

HYE SHARZHOOM

Armenian Action

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36th Year

May 2015

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

More than 4,000 Gather at the Fresno State Maple Mall on April 23 for the Official Unveiling of New Armenian Genocide Monument

MICHAEL RETTIG
STAFF WRITER

On the eve of April 24, the Armenian community of Fresno gathered to unveil the new Armenian Genocide Centennial Monument. Over 4,000 people congregated at the Fresno State Maple Mall to witness the historic event, which brought together Armenians from various walks of life, and also non-Armenians. People from diverse backgrounds were united in their desire to honor the memory of those who were mercilessly slaughtered in the first genocide of the 20th century. Constructed in 100 days, the monument pays tribute to those who were martyred 100 years ago.

Although a somber occasion, there was a sense of accomplishment and celebration in the atmosphere at the completion of this permanent tribute. The melodies of the *oud* filled the air as Richard Hagopian played traditional folk songs while the crowd gathered in anticipation for the ceremony.

The completion of the monument is a testament to the strength which the Armenians embody, which allows them to flourish in communities around the world, despite their traumatic past. “This beautiful Armenian Genocide monument represents the love, honor, accomplishment,

and spirit of our ancestors and the families of the survivors,” said the Honorable Chuck Poochigian, co-master of ceremonies, together with Deborah Adishian Astone, Interim Vice President for the Administrative Services at Fresno State.

Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro demonstrated his continued support of the Armenian community by his participation at the ceremony. “I can think of no other university campus where it would be more fitting to have an Armenian Genocide monument. It’s deeply meaningful to me and for every single member of our Fresno State community and beyond,” he said.

Castro stressed the importance of remaining hopeful and looking to the future rather than being solely defined by tragedy. “This monument will be here for generations to come. It will be a visible reminder each day for all of us that even when a devastating tragedy like the genocide occurs, hope and then joy can follow.”

The community’s civic and religious leaders, including Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearengin, also attended the event. A brief video was shown featuring the leaders of ethnic and religious communities that had faced similar atrocities. Rabbi Rick Winer, of Temple Beth Israel, spoke on the ability of

SEE MONUMENT PAGE 8

President Dr. Castro Proclaims April 24 Day of Remembrance



Dr. Joseph I. Castro
FRESNOSTATENEWS.COM

President Joseph I. Castro proclaimed Friday, April 24, as “Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day” at Fresno State.

Gov. Jerry Brown also proclaimed Friday “A Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide” in the State of California.

SEE DR. CASTRO PAGE 2



The Armenian Genocide Monument at Fresno State.

Photo: Paul Schlesinger, The Collegian

Kooyumjian Foundation Grant of \$40,000 to ASP for 2015

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced that the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation has made a generous donation of \$40,000 to the

Armenian Studies Program and the Center for Armenian Studies. The gift will be earmarked for several purposes, including Fresno State student scholarships, support for the Armenian Genocide Monument on the Fresno State campus, sponsorship

of the “The Armenian Genocide: A Centennial Exhibit” at the Fresno State Madden Library, and a significant donation to the Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra’s April 25 performance of “Witness and Rebirth: An Armenian Journey.”

SEE KOOYUMJIAN PAGE 2

Armenian Studies Program 27th Annual Banquet

MARINA CHARDUKIAN
STAFF WRITER

More than 180 community members and Fresno State students, faculty and administrators gathered on Sunday, March 1, 2015, at the Twenty-Seventh Annual Armenian Studies Program Banquet held at the Fort Washington Golf and Country Club.

The Annual Banquet is a highlight for the year as the Armenian Studies Program emphasizes the achievements of both the Program and its students. This year forty-seven students,



Students receiving a Minor in Armenian Studies and those receiving a scholarship were recognized at the Banquet.

SEE BANQUET PAGE 7

Armenian Studies Program
Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Prof. Sergio La Porta, and the Armenian Studies Program would like to thank the donors, authors, and publishers for the following books, periodicals, videos, and archival gifts, either offered personally, or to the Program.

AGBU Hye Geen, Pasadena, California, for a new book *AGBU Hye Geen* (Los Angeles, 2014) 322pp., in Armenian and English. The book covers the first twenty years of the organization’s social, educational, cultural, and humanitarian initiatives.

Karen Cizek, Glendale, Arizona, for a copy of her grandfather’s memoirs, *A True Life Story*, 115pp., in English, by Souren H. Hanessian. Hanessian was born in Garin (Erzerum) and survived the Armenian Genocide.

Armenian Culture and Solidarity Association, Istanbul, Turkey, for their new 2015 calendar, featuring photographs from the Richard and Anne Elbrecht collection of historical photographs (courtesy of the Armenian Studies Program).

Lucy Erysian, Fresno, for a copy of her new book, *The Torn Photograph: A Story of Hope and Survival* (Fresno: Poppy Lane Publishing, 2015), 30pp., in English and Armenian. A children’s book with the theme of family and family loss from the Genocide.

Betty Ann (Noorigian) Hagopian, Fresno, for a copy of *Seeroon Darer: Armenian Ornate Initials from the Past, to the Present, for the Future*, by Seeroon Yeretzian (Glendale, CA: Abril Publishing, 2013), 248pp., illustrated. The purpose of the book is to acquaint people with the ornate initials used throughout the history of Armenian illuminated manuscripts.

Leo and Marlys Keoshian, Palo Alto, California, for several books related to Armenian Studies, including a guidebook to the Armenian Mekhitarist Monastery of San Lazarro.

Maiden Lane Press, Bronxville, NY, for a copy of *Four Years in the Mountains of Kurdistan: 1915-1919* by Aram Haigaz (Maiden Lane Press, 2014), 362pp., in English. The book was translated by his daughter Iris Haigaz Chekinian.

Peter E. Randall Publisher, Portsmouth, NH, for a copy of *Tadem: My Father’s Village, Extinguished during the 1915 Armenian Genocide* by Robert Aram Kaloosdian (Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher, 2015), 336pp., in English. Tadem was an Armenian village in the region of Kharpert and the book is told through the eyes of Boghos Kaloosdian, Robert Kaloosdian’s father.

