

# ABMDR

ARMENIAN BONE MARROW DONOR REGISTRY

## 2017 NEWSLETTER



### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Every waking hour, the staff and volunteers of ABMDR are acutely aware of the heart-wrenching struggles and desperate needs of our patients and their families. Yet sometimes we lose sight of the fact that those outside our sphere may not have the knowledge we do about these important issues. With that in mind, we realized we needed to enhance the understanding of our work, and, hence, our first annual Cancer Awareness Symposium was born. For a full day in September, the "Knowledge is power" Symposium engaged nearly 100 participants in the Los Angeles community hungry to learn more about the disease that ultimately touches

everyone's lives. Their thoughtful questions during the presentations were sincere and numerous, and their enthusiasm a real inspiration for us to continue to provide further outreach activities. One of these activities will be our first outreach to Argentina in May, where we will have donor recruitments, sponsored by the local ARS, in conjunction with our attendance at the Armenian International Medical Conference. We have long aspired to work with the Armenian community of Argentina, which is home to an estimated 100,000 ethnic Armenians. In 2016, our wonderful staff and volunteers worked tirelessly under the banner "Knowledge is power," and we continue to carry that same banner into 2017. Thank you for marching with us for our special, life-saving cause.

**Frieda Jordan, PhD**, President

## First ABMDR Cancer Awareness Symposium: "Knowledge is power"

ABMDR held its first-ever Cancer Awareness Symposium last year, aiming to raise public awareness of various types of cancer and the very latest advances in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. Featuring a distinguished panel of experts, the highly anticipated event took place on September 17, 2016, in Glendale, California. Given the critical importance of such events and encouraged by the positive response of our community, the Registry already has plans to make the symposium an annual tradition. The next symposium will take place on September 9, 2017, in Glendale. You can read more about the 2016 symposium on page 4.



### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

There are many issues that divide us—both within our borders and among nations. How inspiring it is to be a part of an organization that unites us, irrespective of origin, religion, or politics. This year, the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry has held recruitments in Javakhk, and will soon be conducting its first outreach in South America. ABMDR draws Armenians from all walks of life, and I am proud to be a part of this truly pan-Armenian organization.

**Mark Geragos, Esq.**  
Chairman of the Board of Directors

## Our Syrian-Armenian angel set to help save the life of a patient



### MESSAGE FROM THE HONORARY CHAIR

I have watched ABMDR grow across the globe. And from the outset, it has been my greatest hope to see it ultimately have a profound and lasting impact on the people of Armenia. That time has now arrived. With the establishment of Yerevan's Transplantation Center and its partnership with ABMDR, we can provide life-saving transplants to Armenians in their own country. I am most grateful to Dr. Frieda Jordan and Dr. Sevak Avagyan for helping reach this great achievement.

**Bella Kocharyan, MD**  
Honorary Chair, former First Lady of Armenia

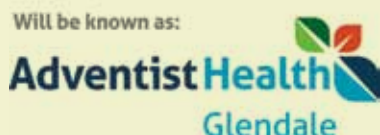


This year, when we received a donor-search request from Germany and identified Mayda, one of our registered donors in Syria, as a potential match, we lost no time to try to contact her. To our utter surprise, given the fact that she lives in a country besieged by a brutal war, Mayda immediately responded to our message, conveying to us her absolute willingness to be of help. Our Syrian-Armenian angel is now set to help save a life thousands of miles away. Read the story on page 10.

Thank you, our sponsors, for your generous contributions



Glendale Adventist Medical Center



MISSION  
WINE  
& SPIRITS





DR. NIHARI BEGHOSIAN

FIGHTING CANCER  
IS ABOUT *life*. YOUR FIGHT  
TO *live* AND HAVE A LIFE  
AFTER DIAGNOSIS AND  
CANCER THERAPY.

THE DOCTORS AND STAFF OF THE  
LOS ANGELES CANCER NETWORK  
ARE *dedicated* TO BEING  
YOUR TEAM FOR LIFE!



DR. BORIS BAGDASARIAN



# LOS ANGELES CANCER NETWORK

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Glendale Memorial Hospital  
222 West Eulalia Street, Suite 100C  
Glendale, CA 91204  
(818) 553-8160

Glendale Adventist Medical Center  
1505 Wilson Terrace, Suite 200  
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Interview with ABMDR Executive Director

# Dr. Sevak Avagyan

**Q: The worldwide network of transplant centers and related institutions with which ABMDR has been working is truly impressive. They include City of Hope, the German National Registry of Blood Stem Cell Donors, the National Marrow Donor Program, and others. Now we hear that a major turning point has been reached through the establishment of a transplantation center in Armenia!**

A: Yes, this has been our dream from the very beginning, and, after 17 years, it came true! No longer will Armenian patients fighting for their lives have the added stresses of traveling from home—and finding the funds to do so—in order to get a transplant. Today we have a formalized a partnership with the Yeolyan Hematology Center in Yerevan.

**Q: So what can you tell us about this new partnership?**

A: In December 2016, ABMDR signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the Yeolyan Hematology Center, where the Bone Marrow Transplantation Center is located. This lays the foundation for the center to rely on ABMDR to tissue-type patients and their siblings, free of charge, with the ultimate objective of providing transplant services to the people of Armenia *in Armenia*.

**Q: This is an extraordinary milestone for ABMDR and Armenia alike. How exactly will ABMDR interact with the Bone Marrow Transplantation Center?**

A: On an ongoing basis, ABMDR and the center will jointly assess, evaluate, and monitor donor-search and transplantation procedures. ABMDR will advise the center on stem cell harvesting and preservation. More specifically, our HLA Typing Laboratory will perform compatible stem cell donor searches as well as tissue-typing of patients and family members who are likely to be potential donors. We have committed to performing low-resolution tissue typing for up to 60 patients and three family members each, and high-resolution HLA typing for up to 40 patients over the course of this first year, all free of charge.

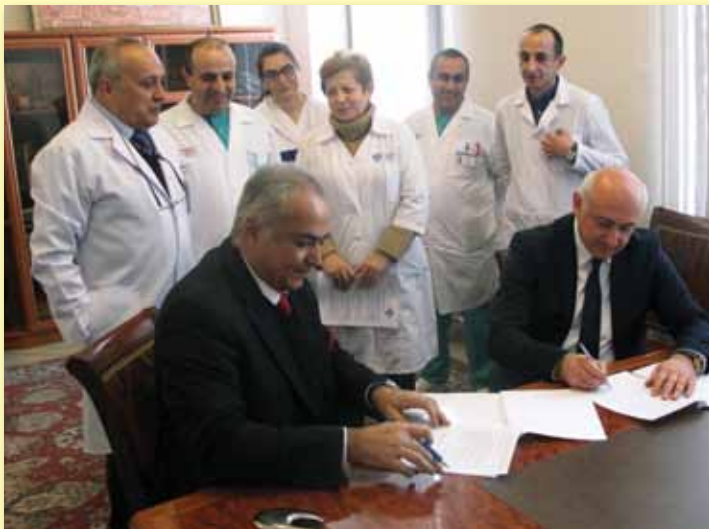
**Q: ABMDR is to be congratulated on this generous spirit of cooperation.**

A: The Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry has always sought to foster strong partnerships and collaboration, and it is our privilege now to do so more actively and directly for the people of Armenia. This MoC with the Yeolyan Hematology Center brings our work to a whole new level of excellence, in our shared quest to save lives.



**“The Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry has always sought to foster strong partnerships and collaboration, and it is our privilege now to do so more actively and directly for the people of Armenia.”**

## ABMDR to play a key role in the work of Armenia's first-ever Bone Marrow Transplantation Center



Dr. Sevak Avagyan and Prof. Smbat Daghbashyan, Director of the Yeolyan Hematology Center, signing a Memorandum of Cooperation. Through this partnership, ABMDR will play an instrumental role in the work of Armenia's newly established Bone Marrow Transplantation Center, which is located inside the Yeolyan Hematology Center.



