

2020

Annual Report



***Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief
(SOAR)***

Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR)



*Providing humanitarian relief
to orphaned Armenians
throughout the world*

2020 Annual Report

Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR)

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Greetings from the Executive Board Chairman

To Our SOAR Family:

As we move into 2021, it is important to reflect not only on the difficulties of 2020, but also admire the ways in which we responded valiantly to these challenges. Between COVID, the explosion in Lebanon, and the Artsakh War, the Armenian community faced three major catastrophes. As always, resiliency prevailed. The Armenian diaspora united in 2020 to support the defenseless, shield the victimized, and protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

I am proud and humbled by SOAR's ability to adapt to a virtual environment and continue support to our children and families. More than 15 years after our founding, SOAR remains the only charitable organization whose mission is devoted exclusively to humanitarian assistance to orphaned Armenian children. Our work, however, transcends the traditional residential childcare institution. While orphanages and special boarding schools remain SOAR's focus, our work to reduce the institutionalized child population is revolutionary.

SOAR's efforts not only address the major humanitarian constructs of education, emotional and psychological support, nutrition, health and hygiene, dental and vision care, and fundamental human rights, but the Programs offer educational curricula on a multitude of topics that stimulate intellectual curiosity, empowerment, and enrichment.

In 2006, our first full year of operations, distributions exceeded \$59,700. Despite the pandemic, which made live fundraising events impossible, 2020 distributions exceeded \$1.6M! In addition, we launched a Mobile Eye Care Clinic, established the Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund, raised more than \$530,000 for baby Ada Keshishyants, and addressed the humanitarian conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh with our Artsakh Relief Campaign. Our work with the Artsakh-displaced orphans, civilian refugees, and families of Armenian soldiers killed in battle helps assure that no children impacted by the Artsakh War will ever need to be institutionalized.

Greetings from the Executive Board Chairman (Continued)

The sustained interaction between our global volunteers and the orphaned children we support demonstrates that geographical boundaries and cultural distinctions are no hurdle to the mission we embrace.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to SOAR's leadership: our Executive Board; Trustees; Mother Arousiag Sajonian; Susan Snavelly; Kim A. Yacoubian; our team in Armenia and Artsakh – Executive Director Hripsime Muradyan; Associate Director Hasmik Diaryan; Manana Mananyan, Gayane Merdinyan, Hasmik Meyroyan, Arevik Musayelyan, Shushan Alexanyan, Marina Muradyan, Naira Sargsyan, Lora Amatuni, Varduhi Zakyan, Tatev Tumasyan, Mariam Vardanyan, Milena Badalyan, and Kristine Gevorgyan; 600+ worldwide Chapter volunteers; and, finally, our financial and emotional supporters. Your unwavering loyalty to SOAR makes our work possible.

Thank you for sustaining our efforts through a difficult 2020 and allowing us to continue to assist, enrich, and protect the most vulnerable populations of Armenians!

Respectfully,

George S. Yacoubian, Jr., Ph.D., LL.M., S.J.D.
SOAR Founder and Executive Board Chairman



Creation and Management

George S. Yacoubian, Jr. began the adoption process in Armenia in 2005. Throughout the spring and summer, he went through home study and various levels of domestic governmental approval. While in Armenia during the summer of 2005, George saw Liliana for the first time. He submitted Liliana's adoption dossier to the Armenian government in the fall of 2005, received preliminary approval in December 2005, and obtained final adoption in the United States on April 23, 2006.

George S. Yacoubian, Jr. founded the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR) in the fall of 2005 as a charitable organization that provides humanitarian relief to orphaned children living in Armenia. Dr. Yacoubian has served as SOAR's Executive Board Chairman since 2005 and provides oversight and guidance to all SOAR operations worldwide. In early 2006, an experienced and talented Board of Directors was assembled, a network of Partners in Armenia was recruited to assist with distributions, and the web site was launched. Between 2006 and 2008, SOAR established itself as the only charitable organization whose singular mission is to provide humanitarian assistance to orphaned Armenians around the world. In late 2007 and early 2008, SOAR launched its first two Chapters – in Los Angeles and Washington, DC. In 2009, a National Board of Trustees was created to annually review SOAR's fiscal operations and distributions. In 2010, SOAR launched its Sponsorship Fund, which today, with approximately \$150,000.00 in annual revenue, is the primary mechanism through which micro-level needs are addressed. Since 2005, SOAR's work has impacted thousands of children across a multitude of constructs, with the penultimate goal to provide institutionalized children with the same educational, emotional, medical, and social support as their non-institutionalized counterparts.

In 2016, SOAR took the proactive step of attempting to reduce the institutionalized orphan population in Armenia. Toward that end, SOAR now supports several day centers, all of which provide services to children at risk for institutionalization. SOAR also established its Services to Children in their Own Home (SCOH) Fund. The SCOH Fund works with residential institutions to deinstitutionalize and reunify children with biological families and provides home-based services after reunification to reduce the economic, social, and professional barriers that leave children at risk for reinstitutionalization.

Represented by 145 Chapters, 5 Junior groups, and more than 600 volunteers worldwide, SOAR supports 40 institutions – orphanages, special boarding schools, day centers, and orphan summer camps – in Armenia, Artsakh, Javakh, Lebanon, and Syria. Chapters contribute to SOAR's mission in a variety of ways, from traditional fundraising to Program development to professional expertise. The common bond among members of the SOAR family is the unwavering belief that orphaned children and orphaned adults with disabilities represent the most vulnerable population of Armenian society.

