



27TH ANNUAL ATAA CONVENTION

BUILDING BRIDGES TO
STRENGTHEN RELATIONS

NOVEMBER 9-11, 2006 • WASHINGTON, DC

ASSEMBLY OF
TURKISH AMERICAN
ASSOCIATIONS

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ATAA Assembly of
Turkish-American
Associations

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INTERNS

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ATAA President's Message

Dear ATAA Members and Friends,

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome you to the 27th Annual Convention of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA) in Washington, D.C.

This has been another busy year for ATAA. In addition to our regular activities, we worked very hard to defend the Turkish Republic against baseless attacks. For the first time in our history, we counter-demonstrated against Armenian atrocities in three major cities, in memory of Turkish foreign officers who were brutally killed by Armenian terrorists.

As you will read in more detail in our annual report in this booklet, for the first time we had a program with a university to educate Turkish mayors, House of Representatives members, college professors and college students in American politics. The "School of Politics" with Bahcesehir University was not only a new experience for ATAA but also a source of income.

ATAA has continued accepting and winning new individual and component members and is proud to welcome three new organizations. Both Istanbul University and the Middle-East Technical University alumni's are welcomed by our Board of Directors. Alumni's of Ankara University's SBF (Mulkiye) are also establishing a new organization in Washington D.C. ATAA would like to have them also as a component organization in the future.

With our 2006 Nevruz Celebrations we brought together all Turkic communities in DC, New York and New Jersey. This was another first in ATAA and we had incredible success working with the Institute for Turkish Studies and Turkic organizations under ATAA's umbrella. I hope this will be an annual event to unite all Turkic communities in establishing a higher voice in Washington for all. ATAA has been helping Azeri communities all over the US, from Florida to California, with their new organizations. We would like to unite our community in actively and legitimately pursuing our collective interests on all levels -politically, socially and educationally- with one voice. I truly believe that ATAA has the capacity to be the unifying force behind all groups that share our principles of integrity, dignity and service to society.

I want to express my gratitude for the dedicated work of the Convention Committee, especially co-chair Nurten Ural, and the Central Office staff. All volunteers and employees consistently put in the time and effort to make this convention and many other activities of ATAA successful. I would also like to thank the members of the Board of Directors and Board of Trustees for their leadership and vision.

Sincerely,

Vural Cengiz



Turkish President's Message

Ahmet Necdet Sezer
President of the Republic of Turkey

On the occasion of its 27th Annual Convention, I wish to congratulate the Assembly of Turkish American Associations for the contributions it has provided to the development of mutual understanding, cooperation and friendship between Turkey and the United States.

As two close allies, friends and partners, Turkey and the United States have been in close cooperation and solidarity for over half a century. We believe that in the years ahead, our relations will progress on the basis of mutual respect and benefit and shared values.

Furthering our bilateral cooperation based on dialogue in every field is amongst our principal goals. This is particularly the case for the war on terror. The contributions of the Turkish-American society carry distinct importance and value in bringing tangible content to this cooperation.

Today, the Turkish society in the United States has acquired a character that represents each social segment and through its high level of education has integrated with the American society. The Assembly, which was initially established to equip the Turkish society with the awareness of acting in an organized manner, later enhanced its functions assuming an important role in further developing Turkish-American relations and strengthening ties between the Turkish and American peoples.

The Assembly also makes useful efforts to effectively inform the American public and relevant circles on Turkey and on the further development of Turkish-American trade relations.

The Turkish-American society has important duties in promoting our relations with the United States based on partnership in a multitude of areas. The welfare, wellbeing and unity of the Turkish-American society is of great importance for the success and efficiency of their activities.

With these feelings and thoughts, I should like to congratulate the members of the Assembly of Turkish-American Associations and its component associations for their admirably selfless efforts and wish them the best of success at their 27th Annual Convention.



Prime Minister's Message

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey

On the occasion of the 27 th Annual Convention of the Assembly of Turkish - American Associations, I would like to sincerely congratulate the leadership and members of the Association, as well as my dear citizens, kinsmen and the esteemed American friends of Turkey.

As our friend and ally, the United States lends great support to Turkey on numerous issues ranging from our membership to the European Union and the fight against terror to the designation of new energy corridors. The United States is also an important partner in our efforts relating to regional and global problems. Our countries cooperate on a vast range of issues including, among others, defense, security, economy, trade, combating terror, dialogue among civilizations, and the establishment of global peace and stability. I am convinced that this cooperation will continue and deepen in accordance with our Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue document.

Turkey and the United States are in a position to bring value added to each other in a number of fields. We believe that the partnership between the two states also contributes to the strengthening of transatlantic bonds.

We are willing to take our partnership relations even further in a multidimensional fashion and based on trust, cooperation and dialogue. And, we are committed to continuing our efforts to that effect.

In this context, the Assembly, as one of our largest umbrella organizations in the United States, displays an outstanding performance in the development of Turkish-American relations, in the promotion of Turkey and the Turkish culture and in bolstering solidarity and cooperation among the Turkish society in the United States, and thereby plays a significant role in fostering ties of friendship between our peoples.

Having assumed a highly important responsibility in organizing the Turkish society in the United States, the Assembly of Turkish-American Associations, whose activities have been underway for over a quarter century, also contributes to the development of a constructive understanding and cooperation between Turkey and the United States. In this regard, it is of the utmost importance that the Assembly undertake efforts to strengthen the unity of the Turkish society without departing from its founding purposes.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank the leadership of the Assembly of Turkish-American Associations, all the members and leaders of the associations that exist under this umbrella organization, as well as the citizens, kinsmen and American friends who support their activities, for their contributions and zeal. I extend my best wishes for success at the 27 th Annual Convention.



Foreign Minister's Message

*H.E. Abdullah Gül
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey*

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Ambassador's Message

H.E. Nabi Şensoy
Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United States

On the occasion of its 27th Annual Convention, I wish to extend my congratulations to all the members of the Assembly of Turkish-American Associations (ATAA).

Turkey and the United States are close partners and allies who share core values such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and also follow the principles of free market economics. Furthermore, our countries agree on a vision for creating lasting peace, stability and social justice in the wide geography of which Turkey is an integral part. As such, our multifaceted agenda as well as our common outlook on issues enables advanced cooperation and coordination between our Governments.

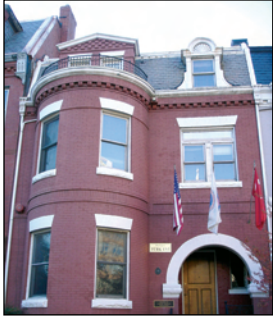
However, as my predecessors have also stated, one of the most important channels of communication and cooperation between our two countries has always been the Turkish - American community in the United States. This community in general and the ATAA in particular provide the human link that is essential if relations between two states are to continue to be based on a sound basis and further flourish.

It is through civil society organizations like the ATAA that many Americans have their first encounter with Turks and Turkey, our culture and our heritage. Frequently, friendships and a deeper understanding of the other come about through such channels. Furthermore, I should stress that this human link is facilitated by the fact that, although Turkey and the United States are separated by thousands of miles, our people have many common attributes that immediately draw us closer.

Having previously served in Washington at an earlier phase in my career, I remember the first years of the ATAA and am today delighted to see that it spans across the four corners of this vast country and gathers over 55 local organizations and associations under its framework. Certainly the ATAA has grown in size and matured in age. It is my belief that this significant stature needs to be paralleled by even more community activity and programs geared at raising the awareness in the United States of Turkish-American issues.

In closing, I would like to make use of this opportunity to extend a warm thank you to all the officials and members of the ATAA and its component organizations. We are aware that the invaluable volunteer work you do is demanding. But it is your dedication that keeps these organizations functional. By the same token, these efforts go a long way in bolstering Turkish-American relations in all its facets.

I once again congratulate the ATAA on the occasion of its 27th Annual Convention and wish its new President the best of success.



The Assembly has grown into an organization that represents 62 Turkish American organizations in the United States, Canada and Turkey.

Assembly of Turkish American Associations

ATAA was co-founded by the American Turkish Association of Washington and the Maryland American Turkish Association in an effort to create a national organization representing the Turkish American community. The first meeting of the ATAA General Assembly was held in May of 1980 in Washington. Delegates from 26 organizations participated and created a coordination committee to write the constitution and bylaws. The bylaws of ATAA were ratified on November 16, 1980 and the first board of ATAA was elected.

From this nucleus, the Assembly has grown into an organization that represents 60 Turkish American organizations in the United States, Canada and Turkey. Today, the Assembly is an influential and fast growing civic organization that pursues the interests of Turkish Americans and friends of Turkey in Washington and beyond, as well as contributes to the strengthening of relations between the United States and Turkey.

A growing base of individual ATAA members support the work of the Assembly through dues and donations. Financial assistance to the operations of ATAA is also granted from the ATAA Endowment Fund, established to secure the long-term growth of the organization.

To fulfill its mission and objectives, ATAA undertakes a number of activities, such as educational seminars for Turkish American communities on grassroots advocacy and civic leadership; conferences on contemporary political, social and economic issues related to Turkey and US Turkish relations; and cultural events to promote Turkey's rich traditions, art and heritage. Working as an information clearinghouse, ATAA regularly publishes reference material on issues that concern the Turkish American community. The Assembly is also the publisher of a quarterly magazine, *The Turkish American*. ATAA hosts one of the most dynamic websites on Turkey and maintains an extensive e-mail communication network. For more information on the daily work of ATAA, visit www.ataa.org.

ATAA is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit organization. Dues and donations are tax-deductible.



NURTEN URAL
President

Nurten Ural will be the President of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations from November 12th, 2006 until 2008. Ms. Ural is also the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Turkey, Detroit, Michigan. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Environment and Design and a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Interior Design and Human Shelter for the Special Needy-both from Michigan State University. Ural is the owner of Ural Interiors, Inc., an interior design firm in Farmington Hills, MI. She is also the owner of Ural Properties. She has received many awards for her business accomplishments and community service work including the Athena Award, Business Accomplishment Award, and the Republican of the Year Award. Ural now serves on the Board of Directors for the Detroit Institute of Arts, and served on the Board of Directors of two Chambers of Commerce, serving as Secretary, Vice Chair and Chair on one of them. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Women Business Owners, Professional Women's Round Table, Historic Homes, the Republican Club, and on the Board of the Farmington Area Homeowners Association. Ural served as the Treasurer, President, and Trustee of the Turkish American Cultural Association of Michigan, as well as ATAA President-Elect and as Vice-President of the Mid-central Region.



GÜNAY EVINCH
President-Elect

Evinch((Övünç) is second generation Turkish American, born in Chicago in 1963, raised San Francisco, living and working in Washington, DC where ATAA is headquartered. From 2004 to 2006 he served as the Capital Region Vice-President of ATAA. Special projects and committees he took part during his term in the Assembly include the Renewal Program, Public Outreach Program, and Anti-Defamation Committee. He was the Secretary General of ATAA between 1998 and 2000. From 1992 to 1998, Evinch contributed to ATAA Turkish Times with his writings on the sections of "Eurasia News", "Sports News", and "Star Turk". He received his Juris Doctor Degree from Washington & Lee University, VA (1991);



B.A. Economics and B.A. in Political Science-Public Service from University of California, Davis (1986). He is a recipient of UC Regents Outstanding Senior Award (1986); European Union Legal Studies Program, University of Madrid (1989). Principal of the Saltzman & Evinch, PC, Evinch's field of expertise include corporate law, commercial transactions, international finance, franchises, treaties, anti-terror, litigation (www.TurkLaw.Net). U.S. Fulbright Scholar and Japan Sasakawa Scholar on the Armenian allegation of genocide, Evinch did research while in Ankara University from 1991 to 1993. He is also a researcher, on issues related to Aegean Turkey (www.TurkishLawProject.org), and on issues related to Armenian terrorism (www.EthnicTerror.org). His writings were published in Wall Street Journal (Iraq), New York Times (Bosnia), Washington Post (PKK), International Herald Tribune (Turkish Jews), Atlantic Monthly (Turkish German athletes), Christian Science Monitor (twice - Wartime Information Security, Turkish workers in Germany), Barrister (PKK), Turkish Policy Quarterly (Armenian Cause), Ankara University Journal of Human Rights (Turkish Human Rights System), The Turkish American (twice - "The Armenian Cause Today", "Iraq Report - Eyewitness"). Evinch has given speeches at Turkish, American, and European universities on topics of Turkish American Integration and PKK, Turkey and Iraq, Northern Cyprus, Armenian Cause, Turkish Code Law, and more. He served as the president of the Washington and Lee University School of Law and the American International Law Society, Vice President of the College of San Mateo, Counselor of the UC Davis International Relations Students, UC Davis Upper Division Students, and American Turkish Veterans Association (ATVA). Evinch is also the Co-Founder of the Turkish American soccer club (www.AnatoliaFC.com), and Children's Soccer Coach in Lexington, Virginia.

