' Training Institute and Artsakh's Mesrop Mashtots University, students have benefited from AUA's teaching expertise and methodologies, and many have been inspired to pursue a Master's Degree at AUA.

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