

Inbound Exchange Group Visit, December 26, 2002 - January 19, 2003



#65 and #190 Educators and students with Steve Kurkjian, Globe Columnist "Independent Media"

December-January Armenian exchange visitors

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On December 26, a new group of students from Schools #65 and 190 arrived from Yerevan. They were accompanied by two teachers from each school, who had their own program designed to acquaint them with education in the US. Students and teachers were hosted by members of the summer group from Belmont and Arlington High Schools, as well as potential new travelers for summer '03. The program was an intense mix of sightseeing and getting to know the Boston area, with field trips, films and classroom discussion relating to the central theme of "Diversity and Tolerance." A number of dinners with hosts from different cultures (Spanish, Brazilian, Indian, German, Italian, Polish, Arab) gave the group a direct experience of the diversity in US society, as did an evening Seder at Temple Beth Shalom in Cambridge, and dinner preceding it at the Middle East Restaurant, courtesy of owners Joseph and Nabil Sater. It was a fortunate coincidence that by arriving right after Christmas, the group was able to attend a performance of the Christmas Revels in Sanders Theatre in Cambridge, featuring Armenian and Georgian music and dance-the two cultures bridged by the story of the life of the troubadour Sayat Nova.

An afternoon with the "Peace Games" staff has by now become a staple of our US program. This time, not only did the group learn a number of cooperation and leadership games from Steve Brion-Meisels and his colleague Kori Redepenning, but managed to teach them their own game, in which the group becomes a "human knot" and then unties it.

Every year, the program looks at a number of aspects of civil society. This year, visits were made to various town departments and agencies such as the Belmont Police Department and Belmont Municipal Light Company, the Cambridge Recycling Center and Cambridge Business Development Center, Cambridge City Council, and the State House. Cambridge Mayor Michael Sullivan and his staff hosted the group for a reception, and particularly memorable was City Councilor Marjorie Decker's pep talk about young women (like herself) becoming leaders and going into politics.

About the Exchange Program

The Program, called "Secondary School Partnership," is sponsored by the Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association, Inc. with funding support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The goal of the program is to partner two local schools, Arlington High School and Belmont High School with schools in Yerevan, Armenia. Each school hosted five students from Yerevan in the winter of 2002. Students from their schools will make a reciprocal visit to Yerevan in the summer of 2003.

The Theme of the program is "Building A Civil Society", and is focused on advancing mutual understanding between our local community and Armenia and developing sustainable institutional linkages that serve the needs and interests of the students, schools and their communities. The groups include a chaperone and an educator, whose program is to study education methodology. Participating students and the educator establish long-term activities and joint projects between the host and guest students. They also engage in local community service projects.

December-January Armenian exchange visitors

(Continued from page 1)

A visit to Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School (CRLS) made a large impact on the group, because of its diverse student body, the fact that its students speak 62 languages, and because Ben Affleck and Matt Damon (famous movie stars worldwide!) went there. This visit, which was arranged by Mayor Sullivan's Education Liaison, Ruby Pierce, included a chance to meet with Assistant Principal Caroline Hunter, and tour the brand new Rindge School of Technical Arts, whose Executive Director Steve Spofford hosted a wonderful lunch prepared by the CRLS School of Culinary Arts.

Thanks to CYSCA Board Member Laura Margosian, who serves as Director of CRLS High School Volunteers Placements, Projects, and Training, the group spent one day at Harvard with the undergraduate-organized Harvard Political Education Project. Together with 125 students from CRLS, the Muriel S. Snowden International School and Dorchester High School they served as members of a model US Congress, drafting and voting on bills on the cutting-edge US issues of surrogate motherhood, school prayer, racial redistricting and Missile Defense. For Lilit Baghdasarian, this was a dream come true to set foot in Harvard Yard, and she was inspired to get up and speak to one of the bills in front of the whole Model Congress.

As the Armenian students and teachers look back on their trip, one general impression about the US is emerging from their emails: that US students are greatly encouraged to develop and express their own opinions on issues. As the students were departing for home, they said they would like to pursue the following projects: an anti-smoking campaign; landmines; work with the Armenia Tree Project; work with fairy tales to develop different outcomes which resolve conflict; "something which helps to develop respect," "tolerance," and in general, to be a volunteer. We look forward to their success!

For further reflections on the impact of the trip upon our visitors, watch the CYSCA website (www.cysca.org). In addition, CYSCA publishes "Educators Abstracts"-an annual compilation of reports by both the US and Armenian teachers.

US summer 2002 exchange trip

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Last June, a group of 20 students and teachers from CYSCA set off for three weeks in Yerevan, to be hosted by students and teachers from schools #65 and 190 who had visited here the previous December, thus completing the second year of two-way exchanges in the Secondary School Partnership to Promote Civil Society. The exchange is funded in part by the US State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Pre-departure orientation took place over several months of group discussions and lectures by guest speakers in which students learned about Armenian history including the Genocide, and studied the Cold War in depth, using curriculum on international law, diplomacy and civil society development from the Toors Cummings Institute at Connecticut College, and Close-Up, Washington, DC.

According to Rev. Joanne Gulezian-Hartunian, Project Manager for the Secondary School Partnership, highlights of the summer trip were an official welcome by students wearing traditional folk dress; a meeting with Mayor Robert Nazaryan of Yerevan, where the group was interviewed by TV reporters; the Saturday afternoon session with the young volunteers of Makur Yerevan ("Clean Yerevan"), sweeping up trash in the streets of Yerevan (see article on p. 13); visits to the School for the Visually Impaired and an orphanage, where the group read to the children, played games with them, danced and developed friendship.