OYA BAIN
Secretary General

Oya Bain is a graduate of American College for Girls - currently Robert College- of Istanbul. She came to the United States as a Fulbright scholar to do post graduate work in Biochemistry. In her professional career she has worked as a clinical chemist and laboratory director in the Clinical Pathology laboratories of several medical centers in Canada and U.S. In 1999 she retired from her position as the Director of Department of Laboratory Medicine at Georgetown University Hospital. Oya Bain has been involved in the Turkish American





community since 1970. As the board member of American Turkish Association of Washington DC (ATA-DC), she held positions, at various times, as the chair of ATA-DC Membership, Lecture and Turkish Radio committees and ATA News editor. She was the Capitol Region Vice President and Secretary of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations in the 1990s and chaired the 1992 ATAA Turkish Heritage Month activities. She served on the boards of Ataturk Society of America and Maryland American Turkish Association. Currently she is on the boards of ATA-DC and Washington Turkish Women's Association. She is also a member of The Hospitality and Information Service (THIS) in Washington DC, a service organization for the diplomatic community. She received numerous awards from ATA-DC, American Turkish Council and ATAA. In November 2005, she received the ATAA Turkish American of the Year award. Oya Bain lives in Bethesda, MD with her husband Ralph Bain, a chemist and educator, retired from the National Institutes of Health. They have one daughter, Tuvana, a physician in New York. Oya Bain strongly believes that the Turkish Americans need to be better informed and be active in the American political and civic organizations. She promotes programs and projects to educate and empower the Turkish American community in the political areas and grassroots activities.

TIMUR EDIB

Treasurer

Timur Edib is a third generation Turkish-American, born and raised in New York. Edib has been active in the Turkish-American community since 1989. He served as President of TAA-Arizona, as Co-Founder and Chair of TAA-Central Pennsylvania, on the Executive Board of TAFSUS, on the Executive Board of ATA-DC, and he currently serves on the Executive Board of MATA. He was also a founding member of the DC Chapter of the Turkish American Business Forum. Edib is a Maryland attorney serving the metro Washington, DC area with a solo practice in business and immigration law. Timur also has a Masters in Public Administration, where he concentrated in Public Policy, and has over five years of experience as a legislative analyst for the Pennsylvania General Assembly's Budget and Finance Committee. Edib and his wife, Melek reside in Rockville, Maryland and have two children. He is the current president of the Ataturk Society of America (ASA).



VURAL CENGİZ

Past-President

Vural Cengiz has been the president of ATAA since December, 2004. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics and Finance from Ankara University's School of Political Sciences (SBF), a Master of Arts degree in Economics and a MBA from State University of West Georgia. He was a member of the teaching staff of Ankara University and Cukurova University from 1980 to 1986. He has been in the US since 1986 and served Turkish-American community in several organizations. He helped 130 Bosnian families to settle in Atlanta area working together with World Relief and International Resque Committee. He received volunteer of year awards from IRC and Save the Children. Mr. Cengiz was the president of Georgia Turkish American Cultural Association between 1994 and 1996. He received High Service Award of TACA in 1998, In national level, Mr. Cengiz has been serving as a volunteer in ATAA since 1996. He was a VP for Southeastern region, Treasurer, President-Elect and President. He received Meritorius Service Award of ATAA in 1996, and Distinguished Service Award of ATAA in 1998. Mr. Cengiz is currently residing in Florida and has a business for Real Estate and Securities Investments. He is married to Sabina Cengiz.



ECE ALTAY-ORHUN

V.P. Capital Region

Ece Altay-Orhun was born in Istanbul, Turkey. She earned her B.A. degree in Political Science and International Relations from Bogazici University in Istanbul and M.B.A. degree from Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Ece has a background in Management Consulting giving strategic advice to Fortune 500 clients across multiple functions and industries. She worked as a Consultant for Kaiser Associates and Siemens, and currently holds the Director, Marketing and Business Development position at Gate Gourmet International. She is fluent in Turkish, English and German, and has a basic knowledge of French and Italian. Ece has been an active member of ATAA and involved with its programs and initiatives since 1998.





ALP BERKER

V.P. Midcentral Region

Alp Berker was born in Hull, Canada in 1966. After living in Canada, the U.S.A and Turkey his family settled in Indiana in 1983. He attended Purdue University and received a degree in Computer Technology in 1991 and a Masters in Sociology in 1998 from the University of Indianapolis. He currently works as an IT contractor for the US Federal Government in Indianapolis. He has served in ATA-IN (American Turkish Association of Indiana) in various capacities, Treasurer in 2003 and has been the Vice-President since 2004. He is married with three children.

HATICE DINÇ

V.P. Midwestern Region

Hatice Dinç was born in Turkey and moved to the United States along with her parents and siblings in 1981. She started her college education working toward a B.S. in Computer Science and Math at Southwest Missouri State University where she also pursued a minor degree in French Language and Literature. Simultaneously, she worked for a non-profit consultant firm as a Director of Research of Grants and Foundations, hence acquiring an immense appreciation for the positive influence of community service. Upon re-locating to Chicago, she began her involvement in promoting the Turkish heritage and culture through organizing and participating on various events through various local Turkish American organizations in the area. She completed a Philosophy of Communications degree at Northwestern University in 1999. She is currently a Human Resources Manager, specializing in the field of employment law consulting working for Sprint Nextel. While at Sprint, she has been heavily involved with the Community Relations Team, a corporate-wide community service effort. She has also worked as a volunteer for several not-for-profit organizations such as Business Volunteers for the Arts (Chicago), Wilson's Creek Battlefield Foundation (Springfield), Good Samaritan Boys Town (Springfield), Dickerson Park Zoo (Springfield), Juanita K. Hammons Performing Arts Center (Springfield). Hatice brings a wealth of knowledge in managing non-profit institutes and organizing fundraising campaigns and special events. She is fully committed to the Turkish Community in the Midwest region and will demonstrate this commitment through her continued work as the President of Turkish American Cultural Alliance-Chicago and the ATAA Regional Vice-President.

KIVANÇ ÖNCÜ

V.P. New York Region

Kivanç Öncü was born in Izmir in 1978, and graduated from Istanbul Technical University's Civil Engineering Department. During his studies, Öncü worked as an engineering intern in Amtrak headquarters in Philadelphia. After being involved in the process of ACELA, high-speed rail system for Amtrak, Öncü started his MBA at the State University of West Georgia. He spent two years in Atlanta, GA where he got involved with Turkish community through ATAA. In 2002, he moved to New York as a Structural/Tunnel Engineer for Parsons Brinckerhoff to work on various tunnel and bridge projects in New York City. Öncü is an active member of ASCE, TMMOB, ITSS, Engineers Without Borders. He is a board member in Istanbul Technical University Alumni Association and the Vice President for New York Region in ATAA.

FERHAN GÖMÜLÜ

V.P. Northeastern Region

Ferhan Gömülü was born in Istanbul. She holds a B.S. degree in Public Administration and Political Science from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara; M.A. in Economics, Northeastern University, Boston. She started her professional career as a Career Diplomat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey. She worked in IBM Turkey for seven years as the Special Bids Representative. Currently, she works in the Information Services department at Northeastern University and also works on her Ph.D. dissertation on Internet Law and Public Policy in the same university. She came to the U.S. in 1991 and has been actively involved in the issues of the Turkish American community ever since. She has served as the Executive Board member and Secretary General of the Turkish American Cultural Society of New England since 1996. She is a public advocate of the Turkish community in the area and has led and took part in organizing numerous projects and events to promote Turkish and Turkish culture, including the Boston Turkish Arts and Culture Festival and the Boston Turkish Film Festival. She is among the recipients of the "Women of Distinction Award" by the Daughters of Atatürk (2001). Currently the ATAA Vice President for Northeastern Region, she has been actively involved in ATAA and its projects in the region since 1999.





ATILLA SORAN
V.P. Northcentral Region

Dr. Atilla Soran is a Professor of Surgery. A recipient of more than ten scientific awards, Dr. Soran had his work published in over a hundred scientific publications. After working as a faculty in the Medicine University of Ankara, Turkey in 1989, he continued his works at the Numune Teaching and Research Hospital between the years 1990 and 1994. Prior to receiving The Best Physician and Academician of Turkey Award in 2004, he was a fellow in the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center between the years 1997 and 1999. He is a member of the Advisory Board of Evaluation in Turkish Ministry of Health; Assembly of Chamber of Medicine of Ankara, Turkey; Advisory Board Development & International Affairs Ankara NTR Hospital; and more. He has been serving for the Pittsburgh Turkish American Association as the president since 2002.



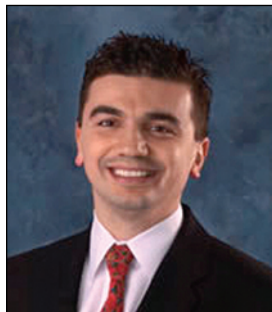
responsibilities, which take a significant amount of his time, Dr. Kaya maintains a full hematology/oncology practice in Spokane. He is a partner physician at Cancer Care Northwest (www.cancercarenorthwest.com/kaya.html), director of the Inland Northwest Autologous Stem Cell Transplantation Program, and a clinical faculty at the University of Washington Medical School. He serves on several national medical committees including US Oncology Transplant Committee and GU Committee. As a hobby, Kaya is interested in martial arts. He is a World Taekwondo Association certified 1st Dan Black Belt with twenty three years of experience.

SINAN ALTUN
V.P. Southeastern Region

Sinan Altun was born in 1972 in Ankara. He is a graduate of TED Ankara College (1990) and Boğaziçi University Economics Department, Istanbul (1995). In 1995, Altun joined Marsa Kraft Jacobs Suchard as a Marketing Specialist. In 1997, he joined The Coca-Cola Company as a Brand Manager for Caucasus and Central Asian Republics Region and worked in Turkey, Belgium, Caucasus, Central Asian Republics, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. In '05, he was selected as one of the top 5 marketing talents out of 600 candidates across the globe to attend the Coca-Cola Company's Global Benchstrength Program based in Atlanta headquarters and became the Global Marketing Manager in the company's Non-Carbonated and New Beverages Department. He is a board member of Atlanta American and Turkish Friendship Council. Altun is married to Serfinaz and has a daughter, Alara.

HAKAN KAYA
V.P. Northwestern Region

Hakan Kaya attended high school at Ankara Atatürk Anadolu Lisesi and graduated from Ankara Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi (Ankara University, Medical School) in Turkey. He has lived in the United States since 1993. Following seven years of medical training in different states, he moved to Inland Northwest in 2001. Since then, he has been an active Turkish American community member by promoting Turkish culture in multiple community activities. His mission has been to reach out and support Turks and Turkish Americans who live in isolated communities of Inland Northwest. As a part of this mission, he founded Turkish American Cultural Association of Inland Northwest (TACA-IN), which is the first and the only Turkish American association in Inland Northwest. He also served as the Eastern Washington Representative of TACA-Washington. TACA-Montana, the first Turkish American association in Montana, was founded with his encouragement. In November 2005, ATAA members elected Hakan Kaya to the position of ATAA VP for Northwestern Region, covering Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, Wyoming. He continues to be one of the most active members of the ATAA National Board of Directors. In addition to community



DR. COSKUN BAYRAK
V.P. South/S.western Region

Dr. Coşkun Bayrak was born in 1959 in Gümüşhane. After completing his elementary education there, his post elementary education was completed in Trabzon; Cumhuriyet Orta Okulu and Trabzon Lisesi, respectively. In order to complete his higher education, he moved to Germany in 1976. After studying for five years in Germany, he moved to Pennsylvania in 1981 to continue his education. After receiving a BS degree from Slippery Rock University, a MS from Texas Tech University, and a Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University in Computer Science, he began his teaching career at the University of Texas at Dallas, Benedict College in South Carolina, Troy State University in Alabama, and finally at the University of





Arkansas. Currently, he is a tenured professor in the department of Computer Science. His primary research is in the intersection of software engineering component based development, data mining, and Biomedical Engineering. However, he also has interest in modeling and simulation, and cellular automata. Dr. Bayrak has published over sixty research articles in scientific conferences and journals, one book chapter, given tutorials at major conferences, and served on program committees for numerous international conferences and symposiums. Dr. Bayrak has a long lasting involvement in civic and cultural activities. While a graduate student at Texas Tech, he demonstrated a commendable leadership in forming the Turkish Student Association (TSA) and proudly served as its first president. While working on his Ph.D. at Southern Methodist University, he demonstrated the same leadership in establishing the Turkish Student Association, for which he again served as the first president. His support in promoting the Turkish culture and Turkey continued while he was living in South Carolina and Alabama. In the fall of 2000, he moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, where he formed the "Friends of Turkey in Arkansas (FoTiA)" organization to promote Turkish culture and strengthen the bonds among the people having the appreciation of Turkish culture and he served as its first president. In addition to his active duties in FoTiA, he also volunteered to serve as the Vice President of ATAA for the Southwestern Region. Dr. Bayrak is married to İşıl and has two daughters, Sinehan and Ecehan.