Yeolyan Hematology Center staff members and ABMDR representatives at the opening of the Bone Marrow Transplantation Center inside the Yeolyan Hematology complex, Yerevan, including Dr. Sevak Avagyan, ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan, Prof. Smbat Daghbashyan, and ABMDR Medical Director Prof. Mihran Nazaretyan.

# ABMDR's first Cancer Awareness Symposium

ABMDR's inaugural Cancer Awareness Symposium was enthusiastically embraced by the Los Angeles Armenian community, as close to 100 attended the informative yet informal event. Featuring a distinguished roster of experts, the symposium took place on September 17, 2016, at the Kouyoumjian Hall of St. Gregory Armenian Catholic Church in Glendale, California.

Opening remarks were delivered by ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan as well as Symposium Chairperson and ABMDR Board member Sona Ashjian.

"Unfortunately cancer remains an often enigmatic illness that can ravage the lives of patients and families," Dr. Jordan said, "but thanks to the medical breakthroughs of the past several decades and ongoing research, we have much reason to be hopeful. On behalf of the entire ABMDR family, I thank our speakers for bringing their wonderful expertise to this important community-benefit event, and I'm confident that when our symposium concludes today, you will leave here with a positive energy, having gained a fresh perspective on health and healing."

"The theme of today's event is 'Knowledge is power,'" said Symposium Chairperson Sona Ashjian in her welcome remarks. "That's because our goal is to help raise awareness of cancer among our community, through a series of presentations delivered by highly knowledgeable and experienced medical professionals in the fields of commonly occurring cancers."

The featured speakers, introduced by ABMDR Board member Dr. Christina Ashjian, included Dr. Boris Bagdasarian, a specialist in hematology, oncology, and internal medicine and chairman of Glendale Adventist Medical Center's Cancer Committee; Dr. Nubar Boghossian, also a specialist in hematology, oncology, and internal medicine; Dr. Vergine Madelian, ABMDR Outreach and Education Officer and a professor of Biology at California State University, Northridge; Susanna Tamazyan, a registered nurse at Glendale Adventist Medical Center; Dr. Ani Balmanoukian, another specialist in hematology, oncology, and internal medicine; Ella Boghossian, a breast-cancer survivor; Dr. Armen Kassabian, a urologist; Dr. Robert Gellibolian, a biochemist and integrative-health consultant; Cynthia Klinger, a marriage and family therapist; Areg Boyamyman, Senior Vice President at Foundation Laboratory and Senior Vice President of reveal23, a genetic-testing company in Los Angeles; and Dr. Peter Ashjian, a plastic surgeon.

Also delivering remarks was California State Senator Anthony Portantino. The symposium focused on a number of common cancers, including colon, breast, and prostate cancer as well as leukemia and lymphoma. Speakers discussed cancer prevention, including nutrition and lifestyle changes; detection and diagnosis; and the very latest treatment options, including alternative treatments. The symposium also comprised presentations on stem cell transplantation, support groups, and genetic testing, as well as survivor stories. The event included two question-and-answer sessions with the panelists, moderated by ABMDR Board member Dr. Evelyn Baghdasraian. The Cancer Awareness Symposium was made possible by the support of major sponsors Glendale Adventist Medical Center, Los Angeles Cancer Network, reveal23 (Foundation Laboratory), and the Armenian-American Medical Society.



**Dr. Boris Bagdasarian.**



**Sona Ashjian.**



**Dr. Vergine Madelian.**



**Dr. Nubar Boghossian.**



**Areg Boyamyman.**



**Dr. Armen Kassabian.**



**Dr. Ani Balmanoukian.**



**Dr. Peter Ashjian.**

# “Knowledge is power”



Clockwise from top: some of the symposium speakers; a recruitment team was on hand at the event; the question-and-answer sessions were moderated by ABMDR Board member Dr. Evelyn Baghdasraian (standing); a scene from the question-and-answer sessions; Dr. Nubar Boghossian answering a question from an audience member.



## Further enhancements to our lab expertise

### Armine Hyusyan receives advanced trainings in Germany

In 2016, Armine Hyusyan, the supervisor of the ABMDR HLA Typing Laboratory in Yerevan, was granted an EFI bursary, which allowed her to receive advanced trainings at the Transplant Immunology Department of the Institute of Transfusion Medicine and Immunogenetics (ITMI) in Ulm, Germany. The scope of Armine's trainings included advanced HLA typing methodologies and other aspects of histocompatibility and immunogenetics, as well as advanced trainings in bone marrow donor-search processes.

"The Department of Transplant Immunology of ITMI is one of the biggest facilities of its kind in Europe," Armine says. "I was very pleased and honored to learn that the Department of Transplant Immunology had agreed to host me as a trainee for two weeks. Our German colleagues have always been willing to provide us with training and expert consultations on any professional matter."

Through her trainings in Ulm, Armine was able to complete certain core modules of the European Specialization in Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics Diploma syllabus. Her examination for the Diploma is slated for May 2017. As importantly, her newly acquired skills and insights will be invaluable for her work as lab supervisor, in view of the 2016 launch of Armenia's first-ever Transplantation Center, and the fact that ABMDR expects to be even more involved in related/unrelated searches of local and international donor databases, conducted for patients living in Armenia.

"I would like to express my profound gratitude to the EFI Education Committee for sponsoring my training at the Transplant Immunology Department in Ulm," Armine says. "And I would like to extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to all the professors and the HLA Laboratory team for their wonderful knowledge, guidance, and support."

### Alina Sirunyan to receive WMDA International Search Coordinator Certificate

In October 2016, Alina Sirunyan, ABMDR's senior lab technician and database manager, began a nine-month course of study, at the conclusion of which she will be certified as an International Search Coordinator.

The course, provided by the World Marrow Donor Association, is intended to equip participants with advanced skills and knowledge with regard to bone marrow donor-search and selection processes and strategies. As Alina explains, "The course consists of nine e-learning lectures on scientific and practical topics pertaining to the work of donor-search coordinators, delivered by renowned speakers in the fields of histocompatibility, immunogenetics, and hematopoietic stem cell transplantation."



Armine Hyusyan, lab supervisor.



Alina Sirunyan, senior lab technician and database manager.

## Cord blood banking: for my child's future health

I was a teenager when the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR) was established in Armenia. My parents often spoke about this pan-national organization, expressing their deep admiration and support. As soon as I reached adulthood, I joined the ranks of ABMDR as a potential bone marrow stem cell donor. Today, I am so very happy that the Registry has facilitated close to 30 bone marrow transplants, and hope that one day I myself will be identified as a match, thereby being able to help save someone's life.

I have always followed the successes of ABMDR with great interest. Among its major milestones are its Stem Cell Harvesting Center and outstanding work in stem cell and cord blood banking. On June 9, 2016, with the birth of my first child, Ruben, I didn't think twice to



request that ABMDR collect my son's umbilical cord blood and preserve it in perpetuity, in case someday it would be needed for a life-saving procedure.

Stem cell research and the utilization of stem cells have revolutionized medicine and continue to grow by leaps and bounds, ushering in a world of wonderful new possibilities. Therefore, by preserving our newborns' life-giving stem cells today, we help secure their future health.

Arev Avagyan

## ABMDR remembers two fallen Artsakh officers who had joined our ranks as bone marrow donors

Two Artsakh Defense Army officers who were killed during the Azeri invasion of Artsakh in early April 2016 were bone marrow donors registered with ABMDR. The fallen officers, Hovsep Kirakosyan, 28, and Ashot Shahbazyan, 23, had joined the ranks of ABMDR as potential bone marrow donors in 2006 and 2010, respectively, during large-scale donor recruitments held at Yerevan's Vazgen Sargsyan Military Institute.