Rubina Sevadjian, Norfolk, United Kingdom, for a copy of her new book *In the Shadow of the Sultan* (Yerani Publishing, 2015), 193pp., in English. The novel is the story of a boy in his early teens who leaves his home and travels 200 miles to his grandmother’s town. The story is set during the period of the Hamidian massacres of 1896.

Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, for a copy of *Goodbye, Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* (Stanford University Press, 2015) 191pp., by Karnig Panian, translated from the Armenian by Simon Beugekian. In 1915 five-year old Karnig Panian was living among his fellow Armenians in the Anatolian village of Gurin. Four years later he was found in an orphanage in Antoura, Lebanon.

KOORYUMJIAN, FROM PAGE 1
The donation will also be used for a major international conference, a Fall 2015 concert, and other events. The Armenian Studies Program has enjoyed the support of the Kooyumjian Foundation for several years and expresses its appreciation for the continued support.

DR. CASTRO, FROM PAGE 1
Dedication of the new Armenian Genocide Monument was held at 7:30p.m. on Thursday, April 23 on the Fresno State campus.
“The Monument is a symbol of hope, education, memory and inspiration,” said President Joseph I. Castro. Fresno State is the only campus in the United States with such a Monument, and there are three significant reasons why it is fitting to recognize the Armenian Genocide at Fresno State.
First, Fresno State is home to the top Armenian Studies Program in the country, a leader in teaching and scholarship in the field. Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Dr. Sergio La Porta have worked diligently to advance the Program. Dr. La Porta is chair of the Armenian Genocide Centennial Fresno Committee, the umbrella association established to commemorate the 100th anniversary.
Second, Fresno State is a campus committed to diversity of individuals and diversity of thought. The campus received the 2014 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award from “INSIGHT Into Diversity” magazine. Fresno State was recognized as a university that demonstrates an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.
Third, we are committed to education, which is also at the core of the Armenian Genocide Monument. This monument will inform and educate people about the Armenian Genocide and bring awareness to the problem of Genocide throughout history and throughout the world as a global issue.
Castro said the monument, which was financed with community donations, demonstrates the University’s commitment to human rights and justice on the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

Fall 2015 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1A-Elementary Armenian (Class #72240)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B Der Mugrdechian
• Arm 2A-Intermediate Armenian (Class #75855)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #74036)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D3				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #72241)	3	12:00P-12:50P	MWF	Staff
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #75843)	3	8:00A-9:15A	TuTh	Staff
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #75793)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	S. La Porta
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #75854)	3	3:30P-4:45P	MW	S. La Porta
Upper Division Armenian Studies Courses				
• ArmS 108A-Arm History I (Class #72242)	3	3:30P-4:45P	TuTh	S. La Porta

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.
Get a Minor in Armenian Studies.

HYE SHARZHOOM
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Give Your Way
to the Armenian Studies Program

There are many ways to support
the Armenian Studies Program.

- 1) A gift today could come through the donation of cash, stock, or goods.
- 2) The Armenian Studies Program can also be supported in the future in estate plans.

Regardless of how a donation is made, each gift impacts the lives of students and faculty at Fresno State.

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Dr. Douzjian Gives Concluding Lectures on Armenian Film



Left to right: Marine Vardanyan, Dr. Myrna Douzjian, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, and Dr. Sergio La Porta.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

LAUREN CHARDUKIAN
STAFF WRITER

2015-one hundred years since the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Filmmaking began taking roots in society about that same time and since the rise in popularity of film, it has become one of the greatest media for expressing emotions and feelings, in ways that books and traditional artwork are unable to do.

Dr. Myrna Douzjian, the Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies for the Spring 2015, presented her second public lecture of the semester, “Atom Egoyan’s Ararat: Traumatic Histories and Transnational Identities” on Thursday, March 19 and her third and final lecture, on Wednesday, April 8, was about “Reinventing the Genocide Documentary: *Solemnity*.”

Dr. Douzjian began her March 19 lecture discussing the basic plot of the movie *Ararat*. The film is about the making of a film that features “in Hollywood-esque fashion, the Armenians’ acts of self-defense in Van in 1915.” She noted that the filmmaker, Atom Egoyan, critiques the film within a film that is being made by director Edward Saroyan in the Egoyan film.

Though both films have their own story, Dr. Douzjian noted that there are at least fourteen more interwoven stories within the main film. She presented some of the main scenes and plot points that were critiqued with the film, but the largest issue stemmed from the fact that many believed Egoyan did not represent “the Armenian Genocide as the clear cut historical fact that it is.”

For some, the film was confusing because of the unrealistic portrayal of the Armenian Genocide. In Dr. Douzjian’s opinion, the actual function of the film is to show

“methods of coping with it [the Genocide] and its denial in the present day.” She also discussed that even though the bulk of the Armenian Diaspora came about because of the Genocide, they experience the world differently because they themselves did not experience the Genocide. Each of Egoyan’s characters experience what the Genocide means and its repercussions.

It was easy to see Dr. Douzjian’s passion for her subject in her final lecture of the semester. The presentation began with the introduction of Hrayr Anmahouni Eulmessekian, who together with Anahid Kassabian, created their interactive art piece called *Solemnity*. The piece consists of an iconic image of the Armenian Genocide, that is projected on a wall, but it is also dynamic and associated with sound.

Dr. Douzjian compared this piece to the traditional form of documentaries, which she considers a post-modernist approach. Once Dr. Douzjian presented the piece and her thoughts, she invited Eulmessekian to answer some of her questions and to give his comments. They discussed the physical work of assembling the piece and what was involved during the process. Because there was not a certain order or synchronism to the image being projected and to the audio being played, each day there was a different combination of sound and picture. Eulmessekian spoke about how using a well-known photo in his piece gave each person shown an identity that they once had.

Though the presentation concluded Dr. Douzjian’s lecture series, it provided the environment for those that attended to prepare themselves for an important and memorable 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Scottsdale Community College Features Armenian Genocide April 17 in “Genocide Awareness Week”

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program professors Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Sergio La Porta participated in Scottsdale Community College’s (SCC) third annual “Genocide Awareness Week,” April 13-18, 2015.

The “Genocide Awareness Week” brings academic experts, genocide survivors, and advocates for peace together for a week of sharing and analyzing the circumstances that led to these tragic periods.

Professor Der Mugrdechian and Dr. La Porta presented talks focused on the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, however the week included presenters on other genocides of the 20th century.