ERTUĞRUL TURHAL
V.P. Western Region

Ertuğrul Turhal was born in Eskisehir, Turkey in 1958. He graduated from Air Force Academy as an Aeronautical Engineer. He completed his MS degree in Aeronautical Engineering at AF Institute of Technology in Dayton, OH. He also has Business Administration Degree from the Anatolian University. For more than twenty years, he worked as an engineer in various aviation maintenance and aircraft production facilities in the U.S. and Turkey. He retired from TAAF as a Colonel. Since 2001, he has been working as the vice president in an international aviation spare and repair services company. Ertuğrul Turhal served as VP in Turkish Scouting association while in Turkey, and worked as a volunteer in Ohio and Canada Turkish American communities. He is married with Birsen and has a son named "Cem", who is attending University of California, Davis, and a daughter, Ece, who is in Amador Valley High School, CA. He enjoys traveling, biking, hiking, and playing tennis.





DR. TAMER AÇIKALIN, *Chairman*

Dr. Açikalın was born in Antalya, Turkey and is a graduate of Ankara University Medical School. He came to the United States in 1973. In 1979, he established the Turkish-American Association of Louisiana (TAAL), and served as the founding president from 1979 to 1980, and again from 1982 to 1983. He was also director of TAAL from 1980 to 1985. Tamer served as the Regional Vice President of ATAA for the South/Southwest region between 1986 and 1994. In this capacity, he traveled throughout the region in support of the activities of the local organizations. He also organized the first Southern Regional Conference of ATAA with the participation of Turkish-American associations in the region. Tamer played a vital role in the creation of The Turkish Times, and organized the first ATAA Media Watch and Response Committee, serving as its first chairman. Tamer was the president of the ATAA Board of Directors from 1996 to 1998.

GÜNEY ADAK

Günay Adak graduated from Istanbul University's College of Economics. Before coming to the United States in 1980, he was involved in the family business of general contracting. After his move, Adak held managerial positions in the construction industry where he gained knowledge and experience in wooden building structures of rafters and trusses. He later went on to partner a business of wooden roof and floor truss systems, where he started designing and manufacturing these systems. The company has not only evolved into a major operation in South Florida, serving from three plant locations, but has also branched out into international trade. Adak has served as a Director on the Board of ATAA, as well as the President of the Florida Turkish American Association. He is married and has two children.

CEMAL ALTAYLI

Cemal Altaylı graduated from Hacettepe University's Geology Engineering department in 1984, after which he started his career within the Turkish government. After working for the government for one and a half years, he entered the private sector and worked for Metro Turizm as the vice president of the accounting department, as well as for Koçar Maden Ocağı and Erbil, Inc. in Germany. Altaylı came to the US in 1982 and earned a degree in business administration from Georgetown University. He is married to Hülya and is very involved with the Turkish-American community.

SUZAN DEMIRCAN

Suzan Demircan was born in 1946 in Bulgaria and came to the United States as a political refugee in 1964. After settling in New Jersey, she studied Management and Real Estate at the Bergen Community College in Paramus. Suzan is the president of the Solidarity of the Balkan Turks of America in New Jersey. She and her husband, Nureddin, are the owners of the Demircan, a construction and real estate company. They live in New Jersey with their four children.

ŞADUMAN GÜRBÜZ

Şaduman Gürbüz was born in Turkey. She was the president of TURANT from 1998 to 1999. She initiated the Turkish festivals in Texas. She raised \$60,000 for Dallas Turkish Festival, actively campaigned and volunteered to raise \$120,000 funds for the Turkish earthquake victims, and fought against anti-Turkish lobbying. She organized music festivals in 11 cities in the U.S. and Canada in 1998. She is a very active fundraiser for members of Congress locally and nationally. She is the leader of the Turkish-American friendship group. She also has served ATAA as the Vice-President and member of Board of Trustees from 1998 to 2006. She has been awarded with Meritorious Service Award by the ATAA in 1999 and 2000. She also received ATAA Benefactor Award in 2005. In year 2001, she has received Women of Spirit Award from Jewish Congress, and Highest Service Medal from Turkish Republic of Foreign Ministry. Dallas Women's Magazine published a full-page article about her in "Angels of Dallas" She is the president of Edis Textile at the Fashion Center Dallas. Mrs. Gürbüz is married and has two daughters.

DR. MUSTAFA HATIPOĞLU

Dr. Mustafa Hatipoğlu was born in İzmir and graduated from Ege University's Medical school. After immigrating to the US, Hatipoğlu specialized in internal medicine nephrology, and established metropolitan dialysis centers in New Orleans and South Louisiana. Mustafa and his wife Lale were charter members of the Turkish American Association of Louisiana (TAAL), where Mustafa served as the president and has been supporting its activities since its establishment. Mustafa's charitable and community activities expand to both the US and Turkey as a Rotarian for many years, earning numerous awards from the Rotary Club. Mustafa excels in investments, as well as in medicine in which he is considered to be wise and a leader among his colleagues.



BONNIE JOY KASLAN

The Honorable Bonnie Joy Kaslan, the first non-Turkish woman worldwide to represent the Republic of Turkey as Honorary Consul General, is Executive Vice President of Kaslan Associates, Inc., a Sonoma based Structural and Geotechnical Engineering firm. A former graduate student at the Sorbonne, Paris, educator and department chairperson, Mrs. Kaslan has served the Turkish American Community since 1978 and was president of the Turkish American Association from 1983-1985. She served as the first woman on the Board of Directors of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations as Western region Vice President from 1982-1986. She was a national chairman of the Assembly's Curriculum Committee History and Social Science. She has represented Turkish American interests at high-level State Department meetings, addressed human relation commissions nationwide, worked on a one-to-one basis with innumerable congressional representatives and their staffs as well as delivered expert testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relation Relations. She was developing and implementing educational and public relations programs as deemed necessary. She has appeared on radio and television nationwide as an educator, advocate and facilitator for a better understanding of Turkey and her people.

DR. ORHAN KAYMAKÇALAN

Dr. Orhan Kaymakçalan was born in 1948 and graduated from Hacettepe University's Medical School in 1972. After completing his surgical residency in Basic Science in Hacettepe Hospital in 1973, he performed his surgical residency at Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center in Chicago between 1974 and 1978. Kaymakçalan received his fellowship in Hand Surgery from the University of Louisville in 1973, and is currently the Chief of the Section of Hand and Reconstructive Microsurgery at Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center. He is a member of the American and Chicago Society for Surgery of the Hand, and has presented multiple papers in National and International Hand Society Meetings and Lectures. Kaymakçalan regularly performs free surgeries for poor and needy patients, particularly for Turkish patients and patients who have been injured in conflicts in Bosnia and Russia. He is the Past President of ATAA, and is married to Nezahat with two children, Sevil and Ömer.

ERCÜMENT KILIÇ

Mr. Kılıç was born in 1958 in Ankara. He is a graduate of UT, Austin with a BS degree in Economics and International Politics. He has served numerous times as President

of TURANT and as Vice President of ATAA. Among his accomplishments is his involvement and arrangement of Congressman Jim Moody's trip as the first US Congressman in history to visit Azerbaijan. Due to his formal training in performing arts, he has been a cultural ambassador for Turkey since 1977. He has been invited by various organizations to do seminars and workshops on Turkish folklore in all 50 states in the US and in England, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, the Republic of China, Hong Kong, and Japan. He is currently involved in his own business, TCI Travel and TCI Construction.

TURAN TOMBUL

DR. COŞKUN TUNCA

Dr. Coşkun Tunca was born in 1943. He graduated with honors from Istanbul University's Cerrahpaşa Medical School in 1968. He completed his residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine between 1978 and 1980, and obtained his diploma from the American Board of Obstetrics & Gynecology in 1975. Coşkun has been with the Division of Gynecologic Oncology Department of the University of Illinois at Chicago since 1984. He is a member of the ATAA Board of Trustees, and married to Barbara Tunca with four children.



27TH ANNUAL ATAA CONVENTION
BUILDING BRIDGES TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS
NOVEMBER 9 - 11, 2006 • WASHINGTON, DC



Thursday, November 9, 2006

- 8:00 am-12:00 pm Tour of Washington DC with tour guide and bus
- 12:00 pm-1:00 pm Registration
- 1:00 pm-1:10 pm Welcoming Remarks by Vural Cengiz, *President, ATAA*
- 1:15 pm-2:30 pm **Panel Session 1: Turkic People in a Changing World Order**
Introducer: David Cuthell, Director of Institute of Turkish Studies, Georgetown University
- “The Turkic People and Their Neighbors: The Past, Present, and the Future of the Strategic Eurasian Corridor” by Timur Kocaoglu, *Director, Center for Strategic Research, Koc University, Turkey*
 - “Silk Road Strategy Act of 2006” (TBD)
- 2:30 pm-3:00 pm Break
- 3:00 pm-4:00 pm **Panel Session 2: ATAA, Turkic Groups and Strategic Allies in the US**
Moderator: Vural Cengiz, President, ATAA
 Tomris Azeri, *Azerbaijan Society of America*
 Alim Seytoff, *Uyghur American Association*
 Leyla Dursunova, *Nationalities Service Center (Ahiska Turks)*
- 4:10 pm-5:30 pm **Interactive Focus Groups**
Moderator: Nurten Ural, President-Elect, ATAA
All of the Audience will be involved.
- 6:15 pm-7:00 pm Cash Bar
- 7:00 pm-10:00pm **Dinner with Music and Key Note Speaker**
Key Note Speaker: Nazim Ibrahimov, Chairman, Republic of Azerbaijan, State Committee on Affairs with Azerbaijanis Living in Foreign Countries
Introduction of Ambassadors by ATAA Board of Directors
Location: Galaxy Ballroom, a beautiful room offering an impressive rooftop view of DC's famous monuments.



Friday, November 10, 2006

- 8:00 am-8:45 am Continental Breakfast and Registration
- 8:50 am-9:05 am Welcoming Remarks by Vural Cengiz, *President, ATAA*
- 9:00 am-10:15 am Remembering Atatürk (TBD)
Short documentary on Atatürk
- 10:20 am-11:40 am Panel Session 1: Issues Status Report
Moderator: Gunay Evinch, Saltzman & Evinch
- “Armenian-Turkic Conflict” by Ergun Kirlikovali
 - “Cyprus” by Ambassador Osman Ertug, *T.R.N.C. Representative*
 - “Iraq, TC, PKK, Turcoman” by Bertan A. Nogaylaroglu, *Defense and Air Attache of the Embassy of Turkey*
 - “European Union” (TBD)
- 11:45 am-12:45 pm Panel Session 2: Silk Road Transportation Energy Corridors
Moderator: John Elkind, EastLink Consulting LLC
- “Energy Corridors” by Zeyno Baran, *Hudson Institute*
 - “State Department View” by Matt Bryza, *State Department*
 - “Energy Corridors” by Ed Chow-*International Energy Consultant*
- 1:00 pm-2:30 pm Ambassadors Luncheon
Introduction: (TBD)
H.E. Nabi Sensoy, *Turkish Ambassador to the United States*
H.E. Ross Wilson, *U.S. Ambassador to Turkey*
Location: Galaxy Ballroom, a beautiful room offering an impressive rooftop view of DC’s famous monuments.
- 2:45 pm-3:55 pm Panel Session 3: Anti-Defamation Issues
Moderator: Barry Jacobs, American Jewish Committee
- “Tradition of Prejudice” by Justin McCarthy, *University of Louisville*
 - “Continuing Trends in Modern Society” (TBD)
 - “Anti-Defamation Issues the Turkish Americans Facing Today” by Gunay Evinch, *Saltzman & Evinch*
- 4:00 pm-5:30 pm Panel Session 4: Advocacy
Moderator: Lydia Borland, The Livingston Group
- “Educating Legislators” by Bob Livingston, *The Livingston Group*
 - “Educating the Media” (TBD)
 - “Experiences of the Other Grass Roots Organizations” by Supriya Christopher, *US India Political Action Committee*
 - “View From the Hill” (TBD)
 - “Experience of a Capital Hill Intern” by Necla Sarikaya
- 5:45 pm-6:15 pm Bus Leaving
- 6:00 pm-7:15 pm Gencay Kasapci Exhibit
- 7:30 pm-9:30 pm Ambassador’s Reception-*By invitation only*



