

# Armenian Jewellers Foundation

Geneva, Switzerland

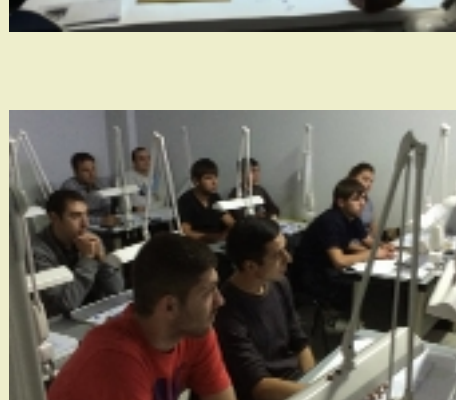
## Advancing the Heritage of Armenians in Jewellery

Geneva, December 2014



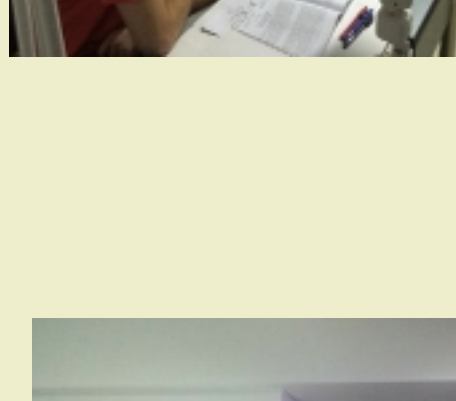
**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
Wishing you happy holidays filled with peace and joy

### AJF AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS IN DIAMOND GRADING



AJF launched its pilot scholarships program this fall thanks to an agreement signed with the Armenian Gemological Laboratory and Academy (AGLA) to fund gemological training for young Armenian students. The following five students representing various communities were selected:

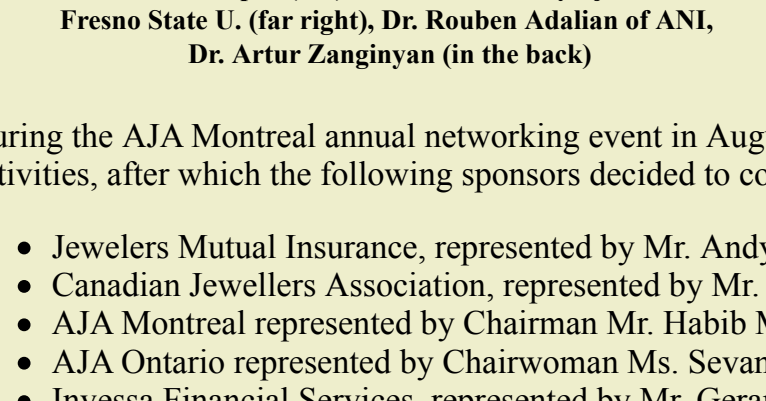
- 1) Alexan Kaplanian, an expatriate from Syria
- 2) Andranik Chilingaryan, a Tavush border village resident
- 3) Emma Muradian, an expatriate from Iraq
- 4) Hovhannes Shatvoryan, a Gyumri resident
- 5) Garabet Mazloumian, a Diasporan repatriate



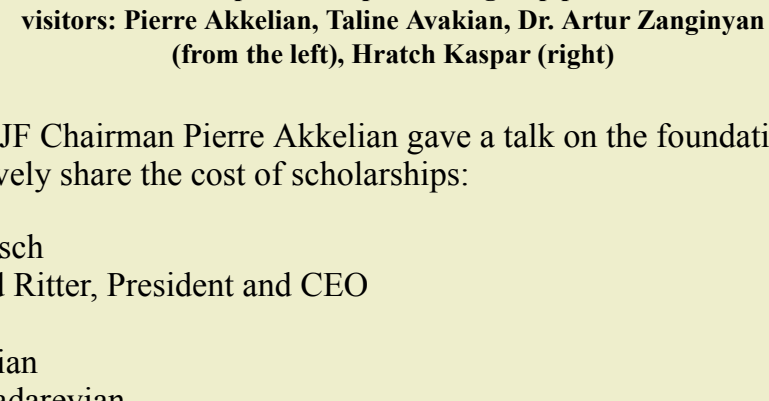
"AGLA is very pleased with its collaboration with AJF and the merit-based selection process that took place. Candidates were evaluated very carefully. We are confident about their abilities and wish them successful graduation," said director Artur Zanginyan.