“The aim is to impart greater awareness of atrocities past and present and instill a desire to end all forms of genocide,” said SCC faculty member John Liffiton, co-founder and director of the program.

The “Genocide Awareness Week” was co-sponsored by the St. Apkar Armenian Church in Scottsdale, under the leadership of Fr. Zacharia Saribekyan. Armenian Genocide topics were also presented for the first time at Gateway Community College



Photo: Victoria Manocogian

Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, “Genocide Awareness Week” coordinator Prof. John Liffiton, and Dr. Sergio La Porta at Scottsdale Community College.

and Mesa Community College. St. Apkar hosted leaders of the Community Colleges for a banquet and cultural program on Sunday, April 19.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian spoke on “The Armenian Genocide-The 100th Anniversary,” analyzing the primary causes of the Genocide. He then continued by presenting three dimensions of the consequences of the Armenian Genocide: the Cultural Genocide, the effects of the Genocide on Armenian language and literature, and the effects of denial.

Dr. La Porta discussed

“One Hundred Years Later: The Armenian Genocide, Historical Memory and Moral Responsibility,” focusing on the important reasons why the Armenian Genocide needs to be remembered and commemorated.

Next year, Scottsdale Community College is planning an expanded role for the Armenian Genocide during “Genocide Awareness Week.” The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State will provide an Armenian Genocide Exhibit and an Armenian Genocide workshop for Phoenix and Scottsdale secondary school teachers.

Der Mugrdechian Participates in Conferences on Genocide at The Hague and Arizona State Univ.



Photo: ASP Archive

Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Joyce Sahyouni, Alexis Demirdjian, Dr. Eugene Sensenig-Dabbous, and Dr. Nanor Kebranian at The Hague Institute of Global Justice.

STAFF REPORT

A conference, entitled “Legacy of the Armenian Genocide 100 years later” was held at the Institute for Global Justice in The Hague, Netherlands, March 5-7, 2015.

The conference was organized by the National Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NIOD) of the Netherlands, the Institute for Armenian Studies at the University of South California and the Centennial Project Foundation. The Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno was a sponsor for the Conference.

During the conference on March 6-7, well-known scholars delivered papers, discussing the consequences of the Armenian Genocide from

different perspectives, as well as mechanisms for preventing future acts of genocide. Prominent lawyer Geoffrey Robertson



Photo: ASP Archive

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian speaking at the Arizona State University Genocide Conference “100 Years Later.”

touched upon the issues of law and policy.

On March 7, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian discussed expressions of the Genocide in modern Armenian-American literature during a session entitled “The Catastrophe’s Legacy.” armeniangenocide100.org/en/conference-entitled-legacy-of-the-armenian-genocide-100-years-on-held-in-the-hague-2/

On March 21-22, a group of Arizona State University College of Law students, held a conference commemorating the Armenian Genocide. The conference featured two distinguished keynote speakers, Professor Taner Akçam and Professor Peter Balakian. Prof. Der Mugrdechian spoke on “The Dimensions of Genocide.” <http://conferences.asucollegeoflaw.com/azarmgenocide/>

Hye Oozh - Saturdays 9:00AM - Noon

90.7 FM-KFSR

Hye Oozh is 90.7 KFSR’s weekly program dedicated to contemporary and traditional Armenian music and culture.

Current Hye Oozh DJs:

Tatevik Ekezian • Vartush Mesropyan • Marine Vardanyan

Congratulations Armenian Studies Minors and Graduating Seniors for 2014-2015

ARAM HAJIAN
Business Administration
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I took Armenian Studies because I am Armenian and I was curious to learn more about my culture.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

Learning the history of the Armenian people from beginning to end really opened my eyes to the struggle our people have gone through, but have yet maintained their religion.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

I enjoyed the language courses because of the complexity of the Armenian language. However, the two survey courses, Armenian History 108A and B were the classes I looked forward to the most.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to work full time and try to stay integrated within the Armenian community.



TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN
Recreational Administration
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

Because I missed my homeland so much, the Armenian Studies courses were the classes that made me feel closer to home, but most importantly I wanted to explore the history of Armenians in the Diaspora and learn about their involvement in the development of our valley and the United States.

What did you value most from your experiences in the

Armenian Studies Program?

The most valuable experiences I had were the amount of the information I learned about the Armenian history and the importance of different events that took place throughout the years. The people I have met and the memories I have created during the events are enormously important for me as well.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

All of the Armenian Studies courses are fascinating, but my favorite courses were “Arts of Armenia,” and the “Masterpieces of the Armenian Culture,” because the information in these courses is very interesting and useful. My favorite events were the commemorative activities for the Genocide, because it teaches many students, Armenian and non-Armenians, important information about the Genocide and the Armenian people.

What are your plans after graduation?

I hope to stay as involved as possible in the Armenian community; also I will be doing an internship in Fresno.

VARTUSH MESROPYAN
Psychology
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I wanted to take Armenian Studies courses to better myself as an Armenian. I have always wanted others to know of my people’s history, but only through the education that I gained from the ASP was I able to be more prepared and strong in how I accomplished this.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

I have been involved with ASO as a member, secretary, vice-president, and president. For seven years, I have also been involved with the Hye Oozh Radio Show. By being involved I have become patient, understanding, and have improved my leadership and communication skills. Being a part of the ASP has given me the courage to explore, learn and educate others about the Armenian rich culture, language and history.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

Every aspect of Armenian Studies was incredible. All the classes taught by Professor Der Mugrdechian, Professor La Porta and Professor Ohanessian were outstanding and filled with a lot of passion, energy and humor. I also enjoyed the classes taught by the two visiting professors, Dr. Sona Haroutyunian and Dr. Myrna Douzjian, which were related to the Genocide.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to take a year off from school and start planning my wedding then return and pursue a Master’s degree in counseling with an option of either in marriage, family counseling or student affairs and school counseling. I also plan on continuing my involvement with the local Armenian community.



ROZA MARABYAN
Social Work
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

At first, when I moved to the United State from Armenia, I never thought that I would study Armenian. I was surprised that in the United State colleges and universities gave the students a chance to study Armenian history. I decided to minor in Armenian Studies, because our history is so interesting and rich. I was very excited to see various ethnic students interested in my national history, religion, culture, art, beliefs, and values.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

I am very grateful and valued everything I learned in all of my Armenian courses. I learned more about my culture and roots than I could ever imagine. The Armenian Studies Program makes me feel proud to be an Armenian.