At schools #65 and 190, classes were given in Armenian conversation for the US students, using traditional methods of conversational Armenian and vocabulary. The group recommended that this be a pre-departure program for the next group going to Yerevan. Rev. Hartunian commented that "This speaks well of the students that are accepted into our program, because it shows a desire and willingness to try and understand and immerse themselves in a different culture and language." The visitors also joined with their host students in workshops on conflict resolution, English literature and Armenian classics. The group was also given a lecture on a free and independent Armenian media by Vardan Hovanessian from CBS, Moscow, who had been imprisoned in Azerbaijan and freed by Amnesty International.

The concept of volunteerism was a main theme of the trip. The Armenian hosts had visited Perkins School for the Blind here in Watertown in January 2002. Inspired by this, they created a project with the School for the Visually Impaired in Yerevan, visiting on a monthly basis. Similarly, the idea for establishing Special Olympics came out of the group's visit to the Peace Corps office in Yerevan.

While in Armenia, each US student focused on one aspect of civil society, e.g. media, law, gender issues, environmental issues, and made a two-year commitment to a project. Rev. Hartunian says, "To call it an exchange is a misnomer. It is a commitment to democracy-building in both countries through school partnerships and joint program development. The US State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was so impressed by the Armenian team's level of volunteer activity and program development that they issued their own award to commend the founders of the project and the volunteers." The two teachers on the trip had their own individual programs, meeting with their counterparts and studying the Armenian education system. Andrew Crowe, who teaches English in Arlington, taught lessons on American short stories and also introduced the game of Ultimate Frisbee to his hosts. Belmont teacher Cheryl Shushan gave a series of classes on conflict resolution, setting the stage for further CYSCA-sponsored work in this area (see article about Nancy Kalajian's project on p. 6). Rev. Hartunian said that the educator program "strengthens teacher skills to identify multiple intelligences, thereby utilizing all of Armenia's future brain power." (The work of Howard Gardner is beginning to be introduced in Armenia.) "Armenia is not a country to be examined, but to be explored with its limitless possibilities and the greatest of all resources, its people. Armenia does not need to be taught how to fish; it needs to be pointed in the direction of the best catch. I believe our program has done that."

About CYSCA

The Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA) was formed by a group of concerned citizens of Cambridge, MA who believed that a partnership with a Soviet city would promote world peace. They understood that people can build bridges for friendship, goodwill and cooperation that some times governments cannot. In 1986, Cambridge City Councilor Frank Duehay led a mission of eleven Cambridge citizens to Yerevan, Armenia, to present a proposal for what became a sister city partnership the following year. CYSCA was incorporated in 1987 as a nonprofit, under section 501, (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue code.

In the 16 years which have followed, many activities have taken place, including citizens' exchanges in the fields of education, economics, environment, music, arts, culture, medicine, school aid, youth exchanges and humanitarian aid.

America

by Anna Harutunyan, #65

For me America is a developed country and there are very beautiful houses. I myself lived in a beautiful house while in the USA. The house was big, and had many rooms. But in Yerevan houses are small. In Yerevan there are many flats instead of big houses. Here, there are many beautiful cars. My host had two cars, but in Yerevan there are people that don't have any. In Yerevan nature is more important. In Yerevan we can buy many things with a dollar, but here we can't buy as many things with the same money. In America we can find jobs easily but in Yerevan there are many people who can't find jobs. In the USA there are many computers sometimes more than one for each family, but in Yerevan many people do not have computers. Here, grandparents don't live with their children, but in Yerevan my whole family lives together in one house. I like that all of my family is together all the time in Yerevan.

After visiting the USA, I can say that both countries have their problems.

Our Exchange Participants

GHAZARYAN TATEVIK SCHOOL #65 My name is Tatevick, surname is Ghazaryan and last name is Karen. I have a large family. I have a father, mother, a grandmother, a brother. My father is 41 years old. He is an electrician. My mother is an engineer and she is 41 years old. My grandmother is a pensioner. My brother's name is Artashes, he is 18 years old. He is a student and he studies at the institute, of economy. I am 14, and I learn in the 9th grade this year. I have a musical education, and I can play the piano. I have studied in the musical school for 7 years. My hobby is listening to the music (classic) and dancing. Besides I like reading books and I like to watch interesting and funny shows on TV very much. My dream is to become a famous singer, to visit other countries and to meet different people. It's my wish.



In Armenia the greatest need is the job, most of the people hasn't job. I wish the rich open work place for poor people.

ARAKELYAN ANI SCHOOL #65 My name is Ani, surname is Arakelyan, and last name is Arthur. I am 14 years old, this year I am a student in the 9th grade. My father is a driver, my mother is store woman, my brother is a pupil in the 10th grade. We both are at the same school. I have



a grandmother too. I have not a grandfather. As for me I have gone to school at the age 7 and I study at this school for 8 years. I study well, I like especially languages, Armenian, English and Russian. I am fond of sport, especially football and tennis. I am fond of music and dance, too. My hobby is embroidery, and besides I collect different kinds of fun things, such as: common rings, ear-rings Brock and others. She is fond of reading books and going out for a walk, too. He dream is to become a translator and to travel to

different countries.

The great problem is the old people, the pensioners who have got so little salary that they cannot live properly. They have worked so much when they were young but now everything is problem for them.

GEVORGYAN TAMARA SCHOOL #65 I am Tamara Gevorgyan. I am 15 years old. I have not a large family. I have got father, mother and one brother. I was born in 1987 in the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, but since the 1994 I lives in Armenia, Yerevan.

My father is Gevorgyan Albert. He's 44. He's a car maker.

My mother is Arsumanyan Manush. She accountant but she doesn't work now. She is 43. My mother is very good cooker. My brother goes in for sport, but



he's now in Armenian army. I love my family very very much. I like art very much. My hobby is listening to music, reading books. I like to watch TV. I am going embroidery. I am a good embroidery. I am commuter fan. I like to speak to other people. I have a lot of friends. There are very kind and good boys and girls.

