



SOCIETY FOR ORPHANED ARMENIAN RELIEF (SOAR)

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

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2021 Final Report to the Albert Tamberchi Foundation



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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 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 approval in March 2006. Liliana Sara Yacoubian arrived in the United States on April 23, 2006.

Dr. Yacoubian 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. He 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



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SOAR's fiscal operations and distributions. In 2010, SOAR launched its Sponsorship Fund, which today is the primary mechanism through which micro-level children's needs are addressed. Since 2005, SOAR's work has impacted thousands of children, 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 expanded its mission, recognizing that, after a decade of helping children in residential settings, it was necessary to take 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, emotional, and professional barriers within the family dynamic that may trigger reinstitutionalization.

Represented by 145 Chapters, 6 Junior groups, and more than 600 volunteers, SOAR supports 40 orphanages, special boarding schools, day centers, summer camps, and transitional centers – in Armenia, Artsakh, Javakh, Lebanon, and Syria. SOAR prides itself on collaboration, creativity, cross-cultural respect, fiscal responsibility, loyalty, and



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transparency. During the past 15 years, SOAR's work has transcended all reasonable expectations. In 2006, distributions totaled approximately \$60,000. Since 2015, SOAR has exceeded \$1M distributions annually. 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.

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.



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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 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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SOAR-Supported Institutions

SOAR supports 35 institutions in four 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); and three Armenian orphanages in Lebanon.

Armenian Evangelical Boarding School (AEBS) in Ainjar, Lebanon, is home to approximately 75 healthy, social orphans.

Birds' Nest Orphanage (BN) in Byblos, Lebanon, opened shortly after the 1915 Armenian Genocide and has been home to thousands of Armenian children for more than 90 years. Today, BN houses approximately 20 healthy, social orphans.

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

Cardinal Aghajanian Orphanage (CAO) in Ainjar, Lebanon, is home to approximately 25 healthy orphaned boys.

Children's Home of Gyumri (CHG), a state orphanage in Gyumri, Armenia, houses approximately 85 children with special needs ages 6 years and younger.



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Community Development and Social Support Center (CDSSC) in Gyumri, Armenia, is a non-residential, state 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 is a state care facility for adults with severe physical and psychological disabilities who have outgrown the traditional orphanage.

Gavar Orphanage, a state orphanage in Gavar, Armenia, houses approximately 45 healthy children under the age of 18.

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

House of Dreams was founded in 2019 to work with children who have special educational needs. They provide individual speech therapy and offer age-focused programs on literacy, mathematics, sand therapy, drawing, logic games, and art therapy.

Kharberd Orphanage is a state orphanage in Yerevan, Armenia that houses approximately 200 children and young adults with severe disabilities.



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Mari Izmirlyan (MI) Orphanage is a state orphanage in Yerevan, Armenia that houses approximately 100 children with special needs between the ages of 6 and 18.

Naghasyan Children's Support Center (formerly Mer Hoos) is a private home in the Arapkir district of Yerevan for approximately 25 teenage girls. 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 as a non-residential Center in April 2000. In 2009, a second Orran center was established in Vanadzor. Today, Orran supports approximately 95 seniors and 200 children across Armenia.

Our Lady of Armenia (OLA) Annie Bezikian Youth Center in Kanaker, Armenia, 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 (OLA) Center in Gyumri, Armenia, houses approximately 28 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.



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Our Lady of Armenia (OLA) 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 (OLA) 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 (OLA) 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 approximately 55 children and young adults with disabilities.

Shirak Marz Child and Family Support Center located in Gyumri, is a merger of two childcare centers: Gyumri Social Childcare Center and the Orphanage of Fridtjof Nansen. The new Center is a hybrid facility that provides day services to families whose children are at risk for institutionalization while serving as a residential setting for children without permanent familial care.



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Sisters of Charity (SOC) (Bethlehem and Spitak, Armenia) 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 25 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 is a residential setting for older teenage girls who have outgrown the traditional orphanage but who are not yet ready for independent living. Opened in November 2019, these young women are enrolled in a college or university; assist in a SOAR-cultivated business; are enriched by SOAR’s academic programs; learn the value of volunteerism and essential life skills; build self-nurturance and self-confidence; and prepare themselves for emotional, fiscal, and professional independence.

SOS Children’s Villages’ (Idjevan and Kotayk, Armenia) provides care for children without suitable parental care. 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 childcare and family strengthening community and educational activities.

Vardashen is a state boarding school in Yerevan, Armenia, that houses approximately 53 children who exhibit socially dangerous behavior between the ages of 6 and 18.



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The Voice of the Armenian Church Summer Day Camp is held in Tsaghgadzor, Armenia, and hosts orphaned children between the ages of 10 and 16. The Camp, held in July, offers the children comfort, love, compassion, and care, while simultaneously instilling in them the love of Christ and the history of the Armenian Church.

Warm Hearth (WH) (3rd Village, Arinj, and Jermik Ankyun Geghanist) offers residential living to adults with disabilities who have outgrown the traditional orphanages.

Yerevan Children Home (Nork) is a state orphanage in Yerevan, Armenia, that houses approximately 60 children under the age of 6.

Yerevan Special School Number 11 (Nubarashen) is a state boarding school in Yerevan housing approximately 48 children with special needs.

