



**St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit
~ACYOA SENIORS~**

**ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend 2015
Committee Report**

**Submitted by: 2015 General Assembly & Sports Weekend Committee
Fr. Garabed Kochakian**

2015 ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend Committee Report

Introduction:

The 2015 General Assembly & Sports Weekend was hosted by the ACYOA Seniors of the St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit, Michigan, from May 21-25. The hotel that we provided for our guests was the Crowne Plaza Hotel located in Novi, Michigan, where we also held the General Assembly meetings. With the theme “Made in Detroit, We Are The Legacy”, we were able to provide the ACYOA senior chapters of the Eastern Diocese with an opportunity to see the unique and notable city of Detroit, of which we are very proud.

Committee:

Pastor:	Fr. Garabed Kochakian
Youth Coordinator:	Lisa Mardigian
Chairman:	Linda Kalfayan
Vice-Chairman:	Alexandra Hachigian
Registration:	Sona Movsisyan & Sevan Misirliyan
Co-Treasurers:	Roseann Manoogian Attar & Brandon Maake
Public Relations:	Anahit Movsesyan

Preparation:

After the initial bid in 2013, the committee promptly began organizing and planning the activities for Sports Weekend. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the steering committee changed its leadership after the first year. This resulted in a change of opinion in the direction Sports Weekend was heading and a loss of time for planning and advertising for the General Assembly & Sports Weekend. It was after these unforeseen circumstances that ACYOA members in Michigan from near and far joined the steering committee in order to ensure a faithful and fun weekend for all.

Once the steering committee was established, volunteers were sought out to help create sub-committees. The 15 sub-committees included: Welcome Gifts; Ad Booklet; Transportation; Security; Entertainment and After Hours; Advertising/Social Media; Budget/Finance; Sports; Sports Concessions; Friday Evening Event; Saturday Morning Program; Saturday Evening Event; Sunday Brunch; Sunday Evening Awards Banquet; and Monday Brunch. The steering committee assigned two or more volunteers to a sub-committee based on their skills and expertise. Each sub-committee was assigned tasks.

The steering committee met every other week in 2014 and coordinated with the sub-committees to ensure that each task was handled appropriately and in a timely manner. There were open lines of communication between the steering committee and each sub-committee which including google drive components, skype, conference calls, etc.

Location:

After 8 years, the St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit had the opportunity to host General Assembly & Sports Weekend. With the theme “Made in Detroit, We Are The Legacy”, we wanted to show our participants the historical side of Detroit they would not normally see. We chose one of our venues to be at the extravagant & renowned Fox Theatre located on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. This theatre was recognized as a National Historic Landmark in 1989 and had housed spectacular performances for many years. We also chose another national landmark in metro Detroit for our second venue to be at the Henry Ford Museum, in Dearborn, MI. Named after the automobile industrialist, Henry Ford, the museum was founded on his idea of preserving history. For the traditional Sunday night banquet, we decided to host our third event at the church hall of the St. John Armenian Church.

In order to provide the participants with a commercial area during the day--walkable distance to a nearby mall--we decided to partner with the Crowne Plaza Hotel located in Novi, Michigan. We knew that transportation would be an issue while planning the weekend, but we chose the most cost effective and convenient transportation for our city.

Events:

1. Thursday, May 21: Delegates’ Reception at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Novi

Our committee decided to hold an elegant reception in the back of the room used for the General Assembly to make it easy and convenient for the delegates. Both food and beverages were provided.

2. Friday, May 22: Venue-The Fox Theatre, Detroit

To show our guests a glimpse of the beauty and magnificence of Detroit, we decided to host our Friday night venue at the Fox Theatre on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. As our guests walked up to the front of the theatre to check in, they were greeted by our marquee lighting up Downtown Detroit with “Armenian Church Youth Organization of America, Sports Weekend 2015...We Are The Legacy”. After checking in, they were allowed to roam the theatre from the upstairs balconies to standing downstairs on the very stage of great artists. Our guests were able to enjoy the music provided by our own DJ’s, the red carpet provided by our committee, and eat food catered by the Fox Theatre along with a cash bar.

