

Long-Time Supporter Makes \$25,000 Donation to Wellness Center Expansion

Washington, DC – The Armenian American Cultural Organization (AACAO) recently announced a generous donation of \$25,000 from Ms. Anoush Mathevosian of New York. Ms. Mathevosian's donation will support the renovation and expansion of the Armenian American Wellness Center (AAWC), formerly the Armenian American Mammography University Center (AAMUC) in Yerevan, Armenia. The renovation and expansion of the current facility began in late 2004 and will be completed in 2007. An exam room at the renovated Wellness Center will be dedicated to Ms. Mathevosian.

The Armenian American Wellness Center, established in 1997 by the US-based Armenian American Cultural Association, is a state-of-the-art health care facility based in Yerevan, Armenia with two satellite centers to service rural areas. The mission of the Center is to save, prolong, and improve the lives of women in Armenia, and their families, through early and accurate detection of breast and cervical cancer and the provision of primary health care services. To date, over 60,000 women have been screened for breast and cervical health at the Center and over 1,500 lives were (have been) saved.

Commenting on the generous donation, Rita Balian, AACAO President and AAWC Founder, noted Ms. Mathevosian's steadfast support of the Center since her first visit, shortly after its opening. "We are grateful for her continued generosity and encouragement." Balian continued.

Ms. Mathevosian recently shared her thoughts on her many visits to Armenia and her impressions of the patient care standards at the Wellness Center. "What impressed me the most during my first visit to the Center was the high-degree of medical and technical competency of the staff, and the level of care provided to patients as was evident by the number of women seeking services at the Wellness Center. The word is out and the waiting room is always full. It is essential to promote preventative health care in Armenia, especially women's health, because for so long, it did not exist, people only sought medical care when it was too late."

"I am delighted to be a sponsor of the renovation and expansion of the Wellness Center as this undertaking is essential, not merely for the square footage gained, but rather for the expansion of services available to the families of Armenia." Ms. Mathevosian's donation will be utilized to equip an exam room at the Wellness Center and she hopes it will inspire others in the community to donate to the project at this critical time.

When asked about her overall impressions of programs and facilities in Armenia, Mathevosian stated, "I always use the Wellness Center program as a model - the gold standard of patient care, utility, and sound management- when discussing other programs in Armenia."

The renovation and expansion of the Wellness Center currently underway was made possible through the donation, by the Government of Armenia, of the entire 5-story

building currently housing the Wellness Center operations on the main level. USAID has also committed \$500,000 to the expansion project but the majority of funds needed to complete the project must be raised through private donations. When complete, the Wellness Center will offer expanded Primary Health Care protocols including hematology, pediatrics, prostate cancer screening, outpatient cancer screening, outpatient surgery, invasive diagnostic procedures and chemotherapy. The renovated building will utilize solar power and an innovative and ecologically clean energy system known as Combined Heat and Power (CHP) to provide the Wellness Center with a reliable power source. Seismic reinforcement of the structure will also ensure that the building is one of the safest in Yerevan during an earthquake.

Please remember the Wellness Center in your annual giving. A donation is also a perfect way to honor or memorialize a loved one. For more information, or to make a donation, please contact AACA by e-mail at info@aacainc.org, by phone at (703) 416-2555, or by fax at (703) 416-2557.