The future of Armenia I see with many Armenians, who have returned from foreign countries to their native town, and help them to the situation of Armenian country. And also. I want to see my nation happy and without care.

Our Exchange Participants

HARUTYUNYAN ANNA SCHOOL#65 My name is Anna, surname is Harutunyan, and last name is Gagik. I am 14 years old. I study in the 9th grade this year. My favorite subjects are: English, History, Armenian language and Literature. I study well at school. I have attended school from the age of 7. But before school I have been in the nursery school, it is near my school. I like my school very much, because I spend a lot of time in a day at school. My hobby is to work with computer, it gives me great pleasure. I like to write my own poems. Besides, I like reading, dancing and singing. My dream is to become a lawyer and behave people in a right way. I want to be a leader and help the poor people. And now some words about my parents. My father is 42. He is a builder, but he doesn't work just now. My mother is a housewife. My mother cooks very well. My brother is 17 years old. He studies in the 10th grade this year. My sister's name is Angin. She studies in the 5th grade. She is very noisy. She likes to play with dolls. My grandmother is a pensioner. My uncle lives with us. His name is Garnik. He is not married yet. I like my family very much because they are very kind.



The greatest problem in our country is of course the work places. Most of the people have no work and money. And these come from our GOVERNMENT. They only think of their own pockets and they don't understand that most of people are jobless and they can't live. I wish my country be rich and developed.



EREMYAN LILIT SCHOOL#65 My name is Lilit, surname is Yeremyan.

I was born on December 7 in 1988. I am living in this country 13 years and I am 13 years old. I have a father, a mother, a brother and a grandmother. My father and mother are engineers. My mother is 36 years old. My father 40 years old. My brother is 16 years old. He graduated school #65 this year, but he isn't a student yet. My grandmother is 69 years old. My hobby is swimming, but I can't swim very well.

I think my country has many problems. Some of them are dirty air, dirty water and the problem of job.

BZNUNI AREVIK SCHOOL #190 I was born in Yerevan, in 17/12/1987. I'm in 9th grade, at school #190. There are three members in my family. My father is 50 years old and he is an engineer-economist. My mother is 47 years old and she is a doctor. I have no sisters and no brothers, but I have fish, who replace them. My hobbies are painting, playing the piano, swimming and listening to music. My favourite animal is a horse. I don't have a favourite meal; I like only ice-cream and fruit.

I have once won an Olympiad in the Armenian language. I enjoy going to the theatre, galleries and museums in my leisure time. I have once travelled to the Ukraine. I have studied English since the third grade and study English only in school.

To my mind Armenia needs a good government. I want to become a painter or philosopher, but I always dream of being an F.B.I. agent.



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Our appreciation to the committee members who worked tirelessly to make this program a success. They include:

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Our Exchange Participants

BAGHDASARYAN LILIT SCHOOL#190 I was born in December 16,1987,in Yerevan. I'm in the 9th grade, at school # 190. There are four members in my family. My father, Hrair is 47 years old and is a first-class engineer. He's a real optimist and he loves me too much. My mother, Susan is 46. She's an engineer too but now she's unemployed.

I have only one brother. His name is Babken, and he's 16. He graduated from school and is going to enter to Polytechnic Institute.



My hobbies are English, music, reading and dreaming. I can't imagine my life without books and theatre. I'm very emotional and talkative. Sometimes when I talk to my friends I even forget about time. I don't like people who lie and I think that they just don't understand how important truth is.

The sports I enjoy are tennis, basketball and swimming though I don't play even one of them. I like different animals but my favorite

animal is a dolphin. For me it symbolizes kindness, peace, friendship, honesty, love and power. I've participated in Olympiads and won in the Armenian language, literature and biology competitions. I studied English from the third grade and I'm still taking English lessons in school. As I like to dream, I have many dreams. One of my dreams is travelling but I've never travelled to any country. And my greatest dream is peace for the whole world. All I wish, all I want is to live thinking that everything's all right and there are no wars, there's no terror, there are no terrorists and there are no unhappy people.

During the last years, Armenians have lived only for themselves and not for their country and in my opinion Armenia needs people who can stick together and be good leaders. So I'm very proud that I'm an Armenian girl. I want to become an economist and help the Armenian government to help our country grow economically.

KHACHATRYAN EDGAR SCHOOL#190 I was born in Yerevan. My birthplace is Armenia. My birthday is the 7th of March in 1988. My hobby is dancing. My favorite sport is basketball. My favorite animals are elephant and monkey. I like fruit, just bananas, lemons and berries... I like to listen to music too. I have a parrot. His name's Jack. I like to read adventure books. I like to play the piano too. I learned English from the fourth grade. I don't pay for my English lessons. I only take my school lessons. I have never travelled. At free time I like to listen to English music. I also know Russian, and I picked English nice singers' photoes. I like kind, large hearted modest people. I also like to be on nature. I want to become an oculist. I want to treat people, the way I am treated now. I am learning about medical plant. I like all seasons, just walk in snow. I like sunny days and I like to watch sunrise and sunset. I like to sleep very much. My favorite holiday is New Year. One of my dream is to visit Madam Tossaud's museum and to see wax figures I have got a father, a mother and a brother. My father works at the "Electron" factory. He is the chief of the shop. My mother does not work. She is a housewife. My brother studies at our school in the ninth grade. My country's essential problem is to help poor people.



