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#### **ICARE ANNUAL REPORT 2017**

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## Vision

Develop a Sustainable
Knowledge Capacity for the Food and
Agribusiness Sector in Armenia

## Mission

Serve as an International
Center of Excellence to Develop Food
and Agribusiness Leaders through
State-Of-The-Art Education Programs
Coupled with Cutting-Edge Research



Agribusiness Teaching Center

Agribusiness Research Center

EVN Wine Academy



JOHN P. NICHOLS

CHAIRMAN
ICARE FOUNDATION
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A n educated workforce and citizenry is one of the cornerstones of a successful and productive agricultural and agribusiness economy. Guided by appropriate market incentives and an effective legal and regulatory system, productivity grows along with employment, income, and the government revenues necessary to sustain the public sector. The International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education has become a center of excellence providing graduates ready to enter the modern food and agribusiness sector of Armenia and the Caucasus Region. Our 2017 Annual Report provides evidence of this contribution through the stories of our graduates' excellence through their work and professional acumen.

ICARE has evolved and expanded its scope over the past two decades to encompass its traditional programs of excellent teaching, and has now become a unique and valuable focal point for the transformation of Armenian food and agribusiness industry through outreach education, applied research, and global partnerships. New initiatives extend into the wine sector, food safety systems management, and greenhouse management, each illustrating the opportunity and need to which ICARE is responding. There is more on the horizon.

The requirement to develop new sources of funding and support is an imperative for us to address the changing and growing talent development, applied research and educational needs of the Armenian and regional agribusiness sector. ICARE is the direct result of legacy support from US Department of Agriculture, USAID and other international and non-governmental organizations. Texas A&M University and the Armenian National Agrarian University have provided facilities, curriculum, and leadership for ICARE's development. We have also enjoyed support from private donations for scholarships, equipment, and laboratories. As the needs of Armenian rural communities and food production increase, our funding model also is evolving requiring an even greater effort on the part of private donors.

This 2017 ICARE Annual Report provides an update to our colleagues in the rural development and agribusiness community, former students and to our many loyal friends and donors. Our goal in the coming year is to expand the ICARE network and to seek new partners who are as committed as we are to the viability of rural Armenia and the foundations of the food economy domestically and across the region.

One way to engage and communicate in any language is to provide personal stories of success. We know that you will find such evidence of success and opportunity in the pages that follow. Your involvement in the future of ICARE and its mission will be valued and we invite you to join us in achieving our goals.



VARDAN URUTYAN

DIRECTOR ICARE FOUNDATION

ADJUNCT ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY Armenia and the increasing value-add component in export structure, the need to feed the sector with highly qualified workforce has become critical. ICARE continues to carry out its mission of educating leaders for agribusiness and related industries, and also continuously analyses and agilely responds to emerging development trends in Armenia and in the region. The internationally competitive qualification of our faculty and outstanding dedication of all stakeholders — from sponsors to each student — are forging the exceptionally high quality of the academic process.

Safe food is an important component for public health. It is also a passport of Armenian food and agribusiness sector to major export markets. In 2017 ICARE launched an important academic program in Food Safety Systems Management, jointly with Pennsylvania State University and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. We had the honor to host teaching faculty from these universities who also trained our local faculty to smoothly take over the teaching process. This program teaches students important aspects of food science, sanitation, food microbiology, better process control, HACCP, and food defense. We had the first group of graduates in February 2017 who are ready to contribute their skills and knowledge to the needs of Armenia.

Increasing investments in greenhouse sector in Armenia create an urgent need to train qualified managers for

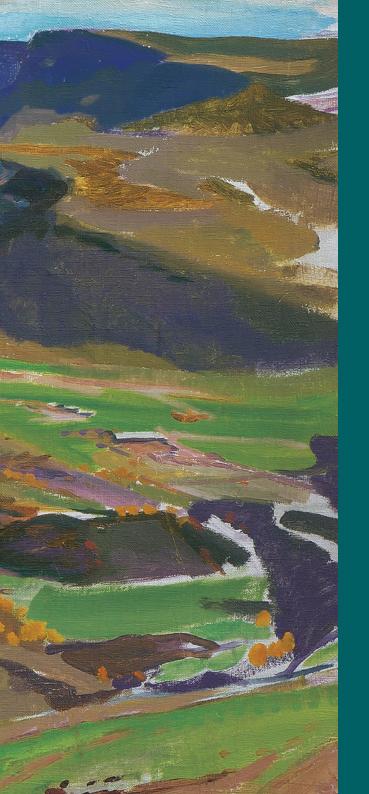
greenhouses. This year ICARE developed a curriculum and will launch from February 2018 an important certificate program in Greenhouse Crop Production and Management. This program will train new and already established specialists in modern methods of greenhouse crop production and management.

The work that we do at ICARE is possible due to key support from international development agencies — United States Agency for International Development (USAID), German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). I also want to extend our gratitude to individuals who support ICARE: Judith Saryan and Victor Zarougian, Parnagian Family Foundation, Jakob Schuler, and all those who support this unique academic institution in Armenia.

ICARE needs more supporters to sustain its current activities and to implement the new undertakings. With ICARE, each donor can see tangible results right away in educating young Armenian men and women, and see the impact on Armenia not long after they graduate. I invite joining the ICARE efforts all those individuals and institutions who are truly dedicated to development of Armenia – those who see this development in capitalizing on human talent. Partnership with ICARE is always transparent, goal- and impact-oriented, and is certainly rewarding for our beloved Armenia!

Join ICARE!





Agribusiness Teaching Center

#### **Food Safety Systems Management Certificate Program Launched**

ood in Armenia is delicious: this is a unanimous statement by guests coming from all over the world to Armenia. Is the food in Armenia safe? We as ICARE, together with our local and foreign partners, have to forge ahead to make this statement the unanimous opinions of Armenians and non-Armenians. Here comes the innovative Food Safety Systems Management (FSSM) academic program to fill the gap of food safety specialists in Armenia. The FSSM program was launched in January 2017 and became one of the new and bright colors in the academic and training spectrum of ICARE thanks to the USAID-funded InnovATE/Armenia project.

The goal of the FSSM program is to improve the safety of food supply chain in Armenia from crop production and processing to packaging, handling, marketing, and consumption. Lectures and lab exercises cover six modules: Introduction to FSSM and Food Science, Sanitation, Food Microbiology, Better Processing,

HACCP, and Food Defense. The program also includes field trips to canneries, dairy processors, wineries and other agribusinesses throughout Armenia. This year the courses were taught by Dr. Catherine Cutter, Professor of Food Science and Assistant Director of Food Safety & Quality Programs (Penn State), Dr. Joseph Marcy, Head of the Department of Food Science and Technology (Virginia Tech), and Dr. Siroj Pokharel, Post-Doctoral Scholar and Advisor (Penn State). Four local experts

were assisting the U.S. faculty during the program; some of them will teach the course next year. Dr. Cutter and Dr. Marcy have developed the curriculum for the program.

This four-week intensive program made many stakeholders to speak loudly about the success of this exceptional program. The graduation and certificate awarding ceremony was attended by the Armenia's Minister of Agriculture



and USAID Country Director. They, together with ANAU Rector, ICARE Director, and InnovATE/Armenia Project Director, handed over the certificates of completion from Penn State and Virginia Tech universities to the first graduating class of FSSM. The Minister thanked USAID for the support in accomplishing this innovative program and immediately offered jobs to some of the program graduates. For ICARE, FSSM became another touch in creating leaders of agribusiness and related fields. Moreover, this unique pioneer program will serve a model for other countries.









#### **2017 ICARE Graduates Honored**

wenty-nine graduates of ICARE/ATC Undergraduate Agribusiness (UAB) program, 16 graduates of Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program and 14 graduates of EVN Wine Academy were jointly honored in a cheerful graduation ceremony on June 2, 2017, traditionally held in the Assembly Hall of ANAU. Parents, relatives, and friends of graduates were delighted to hear words of appreciation addressed to the graduates and wise advice from the Deputy Minister of Agriculture Robert Makaryan, GIZ Country Director Anne Kempa, Dr. John Nichols from Texas A&M University, ANAU Rector Arshaluys Tarverdyan, and ICARE Director Vardan Urutyan. As of October 2017, the employment rate of ICARE undergraduate program alumni only a few months after graduation is 94.4%, while practically 100% of ICARE's Master of Agribusiness program (MAB) and EVN Wine Academy graduates get employed even before they graduate.

