

# WARM HEARTH

## In the Small Corners

### Reprieve

Dear friends,

After months of isolation and quarantine due to the global pandemic, we thought it was safe and prudent to provide our residents with a getaway. All three homes boarded a bus and went to the town of Goris. They stayed at a small hotel where they were the only guests. They danced and ate, laughed and sang, talked and did theater. It was a blessed reprieve after so many months of being home-bound and quarantined.



It was sweet for them to all have time together—to nurture old connections (from previous times in orphanages) and to make new friends. As I watched the videos and looked at the photographs, I couldn't help but hope that they felt how precious they are as individuals and simultaneously how powerful it is to be a part of something larger. As our community grows and thanks to each of you, that is more and more possible. We not only have three forever homes and nearly thirty residents, we also have created a movement that works to absolve the margins. Thank you for cultivating and propelling this movement forward. I hope our residents felt the strength that it is to be gathered together in one place and what it means both to be loved and to see others loved and honored. I hope you can feel that strength too.

Armenia has recovered well from Covid-19. While we still are being cautious, we are also urging staff and residents to simply make the *next* right decision. We cannot know what the future will hold. But hopefully we can make good decisions in the here and now — that honor our residents' vulnerabilities but also the social consequences of isolation. In the meantime, your support and presence is a gift — in times of want and in times of plenty. May there be more times of plenty to come for all of us, the world over.

Sincerely Yours,

*Natalie Bryant-Rizzieri*

Founder & Executive Director





### Christine

Christine lives in our Arinj home. She has a brother, Levon, who remains in an orphanage. We hope to provide a forever home for him one day. She was born in Ararat Marz and lived with her family at a young age. She and her brother are social orphans, meaning their parents are still living but could not care for them. Christine has a shy and sweet demeanor. She is affectionate and responsible. She likes to read, draw, dance and knit.

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**Our 2020 Goals:** sustainable and loving care for our residents and three forever homes that are increasingly independent.

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

- Thanks to Anahit Mkhoyan for working with our staff to strengthen our organizational structure. Your heart and passion have sustained us time and again. Your wisdom is a guiding force.
- After years of dreaming, we are creating a pottery studio so that all of our residents can participate in this art and sell their work to sustain our homes. Thanks to Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) for helping us secure the necessary donations and for all of your support over the last few years.
- Congratulations to our Executive Director in Armenia, Alya Kirakosyan, for being selected for the Ombudsman Board for Disability Rights in Armenia. It is a well-deserved honor.
- Thanks to Para TV and Alya Kiraksoyan for creating a short film that highlights our residents' profound beauty. The blessed humanity of our residents shines through the film, which can be viewed at <https://para.tv/news/view/2309.html>. A film with English subtitles is coming soon.