What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

I enjoyed all my Armenian Studies classes, especially, Armenian Studies 20, the Arts of Armenia. Professor Der Mugrdechian managed to teach us about the Armenian architecture, sculptures, artworks manuscripts and paintings in the most fascinating and detailed way. My favorite events are the Annual Banquet and the ASO Genocide Commemoration.

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduating from Fresno State, I plan on traveling to Armenia to visit the historical monasteries and cities that we learned about during our classes. I am also planning on finding a job in social work.



MICHAEL RETTIG
History
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I have been interested in Armenian history ever since I was young when I stumbled upon my great grandpa’s Armenian history books. Reading about Vartan and the Battle of Avarayr immediately sparked my interest in Armenian history. I am a fourth generation Armenian so I did not grow up immersed in the culture, aside from the cuisine. When I graduated from High School, I knew I wanted to go to Fresno State because of the strong Armenians Studies Program. I was excited to further broaden my knowledge of my ancestors to understand who we are as a people and to keep that alive.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

I most value the relationships I have made with fellow Armenian students. I have established friendships which I will have for the rest of my life.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

My favorite classes were the Armenian history courses. I am a history major, so I naturally gravitated towards that aspect of Armenian Studies. My favorite event is always the Genocide commemorations. I loved to see the Armenian community come together to honor our martyred ancestors and their memory. It is a time for us to reflect and to appreciate that we are still alive and thriving.

What are your plans after graduation?

I am planning to get my Masters in History and eventually teach at the university level.

MARINE VARDANYAN
Public Health
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

The Armenian Studies Program played a big role in my decision to attend Fresno State because I knew my college experience would be greatly enhanced by the numerous activities and projects organized by the Program. I immediately enrolled in the Armenian Studies courses because I was eager to learn from our very knowledgeable professors, discover more about myself and my heritage.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

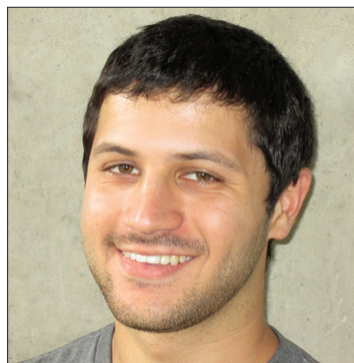
Every minute spent with the ASP has been incredibly gratifying. I take pride in receiving a minor in Armenian Studies and having the opportunity to study under and work alongside Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Prof. Sergio La Porta. The ASP has encouraged me to expand my horizons, take initiative and get involved, and contribute to the Fresno Armenian community. I have met inspiring individuals, participated in momentous programs, and acquired a great deal of experience.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

The Armenian Studies Program is all encompassing and I have greatly enjoyed the variety of activities and events organized by the Program. The highlight of my experience was the Summer 2014 trip to Armenia with Prof. Der Mugrdechian and Prof. La Porta. It was very surreal to be in Armenia with my peers and experience all that we learned in the classrooms. I lived one of the best two weeks of my life traveling throughout Armenia, learning about the culture and history, enjoying unforgettable moments, and building a special bond with all the participants.

What are your plans after graduation?

I will take a break from school to travel to Europe. After I return, I intend on gaining hands-on experience working in the field of public health so I can apply my skills towards bettering the Central Valley as well as the Republic of Armenia. I will pursue a graduate degree after a year off from school.



JOSEPH BOHIGIAN
Music-Composition
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I decided to take Armenian Studies courses to learn more about Armenian culture and language and to become more connected with my Armenian heritage.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

I valued most my new understanding of the Armenian people and the experiences our ancestors have gone through which made us who we are today.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

My favorite Armenian Studies class was Armenian history.

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I will pursue graduate studies in Music Composition at Stony Brook University in New York.

*Photos: Cary Edmondson, Campus Photographer
Barlow Der Mugrdechian*

Genocide Exhibit Opens April 10 in Madden Library



Left to right: Shirley Armbruster, Marcia Morrison, Henry Madden Library Associate Dean David Tyckoson, Dr. Sergio La Porta, and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian.

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

Fresno State’s Leon S. Peters Ellipse Gallery, located on the second floor of the Madden Library, has been transformed into a glimpse into the world of the Armenian Genocide. “The Armenian Genocide: A Centennial Exhibit, 1915-2015” organized by the Armenian Studies Program opened on Friday, April 10, with a reception co-sponsored with the Friends of the Madden Library.

The Exhibit was made possible through a generous donation from the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation and the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Fresno State President Dr. Joseph I. Castro and Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs Dr. Lynette Zelezny attended the opening reception. “We are so deeply pleased to have the symbolic representation of the values that this community brings to us and the connection that the university has to the work that is happening,” said Zelezny.

The Exhibit presents students and community members with a narrative of the Armenian Genocide told through photos and artifacts relating to the Genocide

from all over the world.

“In planning this exhibit, we kept in mind that the Armenian people have had a long and proud history,” said Professor Barlow Der Mugrdchian, Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program.



“We wanted people to begin their journey through the Exhibit by showing something of the place, Armenia, as well as highlighting the life of the people who once lived in Armenia.”

The Exhibit captures the story of the Armenian people, beginning with life before the Genocide. Displays of rare photographs, musical instruments, and videos of Armenians in their daily

routines provide a way for guests to visualize Armenian life before the massacres began. The Exhibit guides visitors through the historic events, with disturbing images of cruelty including starving children, deportations, lifeless bodies, and proud faces of Ottoman perpetrators. Visual documentation was selected from a variety of collections, giving insight into the happenings of the Genocide through different perspectives and never before seen images.

Many of the photos were from the newly released series “Iconic Images of the Armenian Genocide,” provided by the Armenian Assembly of America, the Armenian National Institute, and the Armenian Genocide Museum and Institute of Armenia.

Visitors also got a close-up of the posters created by the United States in efforts to collect funds for the Armenians. The American Committee for Relief in the

Near East, today known as the Near East Relief, mounted the largest humanitarian intervention program in American history.