We see the ICARE's Agribusiness Teaching Center as a unique and very successful synthesis of traditional and Western education systems.

> Robert Makaryan Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Armenia

Ve all gain from highly educated professional workforce in Armenia, in Georgia and, yes, across the globe.

> Professor John Nichols Texas A&M University

#### **Greenhouse Crop Production and Management Program Launching**

he generous support by Judith Saryan and Victor Zarougian, as well as support from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) made it possible to launch yet another well-demanded study program in Armenia. The Greenhouse Crop Production and Management is an 8-month study program that is designed to prepare future specialists with good knowledge in modern greenhouse structures, advanced technologies used at greenhouses, resources and materials applied in production, greenhouse microclimate control systems, plant physiology, and plant protection. This program was developed after a thorough research on existing gaps in professional skills of the greenhouse sector in Armenia. Training programs of the leading universities across the world were studied to ensure the application of advanced learning methods and the provision of up-to-date information.

The program includes 241 hours of classroom education and practice. Nineteen students are now selected from 42 applicants to start the courses in early 2018. The students will be assigned individual works in selected greenhouses and will work under direct supervision of experienced greenhouse specialists. Over 10 partner greenhouses are expecting to hire program graduates.



#### Program Modules:

- Greenhouse Environment Safety
- Greenhouse Environment Management
- Types of Greenhouses
- **Basics of Greenhouse Operations**
- Basics of Hydroponic Greenhouse Operations
- ▲ Introduction to Plant Physiology
- ▲ Modern Technology of Greenhouse **Crop Cultivation**
- Basics of Plant Protection

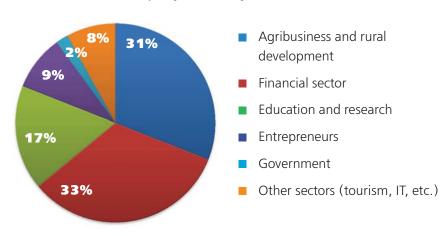
oday greenhouses use the consultancy of international specialists which decreases the price competitiveness of Armenian greenhouse production. This program will highly contribute to preparing qualified specialists for greenhouse management and operations in Armenia, and will support the development of greenhouse industry.

> Poghos Gevorgyan Director of Armenian Greenhouse Association

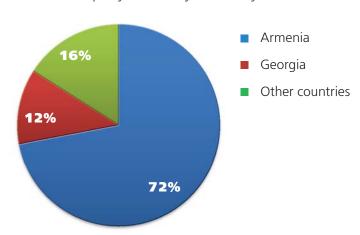


#### **ICARE Alumni Employment**





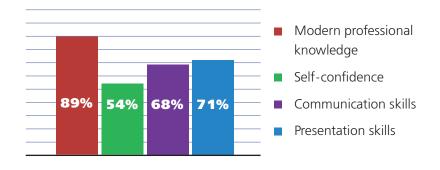
#### Employment by country

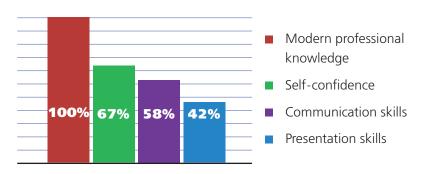


# Skills obtained in ICARE that our alumni say that give them an advantage

Undergraduate Agribusiness Program (UAB)

Master of Agribusiness Program (MAB)





#### **Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development -The Largest Employer** of ICARE Graduates

provides its students with qualifications and competencies for successful employment in international organizations, government, agribusiness sector, NGOs, academia, nonagricultural fields, and banking system. About 94% of ICARE undergraduate program alumni are currently employed: in Armenia (72%), Georgia (12%), and 16% in Russian Federation, North and South Americas (USA, Canada, Paraguay), Europe (UK, Hungary, Germany,

CARD center for

Denmark, the Netherlands, Poland), Australia. Among all graduates, 16% are holding managerial positions. One of our long-time partners and the largest employee of ICARE graduates is the Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD) Foundation, which is a "one-stop-shop" economic development organization with a highly-trained and motivated staff, and a countrywide coverage.

> CARD, leader in providing now a recognized sustainable livelihoods in rural Armenia, started hiring ICARE graduates from the very beginning of its establishment in 2005. Fifteen ICARE graduates are now actively involved in Agribusiness and Marketing, Animal Health, and Rural Development departments' activities. They are also holding important positions in affiliates of CARD: CARD AgroCredit, CARD AgroService and Green Day organic store.

> > Gagik Sardaryan Director of CARD Foundation



#### **ICARE** Graduates in the HSBC Bank **Armenia Hosting Current Students**

he ICARE students' annual visits to our longterm partner HSBC Bank Armenia have already become a tradition. This bank employs 23 graduates – the greatest number of ICARE alumni in the financial sector of Armenia. This time, the main purpose of the ICARE undergraduate senior students' visit was to get acquainted with the bank's structure, its functions, and prospects for career development in the bank.





ICARE students were welcomed by the bank's Chief Executive Officer Edgar Poul, HR Generalist / Business Risk and Control Manager Anahit Poghosyan, and Chief Risk and Administration Officer Gohar Harutyunyan.

Among the ICARE alumni who met current students were: Head of Customer Value Management, Vahan Melkumyan; Mid-Market Enterprise Relationship Manager, Eduard Arakelyan; HR Administrative Officer, Gayane Dovlatyan; Assistant Manager GTRF Sales, Hrant Hovhannisyan; Global Standards Country Lead,

Karen Sargsyan; Procurement Manager, Karen Vardanyan; and Case Manager, Ruzanna Petrosyan. Although the main purpose of the meeting was to introduce their work and career in the HSBC Bank Armenia. the ICARE graduates were even more interested in sharing their memories of being an ICARE family member, as well as assessing the opportunities they had acquired through education in ICARE.

#### **ICARE Students** - Believers in **Change, Bearers** of Change, Makers of **Change!**



#### Astghine Pasovan

Holder of ICARE Teaching Excellence Award in 2017 **ICARE Faculty Member** 

o there I was - a 24-year old, ambitious and enthusiastic fresh graduate in 2002, just repatriated, willing to change Armenia for better, speaking with calm and poised Dr. Daniel Dunn about how I think I can teach the students at Agribusiness Teaching Center to recognize the principles of environmental economics. He smiled at me (like only he can do, and the meaning of that smile hit me years later) saying "If your classes can ensure that our students leave no trash in the nature after the picnics, I will be satisfied."

And now, 15 years later, with substantially less illusion and way more confidence in how much I can realistically change in Armenia, I look at ICARE as the Safe Haven, where people of the same motivation and drive are destined to meet, work together, study hard and make plans for a better Armenia. I think I speak for all the ICARE faculty that fighting the battle of reform and market transformation on various political, economic, institutional platforms of Armenia can be disappointing at times. But it's 15 years in a row, that three days a week I start my mornings at ICARE and looking in the eyes of the wonderful, inspirational youth gives me the energy to get out there after lecture, and fight on all those different fronts for a better Armenia, knowing that every year ICARE makes Armenia's population richer by educated, intelligent, enlightened young professionals who will come to join the army of Believers in Change, bearers of Change, Makers of CHANGE!

Looking in your eyes, Agribusiness Teaching Center, a wonderful teenager, that has evolved and emerged in ICARE, a grownup state when teenagers get passports and vote, I salute you for your maturity! I also thank you for many years of inspiration and being that Safe Haven where we can craft and nurture hopes and big dreams of the next generation of Armenian leaders!

#### **Hands-On Experience During My Internship**

Lilit Karapetyan

**ICARF** Student

ractical implementation of knowledge is a core aspect in the study process – when you apply your theoretical knowledge, learn how the sector works, identify problems and find appropriate solutions for them. In the end of the 3rd year of studying, I was assigned for an internship in Golden Grape ArmAs, one of the leading winemaking companies in Armenia. Eight weeks of internship in the Marketing & Tourism department improved my organizational and managerial





skills. I got the opportunity to analyze and understand the winemaking and wine business from the vineyard to the wine glass. I met many interesting people who shared my vision towards agribusiness development in Armenia. I can proudly say that the most important part of my internship was the job offer which I received when my internship was not even over. As I finished my internship, I was already working in the Marketing & Tourism department at Golden Grape ArmAs. My interest in the field of agribusiness is getting stronger and I hope to run my own agribusiness company in near future.

