



## YEREVAN, ARMENIA

### HATS OFF TO AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA'S CLASS OF 2005

On September 21, 1991, the day Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union, the American University of Armenia (AUA) opened its doors with 101 students enrolled in Intensive English. Fourteen years and 1391 graduates later, receiving major funding support from AGBU since its inception, the AUA today offers eight Master's programs in Business Administration, Industrial Engineering and Systems Management, Computer and Information Science, Political Science, Public Health, Law, Comparative Legal Studies and Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

In the presence of AUA President Dr. Haroutune Armenian and 1200 family members, friends and faculty, the 129 graduates of the Class of 2005 proudly joined AUA's cadre of alumni. Among the many distinguished guests present at the commencement ceremony were John Evans, the United States Ambassador to Armenia; Sergo Yeritzyan, Minister of Education of the Republic of Armenia; Carol Aslanian, AGBU Central Board Member, American University of Armenia Corporation (AUAC) Trustee and Honorary Member of the AUA Alumni Association; and AGBU Central Board Member Levon Kebabjian.

Noteworthy AUA achievements this year are numerous including the University's selection as the first post-Soviet republic institution to host the Annual Conference of the Association of Schools of Public Health European Region (ASPHER); the awarding

of an \$800,000 grant by the U.S. Department of Energy to the AUA Yerevan Physics Institute, National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Optico-Physics Institute of Moscow; the acquisition of the AUA Vartkes and Hasmig Barsam Building (formerly the hotel HyBusiness Suites) donated by Vartkes Barsam, AUAC Trustee; and the ground breaking for construction of the new Paramaz Avedisian Building, made possible by Edward Avedisian.

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### ARMENIAN PHILHARMONIC FEATURES SEASON BURSTING WITH GLOBAL TALENT

In support of the performing arts in Armenia, AGBU has been the principal sponsor of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra (APO) and Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall since 1992, annually allocating grants for weekly concerts, new instruments, international guest artists and special festivals.

The 110-member APO, which includes the 18-member Serenade Chamber Orchestra, has toured throughout the world, including Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America, and has released over 40 CDs. All its members were born in Armenia and educated at Yerevan, Moscow and St. Petersburg Conservatories.

Continuing to catalyze the Yerevan cultural scene, APO presented multiple performances by prominent worldwide artists this season. Among them were Canadian soprano **Isabel Bayrakdarian** as Rosina in Rossini's *Il Barbiere de Siviglia*; Italian baritone **Renato Bruson** performing arias by Verdi; French conductor **Alexander Siranosian** who presented the world debut of Vincent d'Indi's 1872 *Italian Symphony*; Russian American violinist and conductor **Alexander Treger** who premiered Caspar Diethelm's violin concerto *Anubis*; and Germany's cellist **David Geringas** performing Dmitri Shostakovich's *Cello Concerto No. 2* and Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. Abroad this year, APO's award-winning Serenade Chamber Orchestra performed with vocalists **Barsegh Tumanian** and **Irina Zakirian** at the Byblos International Festival in Beirut, Lebanon.



On-site at one of the vital infrastructure projects funded by AGBU Switzerland and Geneva Canton.



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### SWITZERLAND CHAPTER VISITS ARMENIA WITH GENEVA CANTON DELEGATION

The Switzerland Chapter accompanied the Minister of Education of the Geneva Canton, Charles Beer, on his first trip to Armenia to supervise the implementation of Geneva's Armenia programs. AGBU Switzerland, chaired by Taline Avakian, has an ongoing relationship with Geneva Canton partnering on important projects in Armenia, such as the repair of village water pipelines.