SOAR prides itself on creativity, cross-cultural respect, fiscal responsibility, and transparency. During the past 16 years, SOAR's reach has expanded considerably. In 2006, distributions totaled approximately \$60,000.00. Since 2015, SOAR distributions have

Creation and Management (Continued)

exceeded \$1M annually. Our efforts not only address the major humanitarian constructs of education, emotional and psychological support, nutrition, health and hygiene, dental and vision care, and fundamental human rights, but the Programs offer curricula on a multitude of topics that stimulate intellectual curiosity, empowerment, and enrichment. SOAR is blessed with a dedicated and selfless cadre of supporters who share our short-term aspirations and long-term vision. We are faced with an enormous responsibility. Our greatest trepidation is not inadequacy or a belief that we are ill-equipped to assist the orphaned children we have embraced as our own, but rather that we have influence and power beyond measure. Our daily routine involves a compulsive desire to assist the abandoned, the sick, the impoverished, the abused, and the forgotten. As SOAR's light shines, we hope that we are unconsciously giving the orphaned Armenian population the will to do the same.



Quality Control

SOAR imposes a strict quality control protocol to assure that all goods and services reach their intended recipients.

This protocol has nine primary steps:

1. SOAR rarely makes cash distributions directly to the institutions. Rather, goods and services that can be procured in Armenia are purchased by SOAR staff and distributed directly to the orphanages. In-kind donations from the Armenian diaspora that can be shipped or hand-delivered are encouraged.
2. SOAR uses Microsoft Planner to retain receipts, pictures, and internal documents for all projects.
3. All purchases are memorialized with a receipt or invoice.
4. SOAR implements chain-of-custody procedures for all distributed goods or services to assure that items have been received in the exact quantity intended. The recipient provides written documentation to indicate that the goods and services received is the quantity indicated, after which this documentation is sent to SOAR National and retained in Microsoft Planner.
5. SOAR staff, Chapter members, and other volunteers who visit Armenia make random inspections of the institutions. Discrepancies are to be reported immediately to SOAR's Executive Board Chairman.
6. When possible, donations provided by SOAR are engraved and/or stamped with a corporate seal.
7. Capital projects are acknowledged with a plaque and/or dedication ceremony.
8. SOAR does not transfer funds to other organizations to distribute on our behalf.
9. A zero-tolerance policy for fraud, theft, and/or deception is imposed. Malfeasance would result in the termination of assistance.



Institutions We Support

SOAR supports 38 institutions in five countries: 30 orphanages, special boarding schools, day centers, transitional centers, and summer camps in Armenia; one Armenian boarding school in Artsakh; one orphan summer camp in Javakh (Georgia); three Armenian orphanages in Lebanon; and three Armenian orphanages in Syria.

- *Armenian Evangelical Boarding School* in Ainjar, Lebanon, 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 90 years. Today, Birds' Nest houses healthy social orphans.
- *Boarding School #1* in Stepanakert, Artsakh, houses healthy and special needs children between the ages of 4 and 16.
- *Boarding School #2 of Fridtjof Nansen (formerly Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen)* in Gyumri, Armenia, houses children between the ages of 4 and 18. approximately 83 children between the ages of 4 and 18.
- *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* in Gyumri, Armenia, is a non-residential center that offers alternative care and material assistance to special needs children and their families. The Center started its activities in 2012.
- *Dzorak Care Center* in Yerevan, Armenia, 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 for adults with severe physical and psychological disabilities who have outgrown the traditional orphanage.
- *Gavar Orphanage* in Gavar, Armenia, houses healthy children under the age of 18.
- *Gyumri Social Childcare Center* is a day center in Gyumri, Armenia. 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.
- *Kharberd Orphanage* in Yerevan, Armenia, houses children and young adults with severe disabilities.

Institutions (Continued)

- **Mari Izmirlyan Orphanage** in Yerevan, Armenia, houses children with special needs between the ages of 6 and 18.
- **Naghasyan Children's Support Center (formerly Mer Hooy)** 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. In 2009, a second Orran center was established in Vanadzor. Today, Orran supports approximately 95 seniors and 200 children across Armenia.
- **The 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 who 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** in Gyumri, Armenia, 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 (Tsaghgadzor, Armenia)** 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, Armenia, 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** in Yerevan, Armenia, is a day center that offers food, educational, and therapeutic services to children and young adults with disabilities.



Institutions (Continued)

- ***Saint Theresa's Little Flower Orphanage (Azizie and Meydan, Syria)*** 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” (Nakhakhnamootian 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.
- ***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 20 very young children with severe physical and mental disabilities. SOC-Spitak is a private orphanage that houses approximately 15 teenagers and adults with severe physical and mental disabilities.



- ***SOAR's Transitional Center***, the first of its kind in Gyumri, is a residential setting for older teenage girls who have outgrown the traditional orphanage but who are not yet ready for independent living. The residents go to college; cultivate a business; be enriched by SOAR's academic programs; appreciate volunteerism; learn essential life skills, including home and money management; build self-nurturance and self-confidence; and prepare themselves for emotional, fiscal, and professional independence.
- ***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.