Speaking Out on Fairness

by Lilit Baghdasaryan, #190

Every time I listen to the word "fairness," my brain starts to look for all the corresponding words to express what it means for me. That's a mixture of real and cruel life with the beauty of the human heart. Sometimes we feel unfairness and forget about beauty, starting to see only the ugly things around us. However, beauty is the strongest part of fairness and it's going to win! In Belmont High School we watched two movies, one about the Civil Rights movement in the USA and the other about life in Armenia under Lenin and Stalin. To me, it's really unfair that white people treated blacks cruelly. That's not right! Every human has the same rights from birth! I don't understand who decided that some people are better than others. Different religions, skin colors, nationalities, languages and cultures don't mean that some people are going to be good and others bad. Everyone is equal and must be treated the same! In my mind it's also not fair that the men and women in some countries don't have the same rights. The rights are the same for everyone! It's not fair that up until now, all the presidents of U.S.A. have been men. Do you think it's right? We're creating a civil society, and the center of our building must be equality and fairness. So fairness is a kind angel which flies through the real mystery and beauty and always is going to HELP and WIN!!

In Search of a US Project Buddy

by Tamara Gevorgyan #65
tamara1987@rambler.ru

When I was in USA I learned about Civil Society, Tolerance and Volunterism. I loved all the lessons because each of them are very helpful and important projects. But must of all I love Volunterism. Now that I am in Armenia, I want to do a project to help all people in our country and our school's. 1. I'll go to Cleanup Day to clean my country. 2. I wish to collect old books to preserve our history. 3. Set up a tenants meeting in my building to clean the outside, the stairs, and halls. I am looking for a US student who wants to be a partner with me to organize my building.

Our Exchange Participants

NAZARYAN SONA SCHOOL#190 I was born in September 18 of 1987 in Yerevan. I'm in the 9th grade, school #190. Ruzanna, my mother, is 47 years old and she is a master engineer. My sister, Hasmik is a computer programmer and is 24 years old .She has received a gold medal at school and a red diploma at the university. She always helps me, and I think she knows and can do everything. My brother, Tigran , is 22. Now he is in the army, but before the joined the army, he was a D.J.

My hobby is collecting Kinder surprise. I have more than 80 Kinders . In addition, I like music and learning languages.

I know Armenian, Russian and English. My favorite sport is basketball. I like to look at the sky at night, when there are many stars.

Armenia has many problems but I think the most important problems are the development of economy and lack of work places. I am a good student at school and I want to become an ambassador.



ARUSYAK YEGHOYAN SCHOOL#190 I was born in February 2 of 1987. I am 15 years and 7 months old. I am studying in school 190; I'm in grade 9. I have a large family. My father Rubik is a tailor. He is 50 years old. My mother Marietta is a housewife and she is keeping our house very clean. My sister Mary is married. She is 25 years old. She has a two children one boy and one girl. Helen and Vardan.



On September 28 my brother got married. My hobby is collecting bracelets. I have a bracelet collection and I make some of them. I like to listen good music and I like dancing very much. I like interesting books which I am reading with great pleasure. I like to

watch TV and get new and fresh information. My best friend is Ann. She lives in our building. I like to make friends and I'm trying to keep them , because it is very difficult to find good friends.

Teachers

AMIRYAN IRINA 28 YEARS OLD SCHOOL#190 I was born in May 8, 1974 in Yerevan. My father, Vakhtang Amiryan is 55 years old. My mother, Susanna Buniatyan is 53 years old.

They live in Poland and work at a souvenir shop. My brother, Ruben Amiryan is 31 years old. He lives in Yerevan with his family and has two sons.

I finished school # 77 in 1991 and entered the Institute of Foreign Languages named after V. Brusov. I graduated from the Institute in 1996. Then I worked at a school named after Shirvanzade for three years. From 1999 to 2001 I lived in Poland and worked there as a translator at the Police Station. In 2001 I returned to Yerevan and began to work at school # 190.

I am married and have two children: Anna Maria is seven years old and Sergey is three years old. Torgom Sargsyan is my husband and is a furniture maker. We live with my mother-in-law who is a housewife. My hobby is reading and I like to watch cartoons. In my mind, Armenians need a job. In order to accomplish this task, we must improve our economy and get a good government.



Difference Between USA and Armenia

by Edgar Khachatryan, #190

Armenia and America are both similar and different in many ways. I think Armenia and America have the same water, but cars are different. In Armenia we have Zhiguli, but in USA nobody haven't Zhiguli, only BMW, MERCEDES. People different too. They have another opinion (they think in another way). Clothes are different too. They wear jeans, baggy clothes. We wear simple trousers, shirts. Hair styles are different too. Americans make their hairs spiky, with gel.. However we have simple hair. The schools are different too. For example, I'm 14 years old and I study in 8th grade, but Alec who is 14 years too, studies in 9th grade.

Roads are different too, for our roads are rough, but Americans are flat. Our streets are dirty, but Americans are clean. Trees are same. Snow different too. We have very-very soft snow. Foods are very-very different. We haven't Christmas. The style of clothing is different too. Shops are different. Americans shop are bright. There I saw smaller police and woman police. Armenian houses are not decorated on the outside. Dances are different too. Americans dance with a lot of movement.

Difference Between USA and Armenia

by Tatevic Ghazaryan, ##65

I liked America very much. I think American people are very good. My Armenia is very different from America. For example traditions, language, teachers, food, weather. But they have similarities in people's behavior. Behavior can be good and bad. I think good behavior is when they help you when you sick, when they help you do work, when they help you to learn their language. I think bad behavior is using bad words. And American kids use bad words. In America, I heard Armenian children using bad words but in American language. In my country are many people who haven't work, but in America people have a lot of work.. In Armenian people haven't work, and I want our people to have work and think about the future. If Armenians can have jobs, in my country everything will be good.

Our Exchange Participants

RUZANNA MARGARYAN TEACHER FROM SCHOOL #65 I was born in April 23, 1959, in Ararat town, Republic of Armenia.



I graduated #82 secondary school after Hov. Pogosyan (1966-1976).

After I graduated secondary school I worked at the Factory "Louse" -the Factory of Electronically Lamps as a copyist (1976-1977), Yerevan, Rep. of Armenia.

From 1978-1980 I worked in the center of "Milk" association (counting center) as an operator, Yerevan, Rep. Of Armenia.

