



# Newsletter Fall 2018

## **SOAR Welcomes New Chapters!**



As of August 2018, SOAR has 137 chapters!

We would like to welcome the new chapters:

Albuquerque

Antwerp

Columbus

Eindhoven

Grenoble

Harrisburg

Helsinki

Jacksonville

Jerusalem

Johannesburg

Kansas City (MO)

Krakow

Madrid

Naples

New Delhi

Oslo

Panama

Pittsburgh

Portland (ME)

Riga

Rotterdam

Salzburg

Tallahassee

Thessaloniki

Warsaw

Vienna

**Welcome to the SOAR family!!!**

## **I Can-Sports Without Limits**

SOAR hosted the inaugural "I Can" Olympics in Tsaghgadzor, Armenia, between May 24, and May 27, 2018. "I Can," a national sports festival for children and young adults with special needs, was the first of its kind in Armenia. Shavarsh Karapetyan, champion Armenian finswimmer, who is best known for saving the lives of 20 people in a 1976 incident in Yerevan, served as Master of Ceremonies.

When SOAR conceived "I Can" two years ago, we wanted to bring together children and adults with disabilities to show them, and others, what special talents they had. The mission of "I Can" is to provide athletic training and competition for children and adults with disabilities, giving them opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, and experience joy. Our goal is to allow these competitors to participate as productive and respected members of society by giving them an opportunity to develop and demonstrate their skills and talents and by increasing Armenia's awareness of their capabilities. Our vision is not only to create an athletic forum within which these competitors can flourish, but to show that inclusiveness with special needs populations is an attainable goal in Armenia.

Approximately 150 special needs children and adults from Yerevan, Gyumri, Kapan, Artashat, Spitak, and Nor Kharberd participated. Sports included basketball, boccia, canoeing, relay races, soccer, and table tennis. Our hope is to host "I Can" every two years.





## **Hasmik Hovhannisyan** **New Quality Assurance Manager**

Hasmik has been the General Manager of Lili's Bed and Breakfast in Yerevan for SOAR. Recently she has also taken on the role of SOAR's new Quality Assurance Manager. Hasmik's specific tasks include:

- Oversee all distributions, purchases, quality control procedures, and receipt of goods in Armenia.
- Monitor all purchases and projects to assure that funds and goods sent to Armenia are used and distributed as intended.
- Develop, disseminate, and implement written policies and quality control checklists for use in Armenia and put deadlines for reporting.
- Monitor quality control performance of staff in Armenia.
- Conduct trainings on quality control procedures with staff in Armenia.
- Ensure that all legal and internal standards established by SOAR's Executive Board are met.

This is an important step for SOAR, as we can now advertise that we have one person who oversees all of the distributions we make in Armenia.

***Congratulations Hasmik!***

## **SOAR Philadelphia Hosts Black and White Ball**

SOCIETY FOR ORPHANED ARMENIAN RELIEF  
(SOAR) PHILADELPHIA CHAPTER PRESENTS

### **BLACK & WHITE** *Ball*

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 2018  
6:30 pm

LOEWS PHILADELPHIA HOTEL, MILLENIUM BALLROOM

COCKTAILS & SILENT AUCTION, DINNER &  
DANCING, KEVORK ARTINIAN & BAND

MASTER OF CEREMONIES **MARK GERAGOS, ESQ**

GUEST OF HONOR **CARLA GARABEDIAN**,  
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER OF "THE PROMISE"

*Full Open Bar!*

BLACK TIE OPTIONAL, TICKET \$150  
RSVP BY FEBRUARY 26, 2018

GO HERE TO PURCHASE TICKETS

On March 10, 2018, SOAR-Philadelphia hosted a "Black and White" Ball at the posh Loews Hotel in downtown Philadelphia. Master of Ceremonies Mark Geragos did not disappoint, with stories that kept the crowd entertained throughout the evening. Guest of Honor Carla Garabedian, Associate Producer of "The Promise," dazzled the more than 200 guests with amazingly heartfelt filmmaking imagery. An array of butlered appetizers, sit down dinner, and silent auction capped the evening, with all proceeds earmarked for Birds' Nest Orphanage in Lebanon. To date, SOAR-Philadelphia has purchased a new minivan for Birds' Nest, with more support to come. On behalf of SOAR-Philadelphia and SOAR's Executive Board, thank you for your continuing support of our orphaned Armenian children.



MINIVAN DONATED BY  
Society for Orphaned American Relief (SOAR)  
Philadelphia Chapter  
July 2018  
[www.soar-us.org](http://www.soar-us.org)