Through such aid, a number of Armenians managed to escape the Genocide and arrive to the United States, with some settling in the San Joaquin Valley. The stories of Armenian migration to Fresno were placed in the final

SEE EXHIBIT PAGE 7

CineCulture Hosts Director Eric Nazarian for Presentation on Armenian “Celluloid” History



Left to right: Vartush Mesropyan, Lilit Grigoryan, Marine Vardanyan, Eric Nazarian, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Prof. Mary Husain, and Clarice Krikorian.

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

“Fresno to me is the epitome of the Armenian Diaspora experience in North America,” said director and screenwriter Eric Nazarian during his visit to

Fresno State for a discussion and film screening with the campus CineCulture Film Series, co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program.

These words resonate even more strongly this year as the Fresno Armenian Community

rallies together to commemorate the centenary of the Armenian Genocide. A large audience of more than 275 welcomed Nazarian on Friday, March 27, as he spoke on the topic of “Celluloid Exiles: A Brief History of the Armenian Genocide and Diaspora on Film.” Through a series of film clips, Nazarian gave an overview of how the Armenian people have been portrayed through cinema.

“The birth of cinema coincided with the genesis of the Armenian Genocide,” stated Nazarian. Clips from films such as *Ravished Armenia*, *Mayrig*, *Ararat*, *America America*, and *Bolis* were selected to demonstrate how the Armenian culture and history have been represented from the early 20th century to current times.

One of the earliest films about the Genocide, *Ravished Armenia*, tells the story of Arshaluys

SEE CINECULTURE PAGE 6

ASO Commemoration on April 24



ASO students at the April 24 Genocide Commemoration.

Photo: Raffi Mouradian

ARAMAYIS ORKUSYAN
STAFF WRITER

Members of the Fresno State Armenian Students Organization (ASO) continuously demonstrate their fierce love of Armenian culture and undying passion for bringing justice to the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide. On no occasion is this more evident than during the week of April 24.

As has become long-standing tradition, members of the ASO organize commemorative events during the week of the Armenian Genocide that brings together the Armenian community and the community of Fresno State. This year’s activities consisted of two contrasting events: a celebration of life and the resilient Armenian culture, followed by a solemn commemoration of the 1.5 million martyrs of the Genocide.

On Monday, April 20, the ASO demonstrated to the Fresno State community that the Armenian people and culture are still very much alive and thriving 100 years after the Armenian Genocide. Traditional and contemporary Armenian music filled the free speech area of Fresno State, and ASO students danced to the sounds of the *duduk* (Armenian woodwind instrument) performed by Aramayis Orkusyan, *dhol* (two sided hand drum), and *kamancha* (bowed string instrument) played by Gevorg Gevorgyan. The lively music accompanied a photo booth, where students had the opportunity to dress up in traditional Armenian garb and take a picture with Mt. Ararat in the background.

The week culminated with the commemoration of the Genocide on Friday, April 24, held at the newly built Armenian

Genocide Monument on the Fresno State campus. Over 500 people gathered to remember the tragic event in history and the 1.5 million Armenian lives lost.

As ASO president Marine Vardanyan stated in her opening remarks, “The Armenian people stand firm and united.” The commemoration began with the playing of “Bells of Peace” on the campus carillon at 19 seconds passed noon, and lasting for 15 minutes, signifying the year 1915—the year in which the Armenian Genocide began.

The commemoration included heartfelt remarks from Fresno State President Dr. Joseph I. Castro; Fresno State Associated Students President Moses Menchaca; and Associated Students Vice President of External Affairs Kiran Dhanjan.

“I would like to thank the faculty and the staff of the Armenian Studies Program because we would not be a leader in this field without their leadership and many contributions...I also want to thank the Armenian Students Organization and the Armenian students as they are also leaders among the entire community and they are among the finest scholars and leaders that we have at Fresno State,” stated Dr. Castro.

“This monument is deeply meaningful for us at Fresno State and for people throughout the nation and the world. And the letters that are coming to us regarding the monument are extraordinarily inspirational. Our community stands with all communities around the world to commemorate the Armenian Genocide and genocides like it that have occurred in the past.

SEE ASO PAGE 6



ASO students at the April 20 photo booth.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

ASO Genocide Commemoration Day



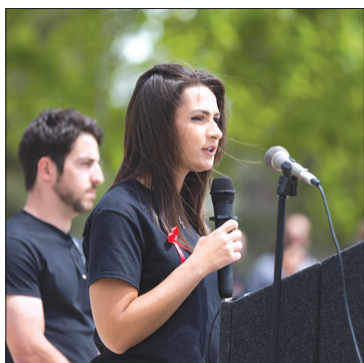
Left to right: Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Sosse Kendoyan, Aramayis Orkusyan, Menas Arisian, Faten Myaznih Kassabian, and Gayane Petrosyan.

Photo: Paul Schlesinger, The Collegian

ASO, FROM PAGE 5

My hope is that we will be able to work together so that we do not have them occur in the future,” concluded Dr. Castro.

Students from the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School also participated in



Tadeh Issakhanian, left, and Megi Hakobjanyan.

Photos: Paul Schlesinger, The Collegian



Prof. Arakel Arisian

with a stirring reading of Vahan Tekeyan’s poem “Bidi Inas” by Haverj Stanbouljian, and an emotional reading of survivor memoirs by Megi Hakobjanyan—who presented the recollections

of her own family—and Tadeh Issakhanian.

ASO member Menas Arisian performed an original song “1915-Never Again,” composed especially for the commemoration of the Genocide. Accompanying Arisian as part of the chorus were Faten Myaznih Kassabian, Gayane Petrosyan, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Sosse Kendoyan, and Aramayis Orkusyan.

This year’s keynote speaker was former ASO president Prof. Arakel Arisian from the Department of Finance and Business Law. Prof. Arisian spoke of the significance of the Armenian Genocide, not only for Armenians, but also for all people.

“This type of injustice transcends nationality, race, color, politics, religion. This is a crime against humanity, and no matter what your background is, it is important for you to care and seek justice and truth,” stated Prof. Arisian. He also stressed the importance of persistence. “We must be persistent in fighting for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.”

Equally as important, Prof. Arisian remarked “We also must be persistent in our zeal to live productive and honorable lives so that we do not waste the opportunities given to us by the sacrifices of our ancestors.” His words were both inspirational and thought provoking.