Institutions (Continued)

- ***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. The organization was founded in 1989 in response to the devastating earthquake of December 1988. In 1990, SOS Children's Village in Kotayk opened its doors for children who had lost their parents in the earthquake. It was the first SOS Children's Village in any former Soviet republic. SOS Children's Village in Idjevan was founded in 2009. Presently, SOS Children's Villages in Armenia operate a wide range of child care and family strengthening community and educational activities.*
- ***Source Foundation** is a non-profit, parent-founded organization that provides multidisciplinary development, rehabilitation therapies, and awareness-raising and social activities for approximately 90 children with disabilities. Founded in 2013, the Foundation's objective is to address the critical needs of children with special needs and their families and provide support for their integration into the society. Since October 2020, the Foundation has provided therapies and other services to special needs children displaced from Artsakh. The director of Source Foundation is Marina Parazyan.*
- ***Vardashen** is a state boarding school in Yerevan, Armenia, housing children who exhibit socially dangerous behavior between the ages of 6 and 18.*
- ***The Voice of the Armenian Church Orphan Summer Camp**, operating under the auspices of the Eastern Prelacy and its Executive Council, is held in the summer retreat of Tsaghgadzor, Armenia, and hosts orphaned children 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, Arinj, and Jermik Ankyun Geghanist, Armenia)** houses adults with disabilities who have outgrown the state-funded orphanages. The three 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, Armenia, houses children (both healthy and with special needs) ages 6 years and under.*
- ***Yerevan Special School Number 11 (Nubarashen)** is a state boarding school in Yerevan housing children with special needs.*
- ***Zadik Orphanage** is a state RCI in Yerevan, Armenia, that houses approximately 21 children between the ages of 3 and 18 and serves 83 additional children non-residentially. After the age of 18, the overnight children can move to either Rainbow House, a transitional home, or Zadikavan, a farming village in Arzni.*

Funds

Sponsorship Fund:

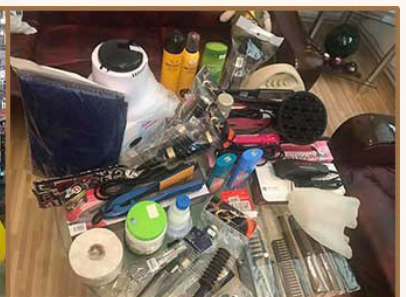
The Sponsorship Fund is the primary mechanism for addressing *child-specific* needs.

The Sponsorship Fund allows you to personally connect with an orphaned Armenian child or adult. Your entire donation goes directly to the orphan you are sponsoring; no funds support their orphanage or SOAR generally, and SOAR assumes the cost of all wiring fees.

SOAR has 4 sponsorship types:

- Sponsorship Fund
- Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund (Learn more on page #23)
- Services to Children in their Own Homes (SCOH)
- SOS Village Sponsorships

In 2020, more than 400 children/families/disabled adults were assisted through these sponsorships.



Funds (Continued)

Art Fund: The Art Fund facilitates interest in the visual arts by offering financial assistance for art supplies, private lessons, and scholarships to advanced art institutions.

Baptism Fund: The Baptism Fund began in July 2015 to provide funds to those institutions interested in having their children baptized in the Armenian Church.

Birthday Fund: The Birthday Fund is a program whereby parents request donations to SOAR in lieu of gifts for their children's birthdays. The funds are used to host monthly birthday parties for the children at Naghasyan Children's Support Center (formerly Mer Hooys) and the residents at Warm Hearth.

Child Reunification and Family Training (CRAFT): guiding the process of returning children in temporary out-of-home care to their families of origin. (Underwritten by the Carol Fananjan Foundation.)

Dental Fund: To address dental issues in Armenia, SOAR's Dental Fund was created and is overseen by a team of dental experts. The Fund has three (3) primary components:

- Dental clinic construction
- Recruiting dental professionals to volunteer at the OLA Summer Camp
- Procure dental supplies

Diaper Fund: Disposable diapers in Armenia are very expensive. In addition to cost, government allocations for diaper expenses are very low and do not adequately control for the diaper needs of the children. While SOAR firmly believes that the Armenian government should be exclusively responsible for the cost of baby supplies in the state orphanages, we have genuine concern for hygiene and the children's comfort. To address these issues, the Diaper Fund was launched in October 2014 to provide diaper subsidies to Yerevan's Children Home (formerly Nork Orphanage) and Mari Izmirlyan Orphanages.

Eye Care Fund: The Eye Care Fund began in February 2015 to address the diagnosis and treatment of children with serious vision problems.

Orphan Transitional Fund: Chapter volunteers work directly with young adults in Armenia as they transition to independent living, offering mentorship in the areas of education, interview coaching, job training and placement, counseling, and financial planning.