AJF's scholarship students have completed their intensive theoretical course and are following practical hands-on classification training. Upon successful completion, they will become certified Diamond Grading Experts.

On October 28, AJF Chairman Mr. Pierre Akkelian, member of the Patrons Club Ms. Taline Avakian, and AJF Strategic Development Director Hratch Kaspar visited the students to get acquainted with them and observe their training. To complement the learning curriculum, in early October, renowned art historian and Emeritus Professor Dr. Dickran Kouymjian of Fresno State University, accompanied by the Armenian National Institute's Dr. Rouben Adalian were invited to AGLA to speak about historical Armenian jewellery artifacts.



Hratch Kaspar (left), Dr. Dickran Kouymjian of Fresno State U. (far right), Dr. Rouben Adalian of ANI, Dr. Artur Zanginyan (in the back)



AJF's scholarship students pose for a group picture with the visitors: Pierre Akkelian, Taline Avakian, Dr. Artur Zanginyan (from the left), Hratch Kaspar (right)

During the AJA Montreal annual networking event in August, AJF Chairman Pierre Akkelian gave a talk on the foundation's activities, after which the following sponsors decided to collectively share the cost of scholarships:

- Jewelers Mutual Insurance, represented by Mr. Andy Kretsch
- Canadian Jewellers Association, represented by Mr. David Ritter, President and CEO
- AJA Montreal represented by Chairman Mr. Habib Malo
- AJA Ontario represented by Chairwoman Ms. Sevan Titizian
- Inessa Financial Services, represented by Mr. Gerard Chadarevian

AJF expresses its gratitude to its new patrons whose contributions are already making a difference, and congratulates AJA Montreal Chairman Mr. Habib Malo, who has since been elected [President of the Quebec Jewellers Corporation](#). CJA recently covered the AJF scholarships program in its [newsletter](#).

With further support from patrons, AJF's scholarship program will continue and expand in 2015. Ten new students will be selected and sponsored at AGLA. Opportunities at leading international design and gemological schools will also be explored.



AJA Montreal Networking Event

### MILLER COLLECTION CATALOGUE AND EXHIBIT LAUNCH ON APRIL 21, 2015



Aza Babayan, Dr. Mikhail Piotrovski

The joint project with the Museum of Ethnography is well underway. Regional Director Aza Babayan visited Saint Petersburg to meet with the Museum's management and hold discussions with AJF Gold Patrons and Saint Petersburg's Armenian community leaders Karen Mkrichyan and Armen Mkrichyan. Stakeholders decided to organize the launching event of Alexander Miller's 1916 Western Armenia collection catalogue and full exhibit on April 21, 2015. Similar events are also planned in Moscow and Yerevan throughout the year.

Ms. Babayan also met with the director of the world-renowned Hermitage Museum, Dr. Mikhail Piotrovski, who expressed interest in joining the effort and reviewing the catalogue. Dr. Piotrovski will also participate in the launching ceremony.

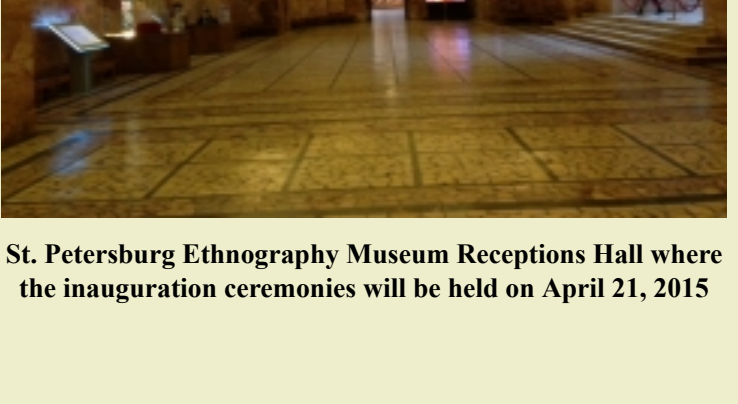
### SEMINAR ORGANIZED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF ARMENIA



Minister Hranush Hakobyan delivering opening remarks, Dr. Lusine Ghusyan (left), Pierre Akkelian (right)

During Yerevan Show 2014, AJF and the Ministry of Diaspora held a seminar to present Miller's Armenian Jewellery Collection and the catalogue project to the jewellery community and the media. Minister Hranush Hakobyan opened the event outlining plans for 2015 and the great value of AJF's project for all Armenians on the eve of the 100th Anniversary. AJF Chairman Pierre Akkelian also offered remarks on the foundation's mission, stating that the initiative was being realized on the behalf of all Armenian jewellers as a collective tribute to the 100th Anniversary commemoration.

