



# ABMDR

FIRST ABMDR CANCER  
AWARENESS SYMPOSIUM  
TO BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 17

ARMENIAN BONE MARROW DONOR REGISTRY 2016

# Newsletter



### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Time. Talent. Treasure. These are the great gifts ABMDR receives every day from its volunteers and supporters around the globe. In 2015, the centenary of the Armenian Genocide, these gifts were particularly poignant to this organization and its mission to save Armenian lives worldwide. The Time which volunteers gave to organize events, including 33 recruitment drives worldwide, bringing us just 2,000 shy of our goal of 30,000 bone marrow donors! The Talent which we have brought to the Caucasus region, providing much-needed diagnostic services, and training for medical professionals in surrounding countries; the talent, too, that our three new young board members are bringing as medical and IT professionals, helping to broaden our networks and launch new initiatives such as the adoption of a powerful international software to improve matches. And the Treasure received by generous donors that enabled us to support our work of tissue-typing, finding matches, and facilitating a record number of transplants – six in one year, bringing the total to 26! The year 2015 was, indeed, a “Sweet 16” year of hope and help for those suffering from blood-related diseases. With the continued commitment of Time, Talent and Treasure from all of you, we know our 17th year will see even greater achievements in responding to our patients in need, wherever they may be. Thank you for your precious gifts.

**Frieda Jordan, PhD, President**

### ABMDR marks first World Marrow Donor Day



[see page 12]

### Celebrating ABMDR donors: our silent heroes!



[see page 5]



### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It is such a privilege to be associated with a truly international organization that unites all Armenians, regardless of origin, denomination, or political affiliation. Every year, ABMDR reaches out and connects with more and more Armenians from all walks of life and convictions who work together for a wonderful cause: saving the lives of Armenians worldwide. My thanks to all the staff and volunteers for your vision, your passion, and your hard work.

**Mark Geragos, Esq.**

Chairman of the Board of Directors



### MESSAGE FROM THE HONORARY CHAIR

ABMDR is already 17! Today, standing close to its roots, I feel so very proud of its achievements and ongoing progress. ABMDR's motto has always been to provide help to patients across the globe. Functioning as a unique bridge between Armenia and the diaspora, the Registry has also been the bearer of new and pioneering ideas in medicine as well as the highest international standards. I am certain that every year will add a new and beautiful page to the biography of this wonderful endeavor.

**Bella Kocharian, MD**

Honorary Chair, former First Lady of Armenia



[see page 6]

*Thank you, our sponsors, for your generous contributions*





DR. NUBAB BOGHOSSIAN

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

[www.LACancer.net](http://www.LACancer.net)  
[www.facebook.com/lacancernetwork](http://www.facebook.com/lacancernetwork)

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

Glendale Adventist Medical Center  
1505 Wilson Terrace, Suite 200  
Glendale, CA 91206  
(818) 409-0105

# Interview with ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan

**Q: Perhaps no Armenian organization is as “pan-Armenian” as ABMDR. The graphs you’ve provided (on this and the next page) reveal an extensive scope of operations on an international scale. Help us interpret what we’re seeing here.**

A. The first thing you notice in the donor chart is that our donors come from all over the world: 28 countries across four continents, reflecting the widespread Armenian diaspora. The second thing that is clear is the large number of donors from Armenia, showing the profound commitment of the people of Armenia to our cause. The same goes for Artsakh. For relatively small populations, they represent a sizeable chunk of our donors. The substantial size of our donors from the US is also noticeable, and not surprising, since our base of volunteer operations are based in the US, and our numbers from Iran are due to a very active ABMDR cadre there.

**Q: As you look at this chart, are there changes you would like to see, in terms of growth?**

A: We would like to see bigger wedges labeled “Russia” and “Argentina!” These countries have a high percentage of ethnic Armenians, and we would like to develop strong recruitment programs in both countries. There are plans to do so within the next two years.

**Q: What about the chart on search requests? It’s interesting to see almost equal “wedges” of activity from the US, England, Italy, Germany, and Turkey.**

A: These allocations are not surprising. We have our base of administrative operations in the United States, with a close relationship with the National Marrow Donor Program there; we benefit from strong networks and personal affiliations in England and many European countries; and, for historic reasons of course, we continue to receive many requests from Turkey.

**Q: And how would you imagine this chart changing?**

A: We’d like to see a more even distribution of requests, and we think we will be able to do this with improved technology that gets us beyond relying on just personal connections – as helpful as those have been.

**Q: What kind of technology are you thinking about?**

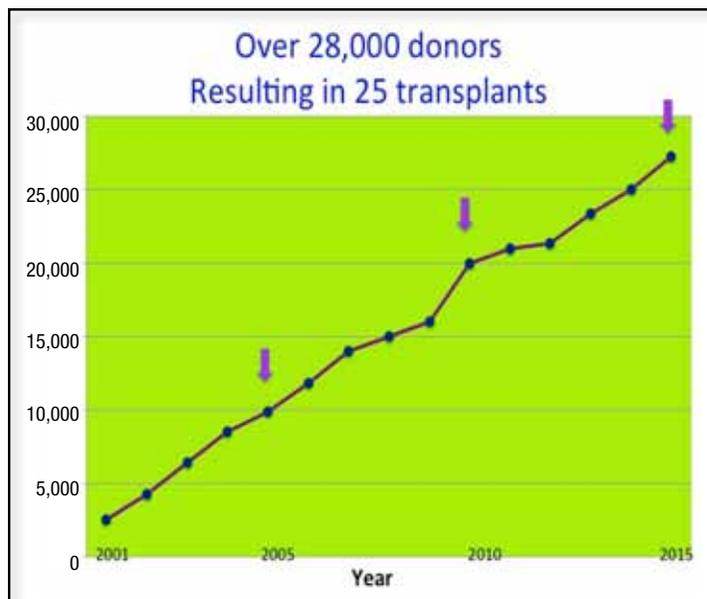
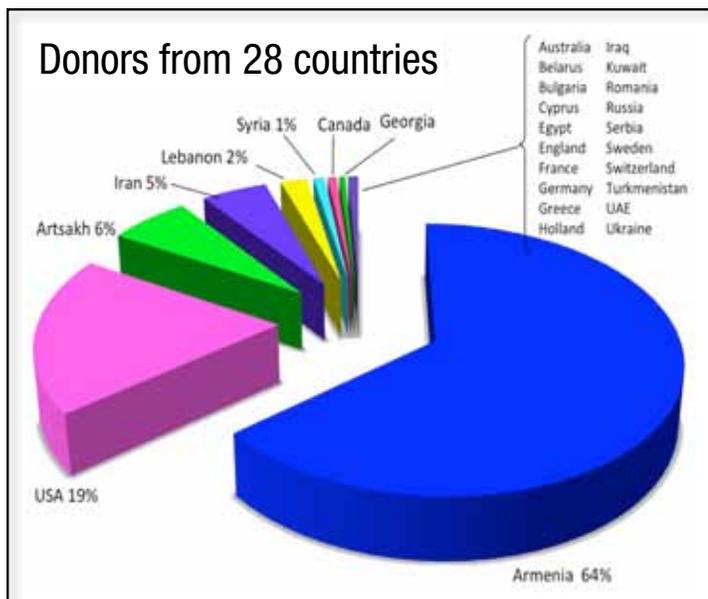
A: We’re very excited about a cloud-based software that provides small- and medium-sized registries with improved visibility, patient access, and communication between registries. Approaching the 30,000-donor mark, ABMDR is a medium-sized registry that lacks the resources of larger registries to connect with individual, multiple international entities to comprehensively identify patients and provide visibility to its donor base, and this program – called the GEMS Hub – will be a cost-effective, reliable IT connection with Bone Marrow Donors Worldwide and larger registries such as the National Marrow Donor Program.

**Q: It’s good to know you are taking advantage of the latest technologies to bring more awareness and access for patients living in places where ABMDR has a relatively smaller presence. Any other changes you’d like to see?**

A: Yes, we’d like to see growth in requests from Armenia. I think this will increase as the Transplant Center in Armenia materializes.

