

Hello Ken:

Armenian Americans need to be included in the new CDE ethnic studies program just as the recent CDE 2016 10<sup>th</sup> grade History/Social studies framework detailed a deeper understanding of the Armenian genocide and gave that WWI genocide its rightful place in history.

California is home to the largest population of Armenian Americans in America. About 205,000 Armenian Americans now reside in California. Armenians began migrating to the US in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the majority of Armenian migrants were escaping the genocide perpetrated by Ottoman Turkey from 1915-23.

My mother lost her family in that horrific tragedy and found her way to America to start a new life in a new country. She came to America to marry a man she knew only from a photograph...my father. I have written a novel, **My Mother's Voice**, based on her tragic life in Turkey, created a 25 minute documentary designed for history/social studies classes endorsed by the National Council of Social Studies, and two Dramatists are now adapting my mother's story into a musical. A full production is scheduled for April 2020 as a forth preview will be held at Lanterman Auditorium in LA Canada on September 20. The play is teaching Armenian genocide history through drama.

Armenian Americans first began settling in California during the 1920s, but a surge in immigration in the 1970s caused the greatest population growth. The group has integrated well with other ethnic groups in the state, and many run businesses and Armenian schools. Los Angeles and Glendale have the highest number of Armenians in the state. California has been the preferred destination for immigrants of Armenian descent in the last two decades, and the population is likely to increase.

Armenian Studies is currently taught at UCLA, UC Berkeley, Fresno State, University of California Irvine, and the Institute of Armenian Studies at USC. In addition, Shoah at USC now includes Armenian genocide survivors in their iWitness program. With the growing Armenian intelligentsia the CDE needs to seriously consider Armenian Americans in the new ethnic studies program.

Thank you for your time.

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