

# Armenian Jewellers Foundation

Geneva, Switzerland

Advancing the Heritage of Armenians in Jewellery



**AJF TO SUPPORT THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED  
JEWELLERY ONLINE LEARNING**



Further to the very successful completion of the Matrix course in 2018, AJF has announced that in partnership with Gemvision and Stuller Inc., its scholarship applicants can now enroll in online courses provided by Gemvision and gain access to the Matrix 3-D software suite.

This initiative follows the intensive course already provided by AJF in collaboration with one of Canada's prime jewellery schools [EGM](#). The extended learning program provides access to the Matrix 3-D Cad online course modules.

With their new certificates, graduating students will be proficient in jewellery design, seeking better employment opportunities in the industry as designers, bench jewellers, customer service and other related areas.

Overall, the aim of this program is to help students understand that jewellery is not simply a gratifying profession, but also an art of self-expression.



Thanks to the AJF educational mission, more than 140 scholarship grants were allocated to-date to deserving young students. Scholarship programs were implemented in collaboration mainly with the EGM and the Armenian Gemological Laboratory and Academy ([AGLA](#)) through the support of generous donors and community organizations (see picture of decorated Artsakh hero receiving diploma from AGLA director Artur Zanginyan).



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## **AJF AT THE INAUGURATION OF MET'S ARMENIA EXHIBIT AND MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER PASHINYAN**

In September, the AJF Chairman was invited to take part in the opening of the ARMENIA exhibit at New York's Metropolitan Museum. The guest of honour was none other than the new Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan who also had a meeting with community leaders from across North America, while attending and addressing the UN General Assembly. Following this event, Pierre Akkelian presented the AJF publication to the Prime Minister and briefed him on AJF's activities.

AJF wholeheartedly congratulates Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on the spectacular achievement of the Velvet Revolution in Armenia and wishes him a successful tenure in the service of Armenia and all Armenians.



*Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, AJF patron Oscar Tatosian & Pierre Akkelian at NY Yale Club*

*Photo by: PM Office Tigran Mehrabyan*



*Ambassador Grigor Hovhannissian at NY Yale Club*



*H.H. Catholicos Karekin II & Minister of Culture Lilit Makunts*

*Photo Credit: MET Museum Darian DiCianno*



*Foreign Affairs Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan  
& Curator of the Armenia Exhibit Helen Evans at the MET*

*Photo Credit: MET Museum Darian DiCianno*

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## **STULLER AWARDS \$75 000 SCHOLARSHIPS IN MATRIX TO 15 SYRIAN ARMENIANS**

In August, the internationally renowned Stuller Inc., leader in the Jewellery business, awarded 15 Syrian-Armenian newcomers to Canada with scholarships for studies in 3-D jewellery design. This was a dream come true to many who fulfilled their educational dreams thanks to the generous donation estimated at \$75,000 and the support of the École de Gemmologie de Montréal, which provided the facilities. Matrix 3-D CAD is the world's leading tool for creating jewellery design.



“Our new 2018 educational initiative will provide Armenian newcomers to Canada a competitive advantage like no other,” said Pierre Akkelian of AJF. “Matrix, the world’s leading jewellery design program is being offered with the complements of our good friend and “Honorary Armenian,” Matt Stuller. His generosity is allowing 15 of our students to pursue their careers with knowledge and confidence.”

Founded in 1970 by Matt Stuller, Stuller Incorporated, with 1300 employees spread out across 5 global operations, is the largest jewellery manufacturing and distribution facility in the United States, and an industry leader in the domestic and international wholesale jewellery sectors.

“Armenians are renowned as master jewellers and a hardworking people; we’re pleased to support young Armenians and help them enter the very exciting and inviting jewelry business,” said Matt Stuller.

AJF spearheaded this special project teaming the American company with Marie-Hélène Corbin, of l’École Gemmologie de Montréal and Mr. Jean Salette, from the St. Martin Hotel Group, both of whom generously contributed to the success of this project.



Gemvision recently released the new version of the world's most advanced jewellery design suite Matrix 9.0. "The matrix essentials classes, lay the foundation to help students learn the fundamentals of understanding how to take an idea and bring it to fruition," says Matt Bennett, Director of Sales and Training at Gemvision, a subsidiary of Stuller Inc., "These intense classes provide the core tools of design and how to take a digital file and create the 3-D version, allowing students a specialization in design or manufacturing."

The course was covered by Hay Horizon TV (watch [here](#)).

### **Matt Stuller in Armenia**



Matthew Stuller, the founder of one of the largest jewellery manufacturers in the world, was invited to Armenia in 2011 where he visited, among other places, the Holy See of Etchmiadzin – and was made into an "Honorary Armenian". View Matt Stuller's Etchmiadzin visit [here](#).

