

MAYOR FROM SISTER CITY CONCLUDES TOUR OF GLENDALE

Armen Karapetyan visited various city departments and landmarks during a 15-day visit to GLENDALE, CA. Armen Karapetyan, mayor of Ghapan, concluded his 15-day tour of its sister city of Glendale after visiting many of the city's departments and meeting several city officials and community members. Karapetyan's trip was initiated as a reciprocal visit to the city after the Glendale Ghapan Sister City Association organized a delegation of 18 individuals from Glendale to tour Ghapan in 2003. It has been an incredible experience and I have learned so much about the city, said Karapetyan. I have no words to describe the warm reception I have received from everyone. It was most interesting for me to see that each city department had at least one Armenian-speaking individual as an employee, said Karapetyan.

Karapetyan arrived on June 27 and visited several city departments, Glendale Unified School District offices as well as R.D. White Elementary School and Glendale Community College. The visiting mayor met with board members, faculty, staff and students of both educational institutions. At the beginning of this year, the GCC Board of Trustees officially established ties with Ghapan College to explore areas of cooperation and exchange of ideas and programs with one another. Karapetyan's tour also included several Armenian establishments and businesses that have sponsored projects coordinated by GGSCA.

I am very glad that Mr. Karapetyan had an opportunity to visit Glendale. Both cities have now familiarized themselves with the other and we can only grow from this point on, said Artin Manoukian, president of GGSCA.

During his stay, Karapetyan met with city council members and during a City Council session presented them with a gift in honor of Glendale Centennial anniversary. He stated that the gift is an obsidian carving of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin by a well-known Armenian artist - a symbol of a strong bond between the two cities to look forward to future endeavors.

The trip was concluded with a reception in Karapetyan's honor hosted by GGSCA. Several guests in attendance included city officials, GUSD and GCC representatives, GGSCA project sponsors and friends from the community.

It is incredible to see the GGSCA grow from a single letter, to an organization that is extremely active and involved with its sister city, said Manoukian. In three years, we have managed to undertake several projects and continue to build strong ties with the Glendale and Ghapan community.

While here, the Ghapan Mayor also visited Glendale Adventist Medical Center where he met with CEO Scott Reiner and toured the Neonatal Intensive Unit. And in September, the GGSCA

will head a seven member week long delegation including representatives from Glendale Adventist Medical Center to Armenia to establish ties with Ghapan Hospital. While there, the delegation will have an opportunity to familiarize itself with the healthcare facilities and system in Ghapan and its surrounding communities.

In addition to visiting Ghapan, the delegation will also visit Yerevan, Armenia's capital, meet with government officials and absorb the historical treasures such as the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, and other sites in an effort to better familiarize themselves with the history, culture and people of Armenia.

GGSCA is a non-profit organization that aims to foster goodwill and understanding through cultural, educational, economic cooperation between the people of Glendale and Ghapan. The GGSCA was established through the joint effort of the Armenian National Committee of Glendale, the City of Glendale, and the City of Ghapan, to help cultivate economic cooperation and cultural exchanges between the two cities. Glendale City Council passed a resolution recognizing Ghapan as a Sister City in December of 2002. GGSCA has identified three areas of focus in Ghapan: schools, healthcare and community infrastructure. For more information or to contribute to GGSCA, please contact (818) 828-8882 or email at info@glendale-ghapan.org