



SOCIETY FOR ORPHANED ARMENIAN RELIEF (SOAR)

150 N. Radnor Chester Rd., Suite F200, Radnor, PA 19087

Office: 610.213.3452 Fax: 610.229.5168

Email: info@soar-us.org Web: www.soar-us.org

**2018 Report to the Harold and Josephine
Gulamerian Armenian Orphan Fund**



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Creation and Management

George S. Yacoubian, Jr. and Erica Yacoubian began their adoption process in 2005. Throughout the spring and summer, they went through home study and various levels of domestic governmental approval. While in Armenia visiting the Our Lady of Armenia Center Summer Camp, they saw Liliana for the first time. George submitted their dossier to the Armenian government that fall, received preliminary approval in December, and obtained final approval the following March. Liliana arrived in the United States on April 23, 2006.

The Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR) was established in the fall of 2005 as a nonprofit organization that provides humanitarian relief to orphaned children living in Armenia. In early 2006, an experienced Board of Directors was assembled, a network of Partners in Armenia was recruited to assist with distributions, and the web site was launched. In 2009, a National Board of Trustees was created to annually review SOAR's fiscal operations and distributions.

Represented by 138 Chapters and 6 Junior groups worldwide, SOAR supports 44 institutions throughout the world. Some volunteers are parents of adopted Armenian children; others simply recognize the significance of SOAR's work and want to help perpetuate its mission. The common bond among them all is the recognition that orphaned Armenians represent the most vulnerable population of Armenian society.



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Quality Control

SOAR has a strict quality control protocol to assure that all donations, in their entirety, reach the intended recipients. This protocol has six primary elements:

1. SOAR rarely makes cash distributions directly to the orphanages. Rather, goods and services that can be procured in Armenia are purchased by SOAR's Partners and distributed directly to the orphanages. Donations from the Armenian diaspora that can be hand-delivered directly to the children are encouraged.
2. SOAR implements chain-of-custody procedures for any distributed goods or services, providing assurance that these items have been received by the orphanages in the exact quantity intended. These procedures have three steps:
 - a. SOAR staff sign for the shipments and/or attest to the type and quantity of goods or services procured in Armenia. This invoice includes an exact description of the type and quantity of goods and services.
 - b. The recipient orphanage's director signs this same invoice, indicating that the exact type and quantity of goods and services received is the quantity indicated.
 - c. Both invoices are mailed to SOAR's Executive Board Chairman.
3. SOAR staff, Partners, Chapter members, and other volunteers who visit Armenia make random inspections of the orphanages. Any distribution discrepancies are to be reported immediately to SOAR's Executive Board Chairman.
4. When possible, donations provided by SOAR are engraved and/or stamped with a corporate seal. Capital projects are acknowledged with a dedication ceremony and plaque.
5. A zero-tolerance policy for fraud, theft, and/or deception is imposed. Any malfeasance would result in the termination of assistance.
6. SOAR utilizes Microsoft Planner, which allows SOAR to retain all receipts, pictures, and internal documents for all projects.



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Institutions We Support

SOAR supports 44 institutions in six countries: 31 orphanages, boarding schools, day centers and summer camps in Armenia; two Armenian boarding schools in Artsakh; two orphanages in Istanbul; one orphan summer camp in Javakh; four Armenian orphanages and one orphan summer camp in Lebanon; and three Armenian orphanages in Syria:

Armenian Evangelical Boarding School is in Ainjar, Lebanon, and is home to healthy social orphans.

Birds' Nest Orphanage in Byblos, Lebanon, has been home to thousands of Armenian children in the Middle East region for more than 80 years. Today, Birds' Nest houses healthy children between 6 months and 17 years old.

Boarding School #1 in Stepanakert, Artsakh, houses healthy and with special needs children between the ages of 4 and 16.

Boarding School #2 in Kashatagh, Artsakh, houses children between the ages of 6 and 17.

Boarding School #2 of Fridtjof Nansen (formerly Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen) in Gyumri houses children between the ages of 4 and 18.

Bzommar Orphanage is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847. Throughout the year, the Sisters carry out catechetical, cultural, and social work with both natural and social orphans. Approximately 10 teenage girls reside at Bzommar.