The commemorative program

CINECULTURE, FROM PAGE 5

“Aurora” Mardiganian, a survivor who witnessed the deaths of her family members, but miraculously managed to escape and move to New York. Produced in 1919, while the wounds from the atrocities were still fresh, Mardiganian was persuaded to travel to Hollywood and play herself in the film, after being given false hope that her brother was alive in Los Angeles.

Ravished Armenia captured the horror of the Genocide and reflected the experience of the Armenian people. The theme of exile, deportation, and loss are continuous throughout the films, such as in the 1963 *America America*, financed by Warner Bros., which depicts the repression of the Greek and Armenian minorities, and in *Mayrig*, through the powerful visuals that convey the cruelty of the Ottoman perpetrators.

Nazarian concluded the interesting evening with a screening of his own short film, *Bolis*. Nazarian reiterated the struggle and search for justice through a story of an Armenian *oud* player who travels to Constantinople and attempts to find his grandfather’s *oud*. Though he befriends a Turkish woman, his search for his grandfather’s instrument remains unsuccessful.

Despite the dark moment in their history, which has been embedded in all things related to Armenians, this small group of people continues to persevere, multiply, and, just like an exclamation mark, make their presence known.



Photos: Paul Schlesinger, The Collegian

concluded with the placement of carnations around the Armenian symbol of eternity in the center of the new Armenian Genocide Monument, accompanied by a performance of “Hovern Engan” on the *duduk* by Aramayis Orkusyan.

Following the Genocide Commemoration Program, participants entered the Monument to place flowers.

GRADUATES, FROM PAGE 4

LILIT GRIGORYAN Business Administration-Finance

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

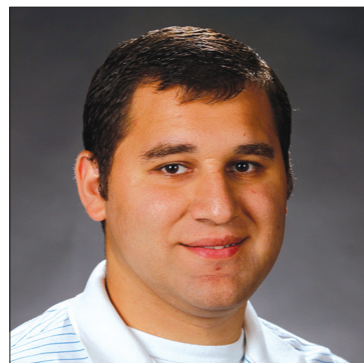
My parents always kept telling me that no matter where you live, you need to always remember that you are Armenian and what being Armenian means. Although I have never lived in Armenia, I always wanted to preserve my “Armenian soul.” Taking Armenian Studies courses seemed a great way to stay connected with my country.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

I would like to say a big thank you to all my professors for putting so much effort to support the Program, so that students can reconnect with their roots. I truly appreciate all their work and knowledge they shared.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

Every class and every event was meaningful for me. Each class offers a great opportunity to learn about Armenia, and each event is an opportunity to experience our beautiful Armenian culture.



ARNOLD MURADYAN Biomedical Physics

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I am Armenian and, at the time, had very little knowledge about my Armenian ancestors. I decided to take an Arts of Armenia course, and see if I would get interested. After taking the course I got inspired by Prof. Der Mugrdechian and took as many Armenian courses as I could.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

I will always value the knowledge I received about Armenian history and culture from an exceptional teacher, Professor Der Mugrdechian. Events and talks were great and memorable, but there is nothing in this Program I value more than the knowledge I got in the classroom when I took Armenian courses.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

Armenian 108B course was my favorite. It was the course where I learned about the struggles of Armenian people under foreign rule, the phenomenal people, such as Khrimian Hayrik, who loved and lived for the Armenian people, and the birth of the new Armenian Republic.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend Oregon State University and obtain an M.S. degree in Medical Physics.

OVSANNA SIMONYAN Business Administration- International Business

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I really wanted to know more about my roots and the start of Christianity because my family always encouraged it with such great passion, which motivated me to be the proud Armenian I am today.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

Everything in the Armenian Studies Program is very valuable to me because everything that they do teaches me. The expansion of knowledge and history is what keeps our culture alive.

What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

I really enjoyed the Armenian 148-Masterpieces of Armenian Culture class because I never had the chance to analyze and read Armenian Literature and never knew how interesting it would be!

What are your plans after graduation?

I want to gain experience within my career and hope to have a business of my own that will later allow me to fund my own nonprofit organization in Armenia, which focus on economic development in order to increase the number of jobs in Armenia.



New Music Ensemble Performs March 9



Left to right: Morgan Phillips (guitar), Nathaniel Musso (piano), Joseph Bohigian (percussion), Josh Locher (saxophone), Lianna Stuart (violin), Katie Winter (clarinet), Aimee Dockum (cello), and Cassandra Barnes (flute).

TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN STAFF WRITER

Remembrance commemorations take many forms. The Armenian Genocide is often commemorated by Church ceremonies, marches and demonstrations, and public talks.

This year, as the centenary of the Genocide is marked, one of the unique commemorative programs was a performance by the Fresno State New Music Ensemble, a student-run chamber group that organizes performances dedicated to the promotion of music by living composers.

The Ensemble kicked off their Spring series on Monday, March 9, in the campus Concert Hall with a program dedicated to living Armenian composers.

The students performed compositions by Tigran

Mansurian, Charles Amirkhanian, Anna Aidinian, Artur Avanesov, Steven Arahamian, Eve Beglarian, and an original piece, “In the Shadow of Ararat,” created by New Music Ensemble Founder Joseph Bohigian.

The program consisted of modern and contemporary works with vibrant and unexpected sounds, yet in every composition, there was an Armenian influence.

“I wanted to display for the audience the wide range of music that is being created today by Armenian composers,” said Bohigian. The closing performance of the Concert was the world premiere of Bohigian’s “In the Shadow of Ararat.”

The purpose of the concert was not only to commemorate but also demonstrate how Armenian artists continue to thrive and contribute greatly to their respective fields.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian



Dr. Joseph Castro, center back, with students who received a Minor in Armenian Studies.

Photo: Ovsanna Simonyan

BANQUET, FROM PAGE 1

who received a combined \$60,000 in Armenian Studies scholarships, were recognized at the Banquet. The occasion also included a celebration of the Armenian Students Organization’s 40th Anniversary.