#### The Minister of **Agriculture Met with ICARE Students and** Alumni

he Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Armenia, Ignati Arakelyan visited ICARE on November 6, 2017 accompanied by the Deputy Minister Robert Makaryan, Director of the Vine and Wine Foundation of Armenia Zaruhi Muradyan, and the ANAU Rector Prof. Arshaluys Tarverdyan. Minister Arakelyan toured in ICARE, highly praised the activities of Wine Chemistry Lab and attended the Sensory Evaluation class taught by Artem Parseghyan. He was impressed with the modern learning opportunities created for students of EVN Wine Academy at ICARE.

Another goal of Minister Arakelyan's visit was to meet with a group of ICARE alumni, students and faculty, before he and Prof. Tarverdyan observed with pleasure the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Vine and Wine Foundation and ICARE by Zaruhi Muradyan and Vardan Urutyan. Mr. Arakelyan answered questions related to the growing wine industry, state policies on supporting young researchers, legal environment for development of agricultural cooperatives. The Minister was impressed by the depth of understanding that the students and alumni demonstrated while addressing challenges faced by the agriculture and agribusiness sector in Armenia.





#### **ICARE** Is So Special



Aramayis Dallakyan

PhD Student, Texas A&M University ICARE Graduate of 2014

seems it was yesterday when one of my ICARE professors said: "Chance favors the prepared." I believe what makes any academic program great is how it teaches the students to be prepared and to think independently. It does not matter what path you pursue after graduation: either it is industry or academic, at some point you need to start making important decisions. That is what makes ICARE special: it teaches students how to approach and solve the real problems. In my way of pursuing double degree in Managerial Economics and Statistics at Texas A&M University, there is no single day that I have not appreciated the education I got at ICARE's Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program. As part of my PhD degree, I am taking different graduate level classes. Among my fellow PhD students with math, statistics, and computer science backgrounds from the best universities globally,

#### **External Review of ICARE's Master of Agribusiness Program (MAB)**



the knowledge and skills that I gained at ICARE make me very competitive. The MAB program at ICARE teaches how to train yourself learn things you do not know. My best advice is not to choose a degree because it sounds fancy, but choose the one that teaches you to compete with the bests. The MAB is indeed such a program!

Victoria Salin, Chair of Intercollegiate Faculty of Agribusiness, Department ■ of Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University; Dr. Annette Levi, Head of the Department of Agricultural Business, California State University Fresno; and Dr. Van Crowder, Executive Director at Center for International Research, Education, and Development / Virginia Tech conducted an external review of ICARE's Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program. The MAB self-study and other materials, interviews with stakeholders including employers of recent graduates, alumni, faculty, staff, students, ANAU Rector,

and the site visits to employers were used as basis for the review. The review identified some outstanding aspects of the MAB program. The report evaluated the curriculum of the MAB as strong that achieves its goals in providing professional readiness to its students. "The language of instruction is English, and it is a definitive advantage for employment. The content emphasizes quantitative methods and also develops the cognitive and behavioral skills that are required for professional careers". The report also states an evidence of very strong business connections and ICARE's excellent career support to students.



#### **My Self-Confidence Increased**

Hasmik Zakeyan

**ICARE Student** 

he Erasmus Mundus "Ember" exchange program awarded me a scholarship to study at Vilnius University for 10 months in 2017. This is the most famous university in Lithuania and is one of the oldest in Europe. I studied Business Administration and took many challenging courses. I was involved in several group projects and experienced the different ways people from different cultures think. I prepared and



presented research papers on the Armenian economy and judicial system which developed my analytical thinking. The international environment of our class was giving an invaluable insight into the overall study process, making group discussions interesting and productive. The Vilnius University also had an advanced modern library which made the study process a real pleasure. My student life in Vilnius was full of memorable moments. In addition to learning from diverse multicultural environment, I introduced the Armenian culture and traditions to my new friends. During cultural events organized by Erasmus Student Network (ESN) I made a presentation about Armenia and taught my international audience the Armenian traditional song Kakavik and the national dance Kochari.

Erasmus program is not only about studying and travelling, but it also helps make lifetime connections. The most valuable thing that I have got from Erasmus program are my international friends. Studying abroad totally changed my mindset: I became more independent, self-confident, and ready to new challenges. I believe, this precious experience will contribute to achievement of my career goals and make me competitive professionally.



#### **Good News from School of Agriculture, Texas A&M University** - Commerce

Sona Grigoryan and MAB Armine Poghosyan, both now MS students at School of

Agriculture, Texas A&M University-Commerce, participated in the 14th Annual Pathways Student Research Symposium at Texas State University in Stephenville. Sona won the 2nd place for poster presentation in the Business category. Sona and the poster co-author Jose A. Lopez entitled their poster "An Empirical Analysis of the U.S. Import Demand for Nuts."

#### **Dreams** are Goals for Me



Elvina Asatryan **ICARE Student** 

ost students of my age dream about successful careers. I do not dream. Dreams are goals for me, and I am confident that I will achieve them. The guarantee of my confidence and the key to my success is the educational background received at ICARE/ATC. I define ICARE as a huge intellectual network which stimulates student development. Even though I am still a student, I already have some experience in business. I had my own contribution to global promotion of two Armenian startup campaigns - Volterman Smart Wallet and Moon by 1-Rina.

This year I was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to continue my education in the U.S. The program required proposing a new business plan for my country and convincing that it will have a thriving path. I want Armenian wines be popular globally. Education in ICARE provides me skills and abilities to contribute to the promotion of Armenian wines.

I always repeat Milton Berle's quote: "If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door." My advice is that we do not need to be afraid of failures. Failure is an opportunity to start over again and learn from mistakes. I perceive life as a game with a set of rules. Just understand the rules and play the game which you are engaged in. Play the game to win it.

#### **Immersing into** the European Culture

Armine Mikayelyan **ICARE Student** 

his year I was provided an opportunity to study at the School of Economics and Management of Minho University in the framework of Erasmus+ "International Credit Mobility" student exchange program. This program helped me further develop my professional skills and knowledge. Due to my background in Economics and knowledge of English gained at ICARE, I managed to guickly adapt to the international environment. Moreover, ICARE had already given us the international exposure of having students from abroad which helped me easily integrate into the European culture. The fact that ICARE provides a Western-style education was advantageous for me to study in a European university without any difficulty.

Abilities and skills that I acquired during my mobility period, such as adaptability, motivation, communication, problem solving, as well as team work will definitely help while building my professional career. I have made friends from all over the world and built an international network of contacts. I became a more responsible and independent person. My understanding and perception of the world has changed.



#### **Investigative Visits of ICARE Students to Agribusinesses**

he Agribusiness Case Studies course brings the experiences of professionals to ICARE classrooms, introducing the managerial, operational and strategic issues of agribusiness industries of Armenia and discussing major issues and challenges the agribusinesses face. The course includes modules of Organic Agriculture, Agricultural Finance and Credits, Agribusiness Value Chain Management, Agribusiness Project Management, Food Law and Quality Control, Export Promotion and Trade Fairs. The modules are taught by industry professionals including Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Armen Harutyunyan (ICARE



graduate); the Director of Informational Analytical Center for Risk Assessment of Food Chain of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, Dr. Davit Pipoyan; GIZ's Senior Expert on Export Promotion, Aram Babayan.



These modules are followed by investigative visits to active agribusinesses of Armenia including dairy companies, meat processing, fruits and vegetables processing, and wine and brandy companies. During the visits students collect important first-hand businessrelated information from the managers, conduct interviews with the representatives of the companies and report their findings in a written form based on specific guidelines. These visits develop professional and soft skills of the students.



#### **ICARE Georgian Students Improve Their Professional Skills During Internships in Armenian Companies**

ince 2001 our students have been spending their internships in more than 250 companies in Armenia, Georgia and Europe. ICARE students from the Georgian partner universities traditionally conducted their internships in Georgian agribusinesses, as well as in financial and public administration agencies. In 2017 we broke the tradition and organized an internship for Georgians in Armenia. This turned out to be a successful experience for both the students and the employers.

Sopiko Kekelidze and Darina Phutkaradze from ICARE Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program spent their internship in Green Lane agriculture support NGO, one of the leading organizations in Armenia promoting development of organic agriculture. Sopiko and Darina were mainly involved in activities of preparing the third international Rural Life and Traditions festival instituted by Green Lane. The eight weeks of Malvina Gogitidze's internship was in Shirakamut Consulting where she said she found herself in marketing. Nino Tchanturia's internship at RegNest resulted in opening a company branch office in Tbilisi, Georgia that she currently runs after graduation.