**Q: One final question: If you had a graph showing sources of support for ABMDR operations, what should it look like?**

A: We are fortunate to have thousands of volunteers around the world helping us in our recruitment and fundraising activities, and I suspect those numbers would roughly correlate with the donor graph. But if you are talking strictly about funding, I’d say we would like to see a chart showing increased allocations to tissue-typing – always an urgent need – and investment in projects that strengthen our infrastructure, like the new software I have referred to. Our supporters have been very generous, and we appreciate those who continue to look to the future with us as we seek to have greater impact on patients who need our help, wherever they may be.



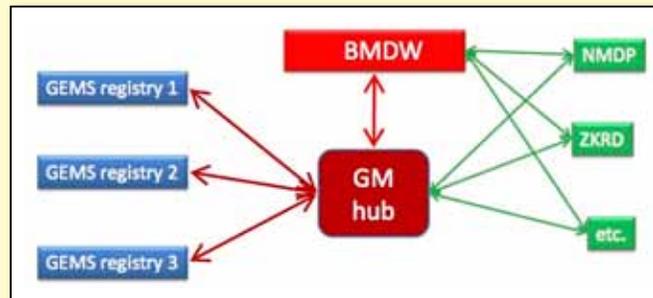
# An urgent appeal to help us save more lives by expanding our IT capabilities

At this critical stage in its development, ABMDR needs to strengthen its database infrastructure by investing in a more sophisticated software system that will improve visibility and patient access, vastly enhancing the process of finding bone marrow matches.

The software system which ABMDR seeks to adopt, called the GEMS Hub, will provide a cost-effective, reliable IT connection with Bone Marrow Donors Worldwide (BMDW) and larger registries such as the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP).

While partnering with several organizations, registries, and medical centers in the US and Europe, ABMDR has not been able to comprehensively identify patients and provide visibility to its donor base. The international IT networks that procure stem cell donors for patients are increasingly complex, and ABMDR is a medium-size registry that lacks the resources of larger registries to connect with individual, multiple international entities. Its current IT system—like many registries of its size—is not designed to be compatible with all the diverse organizations seeking patients, handicapping its ability to make its donors more visible to the international community. Ultimately, this means fewer matches are being made between Armenian patients and bone marrow stem

**ABMDR needs to raise a total of \$55,000 to adopt a universal database system which will provide a cost-effective, reliable IT connection with registries across the globe.**



cell donors... and more lives potentially being tragically lost.

The program which ABMDR needs to invest in—the Group European Medium Sized Registries (GEMS) IT Hub—is a cloud-based software system that provides small- and medium-sized registries with improved visibility for donors, patient access to donors, and communication between registries

To launch the program in 2016, we are seeking \$25,000 to join the GEMS system and establish ongoing connectivity to its extensive networks. We are also seeking pledges totaling \$30,000 to cover the annual \$10,000 program costs over the next three years.

On behalf of the 3,534 patients who have contacted the Registry and whose lives now hang in the balance for a transplant, and the thousands more children and their families who will need this help in the future, we urge you to generously support this project. Your vision and commitment will no doubt be recognized and emulated by others in the community, and your action will serve to create the momentum and driving force to make this crucial project a reality. This will not only start saving lives in the near term, but it continue to do so in perpetuity. Thank you!

## 3531 Preliminary Search Requests from 42 countries



**ABMDR is an international organization operating a state-of-the-art DNA molecular tissue-typing laboratory in Yerevan, Armenia, where it employs 14 lab technicians and medical professionals who receive continuous training in the US and Europe. The Registry has recruitment centers in the US, Armenia, and the Middle East, and plans to expand into Europe and South America. Because its centers are 95% volunteer-run, the organization operates with extremely low administrative expenses. To accomplish its mission, ABMDR:**

- Recruits volunteer stem cell/bone marrow donors from Armenian populations worldwide—currently it has over 28,000 in its database, aiming for 30,000 by the end of 2016;
- Responds to search requests by the medical community and individual patients, and identifies stem cell/bone marrow matches in its own registry, and others worldwide;
- Performs high-resolution advance testing for 100% matches and facilitates stem cell/bone marrow transplants between donors and patients.

## DONOR'S STEM CELLS HARVESTED IN YEREVAN FOR HER BROTHER IN AUSTRALIA

Karine would have never known that only she could have helped save the life of her brother in Australia, if the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry had not looked for a stem cell donor match in Armenia. "In this case, since the patient in Australia is of Armenian descent, the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry at once contacted us, requesting that we try to find a local donor match," said Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan, the medical director of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry.

As soon as Dr. Nazaretyan and his staff identified Karine as a matched donor, they notified their colleagues in Australia and went on to collect stem cells from her. The non-invasive, painless harvesting procedure, which takes only four hours, was performed at ABMDR's Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan, on February 9, 2016, and subsequently the harvested stem cells were flown to Melbourne. To date, matched



Photo above: during the painless stem cell harvesting procedure, Karine enjoys playing on her tablet, overjoyed by the knowledge that she might save her brother's life. Photo below: Dr. Andranik Mshetsyan and a lab assistant administering the procedure at ABMDR's Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan.



An international courier holding the package that contains the harvested stem cells, ready to be shipped to Australia. The courier is photographed with ABMDR Medical Director Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan.

donors in our registry have saved the lives of 26 patients worldwide, including non-Armenians.

"The Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry is linked with 67 national registries across the globe, which means that once a matched donor is identified, the process of shipping out the harvested stem cells for the patient suffering from a life-threatening blood-related illness is performed with absolutely no delay," says ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan. "To date, matched donors in our registry have saved the lives of 26 patients worldwide, including non-Armenians. Days like this make our work all the more worthwhile!"



## YEREVAN NURSE DONATES STEM CELLS TO SAVE LIFE OF PATIENT IN ISRAEL

Seven years ago, when Maria, a Yerevan resident, became a bone marrow stem cell donor with ABMDR, she had no clue that someday she would actually be able to help save someone's life. That opportunity presented itself on March 9, 2016.

After the Rambam Health Care Campus' Bone Marrow Transplant Department, in Haifa, Israel, contacted ABMDR for a matched-donor request, Maria, 36, was identified as a match for a cancer patient in Israel, and the harvesting procedure was set in motion.

Maria's stem cells were harvested at ABMDR's Stem Cell Harvesting Center, in the Armenian capital. Once the painless, non-invasive harvesting procedure, performed by Dr. Andranik Mshetsyan, was completed, the donated stem cells were flown to Israel through a special courier. Maria has been an ABMDR bone marrow stem cell donor since 2009. She is a nurse and the mother of two children: Alex, 15; and Knarik, 18 months old.



Top photo: the harvesting procedure, performed at ABMDR's Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan, was attended by Dr. Sevak Avagyan as well as ABMDR Honorary Chair Dr. Bella Kocharian. Photo above: from left: Armine Hyussyan, Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan, Dr. Kocharian, and Dr. Avagyan. Photo on left: Maria with Dr. Nazaretyan and Dr. Avagyan.



Courier Mishel Zrian (third from left) with ABMDR staff.

### A LETTER OF APPRECIATION TO ABMDR FROM ISRAELI COURIER MISHEL ZRIAN

My name is Mishel Zrian, a courier employed by ICL Critical Solutions. On March 10, 2016, I picked up a delivery of bone marrow for a transplant at the Rambam Hospital, in Haifa, Israel. I am experienced in this field, having worked with FedEx and FC Time Critical and performed numerous deliveries of bone marrows around the world. I would like to thank you all at the ABMDR Stem Cell Harvesting Center for the wonderful, dedicated, and embracing care you have shown, from my arrival in Armenia until my departure.

I was absolutely delighted by your professionalism and the high standards of your center in Yerevan, which, in my opinion, is one of the best, if not *the* best, in the world. Your dedicated staff made sure that I received all the required certificates, in all relevant languages, in order for me to have a smooth path on my way to Israel, with no delays. I was impressed by the sincere concern of all who were involved, including Dr. Sevak Avagyan, who personally escorted me from Zvartnots Airport and made sure that everything went well and smoothly. It was an honor to be of service to Dr. Avagyan and I felt proud to be a part of your process of saving lives. Thank you again for your utmost diligence as well as for taking great care of me during my free time, showing me around your beautiful capital city of Yerevan, and organizing a private driver. I enjoyed it all very much. Thank you!

