



NOVEMBER 22, 2014 **HEALING HEARTS** **DANCE & SILENT ART** **AUCTION**

Join us for a night of fun for a great cause!

Photographs from children at the FAR Children's Center in Yerevan will be on display as part of the auction. All proceeds from the auction will directly benefit the FAR Children's Center.



Reservations
Online:
bit.ly/1xQVt2u

\$40 Reservation
\$45 At the Door

JAQ Hagopian
Band

Cash Bar ~ Mezza

Cocktail Attire

**ST. LEON ARMENIAN
CHURCH**

12-61 Saddle River Road
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

November 22, 2014
7:00 pm

Dearest Friends,

I would like to tell you about an upcoming event that you should all consider attending! But first, allow me to share with you a glimpse of my summer in Armenia.

I had the great privilege of working with the Fund For Armenian Relief's Children Center in Yerevan. As some of you may know, the goal of the Children's Center is "to provide a safe haven for at-risk children through a process of prevention, protection, and recovery." I was given the opportunity to witness the good work that the center accomplishes and to play a small role in the mission of the center.



For a soon-to-be-announced Ayo! project, I was part of a team that gave the children an introductory lesson on photography and spent several days working hands-on with them to create landscape and macro photographs. We focused on making images of nature with the hope of providing hospitals in Yerevan uplifting photographs to hang in their buildings, as studies have shown that the presence of nature images in healthcare settings decreases a patient's anxiety levels and expedites the healing process. The beautiful catch of this project, though, is that the art therapy is twofold: while producing items to be used for art therapy, the kids were engaging in their very own healing as well. Not only are the kids encouraged to take an active and creative role in the health of their country, they are able to participate in their own restoration to wholeness through imaginative, artistic expression.

Though there was a frustrating - and often hilarious - language barrier between us, I sincerely fell in love with the children with whom I worked and feel incredibly fortunate that I shared this experience with them. They represent the best of Armenia: the vibrant present and the hopeful future. I am so excited for the moment when they will be able to see their own artwork on display, knowing that their work will help countless patients on their roads to recovery. It is my fondness for these children and for the wellness of my beautiful Motherland that drives me to see this project to its fulfillment.

This, my friends, is where you come in. ACYOA Central Council, with the help of FAR and Ayo!, is hosting the Healing Hearts Silent Art Auction on November 22 at St Leon Armenian Church. Many of the children's photographs will be on display and auctioned off during the night. All funds raised will go directly to the completion of this stellar project. There will be food! There will be music! There will be dancing! All for the low price of \$40! The only thing we need now is your attendance. Even if you cannot make it to the event, I urge you to consider donating to this worthwhile cause. You can find all of the information you'll need to register for this event here: bit.ly/1xQVt2u

You can learn more about FAR at www.farusa.org and Ayo! at www.weareayo.org. Should you have *any* questions about this event, please feel free to email me at kathrynashbahian@gmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Warmly,
Kathryn Ashbahian