Important practical experience, work in a multicultural environment, self-confidence, changes in career plans, high sense of responsibility, enhanced ability to work in teams with people from different backgrounds and countries, network expanded in quality and quantity: these are the unexhausted list of capacities the four

> Georgian students acquired during their internships in Armenia.



#### A Job Placement in Georgia

hen ICARE student Nino Tchanturia started her internship at RegNest in Yerevan, she didn't know that soon enough she will be representing the company in her country - Georgia. RegNest is a domain name registrar company that helped Nino understand this new and interesting sector of business. Working as a Junior Sales Manager during the internship, Nino was starting her daily work with the guote by Vernor Vinge: "The work that is truly productive is the domain of a steadily smaller and more elite fraction of humanity."





The internship helped Nino understand how the domain market works. "It is amazing to realize that the Internet has no bounds, and the human imagination can create anything," Nino says.

She appreciated also the family environment, similar to what she saw at ICARE, and the readiness of all team members to help her feel home. "This friendly atmosphere gave me the chance to learn a lot from my col-



leagues."

After graduation and after leaving Armenia, the company opened a branch in Tbilisi, Georgia and appointed Nino for the office. So, now Nino continues working from distance with her beloved RegNest Yerevan team.

#### **ICARE Students Immersing Into Agribusiness Sector** in Georgia

Shahen Mirakyan **ICARE Student** 

undergraduate students spent three days in Georgia immersing in Georgia immersing into agribusiness sector of the country. As future professionals in agribusiness and marketing, we wanted to observe closely the agribusiness industry of our neighboring country and understand how they achieve, in particular, the renowned reputation of Georgian wines and how they organize their promotion activities. Dugladze



Winery, Natakhtari Beer and Lemonade Company, and a family-run organic tomato greenhouse were selected to visit. We studied the production process, marketing, and export strategies of each of the companies and dis-



cussed similarities and differences compared to the Armenian agribusinesses that we visited during our local field trips. The cultural part of the trip included visits to Pantheon of prominent Armenians, Mtskheta

> Monastery, Lisi Lake, and Hayartun Armenian Cultural Center. We also had an opportunity to meet with some ICARE Georgian graduates. We are very thankful to the Georgian colleagues and ICARE staff and faculty who made our trip a wonderful experience.

#### **Rural High School Students Visit ICARE** for Professional **Orientation**

uring February-December of 2017, more than 200 students of 8 high schools, mainly from rural communities, visited ICARE for professional orientation. Most of the visits were within the scope of the Armenian National Agrarian University's professional orientation program, being implemented by

the university over the last two years. For almost all the schoolchildren ICARE is a big revelation, with only a few of them having heard of it from their friends and relatives.



#### ICARE Students and Alumni in YPARD

YPARD Agricultural Development is an international movement for young professionals. YPARD operates as a network with more than 10,000 members from 168 countries. YPARD's goal is to serve as a global collective platform through which young professionals can realize their full potential and contribute proactively towards innovative agricultural development. For the last few years ICARE students have been coordinating YPARD activities in Armenia and Georgia. YPARD is a global platform and

networking system that promotes agriculture among young people via increasing awareness of educational programs, events, and conferences aimed at rural development. Seven members of ICARE family (alumni and students) are working hard to motivate the youth to contribute to developing the agricultural sector in Armenia and Georgia. YPARD-Armenia is working closely with ICARE in conducting series of workshops for students and supporting agicultural start-up processes. More about YPARD at www.ypard.net.







Agribusiness Research Center

#### **Assessing the Knowledge and Skill Gaps in Hospitality** and Tourism Sector in Armenia

ynamic growth of tourism sector in Armenia is part of the global trend. A greater influx of tourists each year opens up an excellent opportunity for service-oriented diversification of export, with a high added-value component. Increasing the number of incoming tourists and the plans to invite and host more travelers

generates a need for quality human resources at all levels of tourism sector. This demand for highly qualified human resources is coming from HORECA sector and visitor attractions, as well as those who need to develop and implement effective strategies and legislative environment for tourism sector development. Among the tourism subsectors, wine tourism is now on its uplift, creating a unique market niche which can further boost both tourism sector and wine industry in Armenia. The study conducted by ICARE team revealed specific knowledge and skill gaps which human resources of tourism sector have. It also analyzed the best educational models globally which prepare competitive specialists for tourism sector.

This study has been made possible by funding and support from the Private Sector Development and Vocational Training, South Caucasus (PSD TVET) Project of German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), Armenia. The research results are available on ICARF website under Publications section.



ICARE / Agribusiness Research Center 24



#### **Skill Assessment** of Syrian-Armenians **Involved** in the Creative Sectors

et another endeavor of ICARE team was the support to development of the creative sector in Armenia. This time the main focus of the research was on employment opportunities for Syrian-Armenians involved in the creative sector of the economy. The study collaborator was Academic Director of Digital Innovation from The Open University in the UK.

The impact of the study was professional experience sharing of local artists, jewelers, designers, photographers and craftsmen with their Syrian-Armenian col-





leagues. Based on ICARE study findings, GIZ-Armenia office introduced professional training on exploring crowdfunding principles for creative sector representatives and on business planning for Syrian-Armenians.

The project beneficiaries are international organizations, local NGOs, and employment agencies which can use the findings of the study to develop customized employment policies for Syrian-Armenians.

#### **Publications and Conferences**

research team participated in a number of conferences in

Armenia; in UC Berkeley in the United States; in IAMO, Germany; and in Tbilisi, Georgia. In total 11 presentations were held to spread the research findings and 9 studies were made public either on ICARE website or through well-known periodicals and journals in Armenia and abroad.



#### **Building Human Capital for Organic Agriculture in Armenia**

ollaboration between ICARE and Vienna University of Natural Sciences (BOKU) was established to further support agricultural education in Armenia. The partners signed an agreement within the scope of APPEAR funding provided by Austrian Development Cooperation to establish Organic Agriculture Master's program in the Armenian National Agrarian University. The aim of the program is improve-



ment of knowledge and skills of organic smallholders through participatory curriculum development and outreach. The program has been created to help meet the need for organic agriculture professionals in Armenia.



The broad impact of the program will be the support of marginalized people in impoverished areas so that they can better handle small farms, ensure water conservation and protect biodiversity.

#### **Empowering and Building Skills of Women in Rural Armenia**

ild harvest was defined by the Ministry of Agriculture as an important sector guided by the objectives of poverty reduction and socially and environmentally sustainable development, especially in disadvantaged mountain areas and border regions. In collaboration with the International Finance Corporation, ICARE started a new research project that aims to support the Government of Armenia to develop a strategy for the wild harvest sector by conducting in-depth technical analysis of the value chains. This is to understand the key issues and constraints to a more effective participation of women in these value chains.



#### SFEWRA Team **Helping Fisheries** in Ararat Valley

gribusiness Research Center of ICARE continues implementing the Sustainable Fisheries for Enhanced Water Resources in Armenia (SFEWRA) project, funded under USAID Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program. It aims to develop water-efficient reuse mechanisms and provide consultancy to small and medium groundwater-based fish farms operating in Ararat Valley.

During 2017 the project team continued to periodically conduct inflow and outflow water quality analysis for each of the 15 beneficiary fish farms. In the meantime,

year, six water-efficient fish farming models were developed for the project farms related to Recirculating Aguaculture Systems (RAS) and other environmentally friendly practices, proposed volume of water supply, the number of stocks to be kept, possible financial investments, cost-benefit analysis, etc. One of the models was successfully awarded with a USAID Evidence-to-Action supplemental grant which will cover the costs of establishing a water-effective aquaculture facility. It will serve as a demonstration model for conventional fish farmers.

> In the scope of this project, the team members are also involved in writing scientific papers for publications and conferpapers were accepted for publication in international and local scientific journals, as well as three scientific papers were presented in international and local conferences. Additionally, SFEWRA research team members are actively sharing knowledge with ICARE students.

# the research team was also engaged in developing customized water-efficient farm models. Throughout the

ence presentations. In 2017 only, four

#### **Alternative Energy** in Fish Farms

Iternative Energy in a Fishery as a Sustainable Production Solution" project presented by the research team of SFEWRA was recognized as one of the top 3 among 18 projects at the final conference "Renewable Energy in Your Community" of the Sustainable Energy Academy



2017 organized at the American University of Armenia. As a result, one SFEWRA beneficiary fish farm will get support in technical need assessment, as well as will receive funding for installation of in-farm renewable energy system from Arpi Solar and the Sustainable Energy Development Fund. Installation of solar panels will enable the fish farm to considerably cut production costs and develop into a more economically and environmentally sustainable enterprise.

