

## SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL ARMENIA FELLOWSHIP

The Southwestern Armenia Fellowship continues to thrive in its second year, with Fellow Garen Nazarian continuing his impactful work in Yerevan, Armenia, with the Ministry of Justice and more recently on the legal education front. Garen Nazarian's Fellowship is a result of Southwestern Law School heeding the call of Armenia's Minister of Justice, the Honorable Hrayr Tovmasyan, who asked Diasporan Armenians to assist their ancestral homeland in a specific way: by providing American-trained legal professionals' assistance in the development of Armenia's legal system. Southwestern, home to a large population of bright and impassioned Armenian law students and alumni, responded to the call and set to work. In December 2011, Southwestern signed an agreement with Armenia's Ministry of Justice to establish the Southwestern Armenia Fellowship in Yerevan, Armenia, and in September 2012, the inaugural Southwestern Armenia Fellow, Garen Nazarian, began his work in Yerevan, working side-by-side with Minister Tovmasyan and his high-ranking staff of Deputy Ministers and Advisors. As articulated in the agreement, the goal is for the position to be ongoing and "to serve the developing legal system in Armenia."



Garen Nazarian and Hon. Hrayr Tovmasyan, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia

### GAREN NAZARIAN

brings the experience and expertise that is essential to effectively serve in this role. He spent seven years in the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office defending a variety of cases ranging from theft to murder. He was the

lead attorney in over 30 felony and misdemeanor jury trials and conducted more than 20 juvenile trials before judges and also settled hundreds of cases through negotiation. Mr. Nazarian earned his J.D. degree from UCLA School of Law and his B.A. from UC Berkeley.

### FELLOWSHIP FUNDRAISING

The Ministry and Southwestern's cooperation in establishing the Fellowship has been focused and swift, as it's clear to all involved that advancing the rule of law is the anchor to a nation's stability and development. The Armenia Fellowship Executive Committee plans to sustain the Fellowship for five years and continue its fundraising goal of \$300,000 for long-term support of the project. Tax deductible donations to the Fellowship fund can be made at [www.swlaw.edu/giving](http://www.swlaw.edu/giving) (please write Armenia Fellowship under Other Gift Designation) or by calling Joan Bautista, Director, Southwestern's Institutional Advancement Office at (213) 738-6814.

### PROGRESS REPORT

In his second year, Mr. Nazarian continues to use his expertise in criminal law to advise the Ministry, work with various groups to educate and help implement concrete changes in Armenia's legal system as well as help train the next generation of legal professionals. A few examples of Mr. Nazarian's accomplishments and efforts to date are the following:

- Advising the Ministry on reforms in legal education mandated by the 2012-16 Strategic Program for Legal and Judicial Reforms in the Republic of Armenia, including introduction of clinical education.
- Continuing to teach "Legal English," a trial advocacy course, co-taught with John Lulejian, Rule of Law Advisor at the U.S. Embassy, hosted at the American Bar Association office; the course has approximately eighty registered law students as well as practicing attorneys. Also teaching Trial Advocacy at the French University.
- Teaching at Armenia's School of Advocates, which provides a one-year course of study for advocates, licensed to appear in court.
- In the process of setting up a book reading project in the prisons.
- Preparing for an upcoming project of basing the Public Defender's budget on performance, to comply with recent legislation and with the aim to increase the office's quality of work.
- Advising on key components of the Criminal Procedure Code.
- Advising regarding selection of judges to reduce potential bias or appearance of partiality and increase objectivity and transparency in the selection process.



Garen Nazarian and John Lulejian, Rule of Law Advisor at the US Embassy (former Assistant U.S. Attorney), teaching Trial Advocacy class.