Cardinal Aghajanian Orphanage in Ainjar, Lebanon, is home to orphaned boys.

Children's Home of Gyumri houses children with special needs ages 6 years and younger.

Community Development and Social Support Center (CDSSC) is a non-residential center that offers alternative care and material assistance to children with special needs ages 6-18 and their families. The Center started its activities in 2012.



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Dzorak Care Center in Yerevan served as an orphanage for 400 children during the 1940s. In 1959, it became a boarding school for children from underprivileged families. Today, Dzorak serves as an orphanage and nursing home adults with severe physical and psychological disabilities who have outgrown the traditional orphanage.

Gavar Orphanage houses healthy children between the ages of 3 and 18.

Gyumri Social Childcare Center (GSCC) is a day center in Gyumri. Since July 2006, children from around the province who are at serious risk for institutionalization have been served at the Center.

The Holy Cross Armenian Church of Javakh Summer Day Camp in Akhakalak, Georgia, serves social orphans living at or below poverty level from the nearby villages. The camp provides the children with a safe, clean, fun, and spiritual environment during the summer.

Hrant Dink School in Istanbul offers day services to Armenian children.

Kalfayan Orphanage in Istanbul, Turkey, was founded in 1866 by Srpuhi Kalfayan (1822-1889), an Armenian nun. Both the "Order of Kalfayan" and the orphanage exist today due to support from the Patriarchate and charitable donors.

Kharberd Orphanage in Yerevan houses children and young adults with severe disabilities.

Mari Izmirlyan Orphanage in Yerevan houses children with special needs between the ages of 6 and 18.

Mer Doon offers a home in Echmiadzin for young Armenian girls who have outgrown their orphanage. Mer Doon offer education and a loving and compassionate family environment, thus easing the transition from orphanage life to mainstream society.

Naghasyan Children's Support Center (formerly Mer Hoos) houses teenage girls in the Arapkir district of Yerevan. The girls receive language and job skills training, computer instruction, life skills training, psychological support, and hope, confidence, and love.

Orran, "haven" in Armenian, was established in Yerevan in April 2000. The Center started with 16 children, but within 6 months had expanded to 26 senior citizens and 40 socially vulnerable children. In 2009, a second Orran center was established in Vanadzor. Today, Orran supports approximately 95 seniors and 200 children across Armenia.



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Our Lady of Armenia Annie Bezikian Youth Center is a private facility in Kanaker that houses girls between the ages of 16 and 22 who have outgrown the traditional orphanage and are transitioning to independent living. The Center is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847.

Our Lady of Armenia Center is a private orphanage in Gyumri housing healthy children between the ages of 6 and 18. The Center is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847.

Our Lady of Armenia Center Summer Camp (Bzommar) hosts children ages 8 to 15 throughout the summer. The Camp provides nutritious food, physical rest, recreational activities, and religious-educational experiences both to institutionalized children and other impoverished children throughout Lebanon.

Our Lady of Armenia Center Summer Camp (Tsaghgadzor) hosts approximately 800 children throughout the summer, in four 16-day sessions. The Camp provides nutritious food, physical rest, recreational activities, and religious-educational experiences both to orphan and otherwise needy children throughout Armenia.

Our Lady of Armenia Educational Center in Tashir, Armenia, is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and provides meals and after-school activities to approximately 30 orphaned and otherwise needy children.

Our Lady of Armenia Educational Center Summer Camp in Tashir hosts approximately 50 children ages 7-15 for four weeks throughout the summer. The Camp provides nutritious food, physical rest, recreational activities, educational opportunities, and religious experiences to children from the Tashir community.

Prkutyun is a day center in Armenia that offers food, educational, and therapeutic services to children and young adults with disabilities.



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Saint Theresa's Little Flower Orphanage (Azizie and Meydan) is the House of Providence. After the 1915 Genocide, the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception stood responsible for the displaced and served as comforting and caring “mothers” for the lonely Armenian orphans. In 1936, “The Providence Orphanage” (Nakhaknamootian Doon) was founded in the Syrian region of Azizie and was a haven for 300 orphaned children. Before March 2011, the orphanage housed up to 35 girls who lived in an environment of peace and who attended regular school. Because of the war and the unrest in Aleppo, many of the Armenian orphans could no longer stay at The Providence Orphanage. Some live in Meydan, a very poor Armenian section in Aleppo, and attend Zvartnotz School, while other orphans live in Azizie and attend Zanabek, the other Armenian school run by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

Shengavit Kindergarten Number 141 houses students Monday through Friday whose families live in extreme poverty or which have histories of abuse, domestic violence or alcohol or drug addiction. Although some children return home on the weekends, approximately 150 remain at the school full-time.