#### **Water-Efficient Practices Ensure a Long-Term Economic** and Environmental **Sustainability for Fish Farms**

project was awarded plemental grant from the United States National

Academy of Sciences for transforming one of the SFEWRA beneficiary fish farms located in Ararat Valley into a more intensive facility. The project aims at installing a Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) with components such are water treatment, aeration, and nitrogen management units into an existing conventional fish farm. As a result, the fish farm will shift from a monoculture to an intensive polyculture farm with an aquaponics unit.

The proposed system configuration will contribute to the economic sustainability of the farm. The new business model will create several economic benefits such are high revenues from intensive production of diverse fish species (secondary production of sturgeon and carp); growth of high market value plants in the aquaponic system; and marketing of dried sludge as an organic bio-fertilizer.

The current project in which an extensive aquaculture system is transformed into a highly productive farm with high economic and environmental sustainability, will make the farm an excellent case to demonstrate the viability of SEFWRA-designed business models. Installation and construction works are anticipated to commence in the spring of 2018.



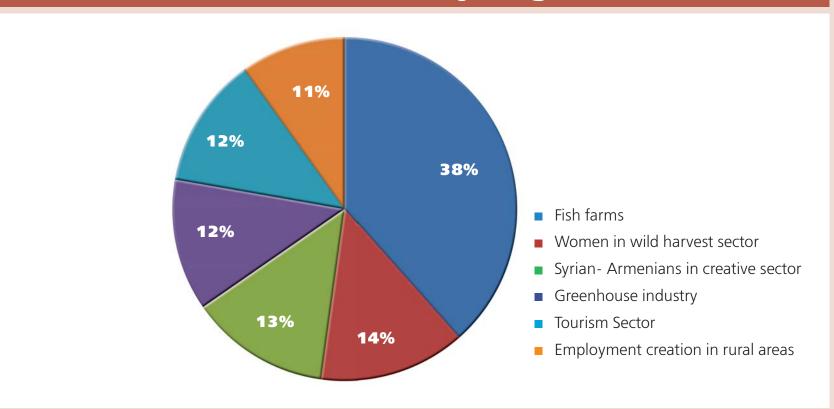
nflow and outflow water quality analysis conducted by the SFEWRA research team helped me fully understand the overall situation in my fish farm. The water quality analysis data and consultancy provided by the project team members helped me improve the management of my farm.

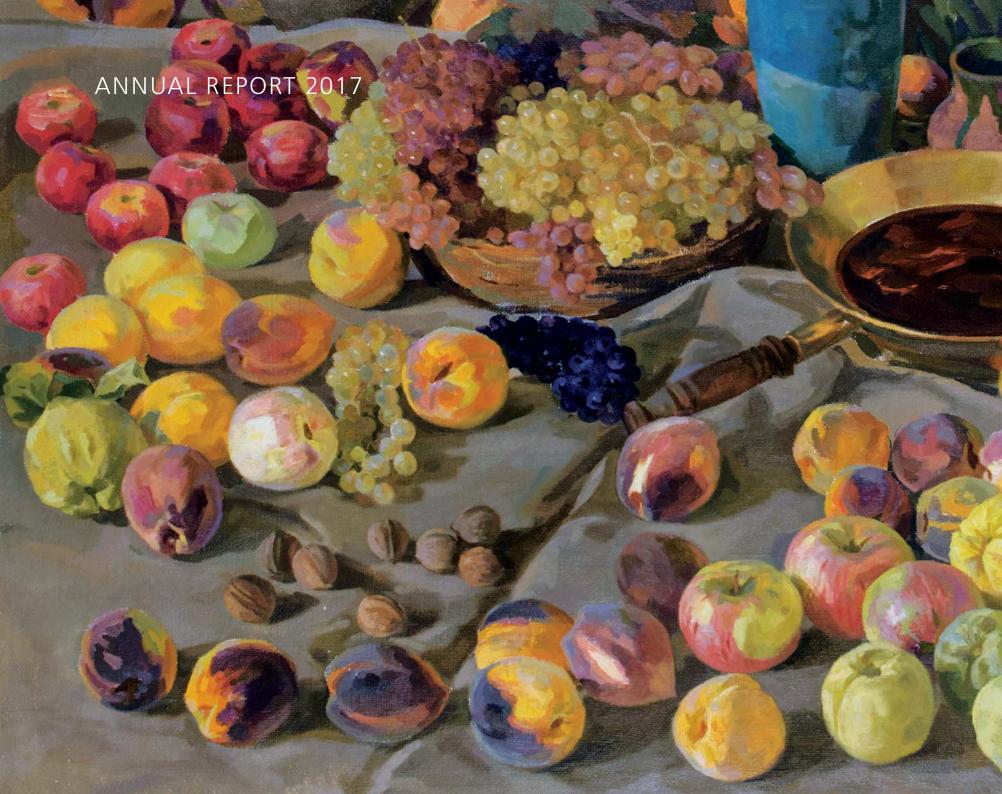
#### Zhora Mkrtchyan

Fish Farmer Hovtashat, Ararat marz, Armenia



#### Research Sectors in 2017 by Budget Allocation







EVN Wine Academy

#### **The First International Wine Conference in Armenia**

Academy instrument and its EVN Wine supporting the Vine and Wine Foundation of Armenia (VWFA) to initiate and host the first "Global Trends and Best Practices in the Wine World: Implications and Recommendations for Armenia" conference in November 23-25, supported also by GIZ, Asian Development Bank, French Embassy in Armenia, and UN FAO. A number of keynote speeches have been



made by OIV President, Monika Christmann; President of the Geisenheim University, Prof. Dr. Hans Reiner Schultz; and Head of Wine Business Programs of the Geisenheim University, Prof. Dr. Jon Hanf. Focusing on overall development of viticulture and winemaking, enhancing Armenia's recognition as a winemaking country and promoting international cooperation were the main goals of this conference. The concerted effort turned out to be a great success, given the world-class experts and officials from a number of countries involved. The conference, participated by 250 specialists from 10 countries, provided an international platform to all interested experts and companies for identifying prospects in the development of the sector and revealing opportunities for investments, development of professional capacities, as well as for further business and research cooperation.

ICARE Director, Vardan Urutyan and Development Director, Arthur Grigorian moderated two of the plenary sessions: Wine Business and Wine Tourism Development Case Studies, respectively. Both wine business and wine tourism are rapidly developing in Armenia; both are taught at EVN Wine Academy as core modules. "Armenia is open for involving large amounts of investments, and we are ready to work with our partners to create the best business environment for investors," said Armenia's Prime Minister who was attending the conference.

The conference came next to the traditional annual Areni Wine Festival held in October and involved a wine tasting contest with, for the first time, world-class wine judges





#### Wine Contest in Framework of Areni Wine Festival

reni Wine Festival has become one of the famous events in Armenia. Every year it takes place in Areni village of Vayots Dzor region on the first Saturday of October. In 2017 a top-notch wine tasting contest was organized in framework of Areni Wine Festival jointly by Areni Fest Foundation and EVN Wine Academy. The latter was responsible for organizing the tasting contest, data analyses, and results publication. The tasting was organized with the support of GIZ "Private Sector Development and Technical Vocational Education and Training South Caucasus" Program.

For the first time in the history of Areni Wine Festival, the Armenian wines were evaluated by 5 professional judges. The judges are internationally recognized



experts directly involved in wine business (importers, consultants, critics, winemakers). Two of them were judge panel members of Mundus Vini wine competition, held twice a year in Neustadt, Germany. They spent two days evaluating 76 labels of wine from 21 Armenian wine producers.



The samples were assessed using detailed tasting sheets based on the internationally recognized tasting schemes. Four wines were awarded Grand Gold, 11 Gold, and 28 Silver medals. All the participating wines were also awarded with certificates including the average score of the wine, as well as a detailed aroma description. This event had a great contribution in internationalization and recognition of Armenian wines. As the judges noted, Armenian wines have a great potential in the global wine market with their uniqueness and rare autochthonous grape varieties.



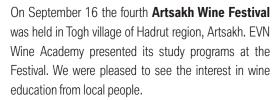
from Germany, Finland, Cyprus, and France invited by VWFA and ICARE through the support from GIZ. ICARE, together with its EVN Wine Academy, have become an important part of the current renaissance of the Armenian winemaking, given the unique educational and research opportunities.

