

The Manoogian Voice

Heritage • Achievement • Excellence

PROMOTING THE
APPRECIATION
OF LIFELONG
LEARNING WITHIN
AN ENVIRONMENT
OF EXCELLENCE



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“It feels like we’re alive:” Armenian Cultural Day at the High School

On March 16, 2023, the Manoogian School revived its annual Armenian Cultural Day celebration. Through the efforts of Sebouh Avedikian, Nayiri Karapetian, and Dikran Callan, and spearheaded by the Senior class, the high school student body and various guests enjoyed an afternoon program of Armenian cultural and artistic expression.

The event started with a poignant dedication to the victims of the Karabakh War and the ongoing Ukrainian War; students from diverse backgrounds decorated the stage with roses and candles to commemorate those tragedies. Next, students read two Armenian poems: “A new flower showed bright today,” by Nerses Shnorhali, and «Ես իմ անուշ Հայաստանի» or “My Love Armenia,” to celebrate the passion of the Armenian for his homeland, followed by the Ukrainian poem “Zapovit,” full of pride at living and dying for Ukrainian identity.

The program mainly focused on a skit adaptation of the story “The Joyful Fellow,” or «Բեֆ անողին քեֆ չի պակսի» by Armenian poet Hovhannes Toumanian. The play depicts the challenges faced by an Armenian cobbler, Armen, living in 8th century Baghdad, whose good nature and resilience never fail in spite of increasing misfortunes. Senior and Junior student performers dressed in traditional Armenian attire, accentuated by three different dances by students from across the high school. Finally, the hero, when faced with an impossible choice, invoked the prayer of St. Gregory of Narek of the 10th century. Armen found great prosperity at last and gathered students and staff up on the stage with him for a celebratory dance.

At the end of the play, the character the King confirms the moral of the story: Armen’s persistent optimism and faith mirror the indomitable Armenian spirit through the ages. Following the Genocide of 1915, Armenian cultural



expression may seem to have waned worldwide. But this isn’t true, as Nayiri Karapetian says: “The very thing that tried to destroy us...is actually the thing that preserved us—today, Armenian culture has been spread to even more places than could ever be destroyed.”

This is the unique mission of the Manoogian school: Being a bulwark of Armenian preservation. The school bears both the benefits and the responsibility of celebrating our beautiful traditions. As Karapetian affirms, “It feels like we’re alive. It’s a rebirth again.”



Armenian Cultural Day Photos

Manoogian Students in DC

6th Grader at ANCA-ER Advocacy Days

Vartanantz Program

In Memory of Edward Azadian

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Armenian Cultural Day at the High School



“This is such a small world:” Current and Former Manoogian Students Meet in DC

In September of 2022, Khrystyna Masnytska, a Senior at the Manoogian School, drove to Washington, DC, to join the Ukrainian Crisis Response Committee at the Ukrainian Action Summit. The goal was to “advocate for support, provisions, financial aid, and other resources,” and Masnytska personally emphasized the needs of children in Ukraine.

There, she ran into a pleasant



surprise in meeting Ani Toumajan, a Manoogian alumnae from 2006. The daughter of Detroit Armenian icons Dickran and Anahit Toumajan, Ani works as a staffer in Senator Debbie Stabenow’s office.

Toumajan shares, “She [Masnytska] started talking about...her principal and her school [in Michigan], and what they had been doing to take in Ukrainian refugees. And at this point, it all started to sound familiar. She barely got the words out before I went, ‘That’s where I went!’ and from that point, the meeting got derailed.”

Both Masnytska and Toumajan left the meeting feeling bolstered by the other’s presence. As Toumajan reflects, “It was really nice to see Khrystyna there, being a constituent, coming to DC, talking to her elected officials’ offices—I think this is something every person should learn that they can do and should do.”



6th Grader Travels to DC for ANCA-ER Advocacy Days

In February, 6th grader Kohar Karapetian and other ANCA representatives traveled to Washington, DC, to advocate for assistance for the dire situation in Artsakh. Kohar was one of over 100 advocates meeting with over 90 US Representatives and Senators, and her presence was notable.

Kohar met with Senator Debbie Stabenow’s office staffer Ani Toumajan, who assured her of the Senator’s willingness to help; following this success, Kohar and the ANCA team met with many Michigan representatives. “We asked [them] to support a resolution or a special request that

condemns Azerbaijan’s actions,” said Kohar. “We also would like them to send help to Artsakh. We also are asking that they cut the millions of dollars the United States sends to Azerbaijan to help their military.”

Kohar found success in several Representatives, particularly Haley Stevens, Rashida Tlaib, and Congressman Josh Gottheimer; by the end of the meetings in DC, the number of co-sponsors jumped from eight to over 50. Indeed, with activists like Kohar bringing up the next generation and carrying the torch for Armenian rights, the future looks incredibly bright.



Vartanantz Program

The Battle of Avarayr, known as Vartanantz War, represents the conviction of the Armenian nation as it stood up for its faith in Christianity when it was challenged by the Persian Empire. On May 26, 451 AD, Vartan Mamigonian led 66,000 Armenian soldiers against a 150,000-strong Persian army. The battle lasted one day, Vartan was killed, and the Armenians lost.

However, they did not give up, but stood firm and persevered. The Armenian nation secured its freedom, free to preserve their Armenian identity and live in their homeland. This year's commemorative event was held on Thursday, February 16, 2023. Students of the Manoogian elementary school recited and sang in honor of Kach Vartan and his friends. Fourth grade students presented a play directed by Mrs. Anahit Toumajan.



Remembering Mr. Azadian

The Manoogian School students and families share their condolences and mourn the loss of Mr. Edmond Azadian, long-time Board Member and friend to the school. His place in the Armenian community has left an indelible mark on our hearts. Asdvadz hokin lousavoreh.