In 1989-90, I had the privilege of serving as the initial full-time program director for Project HOPE’s Pediatric Orthopedic Rehabilitation Program in Armenia,” says Dr. George Kevorkian, a physiatrist, associate professor of medicine and Project HOPE volunteer.

“The program was developed in response to the December 1988 earthquake that killed 25,000 people and injured many more.

“At the time, there were no rehabilitation professionals in Armenia or most of the Soviet Union. The multi-pronged program initially brought 37 children to the U.S. for prostheses, and then developed local teaching for doctors, physical therapists, nurses and orthotic/prosthetic students. The duration of the program was eight years.

In October, I was asked to return to Armenia to give lectures and assist in setting up adult stroke rehabilitation programs.

“My visit was truly gratifying. Many of our former students are now teachers and in positions of leadership in major hospitals in Armenia. Our initial orthotic/prosthetic student is now the owner of Armenia’s main orthotic clinic with 13 employees.

“The pediatric orthopedic program has grown under the leadership of our initial Armenian

continued on next page >
How Dr. George Kevkorkian Helped Build Local Capacity (continued)

counterpart, Dr. Garen Koloyan. The department provides services for 70 percent of children with congenital and acquired orthopedic problems in Armenia and Karabakh. Under his leadership, a pediatric orthopedic residency program has been established, and services include surgery for 350 children annually — with 10 percent coming from Georgia, Russia and the Ukraine. The pediatric outpatient clinic provides services to 5,000 children each year.

Robert M. Bullard, RN

Dr. William B. Walsh (left) with Dr. Koloyan, 1989, at HOPE’s Bethesda office while planning HOPE’s long-term program for Armenia.

“Away are multidisciplinary outreach clinics in various regions of Armenia and Karabakh, regional ultrasound screenings, spinal surgery — with colleagues visiting from France and Switzerland — and a club foot treatment project.

“For my October visit certainly reinforced the belief that the education of professionals is a very rewarding long-term experience for HOPE professionals, our in-country counterparts and generations of children who benefit from a better standard of care.”

Paul Altrocchi, M.D.

On His Work in Sri Lanka in 1968

“Although I made occasional visits to the capital, Colombo, as part of the second rotation of HOPE physicians, intern Marty Cohen and I spent the two-month rotation in the beautiful hill town of Kandy. Our teaching was much appreciated by our excellent Sri Lankan colleagues.

“When a year of graduating from Colby College in Maine, my daughter was in Sri Lanka — then called Ceylon — with the Peace Corps and married Nandi, who is Sri Lankan. I now live with my mother in our five-story apartment building at Yerevan, where both my legs were amputated. An older brother found us. I was airlifted to the capital, Colombo, in two days of searching and digging, my father and mother in our five-story apartment building at Yerevan, where both my legs were amputated. After 7 months, I left the Crouse Hospital in Syracuse, New York, for surgery training. All the senior medical students working with HOPE became directors and chairman of their respective Peace Corps and one of them, Dr. Edgar Rodas, became Minister of Health in Ecuador. A new hospital, medical school complex and curriculum have been instituted, and a second medical school has been opened. Project HOPE’s work and the medical model were eminently successful.”

Ara Tadевossian Shares His Experiences as a Patient in Armenia

“I was 14 years old and at home in Gyumri with my mother in our five-story apartment building at the time of the December 7, 1988 earthquake. After two days of searching and digging, my father and older brother found us. I was airlifted to the capital, Yerevan, where both my legs were amputated. In January, 1989, Dr. Warren Gruppi led a Project HOPE team that selected me and 36 other children needing prostheses to travel, each with a parent or guardian, to receive care in the United States. I underwent surgeries in Syracuse, New York, for 14 months, where a local Armenian nurse became my legal guardian. After 7 months, I left the Crouse Memorial Hospital.

“In March 1990, I returned to Gyumri, Armenia, using two crutches, but I returned to Syracuse for reconstructive surgery in the spring of 1992.”

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- The Lee Olive Harrison Fund, supporting basic nursing skills education.
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I am delighted to be part of the Alumni Association, and to support this wonderful group.

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UPDATE: WILLIAM B. WALSH FELLOW, DR. LAXMIKANT PALO

How His Work Is Progressing

UPDATE: WILLIAM B. WALSH FELLOW, DR. LAXMIKANT PALO

Since becoming Project HOPE’s SE Asia Regional Director in April 2015, Dr. Laxmikant Palo initiated country operations in Nepal after the earthquake. He worked to streamline medical and volunteer supplies to the earthquake-affected population, and implement a needs assessment for a long-term global health program in collaboration with an institutional partner for program implementation. He initiated a USAID-Nepal proposal on health and hygiene.

Dr. Palo has created and developed several high-quality proposals on non-communicable diseases, maternal newborn child health and nutrition — with many breakthrough ideas for unique proposals. He has initiated a process for multi-country programs and multi-donor partnerships, serving a range of public health themes. He continues to scale up current programs while maintaining their quality.

Dr. Laxmikant Palo, an esteemed Walsh fellow, serves as Regional Director-South East Asia with Project HOPE.

HOPIES Unite!

Stay in Touch

Stay connected with HOPE. Our website is updated on a regular basis, and we will continue sending emails with all the latest news. If you have news to share or updated contact information, please reach out to our Alumni liaison, Dulcy Hooper, at dhooper@projecthope.org.

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HOPE Remembers

Patricia Anderson
Anesthesia, Sri Lanka, DOD September, 2015

Linda Michaud, M.D.
Physiatrist, Armenia, October, 2015

Edwin Monroe Knights, Jr.
HOPE pathologist (1964–66), September 19, 2015

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