#### **Wine Festival Culture Booming in Armenia**

erevan Wine Days was a real celebration for locals, tourists, winemakers and wine enthusiasts. On May 5 and 6 about two dozens of nicely decorated pavilions on Saryan Street attracted visitors with a variety of wines. At every pavilion one could see joyful youth and elderly people holding a glass of glorious wine, evaluating, drinking, and comparing the producers.

EVN Wine Academy also had its contribution to the preparation and organization of this celebration. Our students were volunteering in the booths of participating companies, telling the story behind each company, and introducing and serving their wines.





We were also very proud to see some of our graduates in pavilions of different wine producing companies. Success of the first two graduating classes of EVN in the field of wine clearly indicates that we are on the right track preparing new leaders for the Armenian winemaking industry. Judith Saryan and Viktor Zarougian from Boston, Massachusetts, great supporters of EVN and ICARE, were among the special guests at the festival.





# **EVN Wine Academy Students at Study Trip in Germany**

framework of DAAD "Study visits and study seminars for groups of foreign students to Germany" program, 17 students of EVN Wine Academy visited wine-related institutions and companies in Germany, including Neustadt Weincampus, Geisenheim University, wineries, wine cooperatives, a specialized equipment and chemical agent retailer, several wine laboratories, a wine publishing house, and an advertising company.

This visit coincided with ProWein in Dusseldorf, which is the world's leading trade fair for wine and spirits, and the largest industry meeting for professionals from viticulture, production, trade and gastronomy. The EVN Wine Academy students had a unique chance of being part of this global event. They tasted wines from all parts of the world, observed the international wine trends, business and marketing strategies, and did important networking for future internship and collaboration.

# **Contributing to Quality Improvement** of Armenian Wines

stablished in 2016, the EVN wine chemistry lab is not only an academic student lab, but it also directly serves the Armenian wine industry. In 2017 the EVN lab started collaborating with a few Armenian wineries to analyze samples. By the end of 2017 the number of collaborating wineries reached 20. Several researchers and PhD students also have their





samples analyzed by our chemists. These tests is a critical help for the wineries which don't have their own labs on site, or their facilities are not sophisticated enough to conduct all types of analyses. EVN lab works both with big and small producers as well as individuals who make wine at home. The analyses are conducted in accordance with OIV and local standards. During 2017 more than 350 samples were analyzed by the lab. EVN is planning to acquire more sophisticated equipment in near future for more types of grape and wine analyses.

# **Boosting Wine Culture in Armenia**

n addition to the Wine Fundamentals Level 1 course, two additional short courses were developed and are now conducted at EVN Wine Academy: Wine Fundamentals for Enthusiasts and Introduction to **Armenian Wines**. The first one is a special course designed for those who enjoy drinking wine and are curious to find out what makes it so unique. It consists of 2 three-hour sessions, followed by a tasting of 6 wines for



each session. The Introduction to Armenian Wines course tells about the ancient roots of winemaking in Armenia, its history and traditions, current trends, as well as the main winemaking regions of Armenia with their autochthonous grape varieties. This course consists of 2 three-hour sessions, followed by a tasting of 6 Armenian wines.

In 2017 EVN Wine Academy also organized a special course within the framework of My Armenia Program, a collaborative cultural sustainability and tourism program funded by USAID and implemented by Smithsonian Institution. This course was tailored for winery tour guides to provide them with knowledge and skillset to present the Armenian viticulture and winemaking history.





# "Wine Month in **Armenia**" Study **Abroad Program**

he Wine Month In Armenia program at ICARE / EVN Wine Academy is an exclusive opportunity to immerse into the Historic World of Wine, join the young and enthusiastic team of wine professionals who are making a change in wine education sector of Armenia. Winemaking started in Armenia at least 6,100 years ago and the country is now living the years of wine industry renaissance. Learning and sharing knowledge in Armenian wines is a lifetime experience!

The participants will have a chance to explore Armenia – part of the Historic World of Wine - join the young and enthusiastic team of wine professionals, and take courses such as Wine Tourism, Wine Business and Introduction to Armenian Wine, taught by international experts. The program participants will also write a wine business project on wine sector of Armenia.

During this month the participants will join students of EVN Wine Academy in their field trips. They will be involved in a wide range of activities in vineyards during their stay. In addition to the academic part of the program, the participants will also have 3 trips along the main wine routes of Armenia. The program will be launched from January 2018.

A certificate will be awarded upon successful completion of each course and a total of 6 credits will be awarded upon completion of the Wine Month in Armenia study abroad program.

Learn more about the program at: www.icare.am/evn/studyabroad





# **CIM Expert** in EVN Wine **Academy**

April 2017 ICARE signed a two-year contract with Integrated Expert from Germany, Isabelle Rüettiger, a diploma engineer in Enology and Winemaking from Hochschule Geisenheim University. In Germany Mrs. Rüettiger had an experience in working at EATON company as product manager for filtration and enological products such as enzymes, yeast, bacteria, etc. Isabelle is in EVN Wine Academy to contribute with her knowledge and experience to development of the wine sector in Armenia. At EVN Wine Academy Isabelle is responsible for the Wine Chemistry Lab development and wine research.

# **Our Internship Program**

he 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort of EVN Wine Academy students spent their industry internship in fall 2017 – the harvest season - throughout the Armenian winemaking regions. The students had a chance to apply the knowledge gained at EVN in real winemaking process and work in a number of large companies such as Armenia Wine, KARAS, Voskevaz, etc.



The aim of this industry internship is to provide students practical skills and give them an opportunity to understand the entire process of winemaking and start paving their career paths.



In 2017 we had a success story with one of our students, Vahe Armenyan, who spent his internship in Voskevaz winery under the supervision of international expert Mr. Jean-Paul Berger. Vahe was also an Erasmus exchange student for 10 months at ICARE's partner Hochschule Geisenheim University. This experience made him a competitive specialist in Armenia and this internship turned out to be a start of his career as a winemaker in Voskevaz winery.

# **EVN Students Make Their Own Wine**

graduate Samvel Machanyan, previously an IT expert, and his brother Aram Machanyan, an economist, proved to be talented winemakers. Their family owns vineyards in Armavir region, with winemaking being their family hobby for already 3 generations. The knowledge and skills acquired at EVN Wine Academy turned to be very helpful for the Machanyans to build their own brand - Alluria - and occupy a unique niche in the wine market of Armenia. The Machanyans





seek to expand their production and enter the international market with their naturally-made Alluria wine.

Another student of EVN Wine Academy - Hayk Mkrtchyan – after only one year of studies has become an important decision maker at their family owned winery. The Aparteny brand was established in 2015.



Havk's ancestors came from Western Armenia, settled down in Bambakahsat village of Armavir region, planted their vineyards and made wine. Currently they own 2 hectares of vineyards established in 2004. Since 2017 Aparteny brand is available in Armenian market with a total production volume of 5,000 bottles. The uniqueness of this brand is that the wine is produced from rare ancient local grape varieties such as Karmrashat. Hayk is actively involved in each step of the production process, starting from the vineyard management to sales and marketing.

# Geisenheim University **Faculty Teaching At EVN Wine Academy**

former Erasmus student from Hochschule Geisenheim University, Linda Bitsch, taught the module of Wine Marketing and Tourism to EVN Wine Academy students

this year. Linda says: "Being an instructor EVN Wine Academy, I was thrilled to see the motivation and eagerness of the students to gain knowledge in marketing and wine tourism. The mixed backgrounds of EVN



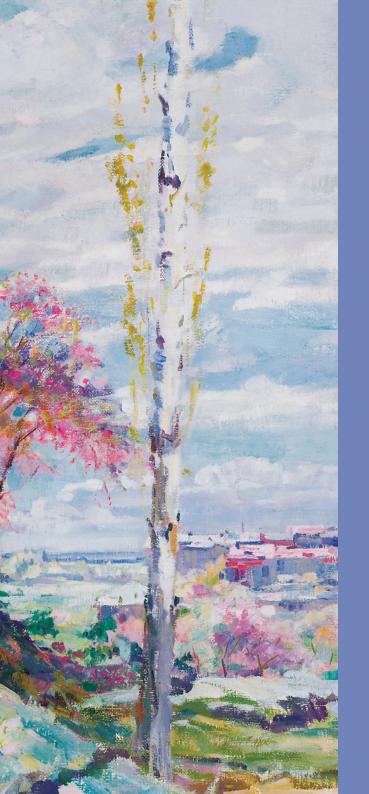
Wine Academy students led to many fruitful discussions and selection of cases and ideas from different industry sectors. The overall teaching environment at ICARE enabled me to work with diversified teaching methods and create optimum learning experiences for students. I enjoyed my time at EVN Wine Academy and I am looking forward to come back to teach the next class of students."

