

Merdinian

News

Pursue Excellence



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Merdinian School Welcomes "DUKHOV" Mr. Arayik Harutyunyan, Minister of Education and Science of RA



By Louisa Janbazian

On January 16, Mr. Arayik Harutyunyan, Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia visited Merdinian School accompanied by John Shirajian, President of Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AESA), Jirayr Abrahamyan, President of the Alumni Association of the Polytechnic Institute of Armenia, and Dr. Vardan Gevorkyan. The students greeted Mr. Harutyunyan in the Aram and Anahis D. Boolghoorjian Hall of the School singing the song "Dukhov." After Principal Lina Arslanian's welcoming words and Armenian language teacher Aline Bezdikian-Shirajian's introduction about the background of the School, Rev. Serop Megerditchian, Merdinian Board member and Pastor of the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena, greeted the Minister and the guests and talked about the significance of the educational work and the mission of the Armenian Evangelicals world-wide, in the Diaspora, and in Armenia, highlighting Armenian Missionary Association of America's (AMAA) Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School in Yerevan. Minister Harutyunyan addressed the students and answered questions directed to him by some of the students regarding the education and the school system in Armenia. He concluded his remarks emphasizing the importance of the Armenian schools in the Diaspora. The students presented a few patriotic songs dedicated to Yerevan, which was greatly appreciated by the Minister. The program ended with a prayer by Rev. Megerditchian. A reception followed the program in the faculty lounge, where Faculty and Board members continued their conversations with the guests in a pleasant atmosphere.

PRESCHOOL NEWS

• The morning of December 11 took a different twist for preschool and kindergarten students. They all gathered in the school hall to have a Christmas pancake breakfast with Santa's helper, their director, teachers, and principal. After the breakfast, Santa's helper visited the classrooms and made colorful balloons for the students. The event was organized and sponsored by the PTO. One of the highlights of the unprecedented event was a surprise slide show with the students' pictures prepared by parents.



• Preschool II, along with Kindergarten classes, attended Taline's Concert on December 19 as their first field trip. They had a memorable time with teachers and parents.



• Parents gathered in the hall on December 21 to enjoy the Christmas Hantes performed by the preschool children. Students sang the Christmas songs that they had practiced for many weeks. At the end, Santa surprised them with nice gifts.



SPORTS

Our students participated in the Shant Annual Soccer Tournament (Youth) on January 21 and 22. They won the championship. Great job!!



FACULTY

• On December 11, Mrs. Carmen Bezerdjian and Mrs. Armine Nalbantian joined a webinar about "Literacy-Rich Science Instruction in grades K-5."

• On December 6 and 13 respectively, Mrs. Lina Arslanian attended webinars about education leadership and homework assignments.

• The faculty and staff had their traditional Christmas luncheon in the Aram & Anahis D. Boolghoorjian Hall before they took off for their Christmas break. The teachers and staff exchanged gifts and played games creating a jolly atmosphere. They also received Christmas gifts on behalf of the Board of Directors and parents! The teachers and staff expressed their appreciation for the generosity and gratitude of our wonderful Board of Directors and parents.



• On January 9, Mr. Fred Sayadian, Mrs. Armine Nalbantian, and Mrs. Carmen Bezerdjian attended the workshop "Making Best Use of Google Classroom" to enhance student engagement and learning. The workshop was specifically designed for educators serving grades K-6 classes. It provided ways to offer differentiated instruction with a variety of Google tools to better meet the needs of all learners.

• On January 10, Mrs. Allison Hammond attended a workshop entitled "Develop Growth Mindset in MATHEMATICS to Increase

Students' Perseverance, Engagement and Success in Your Math Classroom (Grades 6-12)." The workshop was about helping students persevere, engage with, and be successful in math. It was geared towards students that proclaim that they "hate" math and declare that they cannot effectively do mathematics. The seminar offered information and strategies on how to change this trend and mindset in our students. The focus was on ways to connect with the most reluctant learners and how to help struggling students start believing they can learn and do math. It also focused on developing greater perseverance on difficult problems with increased confidence, flexibility and grit.

- Principal Lina Arslanian, Armenian teachers, Mrs. Margarit Meghroyan and Mrs. Aline Bezdikian-Shirajian as well as Board member Ms. Helen Haig attended the AESA's (Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America) 35th anniversary gala in Glendale on January 19 to honor world renowned scientist Dr. Yuri Oganesyanyan. Dr. Oganesyanyan has his name on the periodic table for the discovery of the element Og 118 and has paved the way for the synthesis of elements 103-114. He received the Victor Hambartsumyan Medal of Honor. During the event, Minister of Science and Education, Arayik Harutyunyan was the guest of honor.

- On January 24, principals of few Armenian schools met with Archbishop Derderian and discussed his visitations to the schools and programs for graduating classes.

- Mrs. Aline Shirajian, who is the author of 11 children's books, was invited to V. & A. Chamlian School in Glendale for a storytelling event on January 25.

PTO

- On December 10, our hardworking PTO ladies held a fundraising event at Bloomingdale's.

- Another successful undertaking by the School PTO was the traditional Christmas bake sale on December 21.

- On January 11, 7th and 8th graders were rewarded with lunch for helping during the Fall Carnival. Great job students for your dedication to our school!

- The last two PTO breakfasts took place in the school hall on December 6 and January 11, respectively. These breakfasts attract many parents who attend to get informed about the school's important events and mingle with each other as well.