Saturday, November 11, 2006

COMPONENT ASSOCIATION TRACK

- 8:00 am-8:55 am** Continental Breakfast and Registration
Location: Assembly Foyer
- 9:00 am-10:15 am** Panel Session 1: Empowering Turkish-American Non-Profits
Moderator: (TBD)
- “Forming a Non-Profit Organization” by David Saltzman, *Saltzman & Evinch*
 - “Standards for Excellence-Ethics and Accountability for Non-Profits” (TBD)
 - “Risk Management, Finance and Your Nonprofit Board: Who, What, When and How” by Melanie Herman, *Nonprofit Risk Management Center*
- 10:20 am-11:30 am** Panel Session 2: Empowering and Funding Turkish-American Non-Profits
Moderator: Elif Lee, Merrill Lynch
- “Fundraising for your Non-Profit Organization” (TBD)
 - “Grant Writing for your Non-Profit Organization” by Debra Gittens, *Cornelius Group, PLC*
 - “Banking on the Community” by PNC Bank
- 11:35 am-12:15pm** Introduction of Strategic Plan and Public Outreach Plan
Speakers: Nurten Ural President-Elect, ATAA, Wayne Vick, Facilitator and Mickey Pek, Facilitator
- 12:30 pm -1:45 pm** Luncheon with Key Note Speaker
Speaker: (TBD)
Location: Galaxy Ballroom, a beautiful room offering an impressive rooftop view of DC's famous monuments.
- 2:00 pm-3:15 pm** Panel Session 3: Turkish-American Relations
Moderator: (TBD)
- “Generating Momentum for a New Era in U.S.-Turkey Relations” by Steven A. Cook, *Council on Foreign Relations*
 - “US-Turkish Relations” by Soner Cagaptay-*Turkish Research Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*
 - “Importance of the Melungeon Community to Turkish-American Relations” by David Arnett, *former Consul General in Istanbul*
 - “Congress, Buried in Turkey’s Sand” by Stephen J. Solarz, *former Congressman*
- 3:20 pm-5:00 pm** Turkish Cultural Experience
Moderator: Oya Bain, Secretary, ATAA
- “Turkey’s Love Affair with Tea” (with service of Turkish teas and sweets) by Pelin Aylangan, *President, ATA-DC*
 - “Miniatures of Ottoman Empire” by Professor Nurhan Atasoy, *Emeritus of Art History, Istanbul University, Turkey*
- 5:00 pm-7:00 pm** Break
- 7:00 pm-8:00 pm** Cocktail Reception
Location: Assembly Foyer
- 8:00 pm-2:00 am** ATAA Annual Convention Gala and Republic Day Ball
Location: Commonwealth Ballroom



Saturday, November 11, 2006

TURKISH AND AMERICAN BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP TRACK

- 8:00 am-8:55 am **Continental Breakfast and Registration**
Location: Assembly Foyer
- 9:00 am-9:10 am **Welcoming Remarks (TBD)**
- 9:15 am-10:30 am **Panel Session 1: Business Opportunities in Turkey**
Moderator: Ferhan Gomulu, VP-ATAA
 - “Entrepreneurship in Turkey” by Pinar Ezacibasi, *Young Businessmen Association of Turkey*
 - “U.S.-Turkey Relations in Trade” by Leslie Schweitzer, *US Chamber of Commerce*
 - “Cross Cultures in the Business World” by Rhonda Cost, *International Development Resources, State Department*
- 10:35 am-12:15 pm **Panel Session 2: Business Development, Trade, Marketing and Finance and Current Efforts**
Moderator: Bonnie Kaslan, ATAA Board of Trustees
 - “Turkey-US Business Development, Trade and Marketing” by Ayse Oge, *Senior International Trade Consultant*
 - “Finance” by Pinar Ezacibasi, *GP Trust Financial, Turkey*
 - “Experiencing Doing Turkish Business in US and Doing Business in Turkey” by Bahtisen Tunca, *Best Food/Best Air*
 - “Experiencing Doing Business in Turkey” by Alev Gokce, *Coca-Cola*
- 12:30 pm-1:45 pm **Luncheon with Key Note Speaker**
Speaker: (TBD)
Location: Galaxy Ballroom, a beautiful room offering an impressive rooftop view of DC’s famous monuments.
- 2:00 pm-3:15 pm **Panel Session 3: Turkish-American Relations**
Moderator: (TBD)
 - “Generating Momentum for a New Era in U.S.-Turkey Relations” by Steven A. Cook, *Council on Foreign Relations*
 - “US-Turkish Relations” by Soner Cagaptay-*Turkish Research Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*
 - “Importance of the Melungeon Community to Turkish-American Relations” by David Arnett, *former Consul General in Istanbul*
 - “Congress, Buried in Turkey’s Sand” by Stephen J. Solarz, *former Congressman*
- 3:20 pm-5:00 pm **Turkish Cultural Experience**
Moderator: Oya Bain, Secretary, ATAA
 - “Turkey’s Love Affair with Tea” (*with service of Turkish teas and sweets*) by Pelin Aylangan, *President, ATA-DC*
 - “Miniatures of Ottoman Empire” by Prof. Nurhan Atasoy, *Emeritus of Art History, Istanbul University, Turkey*
- 5:00 pm-7:00 pm **Break**
- 7:00 pm-8:00 pm **Cocktail Reception**
Location: Assembly Foyer
- 8:00 pm-2:00 am **ATAA Annual Convention Gala and Republic Day Ball**
Location: Commonwealth Ballroom



Saturday, November 11, 2006

STUDENT TRACK

- 8:00 am-8:55 am Continental Breakfast and Registration
 Location: Assembly Foyer
- 9:00 am-9:10 am Welcoming Remarks (TBD)
- 9:15 am-10:30 am Panel Session 1: Employment Opportunities
 Moderator: (TBD)
- “Internship and employment at Congress” by Abdullah Akyuz, TUSIAD
 - “Internship and Job Opportunities in the World Bank and IMF” by Mehmet Can Atacik, World Bank, Cemile Sancak, IMF
- 10:30 am-12:15 pm Panel Session 2: Interactive Workshops
 Moderator: (TBD)
- “Targeting the Job You Want” by Virginia Diamond, Diamond Insight
 - “Turkey towards 2023: A Young Approach to the Future” (TBD)
- 12:30 pm-1:45 pm Luncheon with Key Note Speaker
 Speaker: (TBD)
 Location: Galaxy Ballroom, a beautiful room offering an impressive rooftop view of DC’s famous monuments.
- 2:00 pm-3:15 pm Panel Session 3: Turkish-American Relations
 Moderator: (TBD)
- “Generating Momentum for a New Era in U.S.-Turkey Relations” by Steven A. Cook, Council on Foreign Relations
 - “US-Turkish Relations” by Soner Cagaptay-Turkish Research Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy
 - “Importance of the Melungeon Community to Turkish-American Relations” by David Arnett, former Consul General in Istanbul
 - “Congress, Buried in Turkey’s Sand” by Stephen J. Solarz, former Congressman
- 3:20 pm-5:00 pm Turkish Cultural Experience
 Moderator: Oya Bain, Secretary, ATAA
- “Turkey’s Love Affair with Tea” (with service of Turkish teas and sweets) by Pelin Aylangan, President, ATA-DC
 - “Miniatures of Ottoman Empire” by Prof. Nurhan Atasoy, Emeritus of Art History, Istanbul University, Turkey
- 5:00 pm-7:00 pm Break
- 7:00 pm-8:00 pm Cocktail Reception
 Location: Assembly Foyer
- 8:00 pm-2:00 am ATAA Annual Convention Gala and Republic Day Ball
 Location: Commonwealth Ballroom

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Sunday, November 12, 2006

MEETINGS

- 9:00 am-11:00 am Consul General Meeting
- 11:00 am-1:00 pm ATAA Delegation Meeting



IRADA AKHOUNDOVA

Irada Akhoundova was born in Baku, Azerbaijan in 1956. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Baku State University. A naturalized American Irada Akhoundova is a resident of Houston for 10 years and from 2000 to 2005 worked as a teacher in the Katy Independent School District. Currently she is Senior Vice President of the Houston-Baku Sister City Association. The organizations main focus is to build cultural, educational and business relations and exchange programs between Houston and Baku, as well as to educate more people in this country about Azerbaijan and bring more information about the USA to Azerbaijan. Their goal is to unite all the Azerbaijani organizations in the US in order to better represent Azerbaijani culture and politics in the USA.

ABDULLAH AKYÜZ

Abdullah Akyüz is the US Representative of TUSIAD, The Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association. Before joining TUSIAD, he served at the Capital Markets Board of Turkey and Istanbul Stock Exchange. He received his BA degree from Ankara University's Faculty of Political Sciences, and MA degree in Economics from the University of California at Davis.

DR. DAVID L. ARNETT

David L. Arnett retired from the Department of State on November 30, 2005. He was a career member of the Senior Foreign Service with the rank of Minister Counselor. Born in Indiana in 1943, he lived in both Austria and Japan in the 1950's. He received his Ph.D. in English from Tulane University and entered the Foreign Service in 1974. His Foreign Service career included tours as a Junior Officer in Munich and Hamburg, Cultural Attaché in Copenhagen, Press Attaché in Ankara, Public Affairs Officer in Oslo, Deputy Minister Counselor for Public Affairs in Bonn, Counselor for Public Affairs in Ankara, Minister Counselor for Public Affairs in Bonn/Berlin, and Director of the Office of Press and Public Diplomacy (EUR/PPD) in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs at the Department of State. He served as the Consul General in Istanbul from July 2002 to August 2005. He is married to the former Vivi Smiler, who is originally from Norway. He speaks Danish, German, Norwegian, and Turkish. Mr. and Mrs. Arnett live in Sedona, Arizona.

CAN ATACIK

Can Atacik, a Turkish national, is private sector development consultant at the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia region. He holds a Master's in Governmental Administration and a Master's in International Relations from the University of Pennsylvania, and a B.A. in Liberal Arts from St. John's College. He is working on investment climate assessments to identify barriers

to increased private sector growth and productivity, corporate governance, governance of the financial sector. Prior to his current assignment, he was a program coordinator at the World Bank Institute (WBI) where he was responsible for capacity building projects to improve their competitiveness. Most recently, he was tasked with assisting the development of the Ethiopian and Tanzanian Business Coalitions Against AIDS which provide services to local firms for the design and implementation of HIV/AIDS workplace programs. Can Atacik frequently presents training programs to government and private sector representatives, and has co-launched a World Bank publication series titled Business and Development Discussion Papers.

PELIN AYLANGAN

Pelin Aylangan is a Turkish-American who has lived most of her life in the United States. She is the President of the American-Turkish Association of Washington DC, (ATA-DC), and a Senior Information Consultant for D&B Government Solutions in Arlington, VA. She holds a B.A. Degree in Economics and an MBA from the University of Rochester. She has been researching tea in Turkish culture since 2003 and is working on a book, "Tea Leaves, Tea Lives." She has presented her slide-illustrated talk as part of the Smithsonian Associates, the 2004 Annual Convention of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations, the Meridian International Center, the Culinary Historians of Washington and at the Ritz Carlton Washington DC. She was quoted in the December 2003 issue of National Geographic in an article on tea. Her articles were published in TEA: A MAGAZINE (Autumn 2004) and the Turkish culinary magazine Yemek ve Kultur (Spring 2006).

OYA BAIN

Oya Bain is a graduate of Robert College, who came to the United States as a Fulbright scholar to do post-graduate work in Biochemistry. In her professional career, she worked as a Clinical Chemist and Laboratory Director in the Clinical Pathology laboratories of several medical centers in Canada and the US. In 1998, she retired from her position as the Laboratory Director from Georgetown University Medical Center. Oya Bain has been involved in Turkish - American community issues since the 1970s, as the board member of the American-Turkish Association of Washington, DC (ATA-DC). She has also held positions as the chair of ATA-DC Membership, Lecture and Turkish Radio committees. She was also a board member and secretary of ATAA in the 1990s and chaired the 1992 ATAA Turkish Heritage month activities. She is the editor of ATA News, a monthly publication of ATA-DC and a frequent contributor to the Turkish American magazine. In addition to ATA-DC, she serves on the boards of the Atatürk Society of America (ASA), the Washington Turkish Women's Association



(WTWA), and the Maryland American-Turkish Association (MATA) and serves as a liaison among various local associations and ATAA.

ZEYNO BARAN

Zeyno Baran is the Director of the Center for Eurasian Policy and a Senior Fellow for the Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C. Office with Areas of Expertise in Geopolitics of energy, Turkey, Black Sea region, South Caucasus and Central. Baran received her M.A. in international economic development and her B.A. in political science from Stanford University. From 1999 until December 2002, Baran worked as Director of the Caucasus Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). From January 2003 until joining Hudson, Baran directed the International Security and Energy Programs at The Nixon Center, helping American policy-makers and opinion-leaders to understand the political, economic and social dynamics of the Eurasian region. Zeyno Baran joined the Hudson Institute in April 2006. For more than a decade, she has written extensively on Caspian oil and gas pipeline projects and frequently travels to the region, and provided a prominent contribution to the development of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and the South Caucasus gas pipeline projects. Her current work focuses on strategies to thwart the spread of radical Islamist ideology in Europe and in Eurasia and to promote democratic and energy reform processes across Eurasia.

LYDIA BORLAND

Ms Borland has earned a B.A. in International Affairs from George Washington University and a M.B.A. in Finance from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Ms. Borland has more than 17 years of public and private sector experience in international business and government relations. Her regional expertise is in the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, while her functional expertise is international trade development and lobbying. She is currently Washington Representative for the Turkish-U.S. Business Council, comprised of 100 Turkish companies. She is also a consultant to The Livingston Group, and provides strategic direction and support for a contract representing the Embassy of Turkey in Washington. Previously, as the Director of the Caspian Business Group, Ms. Borland worked with U.S. companies investing in Azerbaijan and the Caspian region, including Motorola and Texaco. Ms. Borland speaks Turkish, Italian, Spanish, Azerbaijani, and French. Her foreign country expertise includes Turkey, Azerbaijan, Europe and NATO issues.

MATT BRYZA

Matthew J. Bryza is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs. In this capacity,

his primary responsibility is policy oversight and management of relations with countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Southern Europe regions. In the past, Mr Bryza also served as special advisor to Amb. Richard Morningstar (1997-98); deputy to the special advisor to the President and Secretary of State on Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy (1998-2001); and Director for Europe and Eurasia at the National Security Council (2001-2005). Mr. Bryza graduated from Stanford University with a bachelor's degree in international relations. He received his Master's degree in the same field from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He is fluent in Russian and Polish, and also speaks German and Spanish.