I graduated Polytechnic State University, the faculty of Counting Techniques,(1980-1985), Yerevan, Rep. Of Armenia.

After I graduated PSU I worked in "Algorithm" Scientific Research Institute as an engineer, (1985-1990), Yerevan, Rep. Of Armenia.

From 1993-1995 I worked in "Hay Gorg" ("Armenian Carpet") as carpet maker.

From 1995 till now I work as a teacher of Mathematics and Informatics at the School-College #65 after Leo (Leo is a Armenian historian).

From 1996-1997 in the Teachers Training Institute I've got the profession of teacher of Mathematics, Yerevan, Rep. Of Armenia.

In 2001 participated in Administrative teaching organized by OSI in "Internet" association.

From 2001-2002 I've participated in full course of "Reading and Writing For Critical Thinking" program, Yerevan, Rep. of Armenia.

I am married. I have 3 kids. My husband Samvel Manucharyan is 47.He is working at the "Nairit" Factory as an engineer-electric.

I have a brother, he is 40. he is a doctor. He is married,and has 3 kids. His wife is a doctor too and she is 40.

Her parents are pensioners. Her father was a teacher of Chemistry and her mother was an chemic- engineer.

My hobbies: I collect organizers notebook, love to be in theatres.

I know Russian very well, my English is satisfactory.

I think that my nation lacks respect towards the Law. My nation needs more workplaces and salaries given in time.

Future Orientation

Tamara Gevokyan, #65

I believe that Armenians look at their sad history and don't look forward to the future. And it is my opinion that Americans always look forward, because Americans don't have as many problems as Armenia. America hasn't seen wars in past years, Americans are not persecuted, because America has a big army. And fairness is more important to Americans. I would like to see the Armenian government have the people become more involved in the government .I think that I would like to see Armenians look to the future more with happiness and not sadness. Young Armenians must band together and move forward to make Armenia great once again! I want to see Armenians have jobs and I would like to see our government improve. Armenia doesn't have much money , but it has many schools, colleges, universities, and factories. Armenia in the last few years hadn't lights, but now it has. Looking to the future, I think that Armenia will improve and will be great once again!

An Idea for the Future

Arevik Bznuni, #190

During my visit to the USA, I liked the Christmas lights very much at the La Salette Shrine, because in Armenia I had never seen such beautiful lights. Certainly, there are lights in Armenia, but they are not as bright and pretty. It was very interesting for me to see these lights in the form of letters. Each letter had a meaning that pertained to themes of Christmas. It allowed me to use my imagination and feel like I was in fairy tale world.

We also went to a museum of nations at the Shrine. There they displayed art from many different countries. However, I was disappointed, that Armenia was not included for they were after all, the first Christian nation. I think that if Christmas is being described or presented for an audience, then Armenia must be mentioned. Possibly, when we return to Armenia, we shall create something that we can send to this place, so that Armenia will be included in this museum.



Armenian Teachers with Bonnie Chen, BHS Educator in round table discussing on value clarification

MKRTCHYAN NELLI 26 YEARS OLD I was born in April 25, 1976 in Yerevan. My father, Vladik Mkrtchyan is 53 years old. My mother, Rima Mkrtchyan is 46 years old. They live in Yerevan. My father works in a shop and my mother works in a hospital as a nurse. I have two brothers: Samvel Mkrtchyan and Vahe Mkrtchyan. They live with my parents.

Samvel is married and has a son David who is 9 months old. Vahe is not married yet.



I'm married. I live with my in-laws. My husband, Rustam Khachatryan is a military pilot and is 26 years old. We were classmates. Karen is our son and he is now three years old. He has attended kindergarten since October 1, 2001. He likes all his friends, plays with them with great pleasure and shares his toys with them. He is very friendly.

I finished school # 11 in 1993 and entered the Institute of Foreign Languages in the same year. I graduated from the Institute in 1998 and immediately went to work at school

190. I have worked there for four years. My favourite sport is football. I don't like to play it, but really enjoy watching football matches on TV. I followed all the football matches during the world championship. My hobby is reading. I enjoy myself when I read fairy-tales for my son in the evenings. While reading them, I even act out the tales by changing my voice and making different facial expressions. I do everything to make my son happy.

I like flowers very much. I am interested in the customs and traditions of other nations and I'd like to learn about them. I don't like to see the jobless people in Armenia, because it raises the number of beggars. So I want all my people here in Armenia to have a job and to work somewhere.

NAIRA DANIELYAN 42 YEARS OLD SCHOOL#65

I am Naira Danielyan 42 years old, born October 30, 1959 . I teach Russian and literature at the secondary level. I have graduated from the Institute of Russian and Foreign languages. My father: Gevorkyan Gevork - died in 1975. My mother-Shirazian Rina is a pensioner. My sister-Margaret, has two children. I am married. I have a son and a daughter. My son David is 18 years old and he studies in Conservatoire and a daughter Sona. She is at 9th grade student. Hambartsum is my husband. He is a sound director in National Television and Radio. I like to sing and dance very much. Before Institute I have received a Grand Pri for singing. I will be most happy to learn new methods and improve that in teaching. I look forward to learning about American traditions, to visit as many schools as possible, see the new methodology in practice and communicate with American teachers and pupils.

The goal of my life is to see Armenia the most civilized country in the world. I think Armenians immediate needs are a good government of life, the civilization.



Difference Between USA and Armenia

Tatevic Ghazaryan, ##65

I liked America very much. I think American people are very good. My Armenia is very different from America. For example traditions, language, teachers, food, weather. But they have similarities in people's behavior. Behavior can be good and bad. I think good behavior is when they help you when you sick, when they help you do work, when they help you to learn their language. I think bad behavior is using bad words. And American kids use bad words. In America, I heard Armenian children using bad words but in American language. In my country are many people who haven't work, but in America people have a lot of work.. In Armenian people haven't work, and I want our people to have work and think about the future. If Armenians can have jobs, in my country everything will be good.