After receiving the sad news of the deaths of officers Kirakosyan and Shahbazyan, Dr. Frieda Jordan and Dr. Sevak Avagyan paid visits to the officers' families in Artsakh. The ABMDR representatives conveyed their condolences to the families and made small donations, as tokens of ABMDR's profound appreciation of the bravery and selflessness of the young men who had made the ultimate sacrifice for their homeland.



The late officers Hovsep Kirakosyan (left) and Ashot Shahbazyan. Photos below: ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan and Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan visiting the families of the fallen officers in Artsakh.



## ABMDR at “Conquering Cancer in Armenia with a Smile” conference, Yerevan

ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan, Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan, and Medical Director Mihran Nazaretyan participated in a landmark conference, titled “Conquering Cancer in Armenia with a Smile,” held in Yerevan on May 18, 2016. The conference featured a roster of renowned cancer experts from leading US institutions, who delivered lectures and taught master classes pertaining to various cancers

and the latest breakthroughs in terms of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. The event was organized by Yerevan State Medical University, the Armenian Association of Hematology and Oncology, City of Smile Foundation, the IDeA Foundation, Young Oncologists Group of Armenia, and the Armenian Pediatric Hematology and Oncology Group, with the support of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia.



Dr. Sevak Avagyan with conference speakers Dr. Serine Avagyan, clinical fellow in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at Boston Children’s Hospital/Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and Dr. Leslie Lehmann, Director of Pediatric Stem Cell Transplant Center at Dana-Farber/Boston Children’s Cancer and Blood Disorders Center; photo at right: Dr. Sevak Avagyan with Karen Francis, Project Director of Global Academic Programs at MD Anderson Cancer Center, Dr. Frieda Jordan, and Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan.

## Supporters, including university students, visit ABMDR HLA Typing Lab in Yerevan



In 2016 and 2017, several supporters visited our lab and had a first-hand look at our operations. Photos above: the late Hrach Lukassian (far left) and his wife, Carmen; and long-time ABMDR supporters Sevan Danielian (second from left) and Dr. Aida Avanesian. Photos below, from left: Tania Vahanian (far left) and her mother, Silva Vahanian (second from far right); biology students from Yerevan State University who joined the ranks of the Registry as potential bone marrow donors; and ABMDR Board member Amalia Kiureghlian.





## ABMDR's mission showcased at launch of Armenia-Israel International Public Forum

On April 4, 2016, the establishment of the Armenia-Israel International Public Forum was officially announced during a joint meeting in Yerevan between a delegation representing Israel, the Ambassador of Israel in Armenia, leaders of Armenia's Jewish community, and Armenian leaders representing a broad range of sectors. The Forum was created as a platform for multifaceted

collaboration between Israel and Armenia. The event's invitees included ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan and Medical Director Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan, both of whom participated in the discussions and exchanges of opinions. As one of the forum's speakers, Dr. Nazaretyan made a comprehensive presentation about the ABMDR mission, focusing on donor recruit-

ment, international donor searches, and identification of matched unrelated bone marrow donors for patients in various countries requiring transplantation. As an illustration of the work of ABMDR, Dr. Nazaretyan cited the March 2016 bone marrow transplantation of a cancer patient in Tel Aviv, a procedure that was made possible by stem cells donated by a matched donor in Armenia.



Foreground, from left: Tali Ploskov, Deputy Speaker of the Knesset; Arpi Vartanian, Regional Director of the Armenian Assembly of America in Armenia; Rimma Varzhapetyan, President of the Jewish Community of Armenia; Mihran Nazaretyan, ABMDR Medical Director; and Shmuel Meirum, Honorary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Israel in Armenia.

**Congratulations, ABMDR donor Arthur Aleksanyan!** Greco-Roman wrestler and ABMDR bone marrow do-

nor Arthur Aleksanyan Aleksanyan entered his second Olympic competition at the 2016 Summer Olympics in

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and won the gold medal. He was the flag bearer of Armenia at the closing ceremony.



Arthur Aleksanyan (pictured here with a friend) visited the ABMDR lab and became a donor in 2015. As of 2016, he is Armenia's most decorated Olympic sportsman.

## Our Syrian-Armenian heroine

The Armenian nation has a long history in Syria. A hundred years ago, we saw the flow of Armenians to Syria; and now we see the flow of Armenians from Syria to Armenia. Yet amidst these movements, caused by persecutions, wars, and suffering, there flows something wonderful and hopeful and life-affirming. It is flowing in the blood of Mrs. Mayda Yakoubian. Mayda signed up as a prospective donor when ABMDR was recruiting in Aleppo in 2006. Since that time, she has witnessed the growing crisis in her country while, unknown to her, a patient in Germany was experiencing his own personal crisis: a life-threatening blood cancer. But there was hope, as the patient's search request yielded Mayda's name. Would we be able to find her? Yes! And what an angel.

Mayda responded immediately to our contact, absolutely eager to help. Subsequently ABMDR worked with the Republic of Armenia's Ministry of Defense and Ministry of the Diaspora, as well as the President's office, to obtain confirmatory blood samples via a humanitarian charter flight from Yerevan to Latakia, Syria. There, Tigran Gevorgyan, Armenia's Consul General in Aleppo, forwarded necessary supplies to ABMDR Syrian-based volunteer Dr. Vicken Aroyan, who obtained Mayda's blood sample and sent it back to Yerevan via diplomatic mail. The blood sample is now at a transplant center in Berlin, ready for processing. ABMDR is waiting for a decision from the patient's medical team. We are profoundly grateful for the life-giving forces within Mayda, and those embodied by all the people who help facilitate our work. Angels all.



Mayda Yakoubian, an Aleppo native who had joined the ranks of ABMDR in 2006, embodies our donors' profound commitment to the life-saving mission of ABMDR. In the photo, ABMDR volunteer Dr. Vicken Aroyan obtains Mayda's blood sample, as a first step toward helping save the life of a patient in Germany.

## ABMDR vastly expands IT infrastructure by adopting Prometheus platform

In early 2017, ABMDR's HLA Typing Lab in Yerevan significantly expanded its IT infrastructure by adopting the Prometheus platform, which provides up-to-the-minute access to global registry databases and streamlines donor-match searches.

A cloud-based software, the Prometheus system ensures a cost-effective, reliable IT connection with Bone Marrow Donors Worldwide (BMDW) and larger registries such as the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP). By enabling unprecedented donor visibility, patient access to donors, and communication with other registries, the system vastly enhances the process of finding bone marrow matches.

