

Manoogian Simone Foundation gives \$1.2 Million to UM for Armenian Studies

Ann Arbor, Mich. – Supporters of the resolution on the Armenian genocide will continue to pursue passage in Congress and are optimistic that national opinion is in their favor. As they continue to organize, the Manoogian Simone Foundation is working to advance the research of Armenian history through a \$1.2 million gift to the Armenian Studies Program in the University of Michigan’s College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA). This contribution will propel the study of Armenia to a higher level by providing resources for scholars in the US and Armenia to conduct the research that will generate new historical knowledge and change the way Armenian history and culture is taught and preserved for future generations.

The Manoogian family has given millions of dollars over the years to philanthropic efforts benefitting Armenians, both in the homeland and the diaspora. They have established schools, centers, churches, and libraries throughout the world. The Manoogian Simone Foundation’s gift to the Armenian Studies Program (ASP) will provide funding for graduate and post-doctoral fellowships at UM and in Armenia, a visiting scholars program, annual international conferences, graduate workshops, an expanded Summer Language Institute, and an outreach program.

The Foundation is headed by Louise Manoogian Simone, daughter of the late Detroit businessman Alex Manoogian and sister of Richard Manoogian, who is Executive Chairman of Alex Manoogian’s Fortune 500 Taylor-based Company, MASCO Corporation. “My parents started the Armenian Studies Program at UM,” said Simone, “and this gift will expand the program by providing funds for young scholars to study Armenian language and history, both in Michigan and Armenia.”

“This transformational gift will enable the Armenian Studies Program to become a leading area study center among universities around the world,” said LSA Dean Terrence J. McDonald. “The Manoogian family is dedicated to preserving and expanding our knowledge about Armenia and has demonstrated this commitment at UM through the years.”

The Manoogian family established the Alex Manoogian Chair of Armenian History, the first of its kind, in LSA more than 30 years ago, followed by the Marie Manoogian Chair of Armenian Language and Literature. Because of their generosity, UM has been able to attract leading Armenian scholars, including Kevork B. Barkdakjian and Ronald Grigor Suny, as well as the current director of the ASP, Gerard Libaridian.

A crucial goal of the ASP is to preserve the history and cultural heritage of Armenia. “By training graduate students to do research, we have a chance to make sure this history, this cultural legacy is never lost or forgotten,” said Libaridian. The Manoogian Simone Foundation gift will make possible collaborations between Armenian and US scholars, which will include training graduate students in the US to speak Armenian in order to conduct on-site research in Armenia and training promising Armenian students who come to Michigan as visiting scholars.

The Manoogian Simone Foundation gift is part of LSA’s fundraising effort for the \$2.5 billion Michigan Difference campaign.

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