Programs

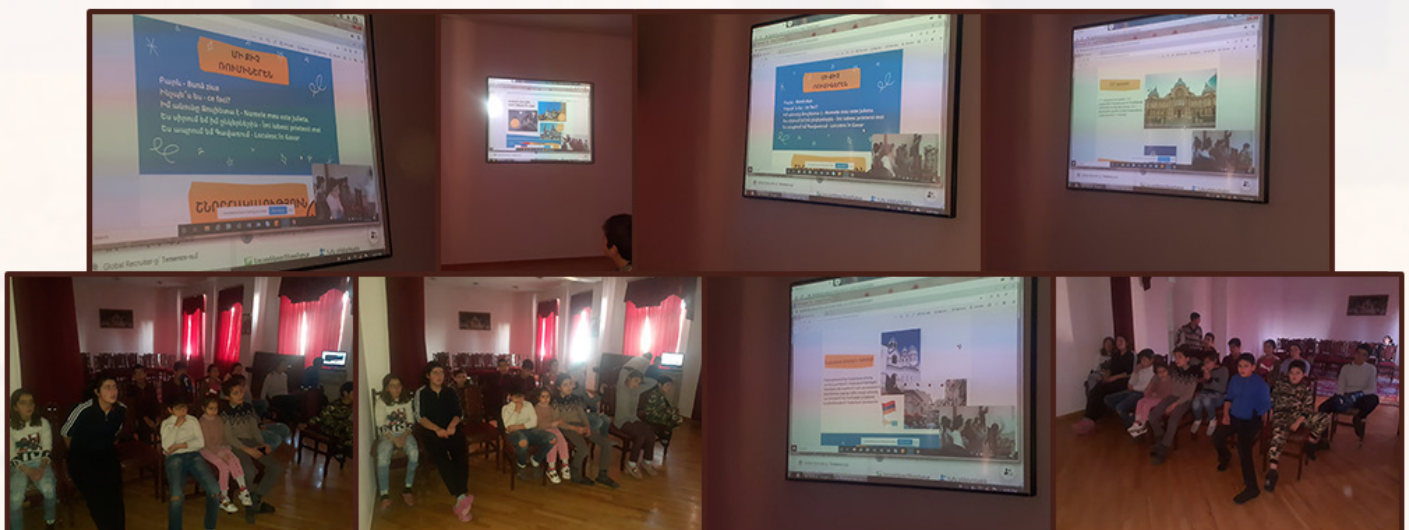
Developed and managed by our Chapter volunteers, SOAR Programs are academic curricula implemented virtually to the institutions in Armenia. Approximately 14 Programs are offered, including cultural discovery, digital literacy, financial planning, girls' empowerment, language tutoring, and mentoring and professional development

Armenian Language Program: providing instruction in the Armenian language, particularly for children adopted from Armenia who are now living in the diaspora.

Bible Study Program: providing an introduction to stories of the Bible in a child-centered format.

Business Development Program: assisting Armenian orphanages in the development of business ideas by reviewing their business plans, identifying strategies for implementation, etc.

Cultural Discovery Program (CDP): advances cultural understanding between global SOAR Chapter volunteers and the orphaned children in Armenia.



Programs (Continued)

Digital Literacy and Coding (DLC): The SOAR Digital Literacy Program serves as a preparational step to empower children from disadvantaged conditions to participate and excel in coding and engineering related studies in schools and activity centers that are offered nationwide.

Disability Early Warning System (DEWS): identifying physical and mental disabilities of children newly arrived at orphanages in Armenia, so that needs for immediate medical intervention will not be missed.

Female Empowerment: improving the girls' social, health, and economic resources so that they can stay in school longer, avoid early marriage, delay sexual activity, and prevent unintended pregnancy and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.

Financial Planning: Educates orphans in the areas of budgeting, employment, identity theft, and money management.

Global Hosting: allowing orphaned or seriously underprivileged children to live with a host family in the States and enjoy a variety of enriching experiences, including a week at Camp Hye Sierra in California.

Human Rights Monitoring monitoring potential human rights violations within Armenia's orphanages, boarding schools, and day centers.

Language Tutoring: Enhancing the foreign language skills of orphaned Armenians through tutoring in English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Bulgarian, and Ukrainian by SOAR volunteers.

Mentoring and Professional Development: Providing personal interaction with adults around the world who can share their education, wisdom, and life and career experiences with institutionalized children.

Pen Pal: Arranging traditional letter writing between first grade Armenian children in the United States and orphaned children in Armenia.

Reading: The aim of the program is to broaden children's' horizons as well as diversify their weekly activities to enhance their social and intellectual skill set.

2020 Distributions

- Chairs and soft furniture for Gavar
- Sport shoes for Our Lady of Armenia, Tashir- funded by SOAR Zurich
- Monthly diapers for SOAR supported facilities
- A new playground at Nubarashen funded by SOAR-Las Vegas
- New windows for Warm Hearth funded by SOAR London and SOAR Philadelphia
- Six months of carpet weaving classes for the girls at Naghasyan Children's Support Center (formerly Mer Hoosy)
- Construction for a wood shop at Kharberd
- Funds sent to Birds' Nest Orphanage, Lebanon, for Covid related assistance
- Provided Kharberd with medical supplies needed due to Covid19
- Renovations in two classrooms and a speech therapy room at Nubarashen, funded by SOAR and the Detroit Armenian Women's Club



2020 Distributions (Continued)



- Bicycles for all the girls at the Transitional Center, funded by SOAR Zurich and the Gulamerian Fund
- Music therapy at Mari Izmirlyan and Kharberd funded by the Jirair S. and Elizabeth Hovnanian Foundation
- A sea container with essentials including diapers for SOAR supported facilities
- Pizza ovens for Our Lady of Armenia Center, funded by SOAR San Francisco Bay Area
- Four boxes of clothing for Gyumri Social Childcare Center children and their families, from SOAR Las Vegas
- Birthday Fund sponsored celebrations throughout the year
- Bathroom renovations at Our Lady of Armenia-Tashir funded by the Gulamerian Fund and the Hilton Fund



