

May 5, 2005

Anahid Aramouni Keshishian to Receive UCLA Distinguished Lecturer Award

LOS ANGELES – Dr. Anahid Aramouni Keshishian has been selected by the UCLA Academic Senate Committee on Teaching to receive a Distinguished Lecturer Award. The goal of this Award is to increase awareness of UCLA's leadership, teaching and public service by honoring individuals who bring respect and admiration to the scholarship of teaching. By recognizing teachers for their achievements, the award gives UCLA an opportunity to demonstrate to the community, alumni, students, parents, donors and others what makes UCLA "a beacon of excellence in higher education." This award is presented to teachers who demonstrate a scholarly approach to teaching, have a significant impact on students, and show major involvement in community-linked projects. Special importance is given to innovative teaching methods which might impact education at a local or national level.

Dr. Keshishian received her Ph.D. in Philology from the Armenian Republic's National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Literature in Yerevan. Alongside numerous literary and art-related articles, Keshishian has published a book entitled *Karapents: The Worldview and the Art*. She has also edited and published numerous acclaimed literary journals and periodicals, which include *Eighties Magazine*, *Moutk/Portal Periodical*, and, most recently, the literary journal *Random Agenda*. Keshishian initiated and had a key role in the organization of the Contemporary Armenian Literature Symposium, which took place at UCLA in 2001 and for the first time brought together Armenian writers and literary critics from all over the world. In 2002, Keshishian founded Arena Productions, a non-profit theatre and arts organization. Its productions to date have included Aghassi Ayvazyan's *Props* and Gevork Emin's *Traveler of Eternity*. Arena's most recent production, *They Were Poets*, is a theatrical rendition of Armenian poetry from throughout the centuries, compiled, edited and directed by Keshishian. She also founded and directed an Armenian Language and Arts school, which served the Los Angeles community for over fifteen years.

Dr. Keshishian has taught at UCLA since 1997. Her classes always attracted a large number of students and have greatly impacted the number of Armenian Minors being completed at UCLA. Throughout the years, Keshishian has been a source of motivation and inspiration for students who devotedly attend her classes. "The students not only show their appreciation for Dr. Keshishian through their written evaluations, but also regularly come to me and express their enthusiasm about her teaching and her impact on their lives," states Student Affairs Officer Diane Abugheida. Dr. Keshishian's unconventional teaching style utilizes music, poetry, and theatre to make the classroom come alive. Dr. William Schniedewind, Chair of UCLA's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, states, "Dr. Keshishian is not only one of the best teachers in the university, she is also a priceless asset to our Armenian Studies program on campus."

The UCLA Academic Senate Committee on Teaching will present Dr. Keshishian's award at the annual "Andrea L. Rich Night to Honor Teaching" ceremony on October 6, 2005.