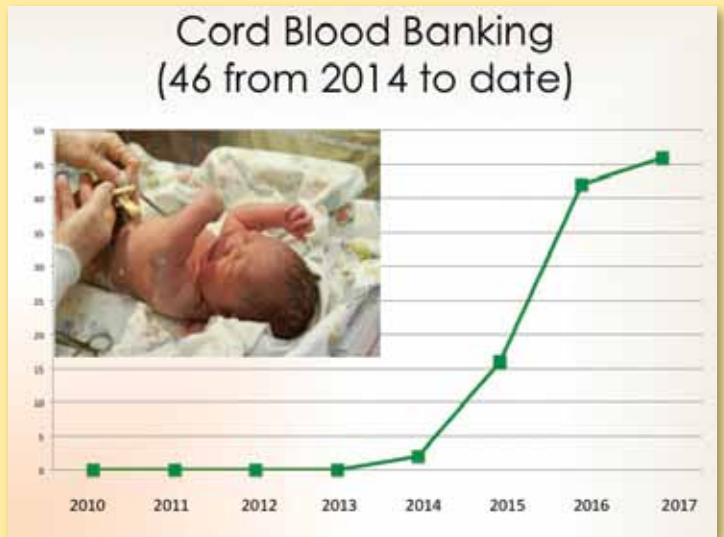
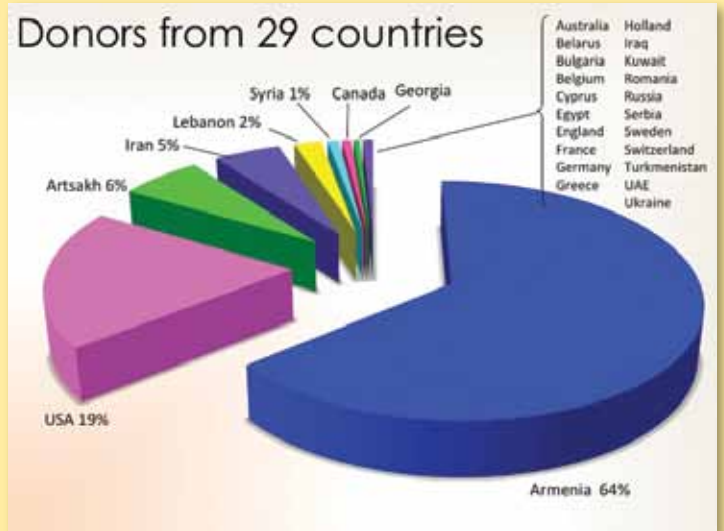
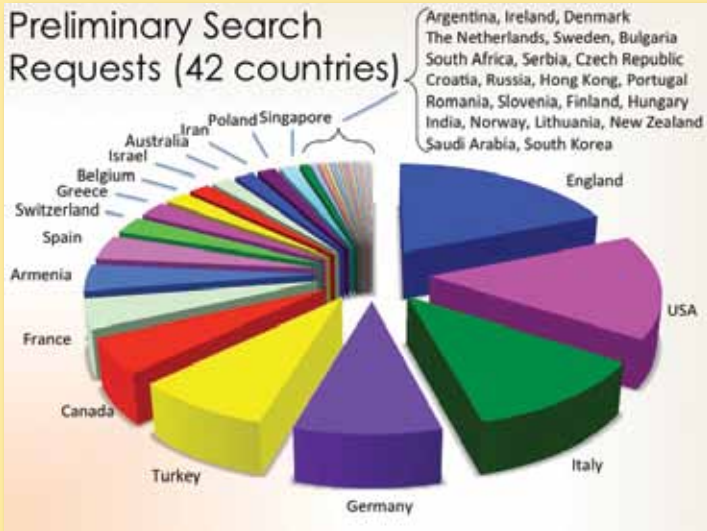
The ABMDR Lab staff has received comprehensive training in the utilization of the Prometheus system, in early 2017. The training was provided by Albert Mustafin of Prometheus. We thank OGMA, Inc. and its president and CEO, Harmik Baghdasarian, for implementing our data conversion and its transfer to the Prometheus system. At the conclusion of the training, Armine Hysusyan, our lab supervisor, and Alina Sirunyan, our senior lab technician and database manager, received Prometheus certification.



Clockwise from above: Albert Mustafin and Alina Sirunyan during the training at the HLA Typing Lab of ABMDR, Yerevan; Alina and Armine Hysusyan with their Prometheus training-completion certificates; Mustafin and the trainees with Dr. Sevak Avagyan.



# ABMDR Lab activities: an impassioned quest to help save lives across the globe



The Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry presents  
**Knowledge is Power:**

## **2nd ABMDR Cancer Awareness Symposium**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2017**  
**10:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

**Glendale Youth Center**  
**211 West Chestnut Street,**  
**Glendale, CA 91204**

**FREE and open to all • Refreshments**



## Recruitment for ABMDR patient Yervant Portakal with Organization of Istanbul Armenians



Yervant Arden Portakal, 63, is suffering from leukemia, a life-threatening illness. He needs a bone marrow stem cell transplant, and, for that, he needs a bone marrow stem cell donor. To help Yervant find his life-saving hero, the Organization of Istanbul Armenians (OIA) and ABMDR organized an informational lecture on March 5, 2017, at the OIA Center in Los Angeles, to explain the process of becoming a donor—a simple, safe, and painless process—and recruit donors. Hopefully one of our new recruits will be a life-saving match for Yervant or any of our many other patients waiting for their match.

The event was attended by Organization of Istanbul Armenians Board members (top left photo), friends, and supporters, including Mr. and Mrs. Saro Altinoglu (photo below, with Dr. Frieda Jordan). The ABMDR recruitment team included Dr. Jordan and Dr. Vergine Madelian (left), who made presentations and answered questions.





## YOUTH POWER

### Laughter for Life wows hundreds of supporters

ABMDR's 14th annual Laughter for Life was held on the night of November 13, 2016, at the world-famous Comedy Store in Los Angeles. Organized by our highly dedicated Comedy Night Committee and hosted by acclaimed comedian and longtime supporter Sam Tripoli, the event featured a stellar lineup of comedians including Dustin Ybarra, Jackie Fablous, Greg Santos, Mary Basmadjian, and Steve Rannazzissi. "For the past 14 years, Laughter for Life has delighted audiences while benefiting ABMDR's life-saving mission," says Lara Yeretsian of our Comedy Night Committee.



Thank you, Lara Yeretsian, Sam Tripoli, and the entire Comedy Night Committee, for making it all happen!

# LATEST ABMDR STATS

- Registered more than 29,000 donors worldwide
- Identified over 4,190 patients
- Facilitated 27 bone marrow transplants
- Active in 29 countries across four continents

## ABMDR OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT EVENTS, FEBRUARY 2016 THROUGH APRIL 2017

### ARMENIA

**February 27, 2016:** recruitment organized by National Democratic Institute and National Endowment for Democracy, Yerevan

**May 16, 2016:** recruitment at French University in Armenia

**May 27, 2016:** recruitment at Armenian National Frisbee Federation

**September 15, 2016:** recruitment at Military Institute of Armenia

**September 17, 2016:** recruitment at French University in Armenia

**January 26, 2017:** recruitment at National Commission on Television and Radio of the Republic of Armenia

**February 9 through 27, 2017:** recruitments at Gazprom Armenia offices in Yerevan

**March 10, 2017:** recruitments at Gazprom Armenia, Abovyan area

**March 17 and 24, 2017:** recruitments at Insurance CJSC Ingo Armenia

**March 21 and 22, 2017:** recruitments at Gazprom Armenia, Armavir Region

**April 21, 2017:** recruitments at Gazprom Armenia, Shirak and Lori regions

### JAVAKHK, GEORGIA

**March 3-4, 2017:** recruitments in Javakhk (Akhaltskha, Akhalkalak, and Ninotsminda)

### UNITED STATES, WEST COAST

**April 6, 2016:** recruitment and outreach, Diocese Prayer Day at St. Leon Armenian Cathedral, Burbank, California

**April 13, 2016:** recruitment and outreach, Prelacy Prayer Day at St. Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church, Pasadena, California

**April 23, 2016:** recruitment and outreach during Genocide Commemoration at Armenian Martyrs Monument, Montebello, California

**May 6, 2016:** recruitment and outreach, General Assembly of Western Diocese, St. Geragos Armenian Apostolic Church, Las Vegas

**September 7, 2016:** interview with Dr. Vergine Madelian, Prelacy TV program

**September 28, 2016:** recruitment at first ABMDR Cancer Awareness Symposium, Glendale, California

**October 1, 2016:** recruitment at 11th Annual ABMDR Walk of Life, Glendale, California

**October 16, 2016:** recruitment at Armenian Food Festival, St. Mary's Armenian Church, Costa Mesa, California

**November 5, 2016:** recruitment and outreach, Seventh Annual Glendale Health Festival, Pacific Community Center, Glendale, California