Yerevan State Day Center was founded in July 2005 to support special needs children aged 6-18 years and to facilitate their integration into society. The Center provides educational and professional orientation services; psychological services, including play therapy, art therapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy; primary health care and medical consulting; and rights protection and advocacy.

Zadik Yerevan Child Assistance Center is a state orphanage in Yerevan, Armenia, that houses approximately 45 children between the ages of 6 and 18.



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CY2021 Projects and Accounting

In May 2021, SOAR received \$67,916.95 from the Albert Tamberchi Foundation. As shown below, the funds were used to support a trip to Bulgaria for several orphaned children through SOAR's Global Hosting Program; tuition payments for the residents of the Our Lady of Armenia Annie Bezikian Youth Center (Kanakaner) (a sample of gratitude letters provided below); renovations of a bathroom at Nork Orphanage; a shunt for Arina Baghramyan at Sisters of Charity Orphanage; renovations at the Our Lady of Armenia Annie Bezikian Youth Center (Kanakaner); and tuition assistance for Arame Hakobyan through SOAR's Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund.



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Table 1. CY2021 Budget

	Balance	Date	
CY2021 Opening Balance	\$83.21		
Deposit (Wire Received)	\$67,916.95	7/12/2021	
Balance	\$68,000.16		
Institution/Project	Amount	Project	Date
Global Hosting Program	\$4,013.00	Summer camp trip to Bulgaria	July-21
Our Lady of Armenia Center (Kanakaner)	\$43,500.00	Tuition	October-21
Nork	\$1,000.00	Bathroom Renovation	October-21
Sisters of Charity	\$1,300.00	Shunt for Arina Baghramyan	October-21
Our Lady of Armenia Center (Kanakaner)	\$16,533.34	Renovations	October-21
Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund	\$1,518.75	Arame Hakobyan Tuition	October-21
Balance	\$135.07		
Fees	\$150.00		1/2021-12/2021
CY2021 End of Year Balance	-\$14.93		



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**Thank you letters from residents of Our Lady of Armenia Center
(Kanakaner)**

I am Ala Antonosyan. I am 21 years old. I am a student at the faculty of history of Erevan State University. I am going to be a senior. I am a member of Javakhk Student Union and I sing in the choir of Erevan State University.

This summer I am going to go to “Our Lady of Armenia Camp” as a volunteer. It will give me a unique opportunity to work with children and have an active rest. Then I will go home to spend the rest of my summer with my family.

It is a great honor to have you in my life. I will remember you in my prayers.

God bless you and your good intentions.

Sincerely

Ala Antonosyan

Dear Benefactor,

I am writing to you to say thank you for your support and kindness to me. Due to the chance you gave me I could successfully finish my studies at College of Management of Economy and Advocacy. Now with skills and knowledge I gained during these years I am going to find a job and work in my profession. These field that I love and in which I am interested will ensure my future personal and professional development. Thank you again for being with me.

Best regards,
Anna Ghazaryan



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I am Izolda Sukiasyan. I am 21 years old. I express my deep gratitude to you for your regular assistance. Thanks to you, I have had many successes in my studies.

Dear benefactor, this year I graduated with great progress from Khachatur Abovyan Armenian State Pedagogical University as an elementary school teacher. Now I have a great desire to continue my studies in the master's program, developing my professional growth.

I have been living in "Ani Pezikyan" youth center since my first year. Like a caring mother, I had both a spiritual and a material upbringing under the guidance of my spiritual sisters. May God bless you and May God's guidance be with you.

Last year, in 2020, due to the epidemic, our lessons were conducted online.

My dear benefactor, I would like to inform you that this summer, under the guidance of my caring sisters, I will go to "Our Lady of Armenia camp" as a volunteer.

Dear benefactor, I wish you to be healthy and happy in all the days of your life.

Dear benefactor,

I am writing to tell you about me and my achievements that I had due to you. Being a student of Yerevan State Conservatory I have had many concerts. Despite pandemia we managed to organize concerts and some of them were online. This year I passed my bachelor's degree final exam in Opera Studio. Recently one of my theater performances taked place.It was "The marriage of Figaro" by Amadeus Mozart where I played the role of Figaro's bride Susan. It was very impressive and by this performance I finished my studies and got high marks. Now I want to share my skills and knowledge I received due



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to you in Summer camp with children. I will be one of the volunteers in Our Lady of Armenia. I will continue to study and profoundly improve my skills to realize my dreams. Thank you for your support and contribution to my education.

Sincerely,
Lusya Karapetyan

Hello dear benefactor,

. I'm Ofik Manasyan from Georgia. I am 21 years old. I'm studying at Yerevan State Medical University, in the faculty of general medicine. During this academic year, I attended operation surgery clubs. I finished this year with high progress. I'll stay in Yerevan in the summer because I want to do voluntary works in hospitals and acquire professional skills and experience for my future.

Thank you for supporting me and giving me the opportunity for getting a higher education. I will do everything to become a good specialist, to be useful for humanity with my knowledge and skills.

Sincerely,
Ofik Manasyan



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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. For calendar year 2021, SOAR received \$67,916.95 from the Albert Tamberchi Foundation to fund a variety of projects and programs in Armenia. SOAR is extremely thankful for the support it receives and extends its heartfelt gratitude to the Foundation for its generosity in 2021. If you have any questions about SOAR or this report, please contact George S. Yacoubian, Jr., at (610) 213-3452 or gyacoubian@soar-us.org.