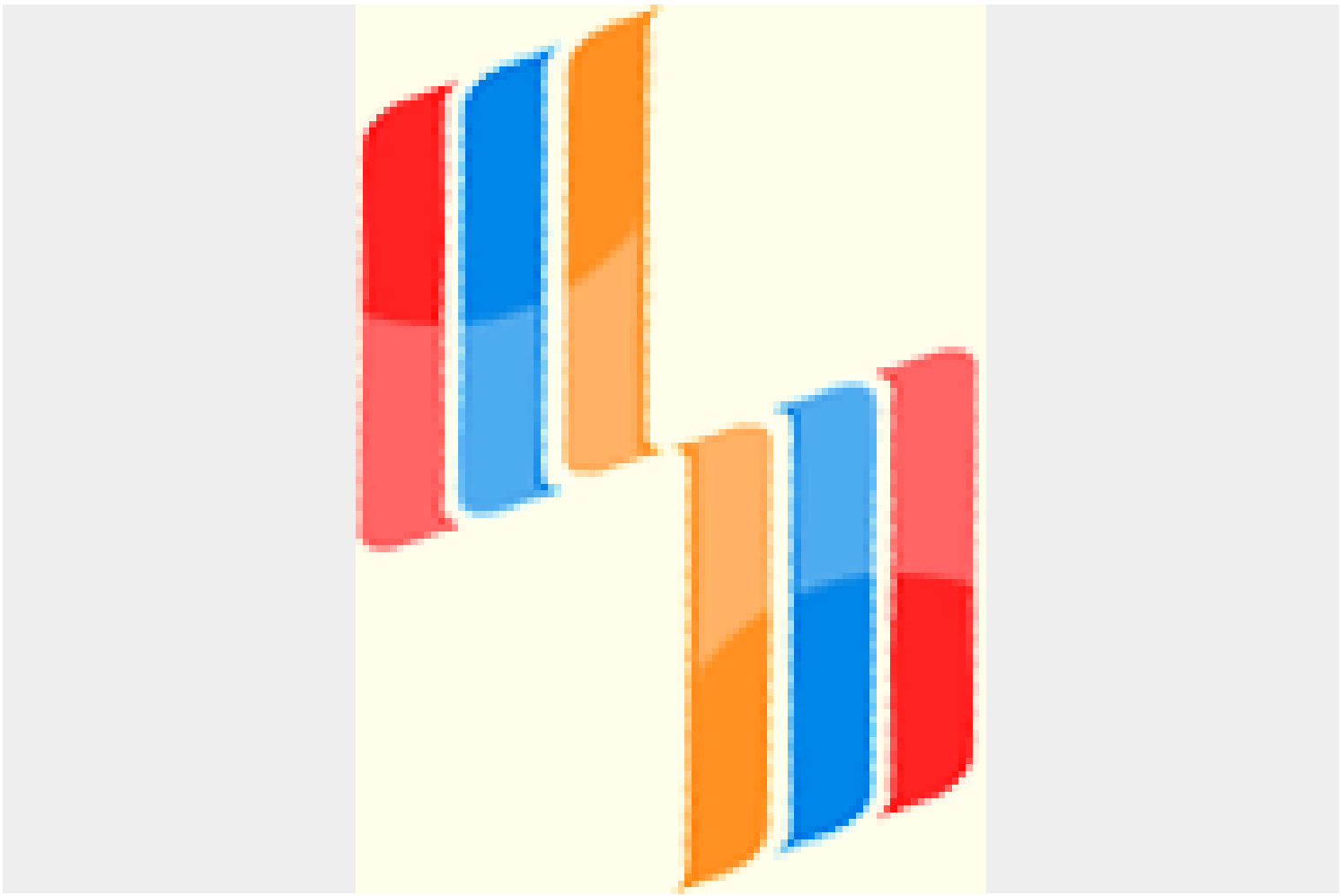
HAYASTAN ALL ARMENIA FUND: ARTSNI COMMUNITY CENTRE & ABOVYAN HOSPITAL

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Category: Opinions



On October 24, the **Hayastan All-Armenian Fund's** Montreal local committee held its annual benefit dinner in Montreal. Close to 200 supporters attended the event, whose guest of honor and keynote speaker was Arkady Ghukasyan, ambassador-at-large of the Republic of Armenia, former president of Nagorno Karabakh, and vice-president of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund's Board of Trustees.
Ghukasyan addressed the audience following remarks by Montreal local committee chairman Antranik Shirinian and Armenian ambassador to Canada Arman Akopian. Ghukasyan's speech, which enumerated many of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund's major development achievements to date as well as the organization's main objectives for the rest of this year and 2010, received a standing ovation.

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Another highlight of the evening was Shirinian's announcement that Canadian-Armenian philanthropists Vrej and Imasdouhi Nigoghosian had pledged U.S. $100,000 for the reconstruction of the Abovyan Regional Hospital, in Armenia's Kotayk Region. Apart from the Nigoghosians' gift, proceeds from the banquet will benefit the reconstruction of the community center of Artsni, a village in the Lori Region. The complete list of supporters who made contributions or pledges during the fundraising event as well as the total amount of the proceeds will be announced during Telethon 2009, which will be aired from Los Angeles on November 26.
Prior to his five-day visit to Canada, Ghukasyan stopped over in New York, where he met with several benefactors and Hayastan All-Armenian Fund Board of Trustees honorary member Louise Manoogian-Simone. Their discussions included current preparations and fundraising strategies in connection with Telethon 2009.

While in Canada, Ghukasyan visited a number of Armenian-community institutions and met with various community leaders. His itinerary included the AGBU Armen Quebec-Alex Manoogian School, where he was warmly received by school founder and chairman Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, principal Robert Kechayan, and students. Ghukasyan also met with AGBU Montreal chapter chairman Armen

Bechakdjian and Tekeyan Cultural Association Montreal chapter president Arto Manoukian.

Other educational establishments visited by Ghukasyan included the Saint Hagop School in Montreal and the Notre Dame de Nareg Armenian Catholic School in the nearby city of Laval. Subsequently Ghukasyan met with Bishop Bagrat Galstanian, primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Canada, as well as other community leaders at the Saint Gregory the Illuminator Cathedral in Outremont, and took part in the groundbreaking ceremony of the Holy Cross Armenian Church in Laval.

Ghukasyan later attended a fundraising dinner hosted by Pierre and Norma Akkelian. During the banquet several guests made pledges in support of various Hayastan All-Armenian Fund projects.

Ghukasyan's official visits in Canada concluded with his attendance of a reception at the Armenian Embassy in Ottawa. Afterwards he left for Los Angeles, where he will assist in the launch of Telethon 2009 and appear as a special guest of honor during the broadcast of the fund's foremost annual fundraising event.