# The Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry Presents **Knowledge is Power:**

## **1<sup>st</sup> ABMDR Cancer Awareness Symposium**

**You are invited to ABMDR's First Cancer Awareness Symposium!**

**SATURDAY  
SEPTEMBER 17  
9:00AM TO 3:00PM**

**Kouyoumjian Hall  
St. Gregory Armenian  
Catholic Church  
1510 E Mountain St.  
Glendale, CA**

**FREE & Open to All  
Refreshments will be served**

Come learn about different cancers, their signs and symptoms, diagnosis process, and treatment options. Our experts will be talking about the latest research and steps to be taken for prevention and survival after diagnosis, including nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

The symposium will feature a panel of speakers, including specialists of various types of cancer and cancer survivors. They will discuss the impact of a cancer diagnosis on a patient's quality of life. A question and answer session will take place after each panel.

Knowledge is power and empowerment is the key to treatment success, early diagnosis, and cancer prevention.

We welcome you to bring your family members and friends to this *free* and informative event! Presentations will be made in English and Armenian.

We look forward to seeing you there!  
For questions, please contact 323-663-3609.



**[www.abmdr.am](http://www.abmdr.am)**



## DR. FRIEDA JORDAN HONORED BY CONGRESSMAN ADAM SCHIFF AS 28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR



On March 15, 2016, Dr. Frieda Jordan was honored in the US Congress by being named the 28th Congressional District Woman of the Year. The honor was bestowed on her by Congressman Adam Schiff, who represents California's 28th Congressional District, in a speech he delivered on the floor of the House of Representatives. Rep. Schiff's tribute was entered into the Congressional Record.

Three days later, Rep. Schiff personally presented Dr. Jordan with a plaque featuring the text of his tribute to her, at a luncheon held in Echo Park, California. During the event, which was organized on the occasion of Women's History Month, Rep. Schiff honored a group of outstanding women, including Dr. Jordan, from communities in the 28th Congressional District. "I rise today in honor of Women's History Month," Schiff said in his remarks at the House of Representatives on March 15. "Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Dr. Frieda Jordan, of Glendale, California."

Commenting on the Congressional tribute, Dr. Jordan said, "I am absolutely humbled by this prestigious honor. I convey my deep gratitude to Congressman Adam Schiff, who is an extraordinary, longtime supporter and advocate of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, as well as the House of Representatives as a whole, for selecting me as the 28th Congressional District Woman of the Year."



## LAB INSPECTION, MESSINA, SICILY



As an official inspector with the European Federation of Immunogenetics and Histocompatibility (EFI), Dr. Frieda Jordan conducted a technical inspection of the Tissue Typing Lab at the Hematology Department of Riuniti Hospital of Pardo-Piedmont, in Messina, Sicily. Dr. Jordan performed the inspection together with Prof. Antonina Piazza, under the leadership of EFI commissioner Prof. Carlo Carcassi. Following the inspection, which took place on November 30, 2015, the lab received a recommendation for renewal of its EFI accreditation. In the photo above: Dr. Frieda Jordan with fellow EFI inspector Prof. Antonina Piazza and the staff of the Tissue Typing Lab, including Dr. Vincenza Giuffrida and Dr. Patrizia Zappia.

## DR. JORDAN RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS HONORARY DIPLOMA

On October 5, 2015, Dr. Frieda Jordan, president of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, received the European Specialization in Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics Honorary Diploma, granted by the European Board of Transplantation Immunology. Dr. Jordan received the prestigious diploma in recognition of her vast experience in immunogenetics and transplantation as well as contributions to both fields.



# HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND SUPPORTERS VISIT ABMDR YEREVAN LAB



ABMDR Medical Director Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan (far right) speaking with guests including Irini Albanti from the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute (far left), Gevorg Tamaryan from City of Smile/Muratsan Hospital (center), and Akhila Annamreddi from the Harvard School of Public Health.



Jasmen Jerahian of the ABMDR Board of Advisors and Dr. Sevak Avagyan.



From left: Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan; Dr. Frieda Jordan; Dr. Rabi Hanna, director of Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplantation at Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital; and ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan.



ABMDR supporter Rooben Mirzaians.



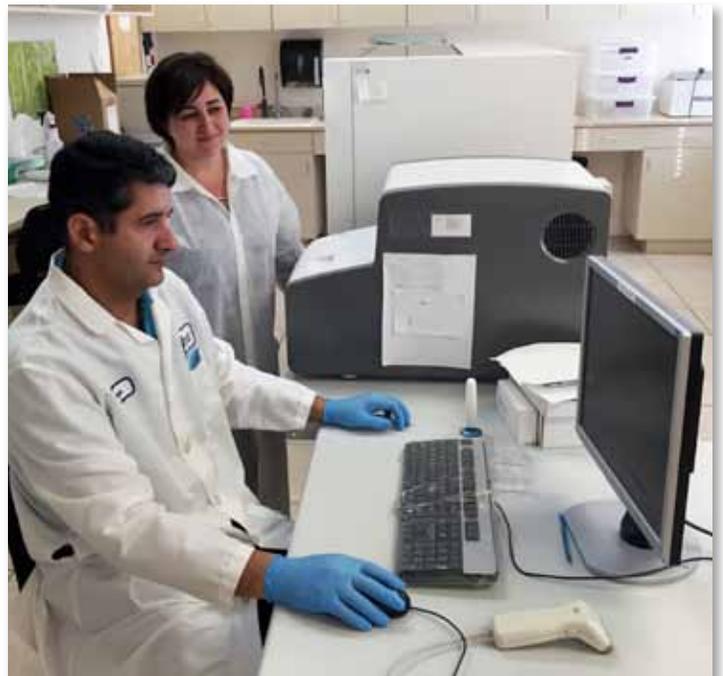
From left: Dr. Sevak Avagyan, Hrach and Carmen Lukassian, and Lab Supervisor Armine Hyussyan.

The ABMDR HLA Molecular Testing Lab is the only one of its type in the entire Caucasus Region, and the only one to be accredited, year after year, by the European Federation for Immunogenetics.

## SENIOR LAB TECHNICIAN ALINA SIRUNYAN RECEIVES ADVANCED TRAININGS IN U.S.



Alina Sirunyan, senior lab technician and database manager at the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry's HLA DNA Molecular Typing Laboratory in Yerevan, received advanced trainings in the United States during October 2015. At the Foundation Laboratory in Los Angeles (photo above), Alina received molecular DNA-testing training from Dr. Frieda Jordan. Alina later accompanied Dr. Jordan to the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she received training as a donor-search coordinator. During the visit, NMDP staff members also familiarized Alina with all operational aspects of the donor program (photo below).



## ABMDR PRESENTATION AT NMDP

In October 2015, Dr. Frieda Jordan made a comprehensive presentation at the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, updating the NMDP Executive Board about the work and latest accomplishments of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. NMDP Board members attending Dr. Jordan's presentation included Michael Boo, World Marrow Donor Association (WMDA) president and NMDP chief strategy officer; and Melanie A. Buetow, B.A., senior liaison of Global Operations and Relationship Development at NMDP/Be the Match Registry.



From left: Alina Sirunyan, Dr. Frieda Jordan, NMDP chief strategy officer Michael Boo, and Melanie Buetow, senior International Operations liaison at NMDP/Be the Match.



NMDP staff members wearing scarves from Armenia gifted by the Registry. From left: Shelby D. Johnson, Melanie A. Buetow, and Pam Robinet.

29th European Immunogenetics and Histocompatibility Conference, Geneva, April 26-29, 2015



European Federation for Immunogenetics Region 8 Meeting, Bucharest, Romania, December 5, 2015



Fourth International Medical Congress of Armenia, Yerevan, July 1-4, 2015



WMDA Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, November 5, 2015



First Pan-Armenian Hematological Symposium, Yerevan, June 1, 2015



# ABMDR AND COAF JOIN FORCES TO MARK FIRST WORLD MARROW DONOR DAY

In September 2015, ABMDR and the Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) participated in the world's first-ever World Marrow Donor Day by jointly organizing donor-recruitment drives in Armenia. The events took place on September 17 in various communities in the Armavir Region and on September 19 at the Cafesjian Sculpture Garden in Yerevan. The drives were sponsored by COAF, the Cafesjian Center for the Arts, and the Gourmet Dourme company of Armenia.