Sisters of Charity (SOC) (Bethlehem and Spitak) is a Catholic religious order established by Mother Teresa to tend to “the poorest of the poor.” SOC-Bethlehem is a private orphanage outside of Yerevan that houses approximately very young children with severe physical and mental disabilities. SOC-Spitak is a private orphanage that houses teenagers and adults with severe physical and mental disabilities.

S.O. Khach Orphanage in Syria has been a family for more than 90 years. Before March 2012, the children lived in the Telil area of Syria. Due to civil unrest, the children moved to the Aram Manoogian Community Center in September 2012. S.O. Khach houses healthy children and young adults between the ages of 8 and 19 years old.

SOS Children's Villages' Armenian Charity Foundation (Idjevan and Kotayk) is a child-centered organization whose core mission is to provide care and development for children without parental care and children in difficult life circumstances. In 1990, SOS Children's Village in Kotayk opened its doors for children who had lost their parents in the earthquake. SOS Children's Village in Idjevan was founded in 2009. Presently, SOS in Armenia operates a wide range of child care and family strengthening community and educational activities.

Terchoonian Home is a private orphanage in Gyumri housing intellectually gifted children between the ages of 3 and 18.



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Vanadzor Orphanage is a private orphanage in Vanadzor housing healthy children under the age of 18.

Vardashen is a state boarding school in Yerevan housing children who “exhibit socially dangerous behavior” between the ages of 6 and 18.

The Voice of the Armenian Church Summer Day Camp, operating under the auspices of the Eastern Prelacy and its Executive Council, is held in the summer retreat of Tsaghgadzor and hosts 50 orphaned boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 16. The Camp, held in July for eight days, exposes the children to comfort, love, compassion, and care, while simultaneously instilling in them the love of Christ and the history of the Armenian Church.

Warm Hearth (3rd village and Arinj) houses adults with disabilities and mental illnesses who have outgrown the state-funded orphanages. The two facilities provide the residents with an alternative to psychiatric institutions, offering holistic care in a family-like setting.

Yerevan’s Children Home (formerly Nork Orphanage) in Yerevan houses children (both healthy and with special needs) ages 6 years and under.

Yerevan Special School Number 11 for Mentally Retarded Children (Nubarashen) is a state boarding school in Yerevan housing children with special needs.

Zadik Yerevan Child Assistance Center houses children between the ages of 6 and 18. After the age of 18, the children move to either Rainbow House, a transitional home, or Zadikavan, a farming village in Arzni.



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The Harold and Josephine Gulamerian Armenian Orphan Fund

Originally from Van (Armenia), Harold Gulamerian was born to immigrant parents in 1924. Harold joined the army in 1943, and, after the war, went to City College to earn a degree in science and business administration and then a law degree. When Norman, Harold's brother, returned from the service, he apprenticed himself to artist Frederick Taubes (1900-1981). He primed his canvasses and grounded his paint. Norman, an artist himself, was having trouble finding unprimed linen. Harold suggested they import it from Belgium. That was the start of Utrecht Art Supply.

Harold and Norman sold linen out of their basement in Brooklyn. The two brothers dedicated themselves to supplying artists with the "highest quality art materials and supplies for the best value." In 1951, they rented an office at 119 West 57th street. The Gulamerian brothers' art supply business grew quickly. In 1957, they developed their revolutionary acrylic gesso for priming canvas. In 1958, they rented factory space at Bush Terminal in Brooklyn. By the end of the early 1960s, they had expanded the Utrecht line to include professional-grade oil paints, acrylics, and watercolor supplies. In 1968, they opened their first retail store at 32 Third Avenue in New York City. They then opened locations in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Washington DC, Berkeley, and San Francisco. By the



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time they sold their business in 1997, they had grown from a small space in Bush terminal to 50,000 square feet and an additional 50,000 square feet of retail space.