**November 29, 2016:** outreach and recruitment at ARS Anahid Chapter, Encino, California

**March 6, 2017:** patient-specific recruitment at OIC Center, Sherman Oaks, California

**March 26, 2017:** recruitment at Easter Market Bazaar, Homenetmen Sipan Chapter, Burbank, California

### UNITED STATES, EAST COAST

**June 12, 2016:** ABMDR New England outreach and recruitment at St. James Armenian Church picnic, Watertown, Massachusetts

**September 24, 2016:** recruitment at Fifth Annual ABMDR New England Walk of Life, Watertown, Massachusetts



# Celebrating World Marrow Donor Day with major recruitments



On September 16 and 17, 2016, ABMDR celebrated World Marrow Donor Day by holding major donor recruitments in Yerevan. The first of the recruitments took place on September 16 at the Vazgen Sargsyan Military Institute, where ABMDR Medical Director Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan made a presentation and a team from ABMDR's Yerevan lab recruited soldiers as potential bone marrow donors. Eighty-five soldiers joined the ranks of ABMDR in honor of two fallen comrades, officers Hovsep Kirakosyan and Ashot Shahbazyan, who were killed in battle during the April 2016 Azerbaijani attack against Artsakh. Both officers were registered ABMDR donors.



# Yerevan's glorious youth spirit on World Marrow Donor Day



World Marrow Donor Day recruitments continued on September 17, 2016, with the participation of hundreds of students and other supporters at the French University of Armenia, the European Regional Education Academy, and the French Professional Academy in Armenia. A total of 150 potential bone marrow donors were recruited at these events, which featured presentations by ABMDR leaders, including Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan. The recruitments took place in the plaza of the French University of Armenia, featuring musical performances by students, an athletic show by Street Workout Armenia, and presentations on the life-saving mission of ABMDR.







# Gazprom recruitments result in 742 enthusiastic new donors

From February through April 2017, ABMDR teams held recruitment drives and made presentations at the offices of Gazprom Armenia in Yerevan as well as Kotayk, Armavir, Shirak, and Lori. A total of 742 enthusiastic supporters joined the ranks of ABMDR as potential bone marrow stem cell donors. Our heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated leadership and staff of Gazprom Armenia!



**Thank you, Gazprom Armenia, for your extraordinary support!**



**Recruitments held throughout Yerevan as well as the Kotayk, Armavir, Shirak, and Lori regions**



**National Commission on Television and Radio of Armenia, Yerevan, January 26, 2017**



**Insurance CJSC INGO Armenia company headquarters, Yerevan, March 17, 2017**



# Welcome, Javakhk, to the ABMDR family!

On March 3 and 4, 2017, ABMDR held unprecedented community-outreach and donor-recruitment events throughout Javakhk, in Western Georgia, led by an ABMDR team from Yerevan. The historic recruitment campaign, which took place in Armenian communities in Akhaltskha, Akhalkalak, and Ninotsminda, was organized with the assistance of the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) of Javakhk, and the invaluable logistical support

of Karine Tadevosyan, chairperson of the ARS Javakhk Region, and other local ARS members. By the conclusion of the recruitment campaign, 76 Javakhk supporters had joined the ranks of ABMDR as potential bone marrow donors. We convey our heartfelt gratitude to Karine Tadevosyan, all of her gracious ARS colleagues, other local community leaders, and the Armenian people of Javakhk as a whole, for joining the ABMDR family!



### April 24 commemoration, Montebello, CA



Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti with ABMDR Board members and volunteers. April 23, 2016.



ANCA National Board Member Raffi Hamparian and Dr. Frieda Jordan. Photo at right: Dr. Jordan, former US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans, an ANCA representative, and Glendale Mayor Paula Devine. Photo below: a scene from the recruitment drive.



Firs

### Crescenta Valley, CA, Health Fair



ABMDR's Armond Mehdikhani and Dr. Vergine Madelian at the recruitment during the Crescenta Valley Health Fair, July 17, 2016.

### Glendale Health Festival



The Seventh Annual Glendale Health Festival took place on November 16, 2016, at the Pacific Community Center. Photo below: Dr. Jordan with Armenian-American Medical Society of California Board members.



**Costa Mesa, CA, community**



ABMDR's Fimi Mekhitarian with festival organizer Herman Basmajian (left) and Nishan Dulgerian of the Knights of Vartan. October 15, 2016.

**St. James outreach/recruitment, Watertown, MA**



A scene from the ABMDR New England outreach and donor-recruitment drive, which was held during the Saint James Armenian Church picnic on June 12, 2016, in Watertown, Massachusetts.

**Fundraising and fun: Zumba of Life, Saint James Church, Watertown, MA, May 2016**





# Walk of Life Los Angeles

Close to 300 people, including community leaders, elected officials, students, and representatives of organizations, took part in Walk of Life, ABMDR's 11th annual walkathon, in strong support of our life-saving mission. The event was held on October 1, 2016, in Glendale, California, in a festive community atmosphere.







**Thank you,  
reveal23, for  
your major  
sponsorship  
of Walk of Life!**



**Honoring Vartan Karlubian.**



The next Walk of Life will take place on October 7, 2017



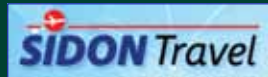
# CONGRATULATIONS, 2016 ABMDR LOTTERY WINNERS!



First  
Prize  
Winner

**Nevart Sepilian**

Two domestic  
round-trip tickets  
donated by Sidon Travel



Second  
Prize  
Winner

**Dr. Hagop  
Dermegerdichian**

iPad  
donated by  
Amalia Kiureghlian



Third  
Prize  
Winner

**Dr. Lory Sahakian**

Michael Aram gift set  
donated by Naz Atikian



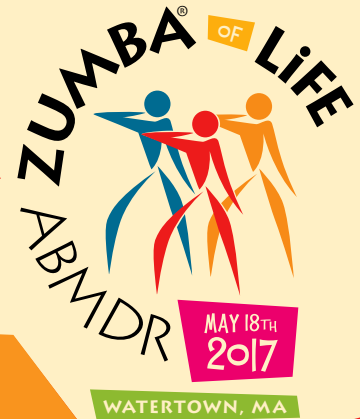
A delighted family member  
collecting the prize, an iPad,  
for Dr. Dermegerdichian.

## BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

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FUN!

SUPPORT THE  
ARMENIAN BONE MARROW  
DONOR REGISTRY  
JOIN OUR 2<sup>ND</sup> ZUMBA® EVENT!

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NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!  
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MAY 18**

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START: 7:00 PM  
RAFFLE & REFRESHMENTS

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# Walk of Life New England





**Thank you, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, for being a major sponsor of Walk of Life New England**



ABMDR New England's fifth annual Walk of Life garnered enthusiastic community support, as over 200 took part in the highly anticipated event. Held on September 24, 2016, in Watertown, Massachusetts, the walk drew numerous community organizations and a large number of young people, including students from local schools and universities. As in previous years, Walk of Life received major corporate sponsorship from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Additional sponsors and supporters included the Armenian-American Pharmacists' Association, PROMETRIKA LLC of Cambridge, Watertown Sav-

ings Bank, several other local businesses, the Armenian Tree Project, and the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center (ACEC). The walkathon kicked off with an opening ceremony at ACEC, where ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan expressed her gratitude to the Walk of Life Committee and the walkers for their continued support. Also delivering remarks was Watertown Councilor at Large Michael Dattoli. On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the New England walkathon, the Walk of Life Committee had provided celebratory cupcakes, donated by Peggy Hovanessian; and pizza, donated by Domino's of Watertown. Tamar Minassian Melkonian of the Walk of Life Committee announced the walkathon winners, and the awards were presented by Dr. Jordan. The Armenian Students Association (ASA) was recognized as the team to have raised the most funds; for the third year, Nairi Krafian won for having individually raised the most funds; and the Amaras Art Alliance and St. James (ACY-OA and Erebuni Saturday School) teams tied for highest number of participants. Also, for their continued support and commitment, a special fifth-anniversary Certificate of Appreciation was presented to the walk marshals, led by Jack Antounian of the Armenian Business Network.