The recruitments in Armavir and Yerevan alike received strong grassroots support, while the Yerevan event was also attended by several celebrities. Alla Levonyan, Sofi Mkheyan, Tigran Hamasyan, chess champion Tigran Petrosyan, Arminka, and DJ Vakcina as well as Dr. Vahe Ter-Minasyan created great enthusiasm by encouraging attendees to register as potential bone marrow donors.

The theme of the inaugural World Marrow Donor Day in Armenia was "Millions of Thanks," referring to the fact that a record 25 million people worldwide are currently listed as potential blood stem cell and marrow donors in the hope of saving the lives of those battling life-threatening blood cancers and diseases. Twenty-eight thousand of those 25 million donors are Armenians in Armenia and the diaspora, all of whom have been recruited by ABMDR in the past few years.



Scenes from the Armavir recruitments. In the photos above: ABMDR executive director Dr. Sevak Avagyan and COAF executive director Anoush Yedigaryan; and ABMDR medical director Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan addressing attendees.



A scene from the event at the Cafesjian Center in Yerevan.

## The World Marrow Donor Day at the Cafesjian Center in Yerevan



Clockwise from above: Dr. Sevak Avagyan, COAF founder and Board chair Garo Armen, and deputy Health minister of Armenia Sergey Khachatryan; ABMDR bone marrow donors Mr. Vahe Vardanyan and Mrs. Varduhi Shahinyan with ABMDR Board members Carmen Lukassian and Naz Atikian; Dr. Avagyan with singers Alla Levonyan and Arminka.



Dr. Vahe Ter-Minasyan (center) served as the Yerevan event's Master of Ceremonies.



Chess champion Tigran Petrosyan and singer Sofi Mkheyan joining the ranks of the Registry.



The Street Workout Armenia team with COAF Health Program Manager Nune Dolyan (far left), Dr. Avagyan (fourth from left), and Dr. Vahe Ter-Minasyan (third from right).

**308 supporters joined the ranks of ABMDR during the recruitments.**





Harout Krumian, a 19 year old battling Leukemia, is in dire need of a stem cell transplant. If you are aged 18 to 50 and are in good general health, please consider joining the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. Joining is simple, quick, and painless (a few cheek swabs!)

09/03/2015 \*  
**BE A HERO**

Where: Homenetmen Glendale "Ararat" Chapter Cafeteria  
3347 N. San Fernando Rd., Los Angeles CA 90065

## RECRUITMENTS FOR PATIENT HAROUT, LOS ANGELES

In August and September 2015, ABMDR held a series of recruitments in support of Harout Krumian, a young leukemia patient in desperate need of a stem cell transplant. The recruitments were held in Los Angeles, at Ferrahian School, the Homenetmen Ararat Chapter, AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School, and Ari Guiragos Minassian School.



## Congratulations, Alique, on your latest achievement

It seems it was only yesterday that the Armenian community rallied around four-year-old Alique as her family searched for a bone marrow donor to help cure her acute myeloid leukemia. It was through those efforts that ABMDR was founded.

Today ABMDR remains near and dear to Alique's heart. Whenever possible, she loves to share the work of the Registry and the importance of people to become registered as potential bone marrow donors. Though a donor was never found for Alique, she went into remission as a result of a chemotherapy clinical trial. She remains grateful that through her illness other lives have been saved by the efforts of ABMDR.

In May 2015, Alique graduated with honors from Ohio University. She earned a BA in Psychology, with a certificate in Global Leadership. She was recognized by the university as one of the founding members of Bobcats for Suicide Prevention and was an executive board member of Psi Chi, The International Honor Society of Psychology. While in school, she conducted research on



ABMDR Board member and longtime supporter Michele Seyranian with her daughter, Alique.

people's attitudes and motivations concerning blood donation. Alique now attends the University of Cincinnati, where she is working on a Master's in Public Health. This summer she will intern at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, where she will participate in a study on infant mortality. She remains committed to a career in health-care and to assisting ABMDR whenever possible.

## The profound satisfaction of helping save a life

When I registered with ABMDR in 2006, I was sincerely wishing to be a match some day. Eight years later, when City of Hope called and told me that I was the only match for an anonymous ten-year-old boy, I accepted with no hesitation or fear, and thanked God for using me to save a life. After several tests, the doctors decided I was 100% healthy to donate. On September 10, 2014, early in the morning, at City of Hope, they put me to sleep for about an hour.\* When I opened my eyes, they said the two bags carrying my bone marrow were immediately flown overseas, where my little recipient was waiting to start his new life. Since I don't know his name, I call him "my bone mate" in my prayers. My pain was gone in less than a week. I continued to rest and eat healthy. After the donation, I have not experienced any side effects or weakness.



Today, with a world of confidence, I want to share my sweet experience and encourage others not to be scared. My dream is to see bone marrow donation become as common as donating blood. All we need to do is think: "What if it was me or my loved ones who needed a match?" When we think that way, we realize that a few weeks of discomfort is totally worth saving a LIFE.

\*In most cases, bone marrow stem cells are collected from circulating blood while the donor is fully awake. In my case, the doctors felt that donating bone marrow instead of circulating stem cells would increase the chances of success for the patient, and asked me if I would be willing to go through that process instead—hence the need to anesthetize me.

Paulette Malekian

## Thank you, donors Paulette and Arpine!



Paulette Malekian (left) donated stem cells for a patient in the Middle East, and Arpine Zohrabian donated bone marrow for a patient in the UK. Paulette and Arpine are also dedicated ABMDR volunteers and supporters.

## A CROSS SECTION OF COMMUNITY DOCTORS AND ORGANIZATIONS SPECIALIZING IN HEMATOLOGY AND ONCOLOGY CARE



**Dr. Boris Bagdasarian**  
Dignity Health GMH, Glendale Adventist Med. Center, Los Angeles Cancer Network, USC Verdugo Hills Hospital



**Dr. Nubar Boghossian**  
Dignity Health GMH, Glendale Adventist Med. Center, Los Angeles Cancer Network, USC Verdugo Hills Hospital



**Dr. Suzy Melkonian**  
City of Hope Cancer Center, Mission Hills



**Dr. Kalust Ucar**  
Dignity Health GMH, Glendale Adventist Med. Center, USC Verdugo Hills Hospital



**Dr. Mihran Shirinian**  
Dignity Health GMH, Glendale Adventist Med. Center, USC Verdugo Hills Hospital



**Dr. Karo Arzoo**  
Providence Saint Joseph Medical Center, Burbank

### FREE MEDICAL SERVICES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR PATIENTS

The Armenian American Medical Society of California, based in Glendale, California, is offering free mammograms for early detection of breast cancer. For more information, visit [aamsc.com](http://aamsc.com)

The Cancer Care Network Foundation, based in Los Angeles, can help cancer patients by providing financial assistance towards deductibles and co-pays for drugs or treatment. The foundation's services include diagnostics and chemotherapy as well as free breast-cancer screening. Visit [cancercarenetworkfoundation.org](http://cancercarenetworkfoundation.org) or call (818) 670-7781.

# LATEST ABMDR STATS

- Registered more than 28,000 donors worldwide
- Identified over 3,500 patients
- Facilitated 26 bone marrow transplants
- Active in 28 countries across four continents

The following are our outreach and recruitment events of 2015 and early 2016:

## ARMENIA

- March 17, 2015**, recruitment at Police Academy, Yerevan.
- March 24, 2015**, recruitment at Police Academy, Yerevan.
- March 30, 2015**, recruitment at American University of Armenia, Yerevan.
- April 9, 2015**, recruitment at American University of Armenia, Yerevan.
- April 17, 2015**, recruitment at Orange Telecommunications Armenia.
- June 25, 2015**, recruitment at Aikido Aikikai Federation.
- September 17, 2015**, recruitment in Armavir Region (organized by COAF).
- September 19, 2015**, recruitment at Cafesjian Center (World Marrow Donor Day).
- September 21, 2015**, recruitment at Chess House, Yerevan.
- October 9, 2015**, recruitment at Military Institute of Armenia.
- November 20, 2015**, recruitment at French University in Armenia.
- February 27, 2016**, recruitment at Erebuni Plaza Hotel, Yerevan, organized by the National Democratic Institute and the National Endowment for Democracy.