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian greeted guests and expressed the Program’s appreciation for the community support. Armenian Studies Program Lifetime Donors were honored for their support of the Program. Those honored included Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan and M. Victoria Karagozian Kazan, Dr. Arnold and Dianne Gazarian, the Bertha and John Garabedian Chartable Foundations, the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation, the Leon S. Peters Foundation, and many others whose bequests and scholarships funds have provided the Armenian Studies Program and its students with the means to excel.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian introduced special University guests Debbie Adishian Astone, Interim Vice-President for Administration; Paula Castadio, Vice President for University Advancement; Shirley Armbruster, Associate Vice President of University Communications; Dr. Saul Jimenez-Sandoval, Interim Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Humanities; Moon-Ja Yunouye, Interim Director of Development for the College of Arts and Humanities; and Dan Kimball, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations

The evening’s celebratory atmosphere consisted of a program honoring the achievements of the Armenian Studies Program and recognizing the link between Fresno State and the greater Armenian community. St. Paul Armenian Church Pastor Rev. Fr. Yessai Bedros

gave the invocation, followed by welcoming remarks from Dr. Sergio La Porta of the Armenian Studies Programs. As guests enjoyed their dinner, Fresno State student and composer Joseph Bohigian treated the audience to three of his original piano pieces.

Fresno State President Dr. Joseph I. Castro shared his support for the Armenian Studies Program, congratulating all of the students, and especially those receiving their Minor and scholarship recipients. He also reiterated his support of all the initiatives taken by the Armenian Studies Program, especially the construction of the Armenian Genocide Monument.

Graduating senior and president of the Armenian Students Organization Marine Vardanyan introduced the ASO executive officers and reflected on her tenure in office and about her interactions with the Armenian Studies Program.

“Throughout my four years at Fresno State, I have been an active participant in ASO. I have witnessed the energy and excitement that drives our members to actively participate and contribute to the group.”

With many current and past ASO members in attendance, Vardanyan screened a video presentation of the ASO throughout the years. Photographs of students from the 1970s to today flashed across the screen, awakening old memories and bringing smiles to the faces of the guests.

“Throughout the decades, young Armenian students have demonstrated their unfaltering connection to their heritage through events and activities that have ranged from traditional dance lessons to April 24th Genocide commemorations,” said Vardanyan.

As the photos of the video demonstrated, 40 years since its

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establishment, the ASO continues to follow its original mission. The ASO also prepared *simit* sesame cookies for those in attendance as an expression of appreciation towards the community.

Following the video presentation, Prof. Der Mugrdechian updated the audience on the progress of the Armenian Genocide Monument, an exciting topic for everyone.

Photos of the most recent phases of construction created a buzz among the crowd, curious to see the completion of the Monument.

Following the presentation, students were recognized for their achievements by President Castro, Dr. Jose A. Diaz, Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, Prof. Der Mugrdechian, and Dr. La Porta.

A surprise for all graduating seniors completing a Minor in Armenian studies was a special Armenian Studies Program graduation stole, a gift created this year for the students.

“I feel pride to be one of the first students to receive an Armenian Studies stole, an honor that once more reminded me of how much I appreciate the Armenian Studies Program for giving us the opportunity to learn about our heritage and history,” said ASO Secretary and Minor recipient Tatevik Hovhannisyan.

This year, eight students are graduating with Armenian Studies Minors: Joseph Bohigian, Aram Hajian, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Roza Marabyan, Vartush Mesropyan, Michael Rettig, David Tataryan, and Marine Vardanyan.

The Armenian Studies Program Banquet was an enjoyable evening.

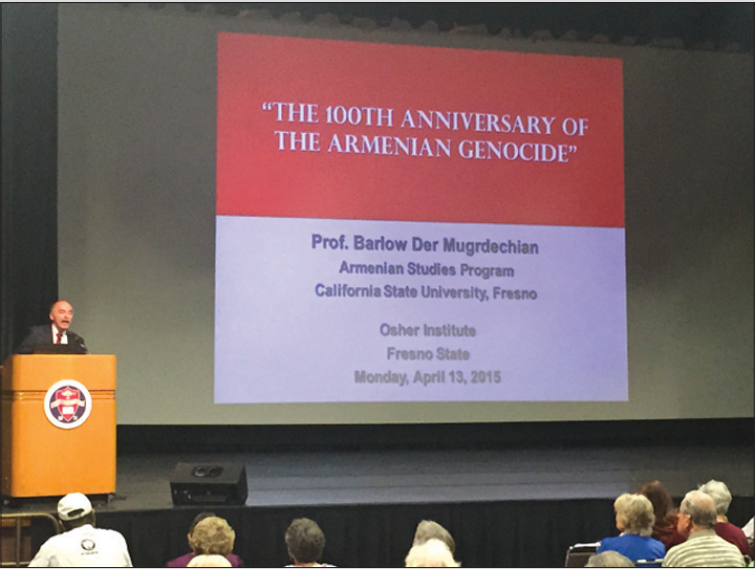
EXHIBIT, FROM PAGE 5

section of the Exhibit. Black and white photos of some of the first Armenians to settle in Fresno illustrated the triumph of the Armenian people despite all attempts to eliminate them.

Armenian Genocide Centennial posters submitted by graphic design students for the Armenian Studies Program highlighted the last section of the Exhibit. Thus, the Armenian experience from 1915-2015 was presented through the Exhibit, producing feelings of sorrow, hope, and triumph.

“When we conceived of the idea of the layout, we conceived of it as a journey,” said Der

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Talk on 100th Year of Genocide



Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian at the Osher Institute talk.

ARAMAYIS ORKUSYAN

STAFF WRITER

Photo: Craig Rebello

April 24, 2015 undoubtedly marked a symbolic day for Armenians worldwide as they commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Consequently, significant efforts have been put forth to raise awareness and urge international recognition of the Genocide. More than just a matter of recognition, the Armenian Genocide is a question of morality and human rights that affects not only Armenians, but all people. The importance of recognizing and contending with past genocides, however, should not be overlooked. Examining the past and understanding the injustices inflicted on such a large number of people is a necessary component for ensuring the end of such atrocities.

One of the most important tools for bringing about recognition of the Genocide is to actively continue speaking of these atrocities. The Central Valley has been fortunate to be home to California State University, Fresno, which has continuously encouraged the open exchange of ideas and information, and on many occasions, the discussion of the Armenian Genocide.

Most recent of these was a talk by Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Fresno State titled

“The 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.”

