

WARM HEARTH

In the Small Corners

Bound Together

Dear friends,

This summer has been full (and hot!) for our residents and staff. The residents from our Arinj home who typically attend a vocational college during the school year have had a break and have enjoyed some long, lazy days. And our residents at both homes have welcomed visitors and friends into their homes — experiencing the way that summer sometimes brims over with sweetness.



In July, a group of professionals through Inclusion Collective (pictured front and back), visited Armenia for three weeks to work with our homes especially around the areas of increased independence for our residents, where it is desired and self advocacy. The team showed so much compassion and respect for our homes through their labors and preparation before going to Armenia. They read our residents' files, asked questions, conducted fundraisers, learned about Armenia and brainstormed with our team about how they could be most effective. And their compassionate labors paid off. Their time in Armenia was fruitful, full of laughter and love. They also hosted a day-long Disability Rights conference in Yerevan!

After they left, our Armenian Executive Director, Alya, told me that they had learned so many things from the team and that they had a paradigm shift around the residents' independence and their ability to dive more deeply into community life. It was a summer highlight for the residents to go shopping at the market with the Inclusion Collective volunteers and then to help them make and share a feast! There is something about sitting around a table, sharing food and stories, drink and song, that will bind people together. We are bound now to this incredible team of volunteers and they are bound to our residents.

Sincerely Yours,

Natalie Bryant-Rizzieri

Founder & Executive Director





Artur

Artur moved into our new home in Arinj last May (2018). He came to us from the Kapan orphanage/special school where he lived for twelve years. Artur has never lived with his family, and is a social orphan. As far as we know, his mother and sister are still living and visited him once when he lived in Kapan. Artur is an incredible dancer! He is friendly and forgiving. He has a contagious laugh and a big huge heart. He connects quickly and easily with others. His dream is to work at a food stand making kebab over an open fire. Together may we be able to make this a reality.

Our 2019 Goals: sustainable and loving care for our residents and two forever homes that are increasingly independent.

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Your kindness sustains our residents, our hearts and our home.

- We have brought on four additional board members this year and are excited to welcome and serve alongside **Satenik Grigoryan** (Los Angeles, CA), **Chantay Jett** (Enterprise, OR) **Juliet Setian** (Irvine, CA), and **Vartuhi Vartanyan** (La Canada, CA). Thanks to each of you for your passion and gifts of time.
- Our counterpart organization in Armenia (Jermik Ankyun Foundation) held their first charity event. It was a musical organized by **Tigranyan Musical School**. Thanks to all who made this possible and volunteered their time.
- Thank you to the sweet circle of friends and supporters we have in Los Angeles who met again this year at **Janet and Araik Dilanchyan's** home for dinner and raised \$4,000. Thanks to each of you who organized, helped and attended this special evening.
- Thank you to **Elenor Avannessian** (Los Angeles, CA) who visited our homes and raised funds to purchase art supplies.