Differences between Armenia and America

Tamara Gevokyan, #65

In America there are many different foods. Their bread tastes sweet. In Armenia it is easier to buy Shishkebab in the street. In Yerevan Shishkebab is sold on the street. The people selling it in special carts that they push around. It is just as easy in Armenia to buy Shishkebab as it is in America to buy a Hamburger.

In America the houses are also different. In Armenia people live in apartment buildings. In America many people live in separate houses.

In America the schools are very warm, but in Armenia they are very cold. Many Armenian students don't come to school in the winter, because they will get sick as the classrooms are not heated. Classes are only 35 minutes long, in Belmont,USA they are at least 50 minutes long.

My Personal Goal - AIDS Awareness

Lilit Baghdasaryan #190, 9th grade

In some difficult situations, when there's no way, we always think we did anything we could. But that's too wrong! There's still much to do. We are humans, we have very modern brains and we must think globally. However, there are so many problems in the world, which need to be solved, but they're still unsolved, because not everyone cares about them. One of the most important problems of 21st century is AIDS. Thousands of people still die, thousands become unhappy during all their life. It's real, huge, living problem, which can happen to anyone, who doesn't care about it. It also kills many children. Why? Who decided their fortunes? Maybe we're losing future scientists, presidents, writers and actors, philosophers and at last human beings like we are. Which parent would like his or her child to feel this hell, to live knowing that soon you're going to sleep deep and deep. It's the ugliest wind in our times and it's getting near. Feel it? I know, we can stop it. We have brains, which means we're the strongest creatures, which God made. We have to be together with all nations, religions, races and cultures. We have to win together. We're equal members of the same society and we must realize that it relates us too. At last, things, which we never expect, happen to us rather. One thing, made me think seriously about the AIDS problem, was seeing an amazing art-work against AIDS in Cambridge High School. The whole cruel truth was expressed in this work and it made me so sad about it. I understood that even art is connected with this problem and through it we can tell people not to be so selfish, so stupid and to think of tomorrow's day. Before to struggle, we must know the problem well, so here's some short information about AIDS.

AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome:

- * Acquired means you can get it;
- * Immune Deficiency means a weakness in the body's system that fights diseases.
- * Syndrome means a group of health problems that make up a disease.

AIDS is caused by a virus called HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus. If you get infected with HIV, your body will try to fight the infection. It will make "antibodies", special molecules that are supposed to fight HIV.

HIV disease becomes AIDS when your immune system is so damaged that you have less than 200 CD4+ cells or you get an opportunistic infection. The AIDS syndrome also includes serious weight loss, brain tumors, and other health problems. Without treatment, these opportunistic infections can kill you. There is no cure for AIDS. There are drugs that can slow down the HIV virus, and slow down the damage to your immune system.

But there is no way to get all the HIV out of your body In the United States, there are about 800,000 to 900,000 people who are HIV-positive. Over 300,000 people are living with AIDS. Each year, there are 50,000 new infections. Even now AIDS is the leading cause of death.

I'll never want people, whom I love to feel this. Think yourself!

Equality

Sona Nazaryan, #190

At first sight I didn't like America, I felt uncomfortable, because America is not like Armenia, everything is different: people, their style. But now I like America and most of all what I liked in the USA is the equality between people. AND IT'S GREAT! For example in Armenia men don't make a dinner, but in America men make a dinner. Or in America everyone can drive a car, but in Armenia it's not like that. Or in America students doesn't stand up when they are speaking with teachers, but in Armenia it's not like that and I think its make some equality between teachers and students.

There is equality not only in America, but also in other countries too. In London airport I saw Black woman and white man: they are married and have a baby. And in Armenia people are not allowed to do that. We saw a movie about inequality between Blacks and Whites in America some years ago. But now in America it's not like that. They respect each other and they are friends. I'm agreeing with the thought that everyone in this world is equal. And if we want to live in peace we must live in equality.

HOW TO GET EQUALITY IN ARMENIA?

I think that the most correct way to get equality in Armenia is to teach students from early age that everyone is equal in this world, also they parents must teach they kids that we are equal. And it's not important you are Black, White, or you are from village or from town, or you are doctor or charwoman.



Armenian students at Old Sturbridge village, 1830 replica

America

Lilit Yeremian, #65

America is a very interesting and rich country. There are many beautiful houses and cars. For example, the house where I stayed is very big and it has many rooms. America has also many museums, fun places for children, fresh air and clean streets. I think one of the important thing is that in America there are lights everywhere. In our country its harder to find places like that, may be because the bulbs are missing or they are needed in another place. Our country is very dirty due to cars, factories and trash. I think what we can do it in our country, too, is to keep it clean and fresh. Everybody must think about what he is doing and if it bad or good for his country, for himself, for his family. In Armenia I'll talk about these things in America.



US - Armenian students in BHS Classroom

What I Have learned from my US Experience

Edgar Khachatryan #190

This program gave me lots of good things in the world. A lot of knowledge: to be more tolerance, understand each other about building Civil Society. I began to look at the world with other eyes. I want to see this program's continuation, because I worried for other people. I want others to learn about all these things, I want them to get power over their own lives again, to be tempted by these interesting ideas and chance in small ways as we.

This program gave me a view of the very big picture of life's trial.

Civil Society

Civil Society is an important thing for every country. If we respect rules and laws it will be a great Civil Society. This program's big part is to build a Civil Society which we learned about. For example: in a Society is Civil we find different and simple ways to solve problems, for example not fight and not go to war.

I can say, I can help my country around that (but a very small part). But in ways I can contribute is I have taught my neighbor's son to learn his subjects, and I do it every day with big pleasure.