2020 Distributions (Continued)

- A newly renovated Art Therapy room for Warm Hearth funded by SOAR Los Angeles
- Bookshelves and shoe closets for OLA Kanaker, funded by the Gulamerian Fund
- Residents at Kharberd had their annual retreat at Sevan
- Roof repairs at Gyumri Social Childcare Center funded by SOAR Dallas and SOAR Portland (OR)
- A new water heater for Our Lady of Armenia Center funded by SOAR La Cañada
- Hygiene supplies sent to Artsakh, with help from the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center
- Artsakh families receive first aid supplies, making a visit to the SOAR Dental Clinic in Gyumri. The families at Our Lady of Armenia Center received household supplies and families at SOS received bags filled with hygiene supplies.
- A sea container for Artsakh relief efforts



2020 Distributions (Continued)

- An all inclusive playground for Zadik Orphanage, funded by SOAR Los Angeles, The Gulamerian Fund, and the Albert Tamberchi Foundation
- A sea container with adult and children's' clothing and shoes, warm coats, hats, gloves, and scarves, blankets, diapers and hygiene supplies, and wheelchairs for Artsakh relief was shipped out by SOAR Madrid. The sea container is valued at almost \$415,000!
- Sleepers for Artsakh refugees staying at OLA Camp
- Beginning of an extension to the woodshop at Kharberd funded by the the Harold and Josephine Gulamerian Armenian Orphan Fund
- 74 boxes of diapers and hand sanitizer were purchased and taken to Children's Home of Gyumri, thanks to fundraising by the SOAR Assumption University College Group!
- Boiler repairs for Kharberd
- Hygiene supplies for Nansen Boarding School while they were still under quarantine.



2020 Distributions (Continued)

Throughout the year, SOAR sent funds for multiple food distributions to Our Lady of Armenia, Orran, Services to Children in Their Own Homes, and Lebanon families



Christmas celebrations/ gifts for EVERY child at SOAR supported facilities, SCOH families, and displaced Artsakh families



Major Projects

Art Therapy

The goal of this project is to facilitate social inclusion of orphaned children housed at SOS Kotayk through art therapy. Funded by the Jirair S. and Elizabeth Hovnanian Foundation, puppetry, pottery, and sand therapy are the three modes implemented.



Dental Clinic

After the delay in services due to Covid, the clinic reopened and continued free dental care, including serving displaced Artsakh families.



Major Projects (Continued)

Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund (FFSRF)

Launched in the summer of 2020, the FFSRF assists the families of fallen and severely disabled Armenian service personnel by providing emotional, educational, and financial support and children's enrichment assistance. The Fund aims to build strong, caring, and loving bonds with each family and to follow the widows and children through the years to assure that no children of fallen

Armenian soldiers are ever institutionalized. We believe that the service and sacrifices made by these Armenian service personnel should never be taken for granted and, just as they have become our heroes, we help their families get past their obstacles and guide them through their darkest times.



Human Rights Monitoring

SOAR's Human Rights Monitoring Program, created in December 2015, monitors potential human rights violations within Armenia's orphanages, boarding schools, and day centers. Specifically, the following constructs are monitored by in-country staff and volunteers: education, food and nutrition, human trafficking, hygiene, physical abuse and neglect, reunification, and sexual abuse. Using a multi-method design, these constructs are examined in each facility quarterly, with reports subsequently provided to facility directors and appropriate governmental personnel.

SOAR Founder and Executive Board Chairman held a Child protection webinar. Data from his Human Rights Monitoring Study were shared and discussed with those who joined.



Major Projects (Continued)

Mobile Eye Care Project

Although delayed due to Covid, the inaugural run for the Mobile Eye Care Project was in September, making its first stop at Warm Hearth Geghanist.

In December, the SOAR Mobile Eyecare Unit in cooperation with Zilfyan Eye Care Center held “Open Door” for all family members of servicemen and for people who had been displaced from Artsakh to Armenia. In-depth ophthalmological examinations, therapeutic treatment, prescription of glasses were performed free-of-charge.

Significant financial support was received by the Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation.



SOAR Transitional Center

The Transitional Center is the first of its kind in Gyumri – a residential setting for older teenage girls who have outgrown the traditional orphanage but who are not yet ready for independent living. At our new Center, these young women will go to college; cultivate a business; be enriched by our academic programs; appreciate volunteerism; learn essential life skills, including home and money management; build self-nurturance and self-confidence; and prepare themselves for emotional, fiscal, and professional independence. Significant financial support was received by the Harold and Josephine Gulamerian Fund, the Albert Tamberchi Foundation, and an anonymous foundation.

This year the girls at the center began taking sewing and computer classes, participated in Language Tutoring and Cultural Discovery with chapter volunteers, and helped with Artsakh relief efforts.



Activity Highlights

2020 was a year that SOAR fundraising had to take on new and innovative options. Our chapters and supporters came through in amazing and unexpected ways!