# **Scholarships at EVN Wine Academy** for Syrian-Armenian **Applicants**

Wine Academy announced scholarships for Syrian-Armenian applicants provided by GIZ Private Sector Development "Economic Integration of Syrian Refugees in Armenia" project. This project tackles the challenges related to Syrian-Armenians who immigrated to Armenia during the last years. The project supports economic dialogue and coordination of relevant stakeholders, the integration of Syrian-Armenians in existing business networks, as well as the access to and the adaptation of employment and qualification programs.

The recipients of these scholarships will build their knowledge and skills through the Enology and Wine Business program of EVN Wine Academy. This certification will substantially increase their competitiveness in the local job market and help the Syrian-Armenians easily integrate into the society.



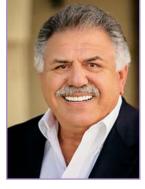


ICARE
Outreach
and
Development

# **Cooperation Between ICARE** and Parnagian **Family Foundation**

xpanding the scope of agribusiness partners

enriches the opportunities for ICARF students in receiving a global perspective of innovations and best practices in agribusiness. It all started in fall 2016 when Vardan Urutyan visited Fowler Packing, one of the largest packing



operations in California. Mr. Dennis Parnagian, the President of Fowler Packing, told the story of his family starting the business and how the company is operating nowadays in a dynamically changing global environ-



ment. Mr. Parnagian also highly appreciated the modern agribusiness education that ICARE provides to young Armenians. An internship of ICARE students at Fowler Packing can be one of the opportunities that Mr. Parnagian was happy to explore. From 2017 Parnagian Family Foundation started supporting education of ICARE students by providing sponsorships to 3 students at Undergraduate Agribusiness Program. ICARE Board and staff extend their gratitude for this important support. ICARE students hope to host Mr. Parnagian in Armenia and share with their experience in this unique academic institution.

About Parnagian Family (source: www.asbarez.com)

n the early 1900's the Armenian-American diaspora began to really grow as Armenians left the villages of their ancestors in search of a better life. Many made their way to California because of the richness of the land and the similarities to home. The Parnagian family, founders of Fowler Packing, were among those families who settled in the San Joaquin Valley.

"This Valley was, and still remains, a paradise for those who want that life of working the land. Armenians seem to have an innate love for the soil and the food it can produce," stated Fowler Packing President Dennis Parnagian.

The late Sam Parnagian started Fowler Packing because of this love for the soil, establishing one of the top fresh fruit packing houses in California. In 2017, Sam's four sons, Dennis, Randy, Ken, and Philip passed the leader-

ship of the company forward to their sons and daughters who are passionate about the mission and the core values laid down by their grandfather: hard work, quality products, unwavering integrity and a social conscience for those in need.



As active members in the Armenian community, Parnagians have "done the right thing" on numerous occasions, helping the Armenian community in a variety of philanthropic activities. "As long as we keep our Church and our faith, there will always be an Armenian community that has meaning and keeps the flame of our heritage alive," said Dennis Parnagian.

"When religious leaders visit the Valley it is always exciting and inspiring. We know there are 'flocks' of Armenians scattered throughout the world but we remain very connected with one another because of our religion and our spiritual leaders," explained Mr. Parnagian. "When they personally visit, it reinvigorates us and strengthens the feelings we have as Armenians."



# **Partnership with the University of Tuscia**

2017 ICARE acquired a new and important partner, the University of Tuscia, Italy, through inter-institutional agreement with ANAU to implement the student and staff mobility through Erasmus+ KA107 credit mobility project. This partnership provides an opportunity to the students of ICARE to study at the University of Tuscia during 2017-2019 academic years. Seven ICARE students are selected to continue their 2017-2018 spring semester



in Italy. Another seven students will be selected for the fall semester. In addition, the program includes staff and faculty mobility, and, based on the agreement, five faculty members will teach and four staff members will be trained in the University of Tuscia.

# **Cooperation with Tufenkian Foundation**

new cooperation with Tufenkian Foundation was established in 2017. This joint initiative will help bring the modern agribusiness and marketing knowledge to Kashatagh region of Artsakh. This project has a real opportunity to create a springboard effect and expand the modern agribusiness approaches among local businesses, as well as generate new business ideas and modernize the culture of doing business.

> A small group of ICARE students will spend their internship in Artsakh and will conduct need assessment and develop business concepts in Kashatagh region. The students will conduct basic value-chain analysis for key agricultural crops, particularly the high-value crops, which can have good market opportunities in Artsakh, in Armenia, and in export markets.

> With their modern knowledge and innovative ideas in agribusiness, the students will contribute to bottom-up community development and creation of start-up business clusters to utilize the

local comparative advantages. The concepts developed by the students will create a ground for developing inclusive business models to empower and engage marginalized individuals and groups in Kashatagh region.

# **New Academic Programs: Geospatial Technologies**, and **Hospitality & Tourism** Management

further support food and agribusiness industry in Armenia, ICARE is analyzing the industry needs. These needs help identify opportunities for new academic programs at ICARE which will educate modern specialists. Based on long-lasting partnership, ICARE and Texas A&M University have been nurturing a concept of setting up a Geospatial Technology Certificate Program in ICARE based on similar program at Texas A&M, and launching it from fall 2018. The new curriculum needs to be carefully elaborated to match the needs, development trends, as well as existing technological environment of Armenia.

In parallel, ICARE is working on possible development of a new certificate program in Tourism & Hospitality Management. The recently completed research by ICARE team identified big skill and knowledge gaps among employees of tourism and hospitality sector in Armenia. ICARE is now planning to identify prospective partner institutions with rich experience in providing similar curriculum.

### ICARE - a Western **Education Model**

is unique and cannot be compared to any other higher education institution in Armenia because it joins strong Armenian agricultural traditions with modern Western expertise and instruction. ICARE has a Western-style curriculum adapted from Texas A&M University. All classes are taught in English and focus on preparing qualified employees and entrepreneurs for the Armenian and regional economy immediately upon graduation.

ICARE's diverse environment of students gives graduates a global perspective that allows a rapid transition into an international business environment.

About 94% of undergraduate program alumni find employment within a few months after graduation.

Practically 100% of Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program and EVN Wine Academy graduates find employment even before they graduate.

84% of graduates are employed in their homeland.

The average salary of an ICARE graduate is 2.5 times the normal salary in the country.

(October 2017 figures)

### Why Support **ICARE?**

ike you, ICARE's graduates are committed to helping build their beloved country.

The graduates remain in Armenia to work even though their knowledge and skills would make them immediately marketable worldwide.

Your investment in ICARE will help Armenia for years to come. Your gift contributes to the economic development of Armenia, both through improving the skill sets, expertise and wages of the Armenian workforce and through higher income taxes paid to the Armenian government by ICARE graduates.

Your gift is money well spent on an effective educational program in Armenia. The job placement rates show the school's positive impact.

The Western-style Texas A&M curriculum is new in Armenia and the entire the South Caucasus region and has the potential to change education at other Armenian universities and colleges.

Your support provides the best tools available: an American university agribusiness curriculum that is not available anywhere else in Armenia.

Your gift supports business people and entrepreneurs in the 21st century world economy.



# Circle of Supporters 2017

# Judith Saryan and Victor Zarougian

provided a generous support for Greenhouse Crop Production and Management program at ICARE.

We extend our gratitude to the circle of ICARE supporters for their continuous commitment to sustain quality education in Armenia.

Armenian Agribusiness Education Fund

Carol & Richard Ishkanian

Carolyn Mugar

Jakob Schuler

John Nichols

Judith Saryan and Victor Zarougian

Parnagian Family Foundation

Rita Balian

Vahan Sarkissian

# Parnagian Family Foundation

provided full sponsorships to 3 Undergraduate Agribusiness Program students of ICARE.

### **Jakob Schuler**

sponsored education of 3 students at ICARE's EVN Wine Academy.

# **How To Support ICARE**

ICARE accepts gifts and pledges from donors in the United States through the Texas Extension Education Foundation (TEEF), located at the Texas A&M University. All gifts to ICARE are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

- Make your check payable to "TEEF" and put in the memo line "for ICARE."
- Send credit card information (name on card, expiration, security code, credit card address) by U.S. mail or by fax.