## CALIFORNIA

- February 15, 2015**, Diocese Prayer Day for ABMDR outreach/recruitment drive at St. Peters Armenian Apostolic Church, Van Nuys.
- February 17, 2015**, Dioceses Ladies' Society Appreciation Day, St. Leon Armenian Cathedral, Burbank.
- March 28, 2015**, outreach and recruitment drive at St. Gregory's Ladies' Auxiliary Fashion Show, Universal Hilton.
- April 12, 2015**, Prelacy Prayer Day for ABMDR outreach/recruitment drive at St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church, Glendale; St. Garabed Armenian Apostolic Church, Hollywood; Forty Martyrs Armenian Apostolic Church, Orange County; and Holy Martyrs Armenian Apostolic Church, Van Nuys.

## CALIFORNIA (continued)

- April 25, 2015**, outreach and recruitment at Armenian Martyrs Monument, Montebello.
- June 16, 2015**, Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America lecture series (Dr. Vergine Madelian, Dr. Frieda Jordan, and Armond Mehdikhani) at Parsons Corporation center, Pasadena.
- August 31, 2015**, recruitment for Harout Krumian at Ari Guiragos Minassian School, Santa Ana.
- September 3, 2015**, presentation and recruitment for Harout Krumian at Homenetmen Ararat Chapter, Glendale.
- September 10, 2015**, recruitment for Harout Krumian at AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School, Canoga Park.
- September 11, 2015**, presentation and recruitment for Harout Krumian at Holy Martyrs Armenian School, North Hills.
- September 16, 2015**, presentation and recruitment at Glendale Community College, Glendale.
- October 11, 2015**, presentation by Dr. Vergine Madelian at ARS Maro Chapter Annual Assembly, Glendale.
- November 7, 2015**, recruitment at Glendale Health Fair, Glendale Civic Auditorium.
- November 14-15**, recruitment at Eighth Annual Armenian Cultural Festival, St. Garabed Armenian Church of the Desert, Rancho Mirage.
- December 9, 2015**, presentation by Dr. Vergine Madelian at Alex Pilibos Armenian School, Los Angeles.

## NEW ENGLAND

- February 27, 2015**, presentation by Dr. Frieda Jordan and recruitment drive at Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, Watertown, Massachusetts.

## IRAN

- September 10-17, 2015**, recruitments during Pan-Armenian Games at Ararat Sports Complex, Tehran.

## LEBANON

- September 7-9, 2015**, presentation and recruitment at various community institutions in Beirut.

## SWITZERLAND

- April 27, 2015**, first-ever presentation and recruitment in Switzerland, at Saint Hagop Church hall, Geneva.



In 2015, recruitment drives in Armenia were held at the Police Academy of Yerevan, the American University of Armenia, Orange Telecommunications Armenia, the Aikido Aikikai Federation center, various community centers in Armavir (see page 8), the Cafesjian Center in Yerevan (World Marrow Donor Day - see page 9), the Chess House in Yerevan, the Military Institute of Armenia, and the French University in Armenia.

## AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

### ORANGE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ARMENIA



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YEREVAN**



## MILITARY INSTITUTE OF ARMENIA, YEREVAN



## FRENCH UNIVERSITY IN ARMENIA, YEREVAN



## NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE / NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY, YEREVAN



## RECRUITMENTS DURING PAN-ARMENIAN GAMES, ARARAT SPORTS COMPLEX, TEHRAN



ABMDR recruitment drives were held during the Pan-Armenian Games at Tehran's Ararat Sports Complex, between September 10 and 17, 2015. One hundred four supporters, including community leaders, joined the ranks of the Registry.

**CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION**



An ABMDR team consisting of volunteers and Board members held a recruitment drive during the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on April 25, 2015, at the Armenian Martyrs' Monument in Montebello, California. The ABMDR team members answered questions, distributed information about the work of the Registry, and welcomed new recruits, particularly from among the youth, into the ranks of ABMDR.

**ARMENIAN FESTIVAL, PALM DESERT**



During November 14 and 15, 2015, ABMDR held recruitments at the Eighth Annual Cultural Festival of St. Garabed Armenian Apostolic church of the Desert, in Palm Desert, California. In the top photo, ABMDR West Coast Recruitment Officer Fimi Mekhitarian (second from left) with festival organizers Fr. Krikor Zakaryan, Medik Yerjianian, and PGM Greg Avedisian. In the photo above, Dr. Armen Karimyan swabbing at the festival.

**GLENDALE HEALTH FAIR, HELD AT GLENDALE CIVIC AUDITORIUM, NOVEMBER 7, 2015**



## GENEVA ARMENIANS SUPPORT ABMDR MISSION

On April 26, 2015, a gathering was held at Geneva's Saint Hagop Church, where ABMDR representatives had the opportunity to meet with the local Armenian community and raise awareness of the Registry's mission. The event, which took place in the hall of the church following Mass, was organized by the Saint Hagop Church Council, headed by the Very Reverend Father Archimandrite Gusan Alchanyan.

Presentations by Dr. Frieda Jordan and Dr. Sevak Avagyan were complemented by a Q & A session, during which they further discussed ABMDR's Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan, recruitment and community-outreach programs, and the importance of becoming bone marrow stem cell donors. In solidarity with the mission of ABMDR, Fr. Alchanyan as well as several other members of the community joined the ranks of the Registry, as potential bone marrow stem cell donors.



## LAUGHTER FOR LIFE

Laughter for Life, ABMDR's 13th annual Comedy Night, was held on November 8, 2015, at the world-famous Comedy Store in Los Angeles. The beloved benefit event featured an outstanding lineup of comedians as well as burlesque dances. Thank you, ABMDR Comedy Night Committee, which includes longtime supporters Lara Yeretsian, Esq., and renowned comedian Sam Tripoli, for once again making Laughter for Life a truly magnificent and unforgettable event!

**Thank you, Tina Yeretsian, of Nomad Catering, for donating the food served at the Comedy Night.**



Clockwise from top: Comedy Night Committee members, including Sam Tripoli and Lara Yeretsian (second from right), and ABMDR Board members; Lara and Tina Yeretsian with some of the night's comedians; Sam Tripoli during his hilarious performance.



### MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS: CHRISTINA ASHJIAN (PharmD, BCPS), STELLA BAGHDASARIAN (DDS, HHC), and HRATCH POSTIK



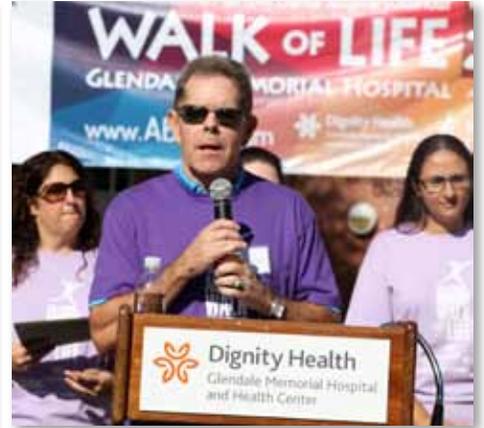
Christina Ashjian is a Clinical Pharmacist and Medication Safety Officer at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center. She has chaired the ABMDR Walkathon Committee and serves on the Comedy Night committee, participates in donor-recruitment drives, and performs outreach presentations.



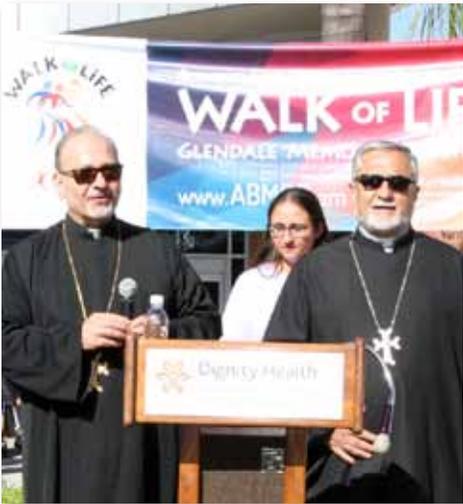
Stella Baghdasarian is a dentist with a private practice in Los Angeles. She has been active in ABMDR's community outreach program and chaired the Walkathon Committee. Currently she is a member of the Gala Committee and participates in recruitment drives and other events.



Hratch Postik is a longtime supporter and a member of our Walkathon team. He is the Senior Director of Medical Informatics with Fuji film Medical Systems and co-founder of the graphics company Softline Solutions, which administers all of ABMDR's online-marketing and social-media activities.