As the project curator, Dr. Lusine Ghusyan from Saint Petersburg's Museum of Ethnography, was the keynote speaker at the seminar. Dr. Ghusyan gave an audiovisual presentation of the jewellery artifacts acquired by Alexander Miller and his expedition team in Van, Mush, and Bitlis in 1916. Some of the authentic Armenian items date back to the 13th century and represent historical, as well as artistic value.



St. Petersburg Ethnography Museum Receptions Hall where the inauguration ceremonies will be held on April 21, 2015



Pierre Akkelian discussing AJF and the museum project (watch the Armenpress [interview](#))

### AJF BOARD HOLDS MEETINGS IN LISBON AND YEREVAN

On October 15, the Board of Trustees held a meeting at the Gulbenkian Foundation headquarters in Lisbon, Portugal. The Board visited Lisbon by special invitation of the Armenian Communities Department to attend functions held during the Armenian Culture Week. On October 26, the Board held its third annual meeting at the Meridian FEZ during the Yerevan Show. At both meetings, ongoing activities were reviewed and key strategic issues considered.

The Board decided to organize an event during Baselworld in March 2015 to lay out AJF's vision for the coming years, present a comprehensive activity report, as well as the results of the first financial audit of the foundation.

In Lisbon, the Board met with Gulbenkian Foundation trustees Mr. Martin Esayan and former minister Mr. Eduardo Marcal Grilo to discuss future plans and projects. Meetings were also held throughout the week with the Armenian Communities Department Director Dr. Razmig Panossian, the chief organizer of the events, to share knowledge and experiences.

AJF Chairman Pierre Akkelian was also invited to attend the Armenians in 2115 Strategizing Seminar, which analyzed the future outlook of the nation (more on the results of this brainstorming event can be found [here](#)).

Mr. Akkelian met with philanthropist and renowned businessman Mr. Ruben Vardanyan in Lisbon, as well as in Montreal and Boston during follow-up meetings. They discussed various cooperation initiatives, including the planned '100 Lives' project spearheaded by Mr. Vardanyan's RVVZ Foundation.



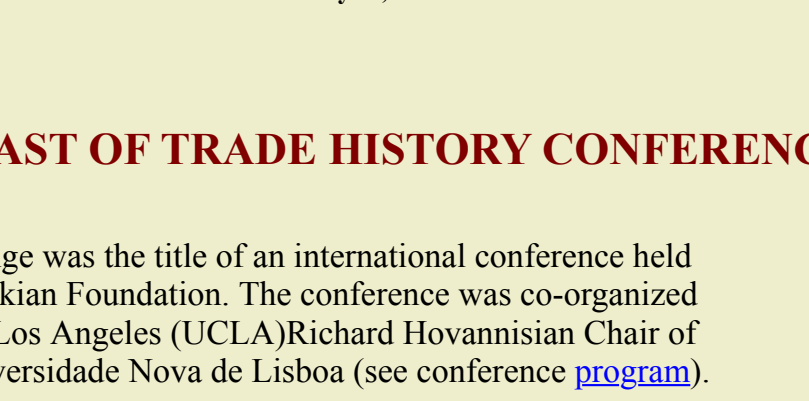
Gagik Gevorgyan, Pierre Akkelian, Vartkess Knadjian



Hratch Kaspar, Pierre Akkelian, Razmig Panossian, Vartkess Knadjian, Prof. Sebouh Aslanian of UCLA



Levon Afeyan, Ruben Vardanyan, and Pierre Akkelian at Canadian Gem offices in Montreal



Vartkess Knadjian, Pierre Akkelian, Razmig Panossian, Martin Esayan, Aram Shishmanian

### AJF SPONSORS LIVE-STREAM WEBCAST OF TRADE HISTORY CONFERENCE



Networks of Circulation and Exchange was the title of an international conference held from October 15 to 17 at the Gulbenkian Foundation. The conference was co-organized with the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Richard Hovannissian Chair of Modern Armenian History, and Universidade Nova de Lisboa (see conference [program](#)).

The history of Armenian diamond traders in the 17th and 18th centuries was prominently covered during the conference. To promote its heritage program, AJF sponsored the live-stream webcasting of the proceedings (see [GIF release](#)).