3. Saturday, May 23: Honoring Our Saints at Hillside Recreational Center, Novi

As an intermission to the morning sporting events, we decided to hold a one hour-long program called “The Court is in Session: Peace & Justice”. Our committee had decided to bring two celebrities, one local and one national, to speak on the events of the Armenian Genocide from the

aspects of peace and justice, as a continuation of the 100th commemoration of the Armenian Genocide and the continuing celebration of honoring our ancestors who were canonized as saints in the Armenian Church in the earlier month. A Hunter House food truck was provided outside the recreational center shortly after the program finished and the sports resumed.

4. Saturday, May 23: Venue-The Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn

Continuing along with our theme, we chose our Saturday night venue to be at the Henry Ford Museum, named after Henry Ford himself. By choosing this museum as our venue, we were able to show off not only pieces of Detroit's history, but American national history. Our guests were invited to walk around the main hall to see the automotive history, antique machinery, and anything the American hands made. Our guests were able to walk around the nearby portions of the museum, dance to the music provided by our own band and DJ underneath the Northwest Airlines DC-3 aircraft, eat gourmet food provided by the Museum along with a cash bar.

5. Sunday, May 24: Divine Liturgy at St. John Armenian Church, Southfield

Church service was held at the St. John Armenian Church on Sunday morning with close to 100 young adults in the pews, preceding the morning brunch held in the church hall.

6. Sunday, May 24: Venue-St. John Armenian Church Banquet Hall, Southfield

To finish off the weekend, our committee had decided to host an awards banquet with an alumni cocktail hour. Our guests were invited to join us for a delicious Armenian meal and to dance to our "all-star" band and DJ, cash bar, and finish the night with a traditional Detroit coney. ACYOA alumni were also invited to this event.

Lessons Learned:

Issue	Description	How to Avoid
Athletes not purchasing complete package	There were many athletes who only paid the \$10 athlete fee and did not purchase a package	Do not put \$10 athlete fee as an al-a-carte option but require athletes to purchase a package.
Low number of participants	Compared to previous Sports Weekends, we had a low number of participation of athletes and ACYOA members from different chapters.	Build a stronger connection with other ACYOA chapters through various events.
Rooms were not near each other	Even though it was a smaller hotel, we had requested that the rooms be near each other in order for the noise to be maintained in one area of the hotel, and they were not.	Contact the hotel the week before Sports Weekend and make sure that the rooms are gathered in one area.
Change of leadership in 2 years	After the first full year of planning, many dedicated members to the board that bid on Sports Weekend dropped out and left the committee up in the air to find new leadership with different ideas than before.	Make sure that leadership involved in planning Sports Weekend know that it is a two-year full commitment.
A few lost buses	During the course of the weekend, a few of the buses got lost during the duration of the ride to the event.	Make sure the drivers know where they are going and how to get there before they leave the hotel. Make sure to have their phone numbers listed.

Suggestions:

1. Transportation: Use smaller buses instead of fewer larger buses.
2. Advertising: Start advertising at the General Assembly & Sports Weekend the year before therefore the participants during that Sports Weekend see your enthusiasm and have an idea of what to expect.

3. Proximity: Try to centralize the venues and hotel to one area, if possible.
4. Venues: More than two people should visit a venue together to get an idea and take notes to be able to provide feedback to the rest of the committee.
5. Contracts: Aside from having many people, including the parish attorney, parish council and ACYOA Central Council, review the contract before signing but also review the contract a week or two before the weekend with each venue and go over with them exactly what is necessary.
6. Deadlines: Try to keep deadlines as an important cut-off for participants to stay away from problems...unless you do not have many participants.
7. Teamwork: Keep the steering committee strong and always working together. Teamwork is the key to success!