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## **GEMOLOGY GRADUATES AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING STUDENTS RECEIVE DIPLOMAS**

On the occasion of the World Refugee Day celebration organized by [Hay Doun](#) on June 20, 2018, 16 AJF scholarship students received Certificates in Gemology I, II and III courses, as well as 4 graduates received full Diplomas in Gemology from the École de gemmologie de Montréal (EGM) -- one of the prime jewellery academies in Canada.

The event also commemorated the success of a special program for Syrian expatriates enrolled in the vocational training program managed by Hay Doun and supported by RBC Royal Bank of Canada, in cooperation with AJF. Thanks to this initiative, 18 youths received guidance and financial assistance to pursue vocational training in Montreal in various fields supporting integration.



*RBC & Hay Doun management with AJF-EGM Gemology course graduates*

On this occasion, AJF Chairman Pierre Akkelian stated: “We are proud of our collaboration with Hay Doun aimed at empowering newly arrived Syrian compatriots and we are eternally grateful to the generous support of AJF patrons. We are fortunate to live in the greatest country in the world where corporate leaders such as RBC Quebec president Martin Thibodeau and his wonderful team members now led by Nadine Renaud Tinker support such great initiatives. Without RBC’s support none of these life-altering accomplishments would have been possible.”

Hay Doun, a community NGO that settled more than 2700 refugees in Canada through its collective sponsorship programs, launched the Vocational Training Program in September 2016 with the financial support of RBC and in cooperation with AJF.

Hay Doun Director Narod Odabashian stated during the event: “The evening was marked by the power of collective efforts and mobilisation in helping young Syrians pursue their educational dreams. As the testimonials of Araz and Nareg conveyed, together we helped them reach their potential. They in turn feel empowered to enrich the lives of many through their professional aspiration and are very thankful! This new host society has just gained 18 youths who will have a tremendous impact on all our lives.”





*RBC & Hay Doun management with AJF-assisted vocational program participants*

The event was attended by RBC's Angie Cefaratti, Michael Catheline, Hasmeg Apekian who commented and thanked AJF and Hay Doun on the success of this special partnership that generated incredible outcome. Emmanuel Manoukian, Paul Nahabedian from RBC Dominion Securities and Vera Kurkdjian from RBC Private Banking also participated in the celebration.

On this occasion, copies of the acclaimed Treasures of Western Armenia catalogue published by AJF and St Petersburg Ethnography museum and recognized as the most important publication dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian genocide was gifted to Hay Doun and EGM.



*EGM's Marie-Helen Corbin & La Corporation des bijoutiers du Québec President Habib Malo present attestation of Gemology Diploma to Diran Aharonian*



*Ouremont City Mayor Philippe Tomlinson addresses the gathering*



*Araz Khshvajian gives a testimonial*



*Gemology graduates (left to right) Shant Chuljian, Viken Apkarian, Diran Aharonian, Aram Tatoian, Suren Aposhian*

## **AJF AT LA FRANCOPHONIE**



*Canadian Senator & AJF Patron Honourable Raymond Setlakwe*



Upon the invitation of Canadian Minister of Tourism, Official Languages, Honourable Melanie Joly, AJF Chairman Pierre Akkelian joined the Canadian delegation to the 17th La Francophonie Summit in Yerevan. Mr. Akkelian attended side events and more notably the first Francophonie Economic Forum, which was organized in Yerevan and Tsaghkazor. He joined Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's visit to the Genocide Memorial where he was interviewed, together with Canadian Senator and AJF patron the Honourable Raymond Setlakwe who is of Armenian origin. Visitors also attended the Digitec show and other side events (watch interviews by Akkelian and Setlakwe on H1 National and Gala TV [here](#)).



*Deputy Minister Mane Adamian, IDeA Foundation CEO Rafi Baghdjian, AJF sponsor Hovel Chenorhokian, wiz-kids Arman Barseghyan and Papken Ghazaryan at Digitec*



*AJF sponsor Hovel Chenorhokian, Pierre Akkelian, IDeA board member Pierre Gurdjian and CEO Rafi Baghdjian at TUMO center economic forum*



*At the Aurora booth in the Village de la Francophonie with AJF sponsor Hovel Chenorhokian, IDeA Foundation's Veronika Zonabend and Armenia's First Lady Anna Hakobyan-Pashinyan*

## **AJA MONTREAL'S ANNUAL NETWORKING EVENT RECOGNIZES AJF PROGRAMS**



*AJF Patrons Gerard Chadarevian of Invessa, Candace Rothermel, Jewellery Business editor Carly Midgley, Aida Alvarez, Thomas Demirjian, VP Birks Group Marco Pasteris, VP Jewelers Mutual Mark Devereaux*

On August 27, the Armenian Jewellers Association of Montreal held its annual networking event at the rooftop Terrasse Place D'Armes in Old Montreal during which it hosted AJF scholarships students. During the event AJF and its sponsors were recognized for their educational and awareness building efforts of the Armenian jewellery heritage. The Jeweler's Mutual company was also recognized for its continued support and sponsorship to the scholarships program.