# 17<sup>th</sup>-ANNIVERSARY MATCH FOR LIFE GALA

On August 28, 2016, close to 400 supporters attended Match for Life, ABMDR's 17th Annual Gala. Guests included dignitaries, community leaders, and representatives of organizations and elected officials. The festive event, which took place at the Glendale Hilton, in Glendale, California, served as an occasion to celebrate ABMDR's most recent major achievements, and to share with supporters the Registry's plans to further expand its life-saving mission across the globe.



***Thank you, Gala Committee members, for organizing a magnificent event!***



Thank you, Glendale Adventist Medical Center, for your major support of the 2016 ABMDR Gala



# CONGRATULATIONS, OUR 2016 AWARD RECIPIENTS!

During our Match for Life Gala, several individuals and organizations were honored with awards for their extraordinary dedication and service to ABMDR's life-saving mission. A special award as well as a Certificate of Appreciation were presented to Kevin Roberts, President and CEO of Glendale Adventist Medical Center, in recognition of its major sponsorship of the ABMDR Gala. The ABMDR Woman of the Year Award was conferred on Alvert Badalian, head of the ABMDR New England Support Group; and the Man of the Year Award was presented to Dr. Nubar Boghossian of the Los Angeles Cancer Network. The Volunteer of the Year Awards were bestowed on Tamara Ashjian, Esq., and Sonia Nercessian. The Organization of the Year Award was conferred on the Chamlian Armenian School. The Team of the Year Award was presented to the ABMDR New England Walkathon Team. The Business of the Year Award was presented to Softline Solutions, and the Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed on Tereza Hacopian.

In addition, a Certificate of Achievement was presented to ABMDR West Coast Recruitment Officer Fimi Mekhitarian for her outstanding outreach work as well as her design of the Gala book; and ARTN Shant TV host Rubina Matevosian was recognized for supporting ABMDR's outreach efforts by making the Shant television studios available for ABMDR programs. As she received her award, Woman of the Year Alvert Badalian said, "Joining ABMDR has been one of the best decisions of my life. I was also fortunate that many friends, family members, and colleagues back in Boston shared my enthusiasm for the ABMDR cause and helped me establish the organization's Support Group in Boston. Today we're very happy to mark the tenth anniversary of our Support Group and the fifth anniversary of the New England Walkathon. On behalf of my committee and myself, I thank Dr. Frieda Jordan and ABMDR for giving us this opportunity, for the recognition and awards. I am and we are honored." On her part, Tereza Hacopian said, "As a cancer survivor, I have a profound appreciation for the compassion, care, and dedication exemplified by ABMDR. Volunteering for this wonderful organization and advocating for its cause have been among the great joys of my life, and I'm truly honored to receive the ABMDR Lifetime Achievement Award."



**Woman of the Year Alvert Badalian (first photo, second from left); Man of the Year Dr. Nubar Boghossian.**



**Kevin Roberts of Glendale Adventist Medical Center; the Softline Solutions team, ABMDR Business of the Year.**



**Volunteers of the Year Tamara Ashjian, Esq. (first photo, third from left) and Sonia Nercessian (third from left).**



**Chamlian Armenian School, Organization of the Year; ABMDR New England Walkathon Team, Team of the Year.**



**West Coast Recruitment officer Fimi Mekhitarian.**



**Tereza Hacopian, Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.**



**ARTN Shant TV host Rubina Matevosian.**





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## SAVE THE DATES



**L.A. TREX GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
 June 3, 2017



**MATCH FOR LIFE GALA**  
 August 27, 2017



**CANCER AWARENESS SYMPOSIUM**  
 September 9, 2017



**WALK OF LIFE LOS ANGELES**  
 October 7, 2017



**LAUGHTER FOR LIFE**  
 November 12, 2017

## ARMENIAN BONE MARROW DONOR REGISTRY



18<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**GALA**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 27, 2017**

**GLENDALE HILTON**

100 WEST GLENOAKS BOULEVARD,  
 GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA

**5:00 PM COCKTAILS 6:00 PM DINNER**

**DONATION \$150**

European Federation for Immunogenetics Annual Conference, Kos, Greece, July 2016



Photo at top left: ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan and ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan represented the Republic of Armenia at the European Federation of Immunogenetics' (EFI) 30th Annual Conference, held in Kos, Greece. Armenia is a full member of EFI, and Dr. Jordan is an official EFI inspector of the Caucasus region. Photo at left: dinner with conference participants. Photo above: Dr. Nezir Cereb, ABMDR supporter and CEO and co-founder of Histogenetics, with Dr. Jordan and Dr. Avagyan.



World Marrow Donor Association Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 2016



A scene from the meeting. Photo at right: Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan and Matti Korhonen, of Finland, Chairman of the Group European Medium Sized Registries (GEMS) Working Group.

## East-West Immunogenic Conference, Olomouc, Czech Republic, March 2017



Organized by the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry of Palacky University Olomouc and the European Federation for Immunogenetics, the 11th East-West Immunogenetics Conference took place during March 10 and 11, on the beautiful campus of the university (photo below). Photo above: Representing the Republic of Armenia at the conference were ABMDR's Dr. Sevak Avagyan and Armine Hyusyan (far right).



## World Marrow Donor Association Spring Meeting, Marseille, France, March 2017

ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan and Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan participated in the Spring 2017 Meeting of the World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA) in Marseille, France, during March 24-25. The meeting is a major global event at which national registries discuss future operational strategies, donor-search software options, and the latest tissue-typing testing methodologies. Ever since its launch in 1999, ABMDR has been a full member of WMDA.



Dr. Sevak Avagyan and Dr. Frieda Jordan at the WMDA Spring 2017 Meeting.



Dr. Frieda Jordan with Dr. Carlheinz Mueller, Medical Director of the German National Bone Marrow Donor Registry.



Dr. Sevak Avagyan with Pam Robinett of the National Marrow Donor Program.

PARTIES FOR A WONDERFUL CAUSE

# ABMDR Wine and Food Affair

Our heartfelt thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Viken and Salpi Mankerian of Mission Wine and Spirits for organizing ABMDR's Sixth Annual Wine and Food Affair, and Rusnak Auto Group's Liz Rusnak Arizmendi and Andrew Arizmendi for hosting the event. Close to 300 supporters attended the elegant event, on July 8, 2016, at Rusnak Auto Group's Rolls-Royce, Bentley, and Maserati showrooms in Pasadena, California.





# Christmas party

Thank you, longtime ABMDR supporter and Board member George Titizian and his family for hosting our Christmas celebration



### Prayer Day at Western Diocese



On April 3, 2016, during Mass at St. Leon Cathedral in Burbank, Archbishop Hovnan Derderian offered special prayers for ABMDR patients. The Prayer Day was also marked at Diocese churches across Southern California. During his sermon, Archbishop Derderian prayed for the recovery and healing of ABMDR patients, and commended the selfless work of the hundreds of volunteers who stand behind the life-saving mission of the organization. Archbishop Derderian also urged congregants to generously support the work of the Registry by making donations, becoming volunteers, and joining the Registry's ranks as potential bone marrow stem cell donors.