On October 3, 2015, close to 400 supporters converged in Glendale, California, to participate in our tenth-anniversary walkathon. The jubilant Walk of Life, which raises grassroots support for ABMDR's life-saving mission, drew scores of community leaders and elected officials, and several large teams of participants from Los Angeles schools, organizations, and youth associations.



**Thank you, major sponsors  
Dignity Health Glendale  
Memorial Hospital  
and Health Center;  
and Foundation Laboratory.  
And thank you, Consul General  
Sergey Sarkisov and his staff  
for hosting our walkers at the  
Armenian Consulate, the  
walkathon's midpoint.**



Dr. Garni Barkhoudarian of Los Angeles, Walk of Life's top finisher, with his wife, Dr. Evelyn Baghdasraian Barkhoudarian, and children.



The next Walk of Life will take place on October 1, 2016







**HRACH LUKASSIAN CLIMBS EVEREST BASE CAMP, CARRYING ABMDR FLAG**

Lukassian holding the ABMDR flag on Khumbu Glacier, Nepal. Mount Everest, the highest peak, is seen in the background.

On October 19, 2015, longtime ABMDR supporter Hrach Lukassian fulfilled a cherished dream when he ascended the Base Camp of Mount Everest, in Nepal. Lukassian's excursion also included treks to the Kala Patthar slope (the original base camp of Mount Everest) and the Khumbu Glacier, the world's highest glacier, which has an altitude of over 5,300 meters.

Another dream Lukassian had cherished for years was to take the ABMDR flag to Mount Everest.

"It was a distinct privilege to carry the flag of our beloved organization to the world's highest mountain," Lukassian said. "I think there's great symbolism in the fact



Hrach Lukassian (second from far right) with ABMDR leaders and lab-staff members, holding the signed ABMDR flag.

that an Armenian organization that helps save lives throughout the world was seen from the very top of the world, if only briefly." Following his Mount Everest journey, Lukassian visited Armenia before returning to Los Angeles. In Yerevan, he visited the ABMDR Stem Cell Harvesting Center, where members of the lab staff signed the historic flag Lukassian had brought with him.

"In 2013, a team of Armenian mountaineers took the ABMDR flag to the summit of Mount Ararat, in a gesture of pan-national support for our registry's life-saving mission," Dr. Avagyan said. "And now Mr. Lukassian, one of our longtime supporters, has carried our flag to the base of Mount Everest. We feel deeply honored!"



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



Close to 250 supporters took part in the ABMDR New England walkathon, in a strong show of grassroots support for our organization's life-saving mission. The fourth annual New England Walk of Life, which took place on September 26, 2015, in Watertown, drew the participation of numerous community organizations and an unprecedented number of young people, including students from local schools and universities.



Once again, the event received major corporate sponsorship from the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. Other sponsors and supporters included the Armenian-American Pharmacists' Association, PROMETRIKA LLC (Cambridge, Massachusetts), Watertown Savings Bank, several other local businesses, the Armenian Tree Project, and the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center (ACEC). The Armenian Business Network team, led by Alex Antounian, served as marshals of the walk.

The 2.2-mile walkathon started from ACEC and concluded at Watertown Square, where participants enjoyed great music, dancing, and food, along with thousands of people attending the annual Faire on the Square festival.





**The next New England Walkathon will take place in September 2016.**



# 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Over 400 supporters, including community and church leaders, elected officials, and representatives of health organizations, joined together to celebrate the Sweet 16 of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. Match for Life, the 16th annual Gala of the Registry, took place on the evening of August 23, 2015, at the Glendale Hilton, in Glendale, California. In addition to functioning as a jubilant testament to the worldwide Armenian community's support of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry's life-saving mission, the Gala served as an occasion to mark the Registry's latest accomplishments. The event was made possible by the major sponsorship of Glendale Adventist Medical Center and the Histogenetics company.

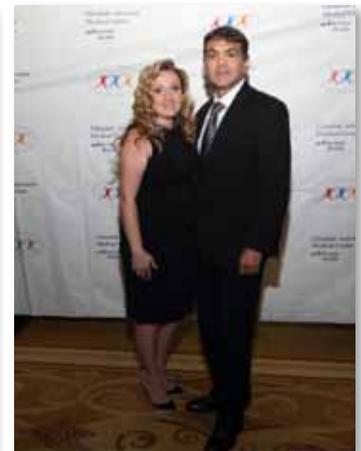


## SWEET 16 GALA





**Thank you, Glendale Adventist Medical Center and Histogenetics for your major support of our Match for Life Gala!**



# CONGRATULATIONS, OUR 2015 AWARD RECIPIENTS!

**D**uring the Match for Life Gala, several individuals and organizations were presented with awards for their outstanding dedication and service to the mission of the Armenian Bone Marrow Registry. The ABMDR Woman of the Year Award was conferred on Lara Yeretsian, Esquire, and the Man of the Year Award was presented to Mardy Kazarians, PhD. The Volunteer of the Year Awards were bestowed on Stella Baghdasarian, DDS, Narreh Ghazarian, and Carlo Manjikian. The Team of the Year Award was conferred on past and present chairpersons of the ABMDR Walkathon Committee, comprising Steve Artinian, Taleen Khatchadourian, Evelyn Baghdasraian Barkhoudarian, MD, Karoline Rostamian, PhD, Stella Baghdasarian, DDS, Christina Ashjian, PharmD, BCPS, Sharlene Gozalians, DrPH, MPH, CHES, and Salpi Aprahamian. The ABMDR Organization of the Year Award was conferred on the Trex Fraternity Los Angeles Chapter, as represented by Chapter Master Johnny Yaldezian and longtime Trex member and ABMDR supporter George Titizian; and the Business of the Year Award was presented to Le Papillon by Naz. In addition, ABMDR Certificates of Recognition were presented to Glendale Adventist Medical Center as well as Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center.



**Woman of the Year Lara Yeretsian, Man of the Year Mardy Kazarians, PhD, and Volunteer of the Year Stella Baghdasarian, DDS.**



**Volunteers of the Year Narreh Ghazarian and Carlo Manjikian; and Naz Atikian, owner of Business of the Year Le Papillon.**



**Ramella Markarian accepting the Glendale Adventist award; Hera Gozalians accepting the award on behalf of her daughter, Walkathon Committee co-chair Sharlene Gozalians; and Marie Filipian accepting the Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital award.**



**Johnny Yaldezian and George Titizian of Trex Fraternity Los Angeles, Organization of the Year; and past and present chairpersons of the Walkathon Committee, Team of the Year.**

# CASINO NIGHT

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Amy Boyadjian, of the Tri-Tech company, for hosting and organizing our Casino Night, on October 16, 2015, at Phoenicia Restaurant, Glendale, California





# CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Thank you, Mrs. Mariette Keshishian, for hosting the event at your home in Glendale, California



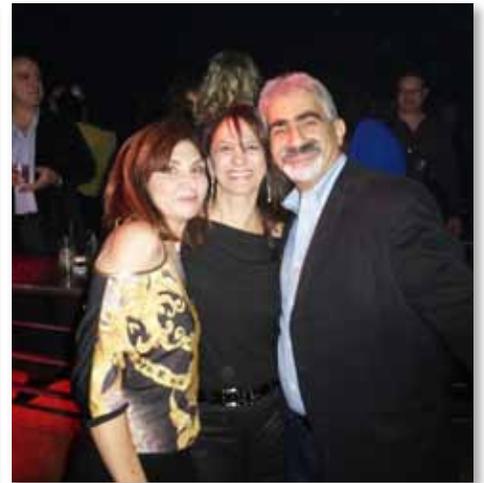
# ARMENIAN OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

Thank you, Los Angeles Chapter Trex Fraternity and longtime ABMDR supporter and Board member George Titizian for organizing the event, on June 7, 2015, in Pasadena, California



# DANCE PARTY

Our first benefit event of 2016, the ABMDR Dance Party at Giggles Night Club in Glendale, California, on January 29, was a great success! Close to 500 supporters attended and had a wonderful time. A big Thank You to Mr. and Mrs. Garnik and Diana Galoostian (in the photo at right), owners of Giggles Night Club, for hosting the dance party; to Stella Baghdasarian for organizing the event; and to all who showed up to support the cause. Proceeds from the event will be used to purchase tissue-typing reagents.