I learned: If we want to build Civil Society, we must respect each other, to be more tolerant, to understand each other. If we want to build C. S. we have other ways we can do it also, such as Personal Control Over the Environments: A person can control environment by different ways: keep the Motherland clean (not trash, recycle), not cut trees, plant trees because nature makes Motherland more beautiful. A person who wants to see his or her motherland beautiful and clean can also teach the others that it will be very nice to live in beauty.

Air becomes dirty, when someone smokes. The gas used in the factories causes pollution in the air. If people would try to control this big problem it would help Earth's atmosphere. The Earth atmosphere is really important for protecting people from the sun and without it people wouldn't be able to survive.

Trash is a huge problem in the world. People need to recycle more in order to help to keep the environments clean.

People need to stop putting trash everywhere. Keeping streets clean is a very important aspect for the city environment.

Equality: Never Differs anyone.

Fairness: Be fair to everyone.

Individualism: each individual is unique, different from each others, and therefore inherently significant.

Privacy is essential, each person should assert independence from others.

Honesty: Always tells the truth never lie. Rely each other and live in hope.



Edgar (#190) and Lilit (#65) team building at AHS

Program Follow On and Community Multiplier Effect

Mrs Joanne I want to make a pamphlet about No Smoking project that you will be able to put in the orientation folder's for next year's group. In this way they could know about it.

Today I had finished the poster's about smoking and I must put it on our school's and school #74 walls so that their student's will also know how bad smoking for their health.

I am sitting with Mrs. Naira, Tatevik and Tamara and we are making the poster about No Smoking. Also I am making one poster the name ATTENTION. There I wrote that all people can write composition about No smoking and send it to us to our No Smoking e-mail address, smokingisbad@yahoo.com. The good compositions we will give no smoking presents which group brought back from USA. Also I'll send them to you!!! **Gayanne Vardanyan, #65**

Last night I had a dream that I started a school newspaper at my University. When I woke up I decided I shall do it. I am looking for sponsors to cover my publishing costs. My father is my first sponsor. I made him an ad and he liked it. Everyone at my school is excited about this idea and is ready to work with me. **Victoria Ohanjanian, #190**



Armenian team with Mayor Sullivan of Cambridge; Suzy Pearce, CYSCA President ; Joanne Hartunian, SSPP Program Manager; Ruby Pearce and City Hall Friends

Program Highlights

I liked the lessons about diversity. Of course nobody likes lessons at school, but that lesson was special. We spent all 3 lessons with Elizabeth Gulezian about Tolerance and Diversity. She was very lively and special, too. She could make those lessons more interesting. During each lesson we played something like games. One of the games was "KNOW YOUR FRIEND" with signatures. On a paper there were examples and whom those examples coincided, that person must write down his or her name. We played other games, which helped us to understand our differences. I would like to have lessons like that in Armenian schools because I think that diversity is one of the important issues. I liked those lessons because they were fun and it was interesting to know each other in our group. I think diversity is important for people to make choices in society. **Lilit Yeremian, #65**

Since childhood I wanted to travel to many lands, to see the ocean and America. CYSCA took me the land of my dreams. America is the city of developed culture and knowledge. Best of all I liked my Japanese host mother, Miss Keiko; visiting Senator Kennedy's office and the Massachusetts State House. At the State House the chairs were made of different heights. The short senators sat on the higher chairs and the tall senators sat on the short chairs, because every person shall have an equal voice. This is what impressed me the most. **Amalya Vardanyan, 2002, #65**

Program Highlights

(Continued from page 11)

This program one of the important programs in Armenia because in our country there are not so many programs like this. And I think that it's important not only to see also to be there in America and to learn something from there. For example our life styles are different. Our schools are different because in American schools pupils can choose subjects. In our schools there are not a rules like this because each grade must learn that what teach the teachers and what they must to know and everyone has to take part in each lesson. Even if they don't like that. Besides it is important to know that in America there are Armenian museums, and that some people knows about our culture. Besides it can be useful in their pupils future. for example in the Universities. **Lilit Yeremian, #65**

My favorite place was the African Museum. That museum was about black people. Everything was so wonderful in that museum. I was in great surprise seeing all that. I saw Frederick Douglass's picture there. I had read about Frederick Douglass from a Free Lending Library book in the English Language . That book's author is Evelyn Bennett. This book was about slavery. Frederick Douglass was slave. I liked that museum, because I learned more about black people and slavery. We saw a movie about black people and photos. Many times ago they all were slaves. But now they are free. I think there is not difference between black and white people. All nations are brothers and they must love each other. I learned from this program that we must solve our conflict's by going to a peace table, to respect each other and always say thank you, sorry, you are welcome and always smile. **Anna Harutunian #65**

What I appreciated learning during my exchange is that all nations are brothers and they must love and respect each other. **Gayanne Vardanyan, (2002) #65**

I miss everything, but especially I miss BHS and student's freedom a little. **Arousak Yeghoyan, #190**

The program, called "Sister School Partnership", is sponsored by Cambridge- Yerevan Sister City Association. Inc. with funding support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The goal of the program is to partner two local schools: schools in Yerevan and schools in U.S.A. The theme of the program is "Building a civil Society". The aim of the program is to teach us about values such as: democracy, diversity, tolerance and volunteerism, love law, change, equality, individualism, honesty, work. I am pleased that I was chosen to participate in this exchange program. I think I learned a lot from this program. And I promise to teach my friends everything which I learned in the U.S.A.

Of course, I learned a lot of things about civil Society but now I understood very well what is equality, which I didn't know well before. And the reason is because I spoke to people of different nationalities in the U.S.A. Many years ago white people killed and drove blacks away. Is it right, what is the sin of black people? Today every thing is different Today they have the same laws. Blacks are free now. Everyone is equal in the world. **Ani Arakelyan, #65**

I liked this program very much. Due to CYSCA I understood who am I, how much I'm able to do something. Due to CYSCA I became more independent and I started to think about my life, about world. At last I understood what I want from my life, that only with work, work, work you can get what you want, and I think with work I got my goal of coming to the USA.