SONER CAGAPTAY

Soner Cagaptay is a senior fellow and director of The Washington Institute's Turkish Research Program. A historian by training, Dr. Cagaptay wrote his doctoral dissertation at Yale University (2003) on Turkish nationalism. Dr. Cagaptay has taught courses at Yale and Princeton on the Middle East, Mediterranean, and Eastern Europe. His spring 2003 course on modern Turkish history was the first offered by Yale in three decades. Currently, he is an assistant professor in the BMW Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University. He has written extensively on U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkish domestic politics, and Turkish nationalism, publishing in scholarly journals such as Middle East Quarterly, Middle Eastern Studies, and Nations and Nationalism. Dr. Cagaptay frequently writes commentaries in major international print media, including the Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, Reuters, Guardian, Der Spiegel, and La Stampa. Skilled in German, French, Spanish, Bosnian, Ottoman Turkish, Hebrew, and Azerbaijani, Cagaptay regularly appears on Fox News, CNN, NPR, Voice of America, al-Jazeera, BBC, CNN-Turk, and al-Hurra. His current Research relates to the historical roots of Turkish secularism, the military as a safety valve for secular democracy, Turkey's recent experience with Islamist parties in government, and the political liberalization associated with Turkey's attempted EU accession.

VURAL CENGIZ

Vural Cengiz has been the president of ATAA since December, 2004. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics and Finance from Ankara University's School of Political Sciences (SBF), a Master of Arts degree in Economics and a MBA from State University of West Georgia. He was a member of the teaching staff of Ankara University and Cukurova University from 1980 to 1986. He has been in the US since 1986 and served the Turkish-American community in several organizations. He helped 130 Bosnian families to settle in the Atlanta



area, working together with World Relief and International Rescue Committee. He received the Volunteer of the Year awards from IRC and Save the Children. Mr. Cengiz was the president of the Georgia Turkish American Cultural Association between 1994 and 1996. He received the High Service Award of TACA in 1998. On a national level, Mr. Cengiz has been serving as a volunteer in ATAA since 1996. He was a VP for the Southeastern region, Treasurer, President-Elect and President. He received the Meritorious Service Award of ATAA in 1996, and a Distinguished Service Award of ATAA in 1998. Mr. Cengiz is currently residing in Florida and has a business for Real Estate and Securities Investments. He is married to Sabina Cengiz.

ED CHOW

Edward C. Chow is an international energy expert with 30 years of oil industry experience. He has worked in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, South America, Europe, and the former Soviet Union, specializing in policy and business strategy for governments and international corporations, investment in emerging economies, and international oil and gas. He spent 20 years working with the Chevron Corporation in the United States and overseas. Mr. Chow is a graduate of Ohio University with a Bachelor's degree in economics and a Master's in international affairs. He has published articles in leading academic and foreign policy journals and spoken at energy conferences in the United States, United Kingdom, Russia, Germany, Turkey, and China.

DR. DAVID C. CUTHELL JR.

Dr. David C. Cuthell Jr. is the Executive Director of the Institute of Turkish Studies at Georgetown University. He was born in Manila and raised in Istanbul and Washington D.C. He attended Phillips Academy and Yale, graduating in 1975. He received his MBA from Columbia University in 1979 and worked in the capital markets in New York and London with Citibank and Morgan Stanley as well as Mabon Securities as a Managing Director. After leaving Wall Street, David returned to Columbia and received his PhD in History in 2005. Dr. Cuthell headed the Turkish, Middle East and Central Asian Studies Program from 2000 through 2004 at Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey. He also is on the faculty of the Middle East Institute at Columbia University and is a Visiting Adjunct at Georgetown University. He has presented several conference papers on the late Ottoman History and is a member of the Advisory Board of the Middle East Institute, a Trustee of Robert College in Istanbul and a Trustee of Paul Smith College in the Adirondacks.

RHONDA COAST

Rhonda Coast is an international human resources deve-

lopment consultant, specializing in cross-cultural awareness training and coaching. Ms. Coast has written and published guidebooks for international business travelers and holds a B.A. and an M.A. in education and foreign languages from Geneva College and the University of Pittsburgh. Ms. Coast has designed and conducted business and cultural orientation sessions for both professional groups and individuals at major multinational corporations; advertising agencies; federal government departments; financial and educational institutions; international airport authorities, healthcare and non-profit organizations; professional associations, and high tech firms. In addition, she has been a featured radio talk show guest, discussing intercultural business issues, and has written published articles on cross-cultural issues.

SUMIT DASGUPTA

Sumit Dasgupta is the Legislative Aide for the US-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC). A native of Delaware, he has served both current sitting United States Senators from the state, Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE) and Senator Thomas R. Carper (D-DE). As a staffer for Senator Carper, Dasgupta handled constituent correspondence on a variety of issues including energy, transportation, and the environment. He later worked in state government affairs as well. In his current role at USINPAC, Dasgupta is leading the committee's legislative advocacy on a civilian nuclear accord with India, as well as other issue pertaining to US-India relations.

VIRGINIA DIAMOND

Virginia Diamond holds a BA in psychology from the University of Chicago and a certificate in organizational development and change management from Georgetown University. She is a certified coach and consultant specializing in helping rising mid-level managers and executives in professional services navigate complex career challenges to become more effective leaders. Her firm, Diamond Insight, offers a full spectrum of leadership development services – from group and one-on-one coaching to team development and classroom training. Prior to founding Diamond Insight, Virginia worked for more than ten years in professional services firms, including Accenture, American Management Systems (AMS), and Booz Allen Hamilton. She has been certified as a Professional Coach for the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and to teach a number of specific courses related to managing change and people.

LEYLA DURSUNOVA

Leyla Dursunova is Project Coordinator, Nationalities Service Center in Philadelphia, PA. She holds a Master's degree in Social Work from Columbia University in New York. Ms. Dursunova was born in Uzbekistan and star-



ted her career there in international development, working for Mercy Corps. She coordinated projects for improving school infrastructure and health training in rural schools in different regions in Uzbekistan and health training projects with Afghan women refugees. In 2002, she received a scholarship to the Columbia University School of Social Work from Open Society Institute/Soros Foundation to study Social Administration and International Social Welfare. After receiving her Master's degree from Columbia, Ms. Dursunova was involved in a practicum with Population Services International in Washington, DC. In late 2004, she left that agency to direct the Meskhetian Turks resettlement project involving thousands of Ahiska Turks (also called Meskhetian), who are settling in the United States.

PINAR ECZACIBASI

Pinar Eczacibası graduated from the University of New Hampshire College of Engineering and Physical Science. She completed her Master's degree at Bosphorous University on Finance. Her Master's thesis was on the "In depth analysis of the behavior of family-owned enterprises in the development of Turkish Capital Markets through public offerings". She started her career at the family-owned Eczacibası Group of Companies and later at Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company, İstanbul and has worked in Tekstil Bank as a Manager between 1988-1992 and assistant General Manager at ING Bank N.V., Barings İstanbul. Since 1998 she has been working as an independent financial consultant on wealth and asset management. She has been the representative of Schrodgers Group in Turkey since 2004. She is presently the President and the Chairman of the Board of "Young Professionals' & Entrepreneurs' Association' İstanbul (GYİAD). She is also a member of the Turkish Corporate Governance Association (TKYD) and a Founding member of 'The İstanbul Heritage Fund' aiming to preserve important historical monuments in Turkey.

JONATHAN ELKIND

Elkind received a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from the University of Maryland. He also has a Masters degree in Soviet history from Columbia University and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan. Jonathan Elkind is the founder and principal of EastLink Consulting, LLC, an independent consultancy focusing on energy, environment, and investment. He also currently serves as a non-resident senior fellow on energy issues at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC. From 1998 to 2001, Elkind served on the staff of the U.S. National Security Council as Director for Russian, Ukrainian, and Eurasian Affairs. Elkind frequently writes on energy and related issues and has recent articles in Energy and Security: Toward a New Foreign Policy Strategy, from Johns Hopkins University Press and the Woodrow Wilson International Center

for Scholars (September 2005) and Survival, the journal of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (Winter 2005-06). He speaks fluent Russian and travels extensively in Europe and Eurasia.

OSMAN ERTUĞ

Osman Ertuğ is the de facto Ambassador of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) to the United States of America. As the TRNC is not recognized as sovereign, his title is officially that of Representative of the Turkish Cypriot Community in Washington, DC. Mr. Ertuğ served as the Representative of the TRNC in New York (de facto Chief of Mission to the United Nations) before taking up his Washington, DC posting. He is regarded by the TRNC Foreign Ministry as a very capable diplomat.

GÜNAY EVINCH

Günay Evinch (Övünç) was born in Chicago in 1963 and raised in San Francisco. Günay received his Juris Doctor from Washington & Lee University (W&L) School of Law, Virginia (1991), completed an EU Legal Studies Program at the University of Madrid (1989), and double majored in Economics and Political Science-Public Service at the University of California, Davis (UCD) (1986). Günay has been an ATAA volunteer since 1989, served as ATAA Secretary 1998-2000, and is the current ATAA Vice President for the Capital Region. Between 1991-93, Günay researched the Ottoman Armenian tragedy at the Ankara University Human Rights Center, with grants from the U.S. Fulbright Commission and Sasakawa Peace Foundation. He interned with the San Francisco District Attorney, Sacramento Federal Public Defender, and San Mateo office of Congressman Tom Lantos. He practices international law at Saltzman & Evinch, www.Turklaw.Net, and founded www.TurkishLawProject.org and www.EthnicTerror.org.

FERHAN GOMULU

Ferhan Gomulu holds B.S. in Public Administration and Political Science from the Middle East Technical University, Ankara; M.A. in Economics, Northeastern University, Boston. She started her professional career as a Career Diplomat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey. She worked in IBM Turkey for seven years as the Special Bids Representative. Currently, she works in the Information Services department at Northeastern University and also works on her Ph.D. dissertation on Internet Law and Public Policy in the same university. She came to the U.S. in 1991 and has been actively involved in the issues of the Turkish-American community ever since. She has served as the E-Board member and Secretary General of the Turkish-American Cultural Society of New England since 1996. She is a public advocate of the Turkish community in the area and has led and taken part in organizing numerous projects and events



to promote Turkey and Turkish culture, including the Boston Turkish Arts and Culture Festival and the Boston Turkish Film Festival. She is among the recipients of the "Women of Distinction Award" by the Daughters of Atatürk (2001). Currently the ATAA Vice President for Northeastern Region, she has been actively involved in ATAA and its projects in the region since 1999.

MELANIE HERMAN

Melanie Herman serves as Executive Director of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, a Washington-based resource center serving the nonprofit community (www.nonprofitrisk.org). The Center provides training, technical assistance and informational resources on a wide range of topics, including risk management, liability, employment practices, accountability, insurance, and child abuse prevention. Melanie has authored and co-authored more than fifteen books covering a wide spectrum of risk management issues and she gives dozens of presentations and workshops each year on risk management, liability and insurance topics. Her most recent books are *Risk Management: A Comprehensive Guide* (published in late 2003 by Wiley & Sons), *Playing to Win: A Risk Management Guide for Nonprofit Sports and Recreation Programs* and *Enlightened Risk Taking: A Guide to Strategic Risk Management for Nonprofits*. Melanie earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Urban Affairs from the American University (Washington, DC) and a Juris Doctor from George Mason University (Arlington, VA). She is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

NAZIM IBRAHIMOV

Nazim Ibrahimov graduated from the Azerbaijan Polytechnical Institute with a mechanical engineering degree in 1985. In 1985-1986 he worked in Nakhchivan Electro-technical factory as a field master. In 1986-1987 he worked as a Secretary of Komsomol Committee of the same factory. In 1987-1991 he began to work as an instructor in the District Komsomol Committee of Nakhchivan and got the position of 1st Secretary. He was a businessman during 1991-97. He served as ambassador in Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. In 200 he was elected to the Milli Mejlis / Azeri National Assembly and was instrumental in the formation of the Azeri delegation at the European Parliament and was the substitute member of the Permanent Delegation of PACE. From August 2002 until the present he has worked as a Chairman of the State Committee of the Azerbaijan Republic on Affairs with Azerbaijanis Living in Foreign Countries.

BARRY JACOBS

Barry Jacobs is the American Jewish Committee's Director of Strategic Studies in the Office of Government and International Affairs and Associate Director of the AJC's Asia and Pacific Rim Institute. He has degrees from the University of Michigan, the National War College and The George Washington University, was a Salzburg Fellow and did graduate study as a Monroe Scholar at

the London School of Economics. He was a Senior Foreign Service Officer with the United States Information Agency from 1968-94, receiving its highest commendations on two occasions, and served in Greece, Venezuela, Israel, India and El Salvador. His domestic assignments included deputy director of the Washington Foreign Press Center, deputy program manager for USIA's WorldNet television service, and director of USIA's Latin American Wireless File. He has also been a consultant in international marketing and public affairs with several multinational corporations. He follows political affairs and offers counsel on Asia, particularly China, Japan and the two Koreas, the Subcontinent, Central Asia and the Caucasus and the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean (Greece, Turkey and Cyprus). He is also a specialist in multilateral issues, particularly international trade, energy and weapons systems with an emphasis on nuclear weapons and proliferation. His wife is the former U.S. ambassador to Papua New Guinea and current Deputy Assistant Secretary for Homeland Security. They have three children.