OLLI offers opportunities for adults age 50 and up to continue learning through general lecture sessions and short courses. A large crowd filled the Fresno State Satellite Student Union on Monday, April 13, the majority of whom were non-Armenians, to hear Professor Der Mugrdechian speak about the Armenian Genocide.

Professor Der Mugrdechian, who is not a first time lecturer at the OLLI, discussed five dimensions of the Armenian Genocide, important historical aspects of the Genocide, and its legacy and impact on succeeding generations.

Commenting on the decision to invite Professor Der Mugrdechian to teach about the Armenian Genocide, Jill Wagner, the executive director of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, remarked “OLLI is dedicated to educating the community about current events, particularly those pertaining to Fresno State. The Genocide was an important event in Armenian history, as well as for Fresno, and we want more people to learn about it and the Memorial [being built on the Fresno State campus].”

Other attendees demonstrated their interest by asking insightful questions after the lecture to attain a deeper understanding of the tragic event in history.

Mugrdechian. Student Margaret Srmayan played a major role in helping to create that journey. Double-majoring in fine arts and theater arts design, Srmayan was thrilled to receive an invite to assist with the Exhibit.

“This project feels very personal to me. I am the great-granddaughter of Genocide survivors and now I am the only Armenian student in my department. I feel nothing but privileged and grateful to be part of this project.”

Malina La Porta prepared the cases for the Exhibit telling a variety of stories and Steve Ruppel provided invaluable assistance in the preparation of the Exhibit.

Dr. Sergio La Porta assisted in the preparation of captions and historical background for the Exhibit.

Noah Files was instrumental

in the construction of the walls for the Exhibit and a large crew of ASO members assisted in setting up the Exhibit.

The Leon S. Peters Ellipse Gallery was converted into a room with free-standing deep red walls that dominated the space and set an appropriate atmosphere for the somber occasion.

“The Armenian Genocide: A Centennial Exhibit 1915-2015” brings the story of the Armenian Genocide to a wider community.

The second part of the Exhibit, a fascinating collection of Armenian Church photographs by Richard and Anne Elbrecht, is located on the third floor of the Library, in the Pete P. Peters Ellipse Gallery.

The exhibits will remain open during regular hours of the Henry Madden Library through May 29. http://libguides.csufresno.edu/library_hours

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The Armenian Genocide Monument at Fresno State.

MONUMENT, FROM PAGE 1

Jews and Armenians to persevere through the horrors of genocide. “We can take the scar we bear and have it serve as an emblem that we are survivors in a difficult world, but a world that still blooms.” He expressed the hope in rebirth that persecuted communities retain in rising above their tragic histories.

“Out of the ashes we create beautiful communities, beautiful culture, and what we have here in this community is a beautiful example of that.”

The Armenians of the San Joaquin Valley are proof that a people can survive such a tragedy and establish a prosperous community 7,000 miles away from their homeland.

A video narrated by Professors Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Sergio La Porta gave a brief account of the symbolic meaning of each of the monument’s nine pillars. The major donors for the

monument were recognized for their support of the project.

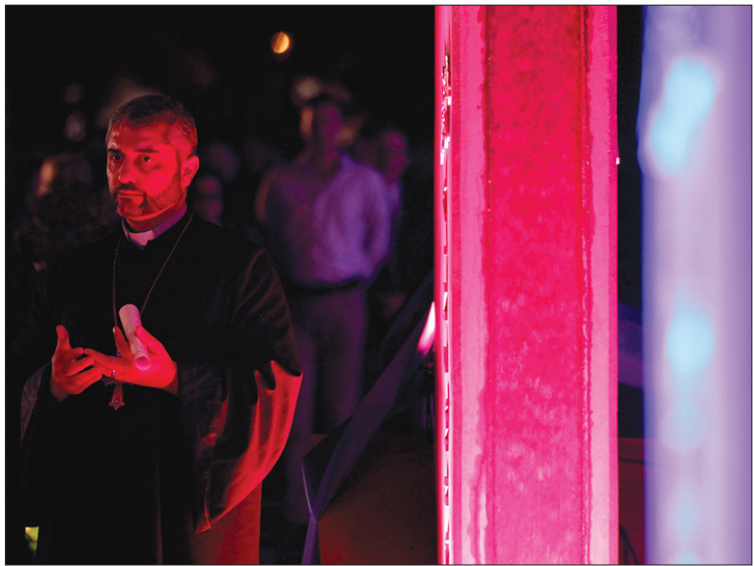
Illuminated by the colors of Armenia’s tri-colored flag, the monument stood proudly and defiantly for all to bear witness to the vitality of the Armenian people. The monument is not only

important in commemorating the Genocide, but it also speaks to the hope that the Armenian community has for the future.

The timeline inside the monument, depicting significant events and cultural achievements in Armenia’s history, will help to educate Fresno State students about the Armenian people. It will help to ensure that the Armenians are known for more than their sufferings, but for their accomplishments as well.

At the ceremony’s conclusion, President Joseph and Mrs. Mary Castro, Mr. Valery Mkrtumian, Deputy Consul of the Republic of Armenia, and the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia in Fresno, Berj Apkarian, cut the purple ribbon, opening the monument to the public.

The Armenian Genocide Monument is a project of the Armenian Genocide Centennial Committee of Fresno.



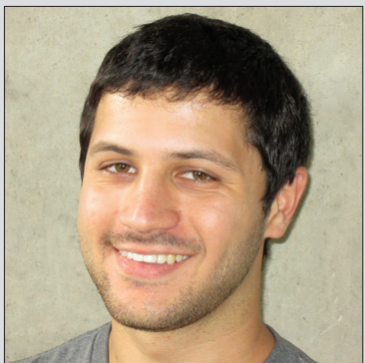
Fr. Zaven Markosyan, pastor of St. Mary Armenian Church in Yettam, at the Armenian Genocide Monument.

Three Armenian Students Named as Dean’s Medalist

Megi Hakobjanyan
Dean’s Medalist
College of Social Sciences



Joseph Bohigian
Dean’s Medalist
College of Arts and Humanities



Marine Vardanyan
Dean’s Medalist
College of Health and Human Services



Ribbon cutting at the Armenian Genocide Monument.



The soaring pillars.

Photo: Darlene Wendels, The Collegian

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