### Prayer Day at Western Prelacy



Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian offered special prayers for patients and members of ABMDR on April 10, 2016, known as Green Sunday or Sunday of the World Church. The prayer service was held in Prelacy churches across Southern California, including St. Sarkis Church in Pasadena, where Archbishop Mardirossian presided over the Divine Liturgy and conveyed his blessings and commendation to ABMDR. "We highly commend the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry for its humanitarian and God-pleasing mission, which is faithfully carried out by its dedicated members under the leadership of President Dr. Frieda Jordan," the Prelate said during his sermon.

### Presentation at Western Diocese Assembly, Las Vegas, Nevada



On May 6, 2016, Dr. Vergine Madelian made a presentation on the work of ABMDR at the Western Diocese Assembly. Appearing in the photo are, from left, Dr. Madelian; Melene Ouzounian of the Daughters of Vartan, Fresno; Archbishop Hovnan Derderian; and Fimi Mekhitarian. "With his ongoing and steadfast support of the ABMDR mission, Archbishop Derderian inspires thousands to follow in his footsteps and make a difference in the lives of those struck by life-threatening blood-related illnesses," said ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan. "We are truly blessed to have the support of visionary and dedicated leaders and community activists such as Archbishop Derderian."

### Presentation organized by ARS Anahid Chapter, Ferrahian School, Los Angeles



On November 29, 2016, Dr. Vergine Madelian delivered a lecture titled "Bone Marrow Stem Cell Transplantation: Why your Ethnicity Matters" at Ferrahian School's Dikranian Hall, in Los Angeles. The event was organized by the ARS Anahid Chapter. During her presentation, Dr. Madelian explained the relationship between blood, bone marrow, blood diseases, and bone marrow transplantation, discussed the crucial importance of genetics and ethnicity in finding matched donors for patients in need of a transplant, and shed light on the role of ABMDR in the life-saving process leading to transplantation. A lively question-and-answer session followed.

## Meeting with Arch. Hovnan Derderian



On February 1, 2017, a group of ABMDR Board members visited Archbishop Hovnan Derderian at the Western Diocese, in Burbank. In what has become a marvelous annual tradition, Archbishop Derderian, a staunch supporter of ABMDR's life-saving mission, has hosted such visits for the past several years. ABMDR Board members thanked the Archbishop for his continued support of the Registry during 2016, particularly by observing a special Prayer Day for ABMDR patients at Diocese churches throughout Southern California and encouraging congregants to join the ranks of ABMDR as potential bone marrow donors. The Archbishop reiterated his strong support of ABMDR, and he and the Board members discussed various ideas and prospects with regard to continuing to help expand the Registry's work in California and beyond.

## Meeting with Arch. Moushegh Mardirossian



On February 7, 2017, representatives of ABMDR, headed by President Dr. Frieda Jordan, paid their annual New Year's visit to Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian at the Western Prelacy. It has become a great tradition to visit the Prelate at the start of each year in order to update him on the progress and achievements of ABMDR and receive his blessings for the Registry's future activities. During the meeting, the Prelate and the ABMDR Board members discussed the organization's recent endeavors and future plans, including recruiting donors in Javakhk (see page 21) and Argentina, tissue-typing patients and their families in Armenia free of charge, and making the ABMDR Cancer Symposium a part of the Registry's annual series of events. His Eminence offered his blessings and reaffirmed the Prelacy's support of our outreach efforts.

## 25th Anniversary of Armenian independence



Sona Ashjian (left) and Dr. Frieda Jordan at the celebration, which was organized by the Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles, September 2016.

## Outreach with Boston's Armenian community



Dr. Frieda Jordan was interviewed by Yevgine Gharibian, director of the Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston radio program, September 2016.

## Armenian Relief Society Christmas Party



From left: Naz Atikian, Jasik Jerahian, Dr. Vergine Madelian, and Sona Ashjian at the party, which took place on January 3, 2017, in Los Angeles.



Dr. Jordan at the St. James Armenian Church Cultural and Youth Center with Father Arakel Ajalian and ABMDR New England's Maral Ter Torossian and Alvard Badalian.



# Meeting with ARS Regional Committee, Marseille, France



Photo above: members of the ARS Regional Committee of France with Dr. Frieda Jordan and Dr. Sevak Avagyan. Below: a scene from Dr. Avagyan's presentation.

On March 26, 2017, ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan and Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan met with the Regional Committee of the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) of France. The event, organized by ARS, was held at the Hamazkayin School and Cultural Center in Marseille. During the meeting, Dr. Jordan and Dr. Avagyan made presentations on ABMDR's mission, global operations, and achievements. Highly impressed by the activities of ABMDR, the ARS leadership discussed organizing follow-up events in Marseille and forging long-term collaboration with the Registry. We thank ARS wholeheartedly for its support of our life-saving mission.



## Recruitment and outreach at Homenetmen Easter Market Bazaar, Burbank, California



The recruitment team at the Easter Market Bazaar, which was organized by the Homenetmen Burbank Sipan Chapter. March 26, 2017, ACF Burbank Youth Center.

### Boyadjian family, Tri-Tech Company



Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Amy Boyadjian, of the Tri-Tech company, for graciously sponsoring our events and hosting our Casino Night for many years.

### Mankerian family, Mission Wine and Spirits



Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Viken and Salpi Mankerian, of Mission Wine and Spirits, for your wonderful support and making our annual Wine-tasting event a great success.

### Glendale Adventist Medical Center



Kevin A. Roberts, President and CEO of Glendale Adventist, and Ramella Markarian.

For over ten years, I have had the pleasure of working with ABMDR, an organization that touches the lives of Armenians not only living in our community, but around the world. I have seen this organization grow and flourish, and I have the greatest confidence that ABMDR will continue to thrive and carry on with its life-saving mission for those with the greatest need. Thank you to all ABMDR volunteers, doctors, and, especially, thousands of donors worldwide, for making this work possible. Your gift is someone else's dream come true. — **Ramella Markarian, MS, MHA, Vice President, Business Development, Glendale Adventist Medical Center**

### Dr. Nezh Cereb, Histogenetics



In March 2017, Dr. Nezh Cereb, founder and CEO of Histogenetics, was presented with a special ABMDR award in recognition of his longtime support of the Registry.

### Vartanian family, Foundation Laboratory



Our deep gratitude goes to the Vartanian family—Stepan and Linda Vartanian, owners of Foundation Laboratory, as well as Dr. Zareh and Taleen Baghoomian—for generously donating the use of the Foundation Laboratory to ABMDR, thereby enabling us to base our US operational hub at the facility.

### Armenian Open Golf Tournament



Thank you, Los Angeles Chapter Trex Fraternity and longtime ABMDR supporter and Board member George Titizian, for donating proceeds from the Armenian Open Golf Tournament to the Registry. The tournament is held annually in Pasadena, California.

## Dr. Nubar and Aleen Boghossian



Thank you, Dr. Nubar and Aleen Boghossian, for your major sponsorship of our Gala and Cancer Awareness Symposium; and thank you, Dr. Boghossian, for participating in the Symposium as a featured speaker.

## Dr. Boris and Karen Bagdasarian



Thank you, Dr. Boris and Karen Bagdasarian, for supporting various ABMDR events; and thank you, Dr. Bagdasarian, for participating in our Cancer Awareness Symposium as a featured speaker.

## Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center



For more than 90 years, Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital has closely held the belief that respecting dignity also means working toward the common good within the communities we serve. We believe that healthcare is a social good and that access to healthcare is a fundamental right for all people. For many years, our partnership with ABMDR has reflected our core hospital values, including collaboration and stewardship. Ensuring that patients and families have access to life-saving cancer and blood disease treatments is a testament to ABMDR's unwavering dedication to the health and wellness of both the local and global community and a true reflection of Dignity Health's commitment to humankindness.