BONNIE JOY KASLAN

The Honorable Bonnie Joy Kaslan, the first non-Turkish woman worldwide to represent the Republic of Turkey as Honorary Consul General, is Executive Vice President of Kaslan Associates, Inc., a Sonoma based Structural and Geotechnical Engineering firm. A former graduate student at the Sorbonne, Paris, educator and department chairperson, Mrs. Kaslan has served the Turkish American Community since 1978 and was president of the Turkish American Association from 1983-1985. She served as the first woman on the Board of Directors of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations as Western region Vice President from 1982-1986. She was a national chairman of the Assembly's Curriculum Committee History and Social Science. She has represented Turkish American interests at high-level State Department meetings, addressed human relation commissions nationwide, worked on a one-to-one basis with innumerable congressional representatives and their staffs as well as delivered expert testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relation Relations. She was developing and implementing educational and public relations programs as deemed necessary. She has appeared on radio and television nationwide as an educator, advocate and facilitator for a better understanding of Turkey and her people.

MICKEY KATZ-PEK

Mickey Katz-Pek, spent 17 years in academic administration at the University of Michigan in the Departments of Microbiology and Reproductive Endocrinology. Ms. Katz-Pek also served on the National Science Foundation's advisory panel for review of commercialization plans for the SBIR program and has been an SBIR/STTR reviewer at the National Institutes of Health. She currently is a member of the Board of Directors of Ann Arbor Commerce Bank and is also a Board Member on the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Long-term Development Finance



Authority. Previously, she served on the National Board of Directors of the American Diabetes Association and was president of its Michigan affiliate. She currently is a grant reviewer for Indiana's 21st Century Research and Technology Fund. Ms. Katz-Pek has been acknowledged as one of Michigan's top 10 business women from the National Association of Women Business Owners, Greater Detroit Chapter; and has twice been listed as one of Detroit's Most Influential Women (1997 and 2002).

ERGUN KIRLIKOVALI

Ergun Kirlikovali is the founder and president since 1985 of Integrated Polymer Industries, Inc. Born on October 31, 1952, in Izmir, Turkey, Mr. Kirlikovali received the B.A. degree in Chemistry from Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey (1974) and the M.S. in Polymer Science from the University of Manchester, England (1975). He conducted research in new polymers in Austria (1973), Holland (1974), and development work on new aerospace materials in the USA since 1978. He has been active in promoting a better understanding of Turkish culture in America and in strengthening Turkish-American friendship. He thinks Turkish history is little known, much distorted, and mostly misunderstood in America. He wrote some five thousand letters in the past 27 years, on subjects relating to Turkish culture, history, and heritage. He has appeared on radio and TV interviews and participated in panel discussions as the president of the American-Turkish Association of Southern California (1982), as Public Relations Chairman for FTAA in New York (1984-5) and as Western Regional Director for FTAA (1985-2006) and ATAA (2004). Being an avid performer of colorful Turkish folk dances during his college years, he still enjoys the folk music and dances of the world.

TIMUR KOCAOGLU

Timur Kocaoglu is the Director of the Center for Strategic Studies, Koç University, Istanbul. Professor Kocaoglu's expertise includes Turkic history and Turkic languages and culture. He received his Bachelor's of Art degree in Turkology from the University of Istanbul in 1971 and studied at Columbia University in New York, receiving his Master's (1976) and Ph.D. (1982) degrees in Central Asian studies. Timur Kocaoglu also worked at Radio Liberty for 18 years (Munich, 1977-1995) as both journalist and senior research analyst. He has published 120 articles and five books on language and reform movements. In addition, the following works are in preparation: Eurasian Phrase Book in 30 Languages (January 2007), Studies on the Golden Horde and Its Successors, co-edited by Uli Schamiloglu (April 2007), and The Turks and Their Neighbors: Past Present and Future (2008). In addition to modern Turkish and Uzbek, his native languages, Professor Kocaoglu is fluent in several Turkic languages (chiefly Uyghur, Kazak, Kirghiz and Tatar) and knows Persian, English, German, and Russian.

ELIF LEE

Elif Lee is a Financial Advisor and a Certified Financial Manager who works with families and non-profit organizations to help them manage their assets with a planning based approach. She was born and raised in Turkey, attended school in France and completed her education in International Finance and Economics, Magna Cum Laude, in the United States. Elif is involved in the community supporting women, minorities, and children through the Soroptimist International, Anchorage Literacy Project, Mercer Island Women's Club, Junior Achievement, Habitat for Humanity, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). She also appeared as a speaker for Microsoft Annual Women's Conference, Alaska Pacific University MBA program, University of Alaska Anchorage Small Business Administration Development Center on Financial Planning and Portfolio Management. The extensive training and resources that Merrill Lynch provides Elif, and her team's expertise and experience, aid her in clearly describing appropriate investment alternatives and helping her clients make informed decisions.

ROBERT L. LIVINGSTON

Robert L. Livingston was elected to the United States House of Representatives in a special election in 1977 to represent Louisiana's First Congressional District and was re-elected to eleven successive two-year terms. He served as a Member of the House Appropriations Committee through most of his time in Congress, and, for the maximum period of six years, in the House Select Committee on Intelligence. From 1995 through 1998, he served as the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. At the start of the 105th Congress in 1997, Mr. Livingston chaired the bi-partisan Ethics Reform Task Force. Following his departure from Congress in February 1999, Mr. Livingston established a successful lobbying firm, The Livingston Group in Washington, DC and in New Orleans, LA. One of the largest exclusively lobbying shop in the Washington area, The Livingston Group has worked with the Embassy of Turkey since 2000, providing government relations services. Mr. Livingston earned a Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctorate degrees from Tulane University, and is a graduate of the Loyola University Institute of Politics. In 1981, he received an Honorary Doctorate from Our Lady of Holy Cross College in New Orleans, LA, and in 1990, an Honorary Order of the Coif from the Tulane Law School. A Navy veteran, Mr. Livingston served on active duty with the United States Navy as an enlisted man from 1961-1963, and received an honorable discharge from the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1967.

JUSTIN MCCARTHY

Justin McCarthy received a Ph.D. in Near Eastern history from U.C.L.A. in 1978 and a Certificate in Demography from Princeton University in 1980. He is presently Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences at the University of Louisville, where he served as Chairman of the



Department of History from 1986 to 1992. He has been a Visiting Fellow at Princeton University, the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, and Boğaziçi University in Istanbul. From 1967 to 1969 he taught at the Middle East Technical University and Ankara University in Turkey. Professor McCarthy specializes in the social and demographic history of the Modern Middle East, particularly Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. His books include *Muslims and Minorities*, *Death and Exile*, *The Population of Palestine*, *The Ottoman Turks*, *The Ottoman Peoples and the End of Empire*, *Population History of the Middle East and the Balkans*, and *Who Are the Turks?* (with Carolyn McCarthy). His most recent book is *The Armenian Rebellion at Van* (with Esat Arslan, Cemalettin Taşkıran, and Ömer Turan). He has held a Senior Research Fellowship from the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities, a National Needs Postdoctoral Fellowship from the National Science Foundation, a Fulbright-Hays fellowship, an International Research and Studies Program grant from the U.S. Department of Education, and other grants and awards.

AYSE OGE

Ayse Oge is an internationally known business woman, instructor, seminar leader, author, public speaker and consultant. Ms. Oge has worked for CENTO (Central Treaty Organization), an economic and political international organization based in Ankara, Turkey. Ms. Oge taught Exporting at Long Beach City College and served on the Advisory Board, International Trade Program at Woodbury University in 2004. Ayse has been a guest speaker for various universities and associations on Global Business Skills, International Marketing and Global Branding. She serves on the Board of Valley International Trade Association and is a member of the Los Angeles World Affairs Council and is the 2003 Community Recognition Honoree of North Star Lions Club LA and Appreciation Award recipient of Saurashtra Patel Cultural USA. Ms. Oge is the author of the book entitled, "Go Global to Win, Small Business Guide in a Shrinking World". She spoke on International Trade at the 2005 Global Women Summit of Women "Leading the 21st Century Economy" at Mexico City

CHERIE L. RUSNAK

Cherie L. Rusnak is Senior Trade Policy Advisor, International Trade Administration (ITA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce and serves in the Office of European Country Affairs and is responsible for promoting improved trade and economic relations between the United States and Turkey, Slovenia and Macedonia. Ms. Rusnak manages the Special American Business Internship Training program (SABIT), which builds partnerships and provides technical assistance by training Eurasian business leaders in U.S. business practices. Prior to joining the Office of Europe in January 2004 as the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe,

Ms. Rusnak held positions in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Market Access and Compliance, the U.S. Export Assistance Center in Pittsburgh, the Russia/NIS Office of the U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service, as well as the Import Administration. Ms. Rusnak directed the business development activities in Latin America of a chemical manufacturer in Pittsburgh, PA from September 1999 to September 2001. Ms. Rusnak was a Wolcott Fellow at the George Washington University, where she earned a Master of Business Administration in International Business in 1991. Ms. Rusnak also earned a bachelor's degree in Marketing from Kent State University in 1986.

DAVID SALTZMAN

David Saltzman is a founding member of Saltzman & Evinch, PC, a law firm concentrating on both public and private international law, and manages the firm's litigation practice. He received his Juris Doctor from Washington & Lee University School of Law in 1991. David conducted his Bachelor's studies at the College of William & Mary in Virginia and the Université Paul Valéry in Montpellier, France. Saltzman has represented a variety of Turkish governmental interests before the courts of the United States and administrative bodies. He has also represented US businesses with interests in Turkey and Turkish businesses with interests in the US. David served the ATAA and several other Turkish American non-profit organizations on a pro bono basis. He has traveled extensively in Turkey and other European countries and has authored several academic papers and media articles concerning trade and non-trade issues that effect U.S.-Turkish relations. He lectured on international affairs issues on numerous occasions and at the Smithsonian Institution regarding the illicit trade in Turkish cultural property. He speaks French fluently and Turkish passably, and has a working knowledge of Spanish and Hebrew.

NECLA SARIKAYA

Necla Sarikaya is Chief Financial Officer for 320 Ranch in Montana, and also runs her own storage business. She is pursuing a Masters of Public Administration at Montana State University. A Board member of the Bozeman Rotary Club and a member of the Montana Center for International Visitors, Ms. Sarikaya is the founding President and current President of the Turkish American Cultural Association of Montana. Ms. Sarikaya was an intern in Congressman Robert Wexler's office in May, 2006.

LESLIE SCHWEITZER

Leslie M. Schweitzer is Senior Trade Advisor for the National Chamber Foundation of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, developing and directing a national grassroots initiative to raise the public awareness of international trade. Schweitzer attended the University of Kansas and University of Copenhagen and received her B.S. in International Relations from George Washington



University. She has over thirty years of experience in the international trade arena. In 1977 Schweitzer co-founded Noble Trading Company, which assisted U.S.-based companies such as Pepsi and General Motors with sales to China, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, South America and the Caribbean. She has been involved in international business ventures in the Soviet Union and Finland. Before joining the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, she founded and managed a full service offshore apparel manufacturing and marketing company in 1987 geared to acquiring advantageous foreign manufacturing sources for U.S. companies, owning factories in the Caribbean that produced labor-intensive apparel for U.S. and foreign retail stores, manufacturers and catalog companies. She is a frequent speaker on entrepreneurship in international trade and has been a member of various boards, and currently serves on the Advisory Board for International Programs at the University of Kansas.

H.E. NABI SENSOY

His Excellency Nabi Sensoy became Ambassador of Turkey to the United States on Jan. 10, 2006. Ambassador Sensoy previously served as Deputy Undersecretary of General Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2002-05), Ambassador to Russia (1998-2002), Deputy Undersecretary of Political Affairs for the European Union (1997-98), Director-General of the Department of Policy Planning at the Foreign Affairs Ministry (1995-97), and Ambassador to Spain (1990-95). He was also Chief of Staff to the president (1988-90), Consul General in London (1985-88), advisor to the prime minister (1983-85), as well as Counselor at the Turkish embassy in Washington, D.C. (1980-83) and in Cuba (1979-80). Before that, he served as Head of Section at the Department of Bilateral Political Affairs for Western Europe (1977-79), First Secretary at the Turkish Embassy in Venezuela (1975-77), Vice Consul at the Turkish Consulate General in New York (1972-75), and Third Secretary and Second Secretary at the Department of Research in the Foreign Affairs Ministry (1970-72). Ambassador Sensoy is a graduate of the Faculty of Political Sciences at the University of Ankara.