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## AJF'S NEW PATRONS

Recognizing the valuable work carried out by the Foundation in the education and cultural spheres, four new Gold Patrons joined AJF during the past period. AJF patrons and donors large and small are our heroes. None of life-altering opportunities offered to so many would have been possible without the support of our great philanthropist friends!



**Oscar Tatosian**

Oscar Tatosian is a philanthropist and a noted leader in the Armenian American community for decades. He is a board member of the USA Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church and the Armenian Assembly of America. Born in Chicago, he is the president of Oscar Isberian Rugs, Inc., with manufacturing relationships in the Near and Middle East. He is also Armenia's Honorary Consul in Chicago.



**Robert Bob Zakian**

Not many businesses have been around since 1923 much less still run by the same family. Bob Zakian has been continuing his grandfather's business tradition in rug cleaning plant and showroom on Parkside Avenue, across from the Mann Music Center, in Philadelphia. He is an active and well-known supporter of the Armenian community.



**Toros Ted Mangassarian**

Ted Mangassarian: a philanthropist and businessman who spent many years in the fertilizer industry. Mangassarian founded Nitron, a premier global trading house. Today, he is at the forefront of the industry, having spent over 40 years innovating and shaping the global fertilizer markets. Mangassarian is involved in many community initiatives.



**Harout Pogosyan**

Harout Pogosyan is a Kazakhstan based philanthropist and businessman with interests in publishing and technology businesses. He is one of the most important magazine editors in the region and owns the rights to several international publications in the area. Pogosyan has been actively supporting several initiatives in Armenia and abroad.

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## **AJF COMINGS AND GOINGS**



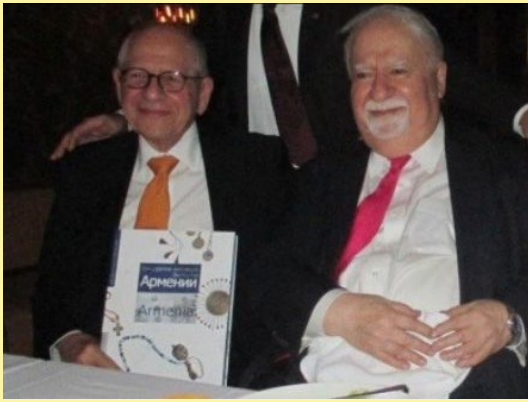
The AJF Chairman visited Carolyn Rafaelian President of the world renowned Alex & Ani brand at her corporate headquarters in Providence Rhode Island, Carolyn is the daughter of Rafael Rafaelian, one of the founding members and participants of the AJA founding assembly in Yerevan in 1997. The exchange focused on future collaboration to support educational programs and research into Armenian jewellery heritage.



During a visit to London, the AJF chairman met with the Gomidas Institute founder Mr. Ara Sarafian with whom a range of issues relating to academic research and future publications were discussed.



The AJF chairman met with renowned historian Dr. Raymond Kevorkian and sought his advice on future research approaches into Armenian jewellery history.



Within the framework of a Genocide conference in Montreal, AJF met with Concordia University History Professor Frank Chalk and New York's Carnegie Corporation President Dr. Vartan Gregorian to introduce and discuss AJF activities and mission.



AJF's chairman met with Clara and Vahe Agopians, owners of Lugaro, leading jewellers and community leaders in Vancouver to exchange views on AJF's mission.



In London, the AJF chairman Pierre Akkelian and vice chairman Vartkess Knadjian met with Gulbenkian Foundation trustee Martin Essayan and Armenian Community's Department Director Razmik Panossian. AJF has had several encounters with the Gulbenkian Foundation in the past and attended conferences. Talks focused on future projects by the Foundation.





Famous entrepreneur, philanthropist and AGBU central Board Member Joseph Oughourlian of Amber Capital was the main sponsor and organizer of a conference in London where AJF was invited to take part. A powerpoint presentation made by AJF highlighted the organization's mission and main directions. AJF dedicated its Treasurers of Western Armenia publication to Mr. Oughurlian on this occasion.



Photo by: Sona Gevorgyan


AJF met with Archbishop Hovakim Manukyan, the Right Honourable Lord Ara Darzi of Denham and his late father Vartkes in London to present AJF and its initiatives.

See recent interview on the Treasurers of Armenia Publication on Hay Horizon TV [here](#).

### **Armenian Jewellers Foundation**

In 2013 The Armenian Jewellers Foundation (AJF) was established in Switzerland as a separate entity from Armenian Jewellers Association (AJA) 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. The international scholarship program promotes and supports students in Armenia and the Diaspora to further their specializations by providing scholarships and quality education and training (see promo [video](#)).

**Help AJF realize its programs and support the next generation of industry leaders by donating [here](#).**

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