HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES ITS FOUNDERS' DAY

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Category: Opinions

Special Honoree and Guest Speaker Dr. Arda Ekmekji on "How to Live the Ethos":
Never Compromise Excellency to Mediocrity

By Mira Yardemian, Public Relations Director, Haigazian University, Beirut, 18 October 2022

With a renewed faith and commitment to the University's core values of "truth, freedom and service",

Haigazian University celebrated the 67th anniversary of its founding, on Monday, October 17, 2022, in the hall of the First Armenian Evangelical Church, adjacent to University campus.

On this special occasion, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Arda Arsenian Ekmekji was granted with the "Distinguished Scholar Award" for her exceptional role in promoting academic excellence and bringing honor to the Haigazian University name. It is worth noting that this prestigious award was previously bestowed on the late intellectual, the encyclopedic Father Antranig Granian, and the mastermind of the Haigazian Rocket Society, Dr. Manoug Manougian.

The auspicious ceremony gathered together academicians, representative of the Ministry of Education, NGOs representatives, friends of the University and students. US Cultural Affairs Officer, Hermila Yifter, and Armenian Embassy's First Secretary Stepan Gevorkian were there to represent their embassies.

In her keynote address entitled "Live the Ethos", Dr. Ekmekji shared her experience of 25 years, in applying the values of Haigazian's motto, "Truth, Freedom and Service".



Talking of "Service" first, a value which she considered "a very much cherished priority", Dr. Ekmekji

brought the example of the civil war, when in Spring 1978 the whole University was mobilized to accommodate and cater the refugees that flooded the University. She considered that this "unique spirit of Service prevails in all the domains of Haigazian … from Financial Aid to the Desert Stream Club, to Orientation Program to Advising and Counseling … It permeates our curriculum, Spiritual Life and committees."

On "Freedom", Dr. Ekmekji confidently declared that never in her career has she been coerced to "teach ideas against my convictions, nor to hire, fire, terminate, promote, accept students or bend decisions due to any external or internal pressures", concluding that only merit was the standard in decision making.

Dr. Ekmekji concluded her invigorating speech by sharing her understanding of "Truth", which according to her is striving to make the outside world align more with the values and standards of the campus world, without compromising excellency to mediocrity.

For his part, University President, Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian stressed on the mission of the University in building the character of the current and future generations. "Society knows that the future depends on the refinement of the character of the next generation, not only on its formal educational levels, transitory accomplishments and socioeconomic welfare," said Haidostian.



Talking of resources, Haidostian underlined the importance of "being resourceful" saying, "natural resources

are full in our world. What we need is resourceful people who turn all natural and spiritual, cognitive and personal capital in the service of life, the life of others, otherwise resources lose meaning and are wasted."

Haidostian concluded his speech by renewing the University's commitment on Founders' Day in striving for "excellence that supersedes narrow academic endeavors.

The ceremony started with a prayer of invocation offered by the Campus Minister, Rev. Wilbert Van Saane. A special documentary featured Dr. Ekmekji's milestones in her career path and community service. Student Lory Gulumian accompanied by Arin Markarian on the piano graciously performed a song entitled "10,000 Reasons Bless the Lord", whereas Board Member John Sagherian read the congratulatory note of the Board of Trustees.

A friendly reception in the Mugar Garden was the perfect opportunity for people to reconnect and conclude the event.

There are no comments yet.