KAMILLA SHAKBAZOV

A native of Azerbaijan graduated from Baku State University with a MS in Chemistry. Since then, Ms. Shakbazov has worked in public education and private sector organizations. She moved to US in 1997. Since that time she successfully works in Information Technology sector. She has been active in the Azerbaijani -American community for quite some time, where she organized and participated in various events. Ms. Shakbazov was a representative in the UN for Azerbaijan Women Development Center (AWDC), the only NGO in Azerbaijan in Special Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC and

UNDPI. She is a coordinator in The Cultural Foundation of Azerbaijani and Caucasian Jewish Communities in the USA (AZEM). Ms. Shakbazov was one of the organizers of First International Jazz festival in New York devoted to the memory of Mr. Vagif Mustafazade, and many other events. Ms. Shakbazov is a member of the Azerbaijan Association of New York (ANA). She was a delegate of the II World Azerbaijani Congress in March 2005 in Baku.

CENK SIDAR

Cenk Sidar graduated from the departments of the Business Administration and International Relations of Istanbul Bilgi University in 2005, and is currently completing a Master's degree at Paul. H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of Johns Hopkins University. His areas of specialization are European Studies and Middle Eastern Studies. In 2005, he was the recipient of the Jean Monnet Scholarship, which is awarded jointly by the European Commission and Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He wrote many articles for Turkish national newspapers, as well as several academic research papers for international journals. Cenk Sidar strongly believes in the significant role of international cooperation and dialogue in creating peace. In his opinion, Turkey is the only country which can achieve this objective if it can resolve its internal problems in the next two decades. He is the founder of the Political Vision Movement in Turkey, one of the most important anti-war organizations in Turkey. Moreover, Cenk Sidar has founded the Model United Nations Turkey Platform by bringing many prestigious Model United Nations clubs together. These two organizations are devoted to promote peace through encouraging the integration and participation of Turkish youth in politics. Cenk is fluent in Turkish, English, and German and has studied Italian.

ATILLA SORAN

Dr. Atilla Soran is a Professor of Surgery. A recipient of more than 10 scientific awards, Dr. Soran has had his work published in over 100 scientific publications. After working as a faculty member in the Medicine University of Ankara, Turkey, in 1989, he continued his works at the Numune Teaching and Research Hospital between the years 1990 and 1994. Prior to receiving The Best Physician and Academician of Turkey Award in 2004, he was a fellow in the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center between the year 1997 and 1999. He is a member of the Advisory Board of Evaluation in the Turkish Ministry of Health; Assembly of Chamber of Medicine of Ankara, Turkey; Advisory Board Development & International Affairs Ankara NTR Hospital; and more. Since 2002 he has been serving as President of the Pittsburgh Turkish American Association.



NURTEN URAL

Nurten Ural will be the President of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations from November 12th, 2006 until 2008. Ms Ural is also the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Turkey, Detroit, Michigan. She has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Environment and Design and a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Interior Design and Human Shelter for the Special Nedy-both from Michigan State University. Nurten is the owner of Ural Interiors, Inc., an interior design firm in Farmington Hills, MI. She is also owner of Ural Properties. She has received many awards for her business accomplishments and community service work, including the Athena Award, Business Accomplishment Award, and Republican of the Year Award. Nurten now serves on the Board of Directors for the Detroit Institute of Arts, and served on the Board of Directors of two Chambers of Commerce, serving as Secretary, Vice Chair and Chair on one of them. She has also served on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Women Business Owners, Professional Women's Round Table, Historic Homes, the Republican Club, and on the Board of the Farmington Area Homeowners Association. Nurten served as Treasurer and as President and as Trustee of the Turkish American Cultural Association of Michigan, as well as ATAA President-Elect and as Vice-President of the Midcentral Region.

SHAUN WATERMAN

UPI Homeland and National Security Editor. Shaun Waterman writes about the Department of Homeland Security and other U.S. counter-terrorist agencies, and about the al-Qaida network and other Islamic terror groups. His stories appear two to three times a week in The Washington Times. Prior to joining UPI, Waterman worked as a senior producer for the British Broadcasting Corporation's flagship evening radio news program, The World Tonight. Waterman joined the BBC in 1992 as a news trainee, and worked in local TV and radio news for three years before joining TWT team. In 1999, he was appointed to run the BBC's American radio news desk in Washington, providing round-the-clock news from all over both American continents for the corporation's six radio networks. Before joining the BBC, Waterman worked as a freelance journalist and parliamentary aide, writing for numerous publications, including the investigative magazine Private Eye, and doing press and research work for a number of members of the British Parliament. Waterman, who is British, has a Master's degree in social science and history from King's College, Cambridge.

H. E. ROSS WILSON

H.E. Ross Wilson, arrived in Turkey to take up duties as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey on De-

ember 3, 2005. Born in 1955 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Ambassador Wilson received a Bachelors degree magna cum laude from the University of Minnesota in 1977 and Masters degrees from Columbia University (1979) and the U.S. National War College (1995). Before his assignment to Turkey, he served as U.S. Senior Negotiator for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and later as Executive Assistant and Chief of Staff for Deputy Secretary of State providing policy and staff support on the entire range of issues in U.S. foreign policy. A career officer in the U.S. Foreign Service with the personal rank of Minister-Counselor, Ambassador Wilson has worked for over 26 years at the Department of State and at American missions abroad as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan (2000-2003) and from 1997 to 2000, as Principal Deputy to the Ambassador-at-Large and Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. In Washington, Ambassador Wilson worked for Secretaries of State Baker, Eagleburger and Christopher in 1992-94 as Deputy Executive Secretary of the Department of State. He is the recipient of the President's Meritorious Service Award (2005), Azerbaijan's Order of Honor, and numerous State Department awards.

WAYNE VICK

Mr. Vick is the Chief Executive Officer of the Dynamic Leadership Consulting Group, Inc., an organization he formed to focus his work on the developing profession of group facilitation, consulting and coaching. He holds a Masters of Business Administration from Troy State University, a Bachelors Degree in Management (Magna Cum Laude) from Park College and an Associate of Science in Instructional Technologies from Regents University. He is an adjunct professor for the Organizational Sciences program of George Washington University teaching Team Coaching and Facilitation. After serving with 20 years of active duty service in a variety of technical, supervisory, training and managerial roles in 1994 Mr. Vick began assisting organizations in adapting culture and supporting systems while using the creativity and expertise of its workforce to create sustainable change. His primary professional focus has been on providing professional group process facilitation with the belief that creating and sustaining shared values is the only way to sustain an organization through an environment requiring continual change.



The strength of ATAA comes from individuals and organizations that embody the values, mission and goals of the Assembly. Each year during its annual convention, the Assembly honors such individuals and organizations that have been nominated by the Turkish American community and stand out in community service, their respective professions, and serve as role models for all of us. We are honored to announce the recipients of the 27th Annual ATAA Awards.

ATAA President's Special Award
GULER KOKNAR

A graduate of the German High School in Istanbul and the Istanbul University School of Law, Guler Koknar started her career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey in 1989. She worked at various assignments in Ankara and as Vice Consul of the Turkish Consulate General in Houston from 1991 to 1994. Mrs.Koknar became Executive Director of the ATAA at the end of 1994 and worked in this capacity until December 2002. In 1998, she was selected to serve as one of three representatives of the Turkish American community at the Advisory Council of the Turkish government on Turks living abroad. Mrs.Koknar became Executive Director of the Turkish Cultural Foundation in June 2004, a position she holds to date. Mrs.Koknar is married to Ali Murat Koknar and they have a daughter, Alara.

Turkish-American of the Year
DR. BRENT KENNEDY

Brent Kennedy graduated from Clinch Valley College (now the University of Virginia's College at Wise) and holds a doctorate from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. His resume includes academic positions at Tusculum College (Tennessee); Mercer University (Macon, Georgia); The University of Virginia's College at Wise; and Georgetown University. He most recently was President of the Wellmont Foundation of Wellmont Health Systems. He is the author of "The Melungeons: The Resurrection of a Proud People" and co-author with the late Joseph Scolnick of "From Anatolia to Appalachia: A Turkish-American Dialogue". He has visited Turkey many times in pursuit of his Melungeon heritage and research. He was instrumental in the development of a sister city relationship between his home town of Wise Virginia and Cesme, Turkey. He is the founding member of The Kennedy Brothers music group and has written numerous songs and screenplays. On December 17, 2005, Brent suffered a stroke and has been hospitalized for over 10 months. He returned to his home in Kingsport, Tennessee on Monday, October 30, 2006 where he continues his recovery.

Şükrü Elekdağ Award
RICHARD HAAS



Distinguished Service Award
MARCUS MANN

Marcus G. Mann works as a project manager for Ural Interiors, Inc., an interior design company in Farmington Hills, Michigan. He attended University of Michigan, Flint for Interior Design. He has his builders license in the State of Michigan. Marcus serves as an Area Director for Special Olympics. He teaches mentally handicapped children and adults snowboarding, skiing, golf and power lifting. He also has served on the Board of Directors for the Turkish American Cultural Association of Michigan and is very involved in volunteering his services to the Assembly of Turkish American Associations.

Meritorious Service Award
ORHAN GURBUZ

ATAA Outstanding Achievement in Arts Award
FAHIR ATAKOGLU

ATAA Component Association Award

TACAM - Turkish American Cultural Association of Michigan
ATA-DC - American Turkish Association of the United States
PTAA - Pittsburg Turkish American Association



Highlights of the Year 2006

ATAA Capitol Hill Lectures

The Assembly arranged two lectures on Capitol Hill this year. On Wednesday, January 18th, Professor Ilber Ortayli, the Director of the renowned Topkapi Palace Museum and lecturer at Bahcesehir and Galatasaray Universities, spoke about Turkey's transition from the Ottoman Empire to a modern state, covering its political, economic, and administrative transformation. On Thursday, March 23rd, Ambassadors Gunduz Aktan and Omer Lutem addressed and discussed the Armenian Question with a diverse audience consisting of legislative assistants, students, educators, ATAA Members, representatives of local think-tanks, and others.



ATAA Turk Evi Lecture Series

The "Turk Evi Lecture Series", initiated in mid-2005, continued throughout 2006. ATAA hosted a panel discussion at its headquarters on Wednesday, January 18th on the subject of "Turkey in the 21st Century." A delegation of scholars from Bahcesehir University (Prof. Dr. Hasan Koni, Prof. Dr. Ilber Ortayli, Prof. Dr. Nilufer Narli, and Prof. Dr. Suheyl Batum) discussed modern Turkey and the rapid changes that have occurred in the past few years in the political realm, the economic and business world, and the social sphere.



On April 19th, ATAA hosted a screening of the "Armenian Revolt", a documentary produced by Marty Callaghan of Third Coast Films, underwritten by the Consortium for Eurasia Humanitarian Studies.



On Friday, May 1st, Azerbaijan's Diaspora Minister, Nazim Ibrahimov, visited the Turk Evi and accompanied a large group of participants from town while speaking of his experiences as a Diaspora Minister.

Special Projects/Programs

Nevruz Celebration in Washington, DC

For the first time ever in the U.S., the Turkish and Turkic-American communities got together to celebrate Nevruz, a very special holiday symbolizing the awakening of nature in spring and the solidarity that is imbued in people. More than twenty component organizations and over six hundred members and friends gathered in Washington, DC and enjoyed a potpourri of folkloric dance and musical performances from the Turkish and Turkic world, while partaking in a cultural journey through the artistic displays and delicious cuisines of the participating countries. We were honored to have the support of the Embassies of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Thanks to the Chair of the Organizing Committee, Cemal Altayli, and the committee members' diligent work, the Nevruz Celebration was a great success.





Support for Meshketian Turks

More Meshketian Turks (Ahiska Turkleri) arrived in the U.S. as refugees from the troublesome conditions they have been facing under the Soviet Regime since Stalin's rule. Local Turkish American communities and organizations across the U.S. were informed about the situation of the arriving Meshketian Turks and encouraged to extend a helping hand. Community members in Georgia, Florida, Michigan, and Washington were able to locate and visit some of the Meshketian families and provide moral and financial support during their adaptation period to their new environment.



ATAA-Bahcesehir University Joint Program; School of Politics 2006

In September, the School of Politics, a two-week long program, organized by the Assembly and the Bahcesehir University of Istanbul, took place in Washington, DC. The participants of the program -college graduates and students, professors, businessmen, and city officials- came from Turkey to stay in the capitol city for a few weeks and attend lectures and panels in government offices and local Think Tanks, NGOs, and firms to gain more insight and understanding of American politics and as current issues. As a result of the program, the Assembly not only gained the trust of twelve of our countrymen, but also received \$8,450.63 as revenue.



Anti-defamation Efforts

In the early months of the year, the Assembly started the "Armenian Revolt and Deportation" petition to PBS for a balanced portrayal of the story on Armenian genocide allegations. Over 40,000 signatures were collected, and letters on Turkish-Americans' concerns about the issue were sent to Mr. Atlas, Mr. Getler, and Mr. Kerger. Though the "Armenian Revolt" movie was not aired, the "Desperate Hours" documentary was, for the first time, broadcast, on 75 PBS stations.

On May 16th, the article "Turkey, Armenia and Denial" was published in the Editorials section of the New York Times. In response, ATAA President sent a message to the New York Times, expressing the disappointment that the statements made in the article would cause among Turks and the Turkish-American community, not only because "it portrayed a poor understanding of some of the basic historical facts concerning the tragic conflict between the Turks and Armenians, but also because its errors, both of commission and omission, tend[ed] to perpetuate the usual false stereotypes about Turks."