### TEEF / ICARE

PO Box 946 College Station, TX 77841 Fax: (979) 6910654

# **Support to Wine Education**

akob Schuler who represents Schuler St. Jakobs Kellerei, one of Switzerland's best known wine houses, visited ICARE's EVN Wine Academy and toured at wine lab and wine tasting room. Mr. Schuler was impressed to see the contribution of EVN Wine Academy to development of wine education in





Armenia over the last years. Mr. Schuler now supports education of 3 outstanding students at EVN Wine Academy. The achievements of graduates of EVN Wine



Academy are truly impressive – they all find employment in wine sector of Armenia even before they graduate. In almost any wine company in Armenia one can meet graduates of EVN Wine Academy working as winemakers and at other professional positions.

Source: www.aravot-en.am

he company of Schuler St. Jakobs Kellerei has been engaged in winemaking for more than 300 years. It has its own production and sales network of its wine. The company has 12 wine shops and 2 production facilities in Switzerland, offering more than 250 exclusive names of wines from around the world. and now also from Armenia.

# **ICARE Students in** Volterman **Crowdfunding Campaign**

number of ICARE students have been participating in development and promotion of Armenianbased Volterman smart wallet. ICARE graduate 2006, ICARE Advisory Board member, and the founder of The Crowdfunding Formula, an international Crowdfunding PR and Marketing Agency, Narek Vardanyan has been leading the promotion activities of Volterman crowdfunding which raised more than

\$2 million and is now widely recognized as the #1 smart wallet in the world. Dr. Vardanyan is now teaching Digital Marketing at ICARE and is sharing his valuable experience with the students.



According to Narek, 15-20 ICARE students and volunteers were extremely helpful in creating the worldwide success of Volterman.

Volterman Smart Wallet has 5 key functions. Power Bank allows charging your mobile phone up to 100%. Whenever your wallet and mobile phone are apart,



Bluetooth Alarm function signals the information from one device to the other. That is to say, your mobile phone will notify if you forget the wallet somewhere. If your wallet has been stolen and you missed the notification, Global GPS Tracker allows you to see through online map (throughout the globe) where the wallet is at certain period of time. The wallet also has WiFi Hotspot, which provides Internet roaming service anywhere in the world at a price 10 times less than that of standard roaming.



Currently, the wallet is in its final stage of production. The electronics will be developed in China, and the leather production and assembly process will be accomplished in Armenia. Afterwards, Volterman will be shipped to 135 countries, where the backers (early supporters) of Volterman come from.

# Partnership with Dasaran

he cooperation between ICARE and Dasaran is growing rapidly as the number of followers on Agribusiness Education page on Dasaran platform is now above 58,000! Through this page, young Armenians learn all about new agribusiness trends globally, as well as how education at ICARE can positively impact their future careers. Guess who is the founder of Dasaran platform? It is Suren Aloyan, ICARE graduate of 2005.



The ICARE-Dasaran partnership invites industry stakeholders from Armenia and abroad to join the efforts in making agribusiness a popular career choice in Armenia.

# Supporting Agricultural Statistics in Georgia

uring the last years a great effort was directed towards developing agricultural statistics in Georgia. The agricultural statistics development project completed in 2017 was a very important component and made a remarkable contribution to the process of GeoStat staff capacity building, sharing international experience, implementing modern technologies, improving data quality, data disseminating and awareness rising of data users. During the project the field staff was regularly trained which substantially improved the data quality provided to thousands of active data users in the country and abroad.



# **ICARE Alumni are Giving Back by Teaching**

very week ICARE proudly hosts alumni who come back to alma mater to conduct quest lectures and transfer their knowledge and skills to current students.



Networking is essential in achieving success in today's job market. Gayane Sargsyan, ICARE graduate who holds also MS degree in Financial Economics from the Ohio University, shared her interesting ideas and experience with the current ICARE undergraduate students as part of "Giving back to ICARE/ATC by Teaching" initiative.

"Advertising sector in Armenia. Practical skills on how to cope with unwritten laws that guide the sector" was the topic of seminar conducted by another ICARE graduate

Tatevik Torosyan, Deputy Director at Media Group. Tatevik taghut to students media strategy, as well as planning and media buying peculiarities in Armenia.

ICARE graduate of 2008, Wine Project Manager at the Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development (CARD) Arman Khojoyan conducted a guest lecture on "Understanding Leadership". As admitted by the students, this was one of the most informative and most pleasant guest lectures from a professional who has already established himself as a leader.

Anna Hovhannisyan, ICARE graduate of 2013, is a member of YPARD (Young Professionals for Agricultural Development), with Armenia being one of the 168 countries having joined to this multi-stakeholder platform. Anna introduced YPARD's main mission to the junior undergraduate students. YPARD is enabling young professionals to realize their potential and contribute to innovative and sustainable agricultural development.



# ICARE Advisory Board

he ICARE Foundation recognizes the value and the importance of engaging stakeholders from business, industry, and academia in development and promotion of its research and education programs. These groups provide critical linkages between educators, students, and practitioners in order to achieve program quality and relevance. The ICARE Advisory Board will provide advice, guidance and support to ICARE in the overall development of its programs. This Board will enable the ICARE administration to have independent views and opinions on various issues of major significance. The Advisory Board members will serve as ambassadors of ICARE providing an ongoing exchange of information and ideas with members of a broader society.

The ICARE Advisory Board members are:

- Ara Chalabyan Chief Auditor, Central Bank of Armenia
- 2. Armen Harutyunyan Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Armenia
- 3. Armen Kocharyan Co-Founder, General Manager, VOLO LLC
- 4. Artashes Kazakhetsyan Director, Prodeco CJSC
- 5. Gagik Sardaryan Executive Director, CARD Foundation
- 6. Hayk Khachatryan Assistant Professor, University of Florida
- 7. Jakob Schuler Founder and CEO, SCHULER St. JakobsKellerei
- 8. Mariam Saghatelyan Founder, In Vino Wine Bar
- Narek Vardanyan Founder and CEO, TheCrowdfundingFormula
- 10. Tatevik Zohrabyan Consultant, Quintiles IMC, Inc. Boston

- 11. Vahe Ghazaryan General Manager, Furoterm CJSC
- 12. Vahe Keushguerian Founder, Executive Director, WineWorks
- Vardges Hovhannisyan Assistant Professor, University of Wyoming
- Victoria Aslanyan CEO, Golden Grape ArmAs
- 15. Zaruhi Muradyan Director, Vine and Wine Foundation of Armenia

# **ICARE Teaching the Industry Professionals**

ew knowledge and skills at industry sector of Armenia are to enhance the value-add at companies, add sophistication of business models, and make economy of Armenia more competitive.

During the past year ICARE provided a number of important trainings for industry professionals. More than 150 industry professionals attended the trainings on topics – Project Management, Forecasting for Agribusiness



Executives, Application of Econometric Models Using STATA for Addressing Economic Questions, Operations Management Using Solver, Quantitative Tools for Marketing Professionals, etc.

Every endeavor in life is a project with defined scope and limited resources. In business, implementing projects in an efficient and effective manner ensures sustainability and future profits. Therefore, currently many organizations give priority to individuals who have certain skills and experiences in project management. The Project Management training conducted by Sona Telunts (PMP), taught application of project management to real-life cases in Armenia.

Forecasting is an important tool at the disposal of executives at small and large agribusiness companies for successful decision-making. In this hands-on training, conducted by Rafael Bakhtavoryan, PhD, Texas A&M University, the participants learned different quantitative models used to generate forecasts of the objects of interest (GDP, prices, quantity sold, sales, costs, interest rates, exchange rates, etc.). The distinctive feature of this training was that it focused on different quantitative models for developing both deterministic or point (without risk) and interval or stochastic (risk included) forecasts.



# 2017 ICARE Financial Highlights



Programs and Operating Expenditures	
	USD
<ul><li>Agribusiness Teaching Center</li></ul>	\$ 216,752
<ul><li>Agribusiness Research Center</li></ul>	\$ 176,905
■ EVN Wine Academy	\$ 50,792
<ul><li>Administration</li></ul>	\$ 138,586
Development & Outreach	\$ 21,593
<ul><li>USAID SFEWRA project</li></ul>	\$ 58,289
USDA Arm. Ag. Census and GeoStat Project	\$ 230,973
TOTAL	\$893,890
26% 24% 26% 20% 6%	

# INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR AGRIBUSINESS RESEARCH AND EDUCATION (ICARE) FOUNDATION

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