Dr. Vergine Madelian and Dr. Frieda Jordan (standing) with Glendale Adventist Medical Center President and CEO Kevin Roberts, US Congressman Adam Schiff, and Mary Hovagimian, Congressman Schiff's District representative.

**"MISSION ARMENIA" SPECIAL LUNCHEON**

ABMDR's Dr. Frieda Jordan and Dr. Vergine Madelian attended the Glendale Adventist Medical Center's "Compassion in Action: Mission Armenia" event. The special luncheon, held on September 26, 2015, at the Brandview Banquet Hall in Glendale, California, benefited Glendale Adventist's initiative of providing critically needed medical assistance to the community of Noyemberyan, Armenia. The project is being carried out in partnership with the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund.



Dr. Madelian, Glendale Adventist Vice President Ramella Markarian, and Dr. Jordan.

**VISITING ARCH. HOVNAN DERDERIAN**



On January 19, 2016, an ABMDR team of Board members had a productive meeting with longtime supporter Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese.

**DR. JORDAN RECEIVES ANC AWARD**



The Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), Burbank, honored Dr. Frieda Jordan by presenting her with its Levon Shant Award for Civic Engagement. The award presentation took place during Burbank ANCA's eighth annual banquet, held on May 8, 2015, at the Arbat Banquet Hall in Burbank, California. In the photo below: Dr. Jordan with fellow award recipients Gary Bric (William Saroyan Award for Community Activism), Araz Majnoonian of the Burbank AYF Varak Chapter (Karekin Njeh Award as Youth Activist of the Year), and Kirk Cartozian (George Mardikian Award for Civic Business Leadership).



**VISITING ARCH. MOUSHEGH MARDIROSSIAN**



On January 26, 2016, we met with Archbishop Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelate of the Armenian Prelacy, who pledged the Prelacy's ongoing support of the ABMDR mission.

## ANC-WR GALA BANQUET



Los Angeles City Councilman Mitch O'Farrell with Dr. Frieda Jordan and Lara Yeretsian at the ANC banquet.

ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan and Lara Yeretsian represented the Registry at the Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region's annual Gala Banquet, which was held on October 25, 2015, at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles.



Dr. Frieda Jordan with banquet guests, including Nyree Derderian of the Armenian Relief Society (far left).

## ARS MARO CHAPTER EVENT



With members of the ARS Maro Chapter and ARS Western US Board members, including chairperson and event host Rebecca Berberian (far left), October 11, 2015.



ABMDR's Dr. Vergine Madelian (third from left) with ARS Western US Region Board members Satenig Ghazarian, Rebecca Berberian, and Aida Babayan-Alrayes.



The ABMDR speakers and representatives with AESA president Dr. Marine Geuvrekian (fourth from left).

## PRESENTATION FOR AESA

On June 16, 2015, the Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America hosted a special evening dedicated to ABMDR's Stem Cell Harvesting Center and its latest accomplishments. Presentations at the well-attended event were made by ABMDR's Dr. Frieda Jordan (below), Dr. Vergine Madelian (right), and Armond Mehdikhani. Titled "A Cutting-edge Molecular Technologies Initiative in Armenia," the event was held at the Parsons Corporation center in Pasadena, California.



## ARMENIA FUND TELETHON



ABMDR contributed to Armenia Fund's annual Telethon, held on November 26, 2015. Pictured above are Lara Yeretsian, Mark Geragos, and Ramella Markarian.

## PRESENTATION AT PILIBOS



On December 9, 2015, Dr. Vergine Madelian gave a presentation on the work of ABMDR at Rose and Alex Pilibos School, to the great enthusiasm of students.

## CELEBRATING DIOCESE PRAYER DAY WITH ARCH. DERDERIAN, FEBRUARY 15, 2015



## CELEBRATING PRELACY PRAYER DAY WITH ARCH. MARDIROSSIAN, APRIL 12, 2015



During the Prelacy Prayer Day, observed throughout Southern California, Dr. Frieda Jordan was given the honor of making a presentation from the altar of the Prelacy chapel.

## ST. GREGORY FASHION SHOW

## MEETING WITH TREX FRATERNITY, LOS ANGELES



ABMDR at the 50th Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show of the St. Gregory Ladies Society of Pasadena, March 28, 2015, Universal Hilton.

ABMDR Outreach Officer Dr. Vergine Madelian meeting with Grand Master Ronald Shanoian and long-time Registry supporter George Titizian of the Trex Fraternity Los Angeles Chapter, June 5, 2015.

## ABMDR contributes to SARF Telethon

During the Syrian-Armenian Relief Fund (SARF) Telethon, held on February 21 in Los Angeles, an ABMDR team comprising Dr. Sevak Avagyan, Dr. Frieda Jordan, Dr. Vergine Madelian, Diana Artunian, and Ani Azar, presented a donation on behalf of the Registry.

Our bond with the Syrian-Armenian community goes back to 2006, when an ABMDR team visited Aleppo for the first time.

That wonderful visit was coordinated by Armen Melkonian, Armenia's Consul General in Aleppo, with the support of Syrian-Armenian physicians who had studied medicine in Armenia.

Syrian-Armenians were among the very first diaspora communities to welcome ABMDR. They received us with open arms, and wholeheartedly supported our mission, by helping us make a presentation about our work and also recruit donors. Community institutions and leaders who gave us their generous assistance included the AGBU of Aleppo (Dr. Bedros Boyajian, chairperson), Dr. Zoya Madoian, Hagop Setrakian, and Mr. Garo Narbekian and his wife, Dr. Tamar Narbekian, as well as Nani Oskanian.

During our visit in Aleppo, 300 community members joined the ranks of ABMDR as potential bone marrow donors. Among these enthusiastic recruits were several community leaders, including Archbishop Shahan Sarkissian.

Today, when the Syrian-Armenian community faces its darkest hour, we salute and thank all of our selfless donors, and hope that our symbolic donation will help ease their suffering.

**The ABMDR team was welcomed at the SARF Telethon by Archbishop Shahan Sarkissian, Prelate of the Syrian-Armenian community (photo below).**



## Far-reaching ArmGenia project launched in Armenia

**Initiative will lead to national DNA database, genetic research, and genetic mapping of historic Armenia, and will result in significantly improved healthcare**

The Armenian Genome Project, known as ArmGenia, has been established in Armenia, with the principal goals of creating a national DNA database (Gene Bank) and accordingly conducting large-scale genetic research and genetics-based associative studies. The Gene Bank will consist of phenotype and genotype data pertaining to the Armenian population.

The ArmGenia project was initiated by Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko, a Professor of Microbiology at the University of Washington and a longtime supporter of ABMDR. Dr. Sokurenko co-founded the ArmGenia initiative with Dr. Sevak Avagyan and Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan of ABMDR as well as Dr. Levon Yepiskoposyan.

The ArmGenia project will make it possible to perform detailed genetic mapping of historic Armenia and identify the locations of Armenians on the genetic landscape

of the Middle East and beyond. The project will help also to understand the extent to which higher frequencies of diseases might be explained by various genetic predispositions.

Furthermore, ArmGenia will identify most common types of health-relevant genetic variations in the Armenian population. This, in turn, will allow the development of refined diagnostics tests optimally tailored for Armenian genotypes. As importantly, it will be possible to evaluate molecular genetic variations in selecting Drug Metabolizing Enzymes (DMEs), therefore significantly improving drug efficacy and safety for the Armenian population. The successful implementation of the ArmGenia project is expected to result in an enormous increase in the potential and capabilities of Armenian medical science as well as major improvements in the spheres of anthropology, bioinformatics, and computational sciences.



**Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko, Professor of Microbiology at the University of Washington and a longtime supporter of ABMDR, is the initiator and co-founder of the ArmGenia project.**

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BLOOD CANCER CONFERENCE, MARCH 19, 2016



Dr. Frieda Jordan and Sona Ashjian, who is the Medical Focus Coordinator at Providence High School and a member of the ABMDR Board of Advisors, attended the Southern California Blood Cancer Conference on March 19, 2016. The event, which was organized by the California Southland Chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma

Society, took place at the Anaheim Marriott. The Southern California Blood Cancer Conference is a free education event for blood-cancer patients, family members, caregivers, and healthcare professionals. Conference speakers included experts in the areas of blood cancer research, treatment, and survivorship.