Dozens of people followed the opening session and the keynote speech by UCLA's Professor Sebouh Aslanian live. Those interested can still [watch](#) the recording online (following the Bem Hajam presentation).



Networks of Circulation and Exchange Conference participants



Conference proceedings

### AJF AT THE ARMENIA DIASPORA CONFERENCE, ARMENIAN STUDIES ASSEMBLIES & YEREVAN SHOW 2014

#### THE FIFTH ARMENIA DIASPORA CONFERENCE



Fifth Armenia Diaspora Conference

The fifth Armenia Diaspora Conference was held in September to discuss critical national issues, especially the coordination of activities during the 100th Anniversary year. AJF was present and took an active role during all plenaries and working sessions. AJA International President and AJF Trustee Mr. Gagik Gevorgyan, as well as AJF Regional Director Ms. Aza Babayan represented the foundation. Mr. Gevorgyan was invited to make a presentation during the opening plenary.

#### SAS AND AIEA CONVENTIONS

In early October, AJF's Hratch Kaspar participated in an academic workshop organized by the US-based Society of Armenian Studies (SAS). The three-day event was held at the Academy of Sciences of Armenia and featured original research by a number of scholars. Mr. Kaspar held meetings with SAS's executive members and others to discuss issues related to AJF's heritage program.



AJEA Board Member Prof. Bernard Coullie of UCL, AIESA President Prof. Valentina Calzolari of Geneva U., Hratch Kaspar



SAS Board Member Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian of Fresno State, Hratch Kaspar and SAS President Prof. Kevork Bardakjian of Michigan U.

The tri-annual 13th general conference of the major Geneva-based Association international des études arméniennes' (AIEA) also took place in October in collaboration with the Matenadaran Manuscripts Library and Institute. It was held in Armenia for the first time in the impressive new conference facilities of Matenadaran, and featured over 70 keynote speakers. Mr. Kaspar attended the proceedings and held discussions with AIEA's Board and other participating academics to explore avenues for future exchanges to promote the study of Armenian metalworks' and jewellery history.



#### YEREVAN SHOW 2014



Aza Babayan at the AJF booth

As part of its on-going efforts to raise awareness about AJF's heritage and educational programs, the foundation had its own booth at Yerevan Show 2014, where the Franck Muller Armenian gold watch was proudly displayed for exhibitors and guests to view.

On October 27, within the framework of Yerevan Show 2014, AJF's team attended the "Armenia as a Regional Jewelry Industry Center" Investment forum, which was organized jointly by AJA and the Industrial Development Foundation.

#### A NATION OF JEWELLERS



Coinciding with the Yerevan Show, Forbes Magazine's Armenian edition published a cover story entitled Nation of Jewellers, featuring AJA & AJF founders Pierre Akkelian and Vartkess Knadjian who recounted their story about the beginnings of AJA. Several references to the activities of AJF were also included.

Read the original article in Armenian on the [Forbes](#) site. Read the English version [here](#).

#### NEW GOLD PATRON JOINS THE RANKS



Ruben Kotanchyan, Hratch Kaspar, Garun Qocharyan, Aza Babayan

Mr. Garun Qocharyan is the latest benefactor to join the ranks of our exclusive Gold Patrons Club. Mr. Qocharyan has built an impressive jewellery retail enterprise based in Russia and Italy; he is an AJA member and active supporter of Armenian initiatives.

Patrons are integral members of our community who believe in our mission to advance the heritage of Armenians in jewellery. Our sincere thanks to all our patrons for supporting our heritage preservation and scholarship development programs.

Heritage belongs to all of us. It is our joint responsibility to ensure that Armenia's legacies and traditions live on. It is only with the support of benefactors that we are able to pursue our mission and realize our vision.

We hope our patrons' contributions will encourage and inspire others to do the same, and in doing so, benefit generations of Armenians to come.

To all past, present, and prospective patrons: thank you for your generosity!

JOIN OUR PATRONS CLUB AND OWN YOUR UNIQUE FRANCK MULLER WATCH TODAY

Only 38 each  
In Gold and Steel are being produced,  
each dedicated to One letter of the Armenian Alphabet.

Limited edition  
**FRANCK MULLER**  
watches dedicated  
to the **Armenian Alphabet**

The Armenian Jewellers Foundation (AJF) was created to advance the heritage of Armenians in jewellery. AJF's mission is to undertake historical research, document present-day success stories and ensure the transfer of knowledge to a new generation of professionals. The Foundation counts among its trustee members some of the most reputable industry leaders. AJF is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

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