SOAR National held multiple online initiatives



Christmas Campaign



Artsakh Relief Campaign



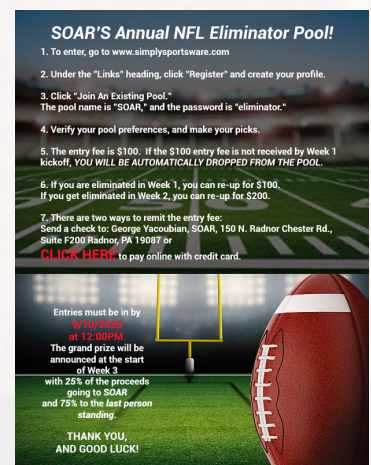
Campaign for Armenian Baby Ada Keshishyants



Virtual Piano Recital-Hayk for Artsakh



Child Protection Webinar



Annual NFL Pool Eliminator

From Gyumri to Greatness Virtual Summer Concert



Live Comedy Show with Kev Orkian



Virtual Piano Recital, Live from Yerevan Hayk Melikyan

Activity Highlights (Continued)

Though not possible for most chapters to hold in person events, this did not slow them down.

Using the available technology, online campaigns, raffles, and auctions were held.

****All in person events followed strict Covid regulations****

FUNDRAISING

SOAR Amsterdam supporter and singer Ruzanna Nahapetjan (who lives in Holland) organized a charity concert the evening of December 11th in Hilversum to fundraise for SOAR's Artsakh Relief efforts.

SOAR Anchorage held a campaign for Artsakh Relief.

SOAR Atlanta held an online raffle for Birds' Nest Orphanage.

SOAR Baltimore held a campaign to "Help Children of Fallen Heroes" *and* held a campaign to "Support Lebanon's Children".

SOAR Boston helped fund the continuing work on the woodshop at Kharberd, *and* sent in funds for Artsakh Relief

SOAR Brussels Chapter President, Lilit Ghukasyan, held a Handicraft Christmas Sale for Children of Fallen Armenian Soldiers, *and* **SOAR Brussels** held a live charity concert with Grand Prix winner violinist Hrayr Karapetyan, and prize winner pianist Hasmik Manukyan.

SOAR Chicago held a campaign for Artsakh Relief *and* sent in funds to help food insecure families in Gyumri due to Covid.

SOAR Clearwater held campaign for "Artsakh Relief" raising funds for the orphans displaced from Artsakh staying at SOS Kotayk *and* ran a "Feed a Family" online fundraiser to help support Armenian orphans affected by COVID-19.

SOAR Cleveland sent funds for the Families of Fallen Soldier Relief Fund.

SOAR Colorado held a campaign to raise funds for Source Foundation.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

SOAR Dallas held a campaign for the Family of Fallen Armenian Soldier Arthur Karapetyan, held a virtual online fundraiser for Birds' Nest Orphanage, *and* helped fund the roof repairs at Gyumri Social Childcare Center.

SOAR Detroit funded renovations in two classrooms and a speech therapy room at Nubarashen.

SOAR Fresno held a "Quarantine Date Night Wine Basket Raffle" *and* held a campaign for the Family of Fallen Soldier, Garik Gapoyan.

SOAR Harrisburg held a "Fundraiser for Artsakh".

SOAR Houston held a campaign to support the education of Armenian Youth.

SOAR Idaho held a campaign for Family of Fallen Soldier, Armen Grigoryan.

SOAR Indianapolis held a campaign for "Families of Fallen Soldiers".

SOAR Inland Empire held a campaign to raise funds for the family of fallen soldier, Taron Poghosyan.

SOAR Jacksonville sent in funds to help with Artsakh Relief.

SOAR La Cañada held a "Movie Night" featuring Mulan, to benefit the Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund, funded the purchase of a new water heater for OLA, held an online silent auction, *and* held a very successful "Wine and Cheese" fundraiser.

SOAR Las Vegas sent four boxes of clothing for Gyumri Social Childcare Center children and their families *and* funded a new playground at Nubarashen.

SOAR London held an "Emergency Campaign for Artsakh Relief", and funded new windows for Warm Hearth.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

SOAR Los Angeles supporter, Diana Madison, held a live makeup tutorial donating all proceeds to SOAR for Christmas celebrations for SOAR supported facilities. **SOAR Los Angeles** helped fund an all inclusive playground for Zadik, funded the renovation of an Art Therapy room at Warm Hearth, *and* held a very successful “Baking Fundraiser”.

SOAR Madrid sent a sea container with adult and children’s’ clothing and shoes, warm coats, hats, gloves, and scarves, blankets, diapers and hygiene supplies, and wheelchairs for Artsakh relief The sea container was valued at almost \$415,000!

SOAR Minneapolis engaged friends and family to fundraise for SOAR emergency efforts.

SOAR Montebello held an online campaign for CAO Orphanage in Lebanon.

SOAR Montreal held an online fundraiser for Artsakh Relief.

SOAR Naples sent in funds for Covid related needs for Birds’ Nest Orphanage in Lebanon.

SOAR New Jersey held a Webinar for Covid 19 raising funds for food insecure families in Armenia.

SOAR New York held a campaign for Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund.

SOAR Orange County held an online Christmas Raffle for Orphaned Armenian Children, *and* held an online wine basket raffle to raise funds for food insecure families in Gyumri due to Covid 19.

SOAR Paris hosted a table for SOAR at a community event to raise awareness on SOAR’s mission.

SOAR Philadelphia held an “Online Christmas Raffle”, *and* held a “Virtual 5K Fundraiser”.

SOAR Phoenix held a local fundraiser for Artsakh Relief.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

SOAR Portland, (ME) held a campaign to raise funds for Artsakh Relief.

SOAR Portland (OR) helped fund roof repairs at Gyumri Social Childcare Center, and helped with the production of the SOAR presentation video.

SOAR Providence gave a donation that enabled Orran families to celebrate Children's Day in Armenia, *and* held a Woman's Day event.