# BE A DONOR, SAVE A LIFE!

We have a registry of thousands. But we still do not have matched bone marrow donors for all patients. With your help, more people will receive a transplant. And more families will have a future filled with hope. How can you help? By partnering with ABMDR, you can help save a life!



# abmdr.am

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2015 LOTTERY WINNERS!



**ZABEL PETROSIAN, FIRST PRIZE**

Zabel won roundtrip tickets to Las Vegas, donated by Sidon Travel (presented to her by Carlo Avakian).



**ARA MADENLIAN, SECOND PRIZE**

Ara won an iPad, donated by Amalia Kiureghlian.

**TALIN MIRZAIAN, THIRD PRIZE**

Talin won a gift set, donated by Naz Atikian of Le Papillon.





# SAVE THE DATES



**L.A. TREX GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
**June 2016**



**HOPE OF LIFE GALA**  
**August 28, 2016**



**CANCER AWARENESS SYMPOSIUM**  
**September 17, 2016**



**WALK OF LIFE L.A.**  
**October 1, 2016**



**CASINO NIGHT**  
**October 7, 2016**



**LAUGHTER FOR LIFE**  
**November 6, 2016**

## The Boyadjian family, Tri-Tech Company



Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Michael and Amy Boyadjian, of the Tri-Tech company, for organizing and hosting our annual Casino Night. And thank you, ABMDR Board

member Amy Boyadjian, for continuing to bring your wonderful touch and tireless dedication to all of our community and benefit events throughout the year.

## The Mankerian family, Mission Wine and Spirits



Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Vicken and Salpi Mankerian, of Mission Wine and Spirits, for your tireless advocacy and steadfast patronage of our cause year after year. And

thank you, ABMDR Board member Salpi Mankerian, for your extraordinary spirit of volunteerism and big-hearted support of our fundraisers and organizational work.

## Glendale Adventist Medical Center



**A message from Kevin A. Roberts, RN, FACHE, President and CEO; and Ramella Markarian, MS, MHA, Vice President, Glendale Adventist Medical Center, and ABMDR Board member:**

Patients suffering from life-threatening often need a bone marrow transplant, and they rely on someone with a similar tissue type to be their perfect match. A patient's best chance of finding a genetic match lies with those of similar ethnic or racial ancestry. That's why ethnicity matters and ABMDR is crucial to finding matches for patients in need. Glendale Adventist Medical Center is proud to support ABMDR and its life-saving mission.

## Stepan and Linda Vartanian, Foundation Laboratory



Our deep gratitude goes to Mr. and Mrs. Stepan and Linda Vartanian for their generous and continued support of our life-saving mission. For the past 17 years, the Vartanians have graciously donated to ABMDR the use of their Foundation Laboratory, in California, enabling us to base our US operational hub at the facility.

## Houry and Frank Melkonian



Thank you, Houry and Frank Melkonian for always being there for ABMDR, and thank you, Frank, for your marvelous work serving on the ABMDR Board of Directors.

## Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center



Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital believes, and research supports, that kindness and compassion have a positive impact on health outcomes. Our longstanding partnership with ABMDR reflects the importance of compassionate care, and we are humbled by the number of patients and families who, through ABMDR, have access to life-saving treatment for blood-related illnesses worldwide.

Jack Ivie, President,  
Dignity Health Glendale Memorial Hospital

## Diana Artunian and family



From left: Zaven Kazazian, member of the Executive Committee of the Armenian American Museum; Hagop and Taleen Khatchadourian, owners of Sylvan Learning, in Glendale; and Diana Artunian, ABMDR Treasurer.

ABMDR Board member Diana Artunian continues to be one of the pillars of the Registry. She and her family are staunch supporters of our life-saving mission, and her

spirit of volunteerism is truly outstanding. Thank you, Diana, for your boundless enthusiasm and support. Thank you for being an inspiration to us all!

## Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko and Dr. Arpenik Avagyan



We salute Dr. Evgeni Sokurenko and Dr. Arpenik Avagyan for their continued and unflinching support of the ABMDR mission, and warmly congratulate Dr. Sokurenko for initiating the ArmGenia project (see page 39).

## Alvart Badalian and Aramais Andonian



ABMDR Board member Alvart Badalian and her husband, Aramais Andonian, have been instrumental in the growth of the Registry in New England. Aramais is also the designer of the ABMDR logo. Thank you both!

## Ralph Yirikian, VivaCell-MTS



Thank you, Ralph Yirikian, general manager of VivaCell-MTS, for supporting our cause and exemplifying the spirit of corporate social responsibility.

## Eduardo Eurnekian



We are honored to consider internationally renowned industrialist and benefactor Eduardo Eurnekian as a supporter and advocate of the ABMDR mission.

## Naz Atikian, Le Papillon



Naz with her sister, Dee Cholian.

Thank you, ABMDR Board member Naz Atikian, of Le Papillon, for donating valuable items to all of our fundraising events, including our annual Lottery.

**Dr. Carolann and George Najarian**



Each year I think ABMDR has reached the limit of what it can accomplish, and each year I am wrong. Again: 2015 has been a remarkable year, with new heights attained in scientific and medical accomplishments, helping more and more patients in ways that were unimaginable even two years ago. All of you involved are our superheroes. Thank you!

Dr. Carolann Najarian

**Anahit exemplifies grassroots support**



Anahit Janoyan exemplifies the type of grassroots support that helps organizations such as ours thrive. In addition to sponsoring a room at our Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan, she continues actively to contribute to our life-saving mission. Thank you, Anahit!

**Wells Fargo Bank, Glendale**



Thank you, Wells Fargo Bank, for once again making a contribution in support of ABMDR's life-saving mission!

**Sharing the joy of a christening**



Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Narbay and Bianca Assadoorian! In August 2015 and afterwards, the couple donated all monetary gifts received on the occasion of the christening of their son, Ara, to ABMDR. The Assadoorians also visited our Stem Cell Harvesting Center in Yerevan.

**4over, Inc. supports our Newsletter**



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

**An artist's thoughtful gesture**



Yerevan artist Mushegh Mkhitarian donated to ABMDR all proceeds from the sale of the catalogues of his November 2015 art exhibition in the Armenian capital. Later, the artist visited our Stem Cell Harvesting Center to personally deliver his donation. We're very grateful!

*Thank you, for in lieu of flowers*

**In loving memory of**



Mariana Kazarian



Dr. Aida Shirinian Kaloostian



Arlene Titizian



Arax Abrahamian



Paul O'Toole



Flora Baroutgian



Arshaloos Khojayan

- Arax Abrahamian
- Flora Baroutgian
- Varoujan (John) Hakopian
- Arsen Issakhanian
- Dr. Aida Shirinian Kaloostian
- Mariana Kazarian
- Arshaloos Khojayan
- Paul O'Toole
- Arlene Titizian

## ABMDR annual Planning Retreat and Recruiters' Workshop, Los Angeles



Our annual Planning Retreat and Recruiters' Workshop took place in January 2016, at the beautiful library of the Armenian Society of Los Angeles, in Glendale.



**Board meeting, spring 2015**



**Gala Committee**



**Board meeting, winter 2015**



**Walkathon Committee**



**ABMDR NEW ENGLAND: A WONDERFUL TRADITION OF VOLUNTEERISM AND GRASSROOTS SUPPORT**



Photo on left: Mr. and Mrs. Roupen and Hasmik Dechkounian (pictured with their son Zareh) have graciously hosted ABMDR New England volunteer-appreciation receptions at their home in Lexington, Massachusetts, for the past four years.

Photo below: ABMDR Board of Directors member Alvirt Badalian (second from right) and longtime ABMDR supporter and Board of Advisors member Rubina Varjabedian (third from right) at a holiday party organized by the Armenian American Pharmacists' Association, January 10, 2016.



For the past four years, Mrs. Roupen and Hasmik Dechkounian have generously hosted volunteer-appreciation receptions for the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry's New England Support Group at their home in Lexington, Massachusetts. Photo above: the New England pre-walkathon volunteer-appreciation cookout, hosted by the Dechkounians at their home, 2015. Thank you, Roupen and Hasmik, for your marvelous support!

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