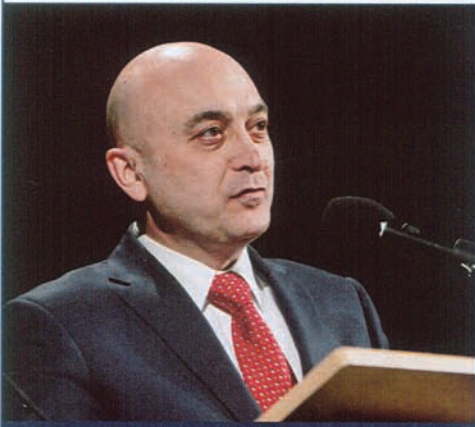


AGBU TO PARTICIPATE IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ARMENIA

The Board of Trustees of the National Competitiveness Foundation of Armenia (NCFA) met on November 2 under the auspices of RA Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. Tourism development in Armenia, a top priority for the government, was on the agenda. NCFA's Tourism Development Project is designed to make Armenia a favorable and attractive country for tourism and to professionally represent Armenia's achievements in international markets. To implement this, a tourism development strategy has been adopted, and is being carried out through state and private sector cooperation.



Vasken Yacoubian Presents AGBU's Plan for Tourism Development in Armenia

AGBU Central Board Member Vasken Yacoubian also addressed the Board, presenting

AGBU's tourism development program in Armenia. AGBU's physical presence in 26 countries and 70 cities ensures that we can create the physical and virtual networks needed to promote tourism to and investment in Armenia.

"AGBU has long been committed to promoting and preserving the Armenian identity, culture and heritage in our homeland and in our communities around the world. Today, we are undertaking a new project – one that will make a long-lasting impact on Armenia's economic development," said Mr. Yacoubian.

AGBU's comprehensive plan includes the creation of Armenia Information Offices (AIOs) at its worldwide chapters and centers. The physical hub of these offices will be in Armenia, located at our soon-to-be-opened AGBU Office Building in downtown Yerevan. All the AIOs will be linked virtually through a dedicated tourism portal, currently under development. This is a serious initiative that will not only strengthen Armenia, but also benefit our widespread Diasporan communities.

The numbers and facts are staggering. In 2013, about 1,000,000 tourists visited Armenia! It is estimated that each additional 100,000 tourists to Armenia can create 1,000 jobs. Official sources also estimate that each tourist to Armenia spends approximately \$1,300 per week!



PM Tigran Sargsyan Presiding Over the NCFA Board Meeting

AUA SUPPORTERS CELEBRATE LAUNCH OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

On December 14, 2013, Zaven and Sonia Akian opened their home to host a fundraising event celebrating the recent launch of the undergraduate program at the American University of Armenia (AUA). The sold-out event, which took place under the night sky, raised over \$110,000 for the university.

"We were so pleased with the turnout for this event," noted Zaven Akian. *"The enthusiasm of the crowd in support of AUA's undergraduate program was stupendous,"* Akian continued.

AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian, who traveled from Armenia to attend the event, remarked, *"It is great to see AUA's academic founding fathers in the room, Dr. Mihran Agbabian and Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian, as well as Seta Karamardian, representing AUA Founder Dr. Stepan Karamardian."*

Primate of the US Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, AGBU Vice-President Sinan Sinanian, Chairman of the AUA Board of Trustees Dr. Lawrence Pitts, Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian, Archbishop Mushegh Martirosyan, AUA Vice President and COO Ashot Ghazaryan, and other prominent guests were also in attendance.

"AUA is the single most important gift that the American-Armenian diaspora has ever given to the Republic of Armenia. With the addition of an undergraduate student body, AUA's regional impact is growing. At this new size, we will create more new graduates in just a few years' time than we have created in our entire 22-year history - more graduates to start new businesses and spur the Armenian economy, more graduates infused in businesses and government who will introduce transparency and best practices, and more graduates who will transform the Armenian economy and the Armenian nation," noted Dr. Boghosian.

In his remarks Dr. Pitts stated, *"This event is the result of the hard work of many people, including the ladies of the organizing committee. I am especially grateful to Zaven and Sonia and their children, who generously opened their home and their hearts to welcome us all."* Dr. Pitts, urging the crowd to continue supporting AUA in its mission to educate a new generation of leaders in Armenia, said, *"Your financial support allows us to continue to provide a high-caliber American education in Armenia."*



(l.-r.) Zaven Akian, Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian, Jerry Tourpanjian, Dr. Mihran Agbabian, Dr. Lawrence Pitts, Dr. Bruce Boghosian