On October 16th, 2006, the President of ATAA sent a letter to the mayor of Las Vegas, protesting the city's

decision to erect an "Armenian Genocide Memorial" in Centennial Plaza and asking that it be abandoned. The French Ambassador to the U.S. also received a message from ATAA, as a response to the intention of the lower house of the French Parliament to pass a bill that would "make it a crime to disagree with, oppose, debate, or question the Armenian allegation of genocide." Also mentioned in this letter was the Assembly's involvement in the *Griswold v. Massachusetts* case, a case in which several non-Turkish American students, parents and teachers are working to protect freedom of speech by asking that scholarly materials that question the Armenian allegation of genocide be reinstated into the teachers' curriculum guide.

In addition to serving as a watchdog and fighting against the imbalanced presentation of controversial issues regarding Turkey and the people of Turkey, the Assembly also acknowledged and accredited those who supported a more objective and reflective approach to conflict resolution. ATAA President Vural Cengiz sent a letter of support to the prominent French historians who have issued an open declaration calling for the repeal of laws that legislate historical events.



Public Advocacy Efforts

In view of the increased media and ethnic lobby attacks against Turkish Americans and Turks on various issues, especially regarding the Armenian allegation of genocide, ATAA has established the Public Outreach Committee (POC). The purpose of the POC is the promotion of a balanced understanding of Turkey among the American public, political, educational and media organizations, and the coordination with local Turkish-American organizations of efforts necessary to create such a balance.

In April, a copy of Professor Guenter Lewy's most recent book, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide* was sent to each House Representative and Senator. Meanwhile, Prof. Lewy was in town and had two book-signing events, one in the Library of Congress and the other in Congregation Beth El in Bethesda to discuss the issues addressed in his work.

In August, ATAA's Central Office sent out a copy of the "Armenian Revolt" movie to the presidents of ATAA Component Associations. The presidents were asked to provide the means for their community members and friends to attend a screening of this significant documentary.

During mid-summer and fall, ATAA's President visited North Carolina, New Jersey, Georgia, and Florida and met with the representatives and members of the local Turkish-American organizations in order to support their public education and advocacy efforts. One such event took place when the U.S. Department official Douglas Silliman appeared before the local organization members in Georgia, on September 8th and 9th, and spoke about the current status of U.S.-Turkey relations.

ATAA Annual Delegation Trip

Each year in late spring the Assembly organizes delegation trips to Turkey and to a friendly country. This year the participating delegates visited Istanbul, Ankara, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Baku, where they met with the highest officials of the countries visited, attended special events organized specifically for their visit, and got a chance to explain ATAA's activities and mission. The leaders of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) of Florida were also a part of this year's trip.

ATAA Annual Convention

The theme of this year's convention is "Building Bridges to Strengthen Relations". Over fifty high-profile speakers, numerous representatives from Turkic, Turkish, American, and Student organizations, key government officials, and members and friends of the Turkish American communities, once again, will get together during this significant event and express their thoughts, con-

cerns, and aspirations on Turkish and Turkish American causes, and share their past, present, and future efforts regarding the issues at stake.

New Component Associations

We are honored to welcome two new component associations to the ATAA family. The Istanbul University Alumni Association of the U.S.A (IUMEZ-USA) (www.iumezusa.org) and the Middle East Technical University Alumni Association -USA both joined the Assembly, raising the total number of the associations under the Assembly's roof to sixty four. The Tristate Turkish American Association is also our new candidate.

New ATAA Members

Since the beginning of January 2006, forty nine new individuals made donations to the Assembly and became members. The total amount brought to the Assembly's budget by our new members is \$5,415. In addition, as a result of regular updates and reminders to our former members, who were active between years 1999 and 2004, seventy seven of them renewed their memberships, contributing a total of \$11,810 to the Assembly.

Central Office Progress and Functions

All of the computers and other equipment in the office were checked, repaired, and reinstalled for further use. For ensuring transparency and reliability of our records, and reaching consistency with the terms of our status as a 501(c)3 organization, new database systems, both for the financial and membership records, were initiated.

Several local groups continued taking advantage of the allocated space at the Turk Evi. The office personnel enabled the use of the conference rooms, as it was needed by ATA-DC for their Children's Folklore Group, Adult Language School, and by other local music groups.

Internships

This year, ATAA had five interns, tirelessly working at its headquarters. Mrs. Basak Akdeniz, Mr. Murat Onur, Ms. Burcu Tanriverdi, Ms. Si-haeng Lee, and Ms. Esra Alemdar helped the office staff in several daily operational tasks. Under the American Turkish Student Internship Program (ATSIP), two Turkish-American students were placed as interns at the Congress this year. Ms. Sevil Kaymakcalan interned at the congressional office of Joe Willson of South Carolina 2nd district, while Mr. Gunay Yilmaz was in Indiana's 5th district representative Dan Burton.



ATAA Annual Delegation Trip to Turkey



By Oya Bain Each year in late spring, Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA) organizes delegation trips to Turkey and to a friendly country. ATAA members and officers from different parts of the US, Canada and Turkey join the delegation. All expenses are paid by the individuals themselves. These trips are unique in that the delegates meet with the highest officials in Turkey and in the country visited, attend special events organized for them, get a chance to network, exchange information and explain ATAA's activities and mission.

In the past years ATAA delegations visited Azerbaijan, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Greece, Israel, Bulgaria, and Germany and had a spectacular two week trip to East and Southeast Anatolia. The journey usually starts in Ankara or in Istanbul.

In June 2006, under the leadership of ATAA president Vural Cengiz, the itinerary included Istanbul, Ankara, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Baku. This year the leaders of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) of Florida were part of the ATAA delegation thanks to Vural Cengiz who had established excellent ties with the Jewish community in Florida over the years.

The first stop of the itinerary was in Istanbul on June 2, at Bahcesehir University, Besiktas Campus for a three day conference on "Global Leadership" and "US-Turkish Relations", featuring a wide range of excellent speakers.



The conference opened with a speech by the former Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, who gave a global view of the issues, stressing the global terrorism threats. He still has impressive mental acumen and excellent oratorical skills. Later Ishak Alathon and Can Kirac gave interesting insights to their long careers as industry leaders. Ambassador Mark Parris presented a realistic and concise speech on the current US-Turkish relations. He sounded guardedly optimistic. Ambassador David Mack of Middle East Institute, was impressive in his impartial and articulate view of affairs in the Middle East.

Dr. Soner Cagaptay, former congressman Bob Livingston, Ambassador Morton Abramowitz, Alan Makovsky were among the speakers. ATAA President Vural Cengiz spo-



ke on lobbying and grassroots activities of the Turkish community in the US. Stephen Beiner president of the AJC Florida Chapter (part of ATAA delegation) spoke on Turkish-Jewish relations. There were dinners and lunches on the top floor of the University with sweeping views of the Bosphorus. Mehmet Agar, leader of Dogru Yol party, was the keynote speaker at the final banquet. There were short meetings with journalists Mehmet Ali Birand, Sami Kohen, Defne Samyeli, with officials Namik Tan, spokesperson for the Turkish Foreign Affairs Ministry (now Ambassador to Israel) and Mehmet Ali Bayar of the Dogru Yol party. The conference closed with remarks by the Education Minister and State Minister, Huseyin Celik and Mehmet Ali Sahin respectively.

The conference which was also a course for Bahcesehir students, was very well organized and attended. ATAA thanks Professor Suheyl Batum, President of Bahcesehir University, to Burak Kuntay, the director of Government and Leadership School, and to all the Bahcesehir volunteers who were excellent hosts of this outstanding event.

The delegation trip continued to Ankara on June 4-7, 2006. The first item on our agenda in Ankara-as always-was the wreath laying ceremony at Anitkabir. This visit which we have done many times in the past, never fails to move us. There, in the serenity of the impressive mausoleum overlooking Ankara-and figuratively all of Turkey- one fully comprehends the momentous events leading to the rebirth of the Turkish nation and the greatness of its leader, Atatürk ATAA President Vural Cengiz and American Jewish Committee-Florida Chapter President Stephen Beiner lead the group in the wreath laying ceremony. Later, the group visited the new museum in the lower floors of the Anitkabir which has very realistic and impressive displays of scenes from İstiklal Savaşı (Turkish Independence Wars of 1920-1923) with sound effects and authentic battlefield artifacts. A large map of Anatolia displaying the occupation zones by the English, Italian, French, Greek and Russian-Armenian forces after the World War I reminded the viewers of the suffering of the Turks, life and death battles of İstiklal Savaşı and the caution must be shown to day in dealing with these nations.

Later that day the delegation was hosted by Professor Ziya Aktas, President of Cankaya University and professor Emel Dogramaci, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Cankaya University is a new and vibrant institution built by the philanthropy of a well to do donor.

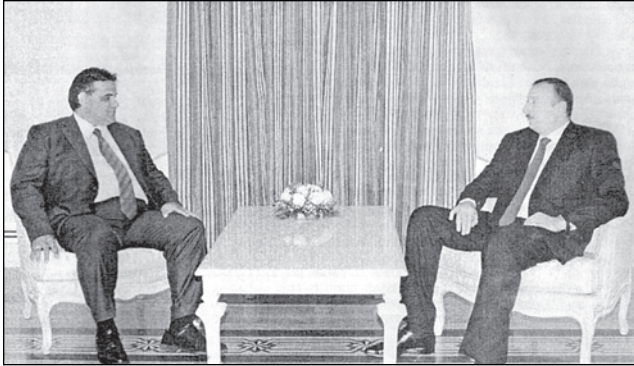
In the following days we met with Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul and Ambassador Selahattin Alpar, several opposition leaders and the chief of staff and some lea-



ders of the Turkish Armed Forces. President Sezer and Prime Minister Erdogan were not in Ankara during our visit. We had a guided tour of the impressive Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. Ambassador Ross Wilson, the US Ambassador to Ankara hosted a reception for the delegation.

During the meetings, President Cengiz outlined ATAA's activities and the scope of its mission. Delegation members expressed their views and concerns as seen from the other side of the Atlantic: Threat to Turkey's secularism, Turkish government taking a stronger stand regarding the ethnic pressures in the US and providing support to organizations like ATAA, the importance of a strong Turkish army and economy in Turkey's foreign policy. The extremism of the Armenian Diaspora in the US and their totally misguided approach oblivious to the realities in the Caucasus were also discussed. It was stressed that the opening of the border between Armenia and Turkey would be counterproductive in view of the shortsighted Armenian Diaspora policies in the US and Europe.

The trip to Russia (June 12-18) was very interesting and more touristic in nature. The Turkish Ambassador to Moscow, Kurtulus Taskent had a long meeting with the delegation. He described the developing Turkish Russian relationships, especially in the economic areas. In



was spectacular, the city was majestic yet warm and friendly.

After few days back in Turkey, the ATAA delegation flew to Baku, Azerbaijan on June 23 at the invitation of of Azerbaijani Diaspora Minister Nazim Ibrahimov. Minister Ibrahimov and his entourage were the guests of ATAA earlier in May 2006 in Washington DC.

We were greeted with great hospitality and warmth. The group stayed in a boutique hotel in the heart of the historic district of Baku overlooking the Caspian Sea. There were many social events, including a colorful and rich Azeri wedding, visits to historic and archeological sites, to the Turkish and Azeri Şehitlik (ceme-teries) and to Aliyev Memorial and meetings with key government officials.



ATAA delegation paid a courtesy visit to the Turkish Ambassador to Baku, Turan Morali. We reiterated our view that the opening of the Turkish Armenian border should be contingent on the resolution of the Armenian occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

There was much discussion with Minister Ibrahimov and others about organizing the Azerbaijani Diaspora in the US into a ATAA like association, where they number close to 1 million. However major portion of the US Azeris are from Southern Azerbaijan (Northern Iran) and are not too involved with issues important both to Turkey and Azerbaijan.



Cultural issues and the feasibility of holding a large Turkish-Azeri festival were discussed with the Minister of Culture Abdulfez Garayev.

ATAA President Cengiz had a meeting with President Ilham Aliyev, which appeared in the newspapers the following day. The delegation's visits and meetings were also covered in the evening news on Azeri television.

ATAA group's visit to Azerbaijan coincided with the official opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. The revenues from this pipeline which carries 1 million barrels a day from a large offshore field in Caspian Sea, to Ceyhan, will double Azerbaijan's current GDP in 2010.

ATAA President Vural Cengiz and the ATAA Delegation thank Minister Nazim Ibrahimov and his wonderful staff for hosting a very informative and pleasant stay for the ATAA group in Baku.

fact, few days later President Sezer had a productive visit with President Putin.

In Moscow there were meetings with the leaders of the Turkish businessmen's groups. The message is that Russia is growing rapidly and there is tremendous potential for the Turkish businesses. Russia is sitting on huge oil and gold reserves and has other vast unexplored resources. Politically it is also charting its own course and seem annoyed by the interferences from the west.

In St. Petersburg, the northern city near Finland, the delegation enjoyed the "white nights", very long days with few hours of darkness. The Hermitage Museum



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