Mr. and Mrs. Harold and Josephine Gulamerian visited Armenia in 1998 at the invitation of Catholicos Karekin I. The Gulamerians were very moved by this visit, especially by the orphaned children they met. Established in 2013, The Harold and Josephine Gulamerian Armenian Orphan Fund (GAOF) is dedicated to improving the lives of orphaned Armenians throughout the world. Through a cooperative agreement with the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), the Foundation provides support to orphaned Armenians in Armenia, Artsakh, Istanbul, Javakh, Lebanon, and Syria.

In CY2018, SOAR received \$266,300.00 from The Harold and Josephine Gulamerian Armenian Orphan fund to support a variety of projects and programs. A breakdown of funds is provided below.



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Projects – CY2018

	Earmark	
Art Fund	Private art lessons and supplies	\$5,000.00
Birthday Fund	Birthday celebrations at MH and WH	\$2,400.00
CDSSC	Annual rent	\$3,000.00
Child Reunification and Family Training (CRAFT) Program	Facilitates reunification & family empowerment	\$10,000.00
Dental Fund	Dental Clinic (Gyumri)	\$8,000.00
Diaper Fund	Diapers for Nork	\$12,000.00
Global Hosting Program	Malta and Sofia	\$10,000.00
Javakh Summer Camp (Georgia)	Summer camp assistance	\$5,000.00
Kharberd Orphanage	Hippotherapy changing room	\$9,900.00
Kharberd, Nansen, and Tsaghgadzor	Mental/dental sea container	\$20,242.00
Nubarashen	Wholesale renovations	\$62,000.00
Orran	Gas bills and new shoes	\$3,958.00
Salaries	Key SOAR personnel	\$67,200.00
SOAR-Philadelphia	Gala sponsor	\$10,000.00
Special Olympics	I Can	\$25,000.00
Summer Retreat	MH and Nubarashen	\$8,000.00
Voice of the Armenian Church Summer Camp	Cash assistance with operating funds	\$4,000.00
TOTAL		\$266,300.00

A photographic montage follows below.



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Projects

Art Fund



Birthday Fund





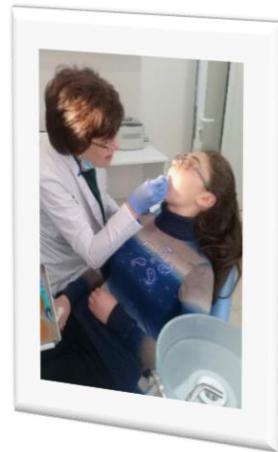
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Dental Fund



Global Hosting Program





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Javakh Summer Camp



Kharberd Hippotherapy Changing Room





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Nubarashen Renovations



Orran Shoes





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I CAN Sports Without Limits





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Conclusion

The Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR) was established in the fall of 2005 to provide humanitarian relief to orphaned Armenian children and orphaned Armenian adults with disabilities. SOAR's long-term goal is to provide orphaned Armenians throughout the world with the resources fundamental to their physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

In calendar year 2018, the Harold and Josephine Gulamerian Armenian Orphan Fund distributed \$266,300.00 to SOAR to support the Birthday and Diaper Funds; rent for CDSSC; reunification efforts through SOAR's Services to Children in their Own Home (SCOH) Program; international travel for children through SOAR's Global Hosting Program; a hippotherapy changing room at Kharberd Orphanage; capital renovations at Nubarashen; a shipment of medical and dental supplies for Nubarashen, Kharberd, Nansen, and OLA-Tsaghgadzor; financial support for gas bills and new shoes for the children at Orran; salaries of key personnel; financial support for SOAR's "I Can" Special Olympics; a summer retreat for the children of Mer Houys and Nubarashen; and financial support to the Voice of the Armenian Summer Camp.

SOAR is extremely thankful for the support it receives and extends its heartfelt gratitude to The Albert Tamberchi Foundation for its generosity in 2018. The desire to improve the lives of orphaned Armenians is the bonding element among our supporters. If you have any questions about SOAR, the institutions we serve, or this report, please contact George S. Yacoubian, Jr., at (610) 213-3452 or by email at gyacoubian@soar-us.org.