- On January 18, the students participated in a Family Movie Night hosted by the PTO. Attendees watched the *Incredibles 2*. The ticket price included pizza, popcorn, dessert, and drinks. It was an exciting event and a great turnout.



WESTERN DIOCESE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Merdinian school was one of the six schools that participated in the Annual Children's Christmas Pageant at the Western Diocese on December 7 in Burbank. Over 650 students participated in this annual event hosted by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian. The two sections of our third graders performed under the musical direction of Mrs. Alice DerKevorkian along with their Armenian teachers, Mrs. Aline Bezdikian-Shirajian and Mrs. Margarit Meghroyan. The students were accompanied by our school's after-school Bell Class led by Mr. Armenak Grigoryan. It was the first public performance of the band. Our third graders wearing Christmas hats and our Bell Class students wearing Christmas costumes created a festive mood and impressed the attendees with their performance.



TOY DRIVE

Merdinian students collected toys to participate in the *Nataline Sarkisyan Foundation Toy Drive* benefitting needy children. Thank you to all who participated and donated!



CHRISTMAS CAROLS

On December 14, 5th, 6th, and 7th grade students joined Mrs. Alice DerKevorkian at the entrance of our school singing Christmas carols as they greeted the parents. Later on, they visited classrooms to continue caroling. We thank Mrs. Alice and the students for this wonderful new tradition at Merdinian.



STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- A few of our elementary students participated in the Las Vegas Invitational gymnastics competition at the College of Southern Nevada on January 19 and 20. They came home with medals, trophies, and ribbons.

Siran Sarah Boyadzhyan-5th
3rd Place All Around

Meri Ella Menedjian-4th
2nd place All Around.

June Aprahamian-1st
4th Place Floor Routine
4th Place Ball Routine
3rd Place Hoop Routine
3rd Place All Around

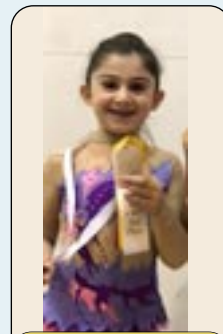
- **Michael Galadjian-1st**
Reached the Purple Belt in Taekwondo. He attends Bejanian Marial Arts.



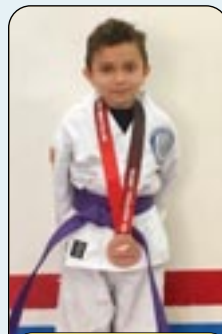
Siran Sarah Boyadzhyan



Meri Ella Menedjian



June Aprahamian



Michael Galadjian

STAR STUDENTS

The December Star Students were Gianna Uhl and Vivian Mira, 1st Grade, David Melkonyan and Sophia Uhl, 2nd Grade, and Emma Sarkisyan, 5th Grade. Our January "Stars" were Sarine Boyajian, 6th Grade, Sam Makaryan, 4th Grade, Emily Aywazyan, 3rd Red, Lena Saghbazarian, 2nd Grade, and Nicolette Kovacs, Kindergarten Red.



OPEN HOUSE

Our annual Open House was held on January 26. Parents, faculty, and staff participated in setting up the event. Student projects were displayed in the hall. The program opened with a prayer led by our Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Shogher Shanoian. After her welcoming remarks, Principal Lina Arslanian proudly invited Daniella Bandari, Alek Ghazanian, Alex Aywazian, and Emily Sayadian, all 8th graders, who delivered their heartfelt and genuine messages to the attendees. PTO Chairlady, Mrs. Azniv

Ghazanian also addressed the crowd by introducing the PTO and announcing PTO events. Student representatives helped prospective parents tour our campus. There was a raffle drawing, and three parents won free registration for next year. It was a great turnout. Thank you to everyone who participated!



Alek Ghazanian



Daniella Bandari



Alex Aywazian



Emily Sayadian

DECEMBER ASSEMBLY

Students, parents, and teachers gathered in the hall for the Christmas assembly on December 21. Rev. Berj Jambazian delivered the opening prayer and his message. Third graders entertained us with delightful performances by acting, singing, reciting, and dancing. A gift exchange was held in each classroom after the assembly.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors hosted their annual Christmas dinner on December 14 in the school hall as appreciation to the faculty, staff, PTO, and the Women's Auxiliary.

The guests got into a joyful Christmas mood, especially when they played a memory game and sang Christmas carols led by Rev. Vatche and Mrs. Lena Ekmekjian, with musical accompaniment by Mr. Armenag Grigoryan and his wife Maneh.



SECURITY GUARD

A full time security guard has been hired since January to ensure the safety and protection of all students and staff.

ARMENIA ARMY DAY

Camouflage outfits replaced school uniforms for Merdinian school students and teachers on January 28 to recognize Armenia's Army Day.

With singer Tata's *Kayl Arach* song, 1st through 8th grade students marched to the hall, where they began the program by singing Armenia's national anthem. They listened to messages delivered by Mrs. Margarit Meghroyan and Mrs. Aline Bezdikian-Shirajian.

Following the messages, the students watched music video clips dedicated to Armenia's Army. The short program was concluded with *Zinvori Yerk* led by Mrs. Lena Ekmekjian and a prayer for the well being and safety of the Armenian soldiers.



SPIRIT DAY

- Students participated in a "Spirit Day" and came to school wearing their Ugly Christmas Sweaters on December 17. The students were excited and enjoyed the day with their colorful Christmas outfits. Teachers also participated in the "Spirit" wearing a different Christmas color assigned on each day of December!



- January 18 was "Backwards Spirit Day." Students came to school wearing their sweaters and polos backwards.

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