Before I went to the USA I have no idea about tolerance, volunteers, how to create a Civil Society. But due to CYSCA, I have became more, much more tolerant, and I know what is a volunteer, and I want to help people without getting anything in return. I want to help whoever needs it. Everyone must understand that. And Armenia isn't exception. In Armenia there are so many problems we need Civil Society more than others, and only together we can help our country and only due to CYSCA I understand that this programs are necessary in each school, because every teen in my age must know what is Civil Society, tolerance, and volunteerism. It's important not only for our future or for Armenia, it's important even for world's future. And one of the most important things which I am using is " think globally, act locally".

Besides knowledge, this program gave me a friends: not only in USA, but in Armenia also. It gave me second family and the most important gave me a father. And I want to say THANKS. **Sona Nazaryan, #190**

There aren't so many volunteer work in Armenia as it is in the U.S.A. And I think it is because of our economical position and our difficult life. But being and exchange student I understood and saw that a good thing it is. And I m felt how happy one can be when she can help the elderly, the poor, the sick people or simple to help somebody without thinking of money or something else. And I also decided to do a Volunteer work on our school. I also can help Tatevik with her work. You know that in front of our school there are many nice flowers. And I promise when spring comes I shall water these flowers two times in a week. And I think that I shall do it with great pleasure. **Ani Arakelian, #65**

I would like to speak on behalf of the Secondary School Partnership to Promote Civil Society Program. I was very surprised to hear that your Government may not renew the program next year. I think it will be big mistake because people must know each other. They must have contact with each other, visit each other, otherwise they will know the wrong side about a country, its people and customs. Your job is very important for teenagers, especially, because they are our next generation. And it is very important that they understand the problems other countries face and must understand the issues correctly. Our students who were in USA changed their opinion about many things. Now they know, that America is our friend, American people are similar to Armenians. They want peace in the world too.

Program Highlights

(Continued from page 12)



Lilit Yeremyan (#65) with femme Belmont plain clothes police officer

They must study our history, and we must develop our friendship and relations with one another. For this reason we must visit each other's countries. The exchange program will help them avoid many - many-mistakes of judgment and opinion. And moreover it is an interesting education program. For example, I am a teacher and I exactly know that this program helped me to improve my English which is important for me, because I teach the language and I must know many languages. It helped our students to introduce them to another country, its history and people. And now they all have their own opinion about your country. We don't want this program interrupted. I and our school consider that the program carries good friendship and interunderstanding. **Naira Danielyan, #65 Educator**

I liked everything about America and I want to write about what I liked most. I liked International Dinners very much (though for me some of them weren't tasty). Due to dinners we met with other countries culture, we learned what people like to eat for example in Spain, in India, in Brazil. I liked the dinner where we played "International Bingo": it was fantastic. Besides fun and gifts gained much knowledge. I learned Chinese, Ethiopian, and Arabic numbers. I liked it too much. **Sona Nazaryan, #190**

I always dreamed to walk through Harvard University and always said to myself " Sometime, even if I be 60, I'll study in Harvard...." So. when I knew that we were going to go to my dream-place, for sure I was very excited. At first I was afraid, because I felt big responsibility that we were representing Armenia, our school, our program.

I felt that I wanted to do something important there, but I was afraid that I couldn't. At first, when I saw my dream building, I felt as if I was in 19th century period building and was going to an important meeting. We were separated to different houses and senates. My group talked about School Prayers. I raised my hand and expressed my opinion about it. I noticed that everyone listened to me with attention and they even loved my speech! "Victory!!", I thought. Then I remembered that some days ago I was just a usual Armenian girl, who lived with dreams, and now I was sitting here and discuss something very important for people. I felt that my voice was important. Then there was a time, when senators expressed their opinions in a big hall in front of many people. I was so excited that I didn't even notice how I poured the orange-juice on my bag while standing to go to the center of the hall. When I started to speak, the hall was noisy, but I didn't stop and at the end everyone clapped. I realized part of my dream! It was so interesting to know how politicians discuss problems and try to satisfy everyone with their opinions and decisions. **Lilit Baghdasaryan, #190**



Tatevick, Ani, Arevik, Lilit at boston first night New Years Eve's Diversity celebration enjoying face painting and hat decorating.

Program Highlights

Before my trip to US I knew United States as the most powerful and rich country of the world and imagined people of that country as very specific one. My first impression was caused by abundance of smiles around of me, at the streets of city. It is enough to stop a glance at someone to hear his greeting: " Hello, how are you?" I discovered that Americans are just ordinary people: they have an interest to cooking, sport, cinema and theatre.

It was very pleasant to me to see that volunteerism is widespread in USA. Everyone is ready to help you and to spend his free time for it. Another deep impression is related to the human respect to people with physical disability, everywhere I met car-parking places, toilets, sitting places in transport etc. for persons with physical disability.

I like very much the idea with sound alarm button at road crosses for blind people. Unfortunately , in my country persons with physical disabilities have no possibility to participate to real life.

In US I met kids , who went 20 miles to gather a money for two brother from Armenia, who's father died and who's family faced to serious financial problems.

I like very much the freedom of Americans. It starts from the very early age. Kinds have their own opinion around of any question, students choose subjects to study at the school. In this way American kids become free, kind and independent people.

I found people of different nationality, which are not only able to live in peace, but also respect mentality and traditions each to other. Indeed , all of them irrespective to the place of birth and the color of skin are Americans, citizens of free and powerful country. **Anna Karakhanyan, Internet Specialist**

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Many thanks to the host AHS - BHS families in USA for opening their homes and hearts to host the Armenian Team.

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