Achievements:

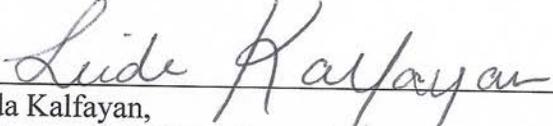
1. Transportation: Small luxury shuttles ran every 15 to 30 minutes promptly. . We used our shuttle system to our advantage to get all participants to the events on time by advertising the “last shuttle” a half hour before the actual last shuttle. This was instilled to make sure that the last shuttle was not packed and overcrowded, and no one was left behind.
2. Chaperones: There was a chaperone on each shuttle to ensure the safety of all participants and prevent any altercations.
3. Alumni Cocktail Hour: Introducing this idea allowed for more ACYOA community members and alumni to attend our banquet event.
4. Mobile Application: Included places to go and eat, shuttle times, dress attire, descriptions of each night, etc. We were able to direct any questions the participants had to the App.
5. Gift Bags: For each participant/guest who bought the entire package of all 3 events, a themed “Made in Detroit” gift bag was provided at the time of check-in.
6. Budget: Debt free due to generous benefactors from the St. John’s Armenian community!
7. Steering Committee: The new board was able to work with and around previous decisions to ensure a fun and faithful weekend for all!

Conclusions:

Hosting the 2015 ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend in Detroit was an honor and privilege. Our ACYOA Seniors were able to make connections with the ACYOA alumni and learn from their experiences and expertise in planning Sports Weekends. After 8 long years, ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend finally returned to Greater Detroit, and our guests were able to witness some of the most beautiful and historical places in Detroit. During the 20th century, Greater Detroit welcomed a significant number of Armenians to build their lives and families. Detroit welcomed Armenians in the past, in the present, and will continue to in the future. Until next time, ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend!

General Assembly and Sports Weekend Participation	
Hotel Information	
Room Nights Sold	
Wednesday	1
Thursday	29
Friday	53
Saturday	51
Sunday	48
Total	182
Number of Attendees	
General Assembly	
Clergy/Staff	12
Delegates	36
Total	48
Friday Night	202
Saturday Night	209
Sunday Night	487
Registration Information	
Packages Sold (\$180)	101
Athletes	48
Clergy	12
Non - Members/ Locals	367

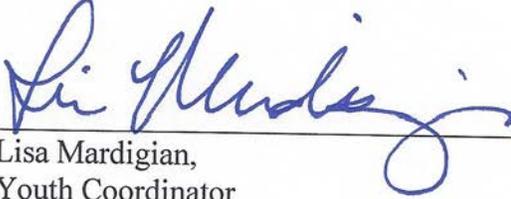
ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend 2015 Signatures



Linda Kalfayan,
Chairman of ACYOA General Assembly & Sports Weekend 2015

9-1-15

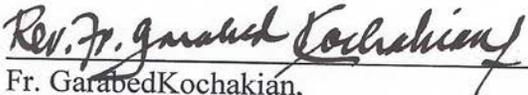
Date



Lisa Mardigian,
Youth Coordinator

9-1-15

Date



Fr. Garabed Kochakian,
Pastor of St. John Armenian Church

Sept. 1-2015

Date

2015 Detroit ACYOA National Assembly & Sports Weekend

Aug 20th, 2015

Income

Packages	\$ 18,180.00
Friday Night	\$ 5,475.00
Saturday Night	\$ 6,465.00
Sunday Brunch	\$ 800.00
Sunday Night	\$ 21,284.00
Monday Picnic	\$ 30.00
Ad Book	\$ 17,445.00
Concessions	\$ 920.50
Donations	\$ 36,920.94
Sports	\$ 1,735.00
Diocese Meeting Reim.	\$ 2,241.60
MISC	\$ 6.00
Total Income	\$ 111,503.04

Expenses

Delegate Meetings	\$ 5,340.00
Friday Night	\$ 15,680.00
Saturday Night	\$ 28,971.48
Saturday Afterglow	\$ 2,304.00
Sunday Brunch	\$ 885.83
Sunday Night	\$ 22,134.79
Sunday Afterglow	\$ 2,383.40
Monday Picnic	\$ 1,362.00
Booklet	\$ 2,377.51
Paypal fees	\$ 752.58
Advertising	\$ 1,449.40
Sports	\$ 2,783.80
Concessions/Swag	\$ 4,858.74
Speaker	\$ 3,429.10
Transportation	\$ 11,150.00
MISC	\$ 586.01
Total Expenses	\$ 106,448.64
Total Profit (Loss)	\$ 5,054.40