SOAR Sacramento held an "Online Raffle for Families of Fallen Armenian Soldiers".

SOAR St. Louis held a campaign for Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund.

SOAR Salt Lake City Chapter President, Talar Herculian Coursey raised funds from sponsorships for the Salt Lake City Marathon and held a second marathon fundraiser in November!

SOAR San Antonio held a campaign for Family of Fallen Armenian Soldier Arthur Karapetyan.

SOAR San Diego held a campaign to Help the Family of Fallen Armenian Soldier Martun Mkrtchyan.

SOAR San Francisco Bay Area held a "Honey for Heroes online fundraiser", sent \$5,000 to Lebanon facilities, Birds' Nest and Armenian Evangelical Boarding School, *and* funded new pizza ovens at OLA, Gyumri.

SOAR Syracuse held an online envelope challenge to support education of young ladies at Our Lady of Armenia Annie Bezikian Center and the SOAR Transitional Center.

SOAR Toronto held a campaign to help families of fallen soldiers from Artsakh, *and* held a campaign to help save the life of Armenian baby, Ada Keshishyants.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

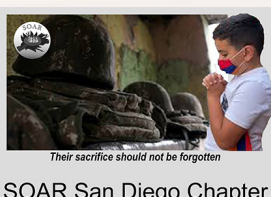
SOAR Vancouver held a very successful online campaigns for Artsakh Relief, to raise funds for young ladies at Our Lady of Armenia Annie Bezikian Center, *and* for Armenian Baby Ada Keshishyants.

SOAR Ventura County held an “Online Christmas Raffle for Families of Fallen Armenian Soldiers” with items from the SOAR Transitional Center, *and* Rosemarie Sherbetjian, SOAR Ventura County Chapter President (and her Mom), held a very successful Baklava Drive making and selling trays of homemade Armenian baklava.

SOAR Washington DC Metro held a successful “Feed a Family” campaign to support food insecure families in Armenia impacted by Covid.

SOAR Wisconsin donated \$18,000 during the year from local fundraising, for emergency facility needs due to Covid, facility Christmas parties, and for Families of Fallen Soldier Relief Fund.

SOAR Zurich raised funds for new bicycles for the SOAR Transitional Center girls and sport shoes for children at OLA-Tashir.



SOAR San Diego Chapter



Activity Highlights (Continued)

PROGRAMS & ADMINISTRATIVE

SOAR Abu Dhabi is an internal administrative chapter assisting with purchasing.

SOAR Ankara did a presentation to the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Antwerp made a presentation to the children at Gavar Orphanage through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Bogota gave a presentation to the children at Gavar Orphanage through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Bucharest gave a presentation to the children at Gavar Orphanage through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Budapest conducts classes with the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center through the Language Tutoring Program.

SOAR Cairo participates in the Sponsorship Fund bringing awareness and matching supporters to SOAR sponsorships.

SOAR Cincinnati assisted in the production of the SOAR semi-annual newsletter.

SOAR Daimus gave a presentation to the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center.

SOAR Detroit oversees all aspects of the Volunteer Program.

SOAR Doha participates in the Disability Early Warning System Program *and* is an Internal Administrative Chapter overseeing medical requests and funding.

SOAR East Asia managed the Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund.

SOAR Eindhoven gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Estonia participates in the Global Hosting Program *and* the Digital Literacy and Coding Program.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

SOAR Hamburg gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Harrisburg gave a presentation to the children at Orran through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Hartford oversees the Disaster Assistance and Response Team.

SOAR Helsinki gave a presentation to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Istanbul made a presentation to the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Jerusalem made a presentation to the children at Orran *and* made a presentation to the children at SOS Childrens' Village-Kotayk through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Johannesburg gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center and to the children at Orran through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Kansas City (Mo) gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Kiev gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Krakow gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Krasnodar gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center *and* to the children at Orran through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Las Vegas holds regular classes with the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center through the Mentoring Program *and* gave a presentation to the girls at the SOAR Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

SOAR Leeds gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Lisbon gave a presentation to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Madrid gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center *and* to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Miami gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Monaco holds regular classes with the girls at the Transitional Center through the Language Tutoring Program.

SOAR New Delhi gave a presentation to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Nottingham participates in the Language Tutoring Program giving regular instruction with the girls at the Transitional Center *and* gave a presentation to the children at Orran through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Odessa made a presentation to the children at Gavar Orphanage through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Oslo gave a presentation to the children at Birds' Nest Orphanage *and* to the girls at the Transitional Center as part of the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Paris gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center as part of the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Pisa participates in the Disability Early Warning System Program.

SOAR Pittsburgh gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Portland (ME) gave a presentation to the children at SOS Children's Village.

Activity Highlights (Continued)

SOAR Prague gave a presentation to the children of Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Rotterdam gave a presentation to the children at Orran through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Saint Petersburg gave a presentation to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program *and* give regular instruction in Russian to the children at Gavar through the Language Tutoring Program.

SOAR Salt Lake City is an Internal Administrative Chapter assisting in legal matters.

SOAR Salzburg made a presentation to the children at Orran through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Sao Paulo gave a Cultural Discovery Program presentation to the children at Gavar Orphanage and participates in the Global Hosting Program.