Jack Ivie, President,  
Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital  
and Health Center

## Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko and Dr. Arpenik Avagyan

It is a great honor and pleasure to be associated with the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, an organi-



zation that is uniting the efforts of thousands of people for an ultimate good: prolonging a life. And it is essential that this complex cooperation should have a viable and strong core, one which works on many different levels while directing efforts into a singular path. It seems a simple and basic principle, but it is so skillfully exercised by ABMDR that many countries today are seeking its expertise and replicating its model. We should all celebrate the fact that the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry continues to expand its role and influence across the world.

Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko  
and Dr. Arpenik Avagyan

## reveal23 team



A big Thank You to reveal23 for its major sponsorship of our 2016 Los Angeles Walkathon as well as our inaugural Cancer Awareness Symposium, also in 2016. Recently launched in Los Angeles, reveal23 is a pioneering company that specializes in genetic testing. In the photo above, from left: Arineh Vartanian, Vice President of Business Development; Lala Vartanian, Executive Vice President; and Areg Boyamyan, Senior Vice President.

## Congratulations, ID Genomics

We congratulate longtime ABMDR supporter Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko and the company he leads, ID Genomics, for recently having received a major grant from the National Institutes of Health. The grant was made for ID Genomics' pioneering work in bacterial research and the development of an extensive clinical database of bacterial strains. To date, the ID Genomics library has collected more than 8,000 UTI samples. Dr. Sokurenko says he plans on expanding the work of the company in order to help treat a wide range of infections.

## Alvart Badalian, ABMDR Boston



The incomparable Alvart Badalian is ABMDR's pillar on the East Coast. As head of the ABMDR New England Support Group, she is the driving force behind our New England Walk of Life and other ABMDR outreach and recruitment events in the area. In 2016, it was our honor to name her the ABMDR Woman of the Year. Thank you for your marvelous work, Alvart; and thank you, our New England team, for your outstanding dedication!

## 4over, Inc. supports our Newsletter



Thank you, Tina Hartounian and Zarik Megerdichian of 4over, Inc., for continuing to generously donate your printing services for the publication of our annual Newsletter.

## In memory of Garine Lapoyan



Thank you, Ewing's Sarcoma Research Foundation for donating \$5,000 to ABMDR in honor of the late Garine (Gareen) Lapoyan. Garine lost her battle to Ewing's sarcoma, a primary bone cancer that affects 1% of children and adolescents, in 2012, at the young age of 24. Prior to her death, in 2010, she started the Ewing's Sarcoma Research Foundation with her father, Varoujan Lapoyan, with hopes of finding a cure.

## Wells Fargo donation to ABMDR



Thank you, Wells Fargo Bank, for your spirit of community give-back and thoughtful donation to ABMDR.

## The late Susan Lidgett's generosity



Shortly prior to her passing, Susan celebrated her 90th birthday and asked loved ones to make donations to ABMDR in lieu of presents. She will be fondly remembered! And thank you, Seyranian family, for your support.

## Supporting our lab operations



Thank you, Mrs. Maral Poladian, for graciously facilitating the gift of a valuable PCR machine to ABMDR.

## Remembering Hrach Lukassian



On December 29, 2016, ABMDR lost one of its most beloved supporters, Hrach Lukassian. Hrach believed deeply in the ABMDR mission and encouraged his entire family to follow suit. He was our "go-to" man for props and displays, and always came through to solve our problems. He was present at all our events. During our walkathons, we could see him towering above the crowd, his professional cameras hung around his neck. Hrach was extremely generous with his time and talents. His donations of hand-carved backgammon sets



and watercolor renderings of Armenian churches were big hits at our gala auctions year after year. Hrach was an avid traveler, camper, hiker, and mountain climber. Even here, he used his hobbies and skills to bring attention to ABMDR: in 2013, when he reached the summit of Mount Ararat, he unfurled the ABMDR banner. For this, he and his partners received a Special Pride Award from ABMDR. A year later, he flew the banner at Mount Everest Base Camp. Hrach was a family man. He and his wife, Carmen, traveled all over the world, and he always brought back mementos of his sojourns to his friends and family. Hrach lived his life as a rich man: rich in interests, rich in talent, rich in experiences. He will be sorely missed by us all.

*Thank you, for in lieu of flowers*

**In loving memory of:**



Mariana Kazarian



Dr. Aida Shirinian Kaloostian



Arlene Titizian



Hrach Lukassian



Hamlet Petrossian



Alice Shahinian



Paul Boghos Mekhitarian

- Mariana Kazarian
- Dr. Aida Shirinian Kaloostian
- Arlene Titizian
- Hrach Lukassian
- Hamlet Petrossian
- Alice Shahinian
- Paul Boghos Mekhitarian
- Siranush Zograbyan
- Vartan Karlubian
- Susan Lidgett
- Dr. Susanna Yezinkian Ayvazian

## VOLUNTEERS FOR LIFE

# Annual planning retreat

On January 28, 2017, ABMDR held its annual planning retreat in Los Angeles. Following Dr. Frieda Jordan's overview of major developments in 2016, several other Board members made presentations on the Registry's 2016 operations and services, pertaining to cord-blood banking, recruitment, marketing strategies, fundraising and educational events, as well as ABMDR's first-ever Cancer Awareness Symposium. The participants then mapped out a schedule of activities and events for 2017.



During the annual planning retreat, held at the Western Prelacy, presentations on ABMDR's 2016 activities and services were made by (clockwise from above left): Dr. Frieda Jordan, Dr. Vergine Madelian, Fimi Mekhitarian, Armond Mehdikhani, Hratch Postik, Amy Boyadjian, Lara Yeretsian, and Sona Ashjian, as well as Dr. Christina Ashjian (top right).





ABMDR Board of Directors meeting, summer 2016.



ABMDR Board of Directors meeting, winter 2017.



Members of the ABMDR Walk of Life Committee.



Dr. Avagyan and Dr. Jordan visiting ABMDR Honorary Chair Bella Kocharyan, Yerevan.

## Congratulations, Salpi Mankерian, for being honored by Congresswoman Chu



Salpi Mankерian receiving the award from Congresswoman Judy Chu.

Salpi Mankерian, one of our most dedicated Board members and longtime supporters, was honored by Congresswoman Judy Chu, the US Representative for California's 27th District. Salpi received the Congressional Certificate of Recognition, in appreciation of her years of service as a community volunteer and benefactor. The honor was conferred on her during an award ceremony that took place at Congresswoman Chu's offices in Pasadena, California, on April 10, 2017.

As she presented the award to Salpi, Congresswoman Chu said, "I'd like to present this Congressional Certificate of Recognition for your tireless volunteer work and generous philanthropy. For the past ten years, as a member of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry's volunteer corps, you have volunteered for and helped organize all of the Registry's community-outreach and fundraising events. In addition, you and your husband, Mr. Viken Mankерian, have graciously hosted ABMDR's annual benefit wine-tasting at your home in Sierra Madre, sponsoring all aspects of this very important event. You've exhibited such extraordinary altruism, volunteerism, and compassion, and you're a role model for our new generation." Congresswoman Chu also mentioned that Mrs. Mankерian has been equally active in organizing and supporting the annual benefit Fashion Show of Pasadena's St. Gregory Church, as both a benefactor and Ladies' Society member, and that she continues to serve as a committee member and volunteer with the American Cancer Society, USC Town and Gown, and the St. Leon Church Ladies' Guild. On behalf of the entire ABMDR family, we congratulate Salpi for this prestigious honor.

## Carolann and George Najarian's support



These days we are all asked to give as much as we can, as there are so many people who need help, but none can be more compelling than those who will die if help isn't forthcoming. That's what ABMDR is all about: helping those who have no other recourse and for whom a bone marrow match is life-saving—literally. That is why I support this organization and have been proud to be a part of it from the beginning.

Carolann S. Najarian, MD

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