

## AUA MATRICULATION CEREMONY

*300 Students in AUA's Newly-Launched Undergraduate Program*



The first-ever Matriculation Ceremony at the American University of Armenia (AUA) on September 5 marked the launch of the new bachelor's degree program. Students, faculty, staff, and family gathered to formally welcome the first generation of undergraduate students to the AUA community.

The new program offers Bachelor's degrees in Business, English and Communications, and Computational Sciences. The incoming undergraduate class consists of nearly 300 students from all over the world including Armenia, Belgium, Canada, Georgia, Russia, Syria and the United States. The university has received accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and a license from the RA Ministry of Education and Science to offer this four-year program.

As AUA Director of Admissions Arina Zohrabian noted, the majority of the freshmen (170) are in the Business Management Department. The Department of English and Communications has 60 freshmen, while Computational Sciences has 50 incoming students.

Attending the ceremony were RA Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan, AGBU President Berge Setrakian, AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian, Member of the AUA Foundation Board of Directors Yuri Sargsyan, AUA Provost Dr. Dennis Leavens, AUA Vice-President Ashot Ghazaryan, AGBU Central Board Member Vasken Yacoubian, AGBU Armenia Director Arpi Vartanian, AGBU Deputy Director Hovig Eordekian, AUA students, faculty, staff and other guests.

Minister Hakobyan offered her welcoming remarks to the Class of 2017, and was followed by AUA President Dr. Boghosian, Provost Dr. Leavens, and Dr. Caren Meghreblian on behalf of the AUA Board of Trustees. Students took the AUA Honor Pledge, vowing to maintain AUA's standards of academic integrity.

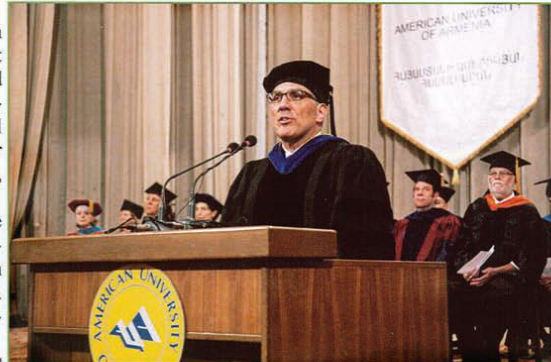
*"The American University of Armenia is one of the best achievements of our independence period. AUA was the first to start research on Armenian studies. The most important thing with AUA, for me personally, as the Republic of Armenia's*

*Minister of Diaspora, is the fact that it is built on the financial assistance and support of our Diasporan organizations. And for that very reason, I would like to thank the Armenian General Benevolent Union,"* said Minister Hakobyan.

*Eighteen year-old Hovsep Markarian, majoring in English and Communications, says, "I am very proud to be a member of the first undergraduate class. I know that we are making history. It's really an honor to be here."*

*With the influx of students, there are many changes occurring within the institution. AUA President Dr. Boghosian says, "There are more students in our halls and classrooms than ever before. This will help us better fulfill our mission, which is to address the needs of Armenia and the surrounding region for sustainable development, in a setting that values and develops academic excellence, free inquiry, integrity, scholarship, leadership, and service to society. We are pleased by the opportunity to inculcate these values in a larger population with a broader range of ages."*

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AUA President Dr. Bruce Boghosian Addresses the Students



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*(continued from p. 2) Provost Dr. Leavens shares, "I see the vibrancy in the halls, in the faculty and staff. I am teaching an undergraduate class and the students are delightful, just a joy. That joy suffuses the halls everyday. Everyone I speak with has nothing but praise for this young group of students. They have changed the whole atmosphere of AUA."*

The launch of the undergraduate program is a momentous occasion for the American University of Armenia, with students bringing new energy to the campus. As Dr. Boghosian notes, *"There are lots of smiles in the hallways these days."* *"Today is a great day. I remember the first days of AUA's establishment and I am happy and proud to see the advancement of this institution,"* said AGBU President Setrakian.



Students at the AUA Matriculation Ceremony



AGBU President Berge Setrakian Interviewed after the Ceremony.

A reception followed the Matriculation Ceremony.

In July 2012, as it entered its third decade of operations, AUA announced its intention to introduce the undergraduate program as part of an overall policy of expanding its education programs. The launch of the undergraduate program was the first major step in this direction.

The fruits of another joint project of AGBU and AUA will soon be seen in Stepanakert. The construction of the AGBU NKR Campus will begin soon in the capital of Artsakh. This new center will house the Artsakh branches of AUA's Extension Program and TUMO Center for Creative Technologies. American education will reach the students of Artsakh.

For videos, please visit [AUA Matriculation \(ArmNews\)](#), [AUA Matriculation \(H2\)](#) or [www.youtube.com/AGBUvideo](http://www.youtube.com/AGBUvideo)

## AUA'S NEW PROGRAM WAS JUST WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR



AUA Undergraduate Ani Ghazaryan

Ani Ghazaryan is one of the nearly 300 students in the American University of Armenia's (AUA) first undergraduate class. She comes from Kapan, a small town in Armenia's southern Syunik region, and is majoring in Business. Read on to learn more about her expectations from AUA and her plans for the future.

**Why did you apply to AUA?**

*In high school, I participated in the FLEX exchange program and moved to the United States, an experience which changed the course of my education and life. When I came back, I was so glad to hear that AUA was launching an undergraduate program. I applied, determined to find something new after coming back from the States. AUA was the best option.*

**What are your expectations for your education at AUA?**

*In American universities, students are given the freedom to choose the subjects they want to study. There is a need for qualified specialists in the field of business in Armenia. My expectation from the AUA Business program is to become a qualified specialist for Armenia.*

**You have already experienced an American education. What opportunities did it give to you?**

*I really liked the sports - I was involved with the swim team. When I moved to the States I did not know how to swim at all, unlike the Americans who swim perfectly. But, I soon learned. As for education, I think that in Armenia students study harder. I think the education at AUA will be a mix of Armenian and American styles. I hope that at AUA the education will be something new, something different.*

**In what activities have you been involved in Armenia?**

*I have gone to different summer camps in different regions of Armenia. I was also a member of Camp GLOW [Girls Leading Our World], first as a participant, then as a senior counselor. I've also worked with Peace Corps volunteers.*

**What are your future plans for your professional life and your life in Armenia?**

*After graduating, I plan to stay in Armenia and work in different places, to understand what condition Armenia is in, and where we are going. Then, I plan to study at Harvard, after which I will surely be back as my country will need me more than America.*