

YCA encourages autonomy, initiative taking and critical thinking of young people within the over-arching goal of creating a participative and democratic society in Armenia

YOUNG CITIZENS OF ARMENIA

March 2014- n°6

NEWSLETTER

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YCA's NEWS

Sri Lanka's independence day, the Sun day in Argentina, the Flag Day in Canada, International Mother Language Day, and the relaunch of the “Young Citizens of Armenia” project clubs. All these events happened in February. After the January holidays the clubs again reunited the youth to discuss such topics as “Education” and “Environment”. In the frames of the “Education” topic the Psychological club hosted the teacher Samvel Martirosyan, alumni Sargis Khachikyan and psychologist Rajni Avagyan to present the educational system of the Waldorf school. February was a month of different discussions on education system, different types of education, the cultural peculiarities of education, and right to education. In March, alongside the awakening of the nature, we launched the monthly topic on “Environment” focusing our discussions on the ecological problems in Armenia, ecology of mind, eco art and many others. Another important event was the composition of the new board of the Animators' Council and their meeting. The animators had their 3rd training where they analyzed the current situation in their clubs, the existing problems, possible solutions, as well as successes, learned new methods. In April we are expecting interesting meetings on the topic “Conflicts”. We are looking forward to seeing you.



“Our environment, the world in which we live and work, is a mirror of our attitudes and expectations.”
Earl Nightingale

Animators About The Monthly Topic "Environment" Our Clubs

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BEING REAL

Nowadays the environmental issues are considered to be the most fatal. It is obvious that the human being has changed the Earth, has made the nature angry with his aspirations. All the continents have been "exploited" and used. In a nutshell, we have made the Earth to look like the way we want. This is what is happening on our small planet, and the worst thing is that nothing is exaggerated.

Every civilization is born and passes away like people. The life of the Earth is very much like the life of the human being. The human being always creates social environments (state, empire) in order to live, and a more collected image of it, is our planet.

It's a pity that we demolish whatever we create. Can't the "Homo sapiens" live without injuring as stated by Ghandi: "Live the way that will enable the others to live". I would very much prefer these words not to sound very utopistic. We usually divide our life into 4 phases, birth, period when we demolish our life, struggle to prevent the demolition (this always results in loss), death. Today the Earth is in its third phase. My thoughts may seem not hopeful, but this is the formula which we have been following. We have no idea how many civilizations there were before us and how many there still will be after us. Therefore, the life never stops, only the civilizations change. They get punished for using the Earth.

And now I ask myself the following question. Do the people understand this statement from the Bible right? "God let the human being rule over the Earth and Sky".

Arman Meliqyan,
Animator of Human Rights Club
in Yerevan

"Live
as if you were
to die tomorrow.
Learn as if you were to
live forever."
Mahatma Gandhi

Tuesday

Human Rights Club, 18:00, Yerevan

Wednesday

French Club, 18:00, Yerevan
Art Club, 15:00, Gyumri

Thursday

Intercultural Club, 18:00, Yerevan
Art Club, 18:00, Yerevan
Human Rights Club, 15:00 Gyumri

Friday

Psychological Club, 18:00, Yerevan
Cinema Club, 15:00, Gyumri

Saturday

Cinema Club, 17:00, Yerevan
French Club, 13:00, Gyumri
English Club, 14:30, Gyumri
English Club, 15:00, Yerevan

On 5th and 20th of each month

Cartoon club, Gyumri





Hovhannes Hovsepyan,
Club participant in Yerevan

1. Which clubs do you attend? Why?

It's about 5 months that I attend the clubs of the "Espaces" centre. The first club I attended was the Psychological club, and then also started attending the Art and Cine Clubs. The Psychological club attracted me with the opportunity of freely expressing myself on different topics, and the Art club always organizes interactive meetings which help to fully get involved in the process.

2. Has the "Young citizens of Armenia" project impacted you and your perception of civil society in Armenia?

Attending the clubs has taught me to listen to the others and to showcase a relevant approach to opinions I don't much agree with. And what is more interesting, I have learned to present my opinion without offending the position of the others. Even if I hear "absurd" ideas. I try not to be aggressive. I now recalled one of the club meetings when the topic was "Euthanasia". 90% of the participants were for euthanasia, and the rest 10% who were against euthanasia were trying to convince the others in being wrong. Here I listen to and learn many new things about topics which seem to be familiar, at the first sight only. I have realized that there are people who are thinking globally instead of a narrow professional thinking which is quite encouraging.

3. If you could change one thing about Armenian society, what would it be?

I would change many things. For example, I hear many talks in the streets and realize that the majority of our society is in need for getting a self-reliance. I would suggest them to do something else than just talking, painting for example, reading or writing a book, doing a useful thing in order to get a self-reliance. Another thing, I notice in our country are the extremist approaches to different issues. We often want everything to happen at once without realizing that we need time for everything.

1. Which club do you animate and how did you come to animate this club?

I am one of the animators of the French club, I have been a participant of KASA Gyumri clubs for many years. The positive emotions and the bunch of good news have always attracted me and I've always wished to become an animator, but something always kept me back and I felt it was not the right time to become an animator. This year I finally managed to overcome my uncertainty and become one of the animators.

2. Has the "Young citizens of Armenia" project impacted you and your perception of civil society in Armenia?

Due to the "Young Citizens of Armenia" project I have become confident and have developed the idea, that I can also be an active citizen of my society. I've always had the feeling that I won't be accepted by the society if I initiate something, but this project has given me the reason to break this way of thinking. This project has brought many positive changes in the society. Today more young people are engaged in creating healthy civic society. More and more young people start realizing that the change starts from them. Particularly in Gyumri, the young people have become more active, self-confident and united.

3. If you could change one thing about Armenian society, what would it be?

I would add optimism. One must keep the optimism to withstand all the difficulties in life. There are more pessimistic people in our society rather than optimistic. I would also add smiles on the faces of people.



Hasmik Aleksanyan,
Animator of French Club in
Gyumri

Youth Events, Grants, Scholarships Examples Of Civic Activism

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“Young Citizens of Armenia” project [video](#).

CREATE and MOTIVATE training in Moldova by Salto. Deadline to [apply](#) 30th April.

Competition for journalists covering trafficking and fight against it by FOI. Deadline to [apply](#) is 15th May.

Announcing the 2014 Rising Voices Microgrant Competition. Deadline to [apply](#) is 9th April.

International Workshop on Youth Leadership and Entrepreneurship /wnyleworkshop2014.com/. Deadline to [apply](#) is 30th April.

Plural Plus video festival /pluralplus.unaoc.org/. Deadline to [apply](#) is 27th June.

The UNAOC-EF Summer School. Deadline to [apply](#) is 22nd April.

Youth citizen entrepreneurship competition / youth-competition.org/. Deadline to [apply](#) is 30th June.

“This City Belongs To Us” civic initiative was launched in April 2010 in order to protect the Students Park of Yerevan. The main victories of the initiative is the Dragon’s Park (June, 2011), Mashtots Park (May, 2012), etc. The group aims to make use of all legal means and the forms of the expression of public opinion in order to make publicly and legally accountable those destroying the public and green spaces, as well as for protecting the parks of Yerevan and creating the culture of protection of public green spaces. The group has launched a special [webpage](#) (kanach.am) in order to alarm and inform about illegalities and harassment against trees, green spaces and parks while sending an SMS or an email or using the capacity of the website.

Source: www.kanach.am



Photos on 1st and 2nd pages by
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Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the articles and interviews are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of “Young Citizens of Armenia” project.

Our supporters



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