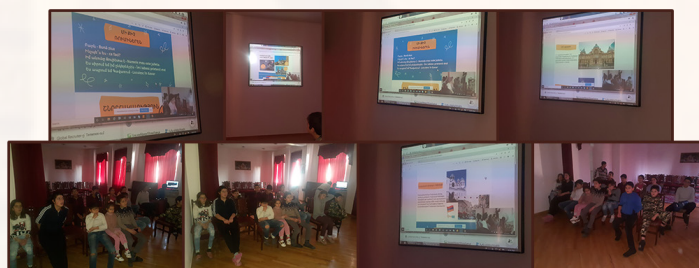
SOAR Saudi Arabia gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center and to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Slovakia gave a presentation to the children at Gavar through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Sofia participates in the Global Hosting Program.

SOAR Stockholm gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program.

SOAR Thessaloniki gave a presentation to the girls at the Transitional Center through the Cultural Discovery Program and participates in the Global Hosting Program.



Activity Highlights - College Groups

SOAR Assumption University Group They held their Kickoff meeting in February 2020. Covid did not keep them down as they held a fundraiser and were able to purchase 74 boxes of diapers and hand sanitizer for Children's Home, Gumri!



SOAR Ramapo College of New Jersey held Valentine's Day Fundraiser, held a campaign to raise funds for Armenian baby, Ada Keshishyants, and held a Christmas Fundraiser for Orphaned Armenian Children!

Activity Highlights - Juniors

"Children Helping Children"

SOAR recognizes the importance of developing the future leaders of the Armenian community. SOAR-Juniors was created in October 2013 (by Philadelphia Juniors) for youth between the ages of 8 and 17.



SOAR New Jersey Juniors held a very successful hybrid "Canvas Painting Fundraiser".

SOAR New York Juniors held a bowling fundraiser bringing in over \$1,300!

SOAR Philadelphia Juniors held an ice skating fundraiser before Covid restrictions were in place, and held a Christmas campaign in December.



Accounting Summary

Distributions

• Armenian Evangelical Boarding School.....	\$15,760.00
• Birds' Nest Orphanage.....	\$26,500.00
• Boarding School #2 of Fridtjof Nansen.....	\$1,458.00
• Bzommar.....	\$4650.00
• Cardinal Aghajanian Orphanage.....	\$3,200.00
• Community Development and Social Support Center.....	\$4,692.00
• Children's Home Gyumri.....	\$1,295.00
• Dental Clinic.....	\$280.00
• Dzorak Care Center.....	\$1,300.00
• Eye Care Project.....	\$2,516.00
• Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund.....	\$31,600.63
• Gavar Orphanage.....	\$1,392.00
• Gyumri Social Childcare Center.....	\$7,295.00
• Kharberd Orphanage.....	\$6,628.00
• Mer Doon.....	\$1,500.00
• Naghasyan Children's Support Center (formerly Mer Hooys).....	\$950.00
• Mari Izmirlyan Orphanage.....	\$1,500.00
• Orran.....	\$7,512.00
• Our Lady of Armenia Center.....	\$62,057.00
• OLA-Kanaker.....	\$11,443.00
• OLA-Tashir.....	\$9,030.00
• OLA-Tsaghgadzor.....	\$210.00
• Prkutyun.....	\$648.00
• Services to Children in their Own Homes (SCOH).....	\$9,990.16
• Sisters of Charity.....	\$2,600.00
• S.O. Khach.....	\$1,000.00
• SOS-Kotayk.....	\$24,736.00
• St. Theresa's.....	\$7,000.00
• Transitional Center.....	\$92,435.00
• Warm Hearh.....	\$19,537.00
• Yerevan Special School Number 11 (Nubarashen).....	\$11,619.00

Accounting Summary (Continued)

• Zadik.....	\$15,000.00
• Sea Containers.....	\$1,056,733.30
• Miscellaneous.....	\$56,162.36
• SOAR House.....	\$48,940.61
•	
TOTAL DISTRIBUTIONS.....	\$1,546,737.16

Administrative

• Salaries.....	\$52,646.00
• Bank.....	\$6,272.87
• Cell.....	\$380.00
• Transportation.....	\$242.00

TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE.....\$59,480.87

GRAND TOTAL.....\$1,606,278.03



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.

SOAR prides itself on creativity, cross-cultural respect, fiscal responsibility, and transparency. During the past 15 years, SOAR's work has transcended all reasonable expectations. In 2006, distributions totaled approximately \$60,000. In CY2020, SOAR exceeded \$1.6M in distributions. Our efforts not only address the major humanitarian constructs of education, emotional and psychological support, nutrition, health and hygiene, dental, medical and vision care, and fundamental human rights, but the Programs offer educational curricula on a multitude of topics that stimulate intellectual curiosity, empowerment, and enrichment. Our most significant accomplishments in 2020 was the launching of our Mobile Eye Care Clinic and our Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund.

For several of us, SOAR is our life's work, and we are blessed with a dedicated and selfless cadre of supporters who share our short-term aspirations and long-term vision. We are faced with an enormous responsibility. Our greatest trepidation is not inadequacy or a belief that we are ill-equipped to assist the orphaned children we have embraced as our own, but rather that we have influence and power beyond measure. Our daily routine involves a compulsive desire to assist the abandoned, the sick, the impoverished, and the abused. As SOAR's light shines, we hope that we are unconsciously giving our orphaned population the will to do the same.

If you have any questions about SOAR, our mission, the populations we serve, or this 2020 annual report, please contact

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