

**Vem Radio**  
**Company Report**  
**2000-2002**

**Yerevan 2003**

## **Vem Radio's Advisory Board Members**

*James Tufenkian (USA/Armenia)*

*Carolyn Mugar (USA/Armenia)*

*Vartan Gregorian (USA)*

*Noubar Afeyan (USA)*

*Vahak S. Hovnanian (USA/Armenia)*

*Stephen Kurkjian (USA)*

*Mark Geragos (USA)*

*Armand Arabian (USA)*

*Harut Sassounian (USA)*

*Linda Shirvanyan (USA)*

*Sarkis Mesrobian (USA)*

*Simon Balian (USA)*

*Thomas J. Samuelian (USA/Armenia)*

*Tamar Hajian (USA)*

*Barsegh Beglarian (Armenia)*

*Manvel Badeyan (Armenia)*

## **Contact Info**

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# Vision

*To provide spiritual protection to each and every Armenian.*

A coordinated strategy of thoughtful and careful investment in spiritual and cultural values is essential for the life of any nation. Culture, the spiritual inner conscience, and patriotism demand continuous cultivation and effort; they do not progress on their own. What kind of nation do we want to have? What will our future generation be like? What is our spiritual and national ideal? What is our destiny as Armenians? These are fundamental issues for any nation. These questions have no easy answers. They require insight and care.

Our nation faces important social issues, such as poverty, abandoned children, elderly in need of care, refugees, and emigration. These are compounded by other social problems alien to our national and spiritual characters, but rampant throughout the world and to which we are not immune, such as drug addiction, violence, and corruption. These are pressing issues. Solutions are needed now. The media, as the mirror of society, has an essential role to play. Radio is especially effective. It is a pervasive medium, but not intrusive like television. Radio reaches people at home, at the work place, in the car, or on the street. One can listen to the radio every day, even if busy with work. Radio today can influence a person's inner world for the better. It is an important resource for societal progress.

Vem Radio was created to respond to the need for change in the lives of our people and to solve the concrete problems facing us today. At first, founding such a radio station may have seemed incongruent with trends in the world. How could the gentle voice of the spiritual and eternal stand a chance of being heard amidst the noisy background of the contemporary society? Nevertheless, experience has shown that a voice addressing the eternal and essential values of life is necessary at all times, even, and perhaps especially, in today's world. Like plants striving for light, the human soul inclines towards godliness and eternity. Perhaps this was the source of the early and widespread interest in our radio station when it began broadcasting. Never before has this medium been used in Armenia in this way. Many good and worthy ideas fail to take root and prosper, due to human failings, excessive ambition, bad timing, or any number of other reasons. But, by God's grace, our destiny was different, and today we are seeing the fruits of our efforts.

Vem Radio has been broadcasting for over one year. Our pro-

**The word Vem in Classical Armenian (grabar) means "rock, large stone", as well as "foundation". In spiritual terminology, the word Vem symbolizes Jesus Christ. Vem also symbolizes "faith". Put together, Vem symbolizes the "foundation of existence" or "the basic values of human life".**

grams, with their content and quality, have had a positive impact on our society. This is rewarding, and at the same time obliges us to work yet harder. Vem Radio is a unique source of communication of spiritual values and culture, and is valued as such by its vast audience. First and foremost, we avoid superficial information. The individual who lives in the age of information technology is overloaded with useless and stressful material. As a result, man is not content. Today, the spirituality of the individual is changing. Man is automatically drawn towards knowledge that will improve his life. Taking the road less traveled, we pursued our mission. In a short time, Vem Radio has created in Armenia a new genre of radio discourse and set a new standard for radio programming that does not shy away from profound concepts or serious, open dialogue.



Vem Radio is the outgrowth, in a new medium, of the research and mission of Gandzasar Theological Centre. The professional skills and expertise of the Gandzasar Theological Centre are the foundation of the radio's content. The spiritual, bibliographical, Armenological, historical and cultural publications of the Gandzasar Theological Centre inform and enrich our programs. Naturally, like any radio station, Vem Radio has its musical character. It is a classical music station with one important difference: Armenian classical and spiritual music forms an important part of our repertoire. Much of this has been newly recorded specifically for Vem Radio broadcasts.

All of the foregoing is directed to our core mission:

- To free our people from the bonds of an atheist past and to reestablish the traditional bulwarks of our national identity by creating a forum of spiritual and cultural discussions;
- To elevate our people's cultural level, through quality programming and classical music.

Taking into account the spread of Armenians throughout the world, the aim of Vem Radio has been to create a communication forum for all Armenians focused on their own unique culture. What does the Diaspora expect from Armenia? What can Armenia do for the Diaspora? We need to change the level and depth of communication between Armenia and the Diaspora. Spiritual maintenance and growth, family values, and national culture are not only essential for Armenia, but also for the Diaspora. These issues are the major items on the agenda of Vem Radio.

We would like to thank particularly our friends and colleagues. Without their kindness and generosity we would not

have been able to realize this vision. In the spiritual sphere of nation and culture, it takes serious effort to have an impact. Here, we are a small people with big challenges. We need nation-wide programs that address these challenges. Who will address these, if not people of insight and vision?

*Fr. Mesrop Aramian, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief*

Spirituality matters. The 21st century will not be one of oil, arms, economy, nor of science or ideology. It will be the century of spirit. Spirituality will be the most searched for resource; it will be the key to victory, especially for us Armenians. Our Christian spirituality is what defines us, it was the basis of our existence for centuries, and it continues to be so now.

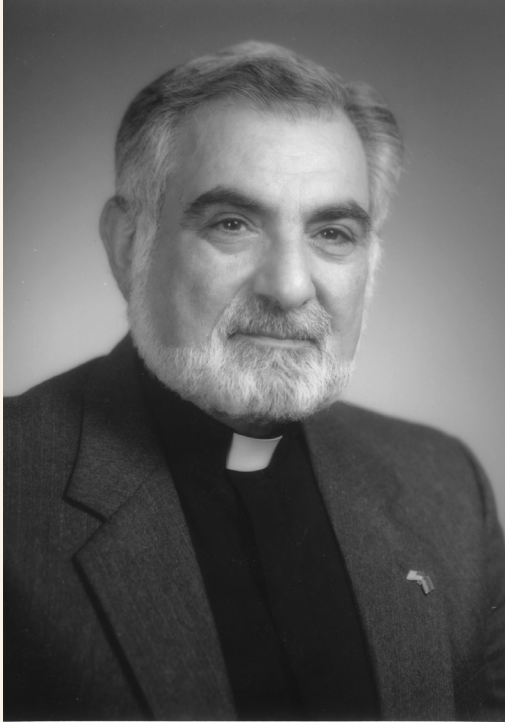
Vem attempts to provide this spirituality to every Armenian, trying to protect them globally by bridging the gap between our rich spiritual heritage and the current “distorted” reality of our nation. We believe that our strategy is effective, ensuring the success of our mission. Since Vem is positioned as an intellectual station, opinion shapers within society form the majority of our audience. We hope that the content we are providing will allow these individuals to become agents of change in Armenian society, creating islands of virtue upon which will be founded and erected the changing processes that will build a moral and prosperous Armenia.



*Manuk Hergnyan, Executive Director*

For more than three years, I have been in Armenia, a long way in space and time from Massachusetts, where my family lives. It has been an exciting time in my life, perhaps its most productive and certainly the most satisfying. To be involved in creating and building of the new society, emerging in the ancient land of our ancestors, is an experience in which few are privileged to participate.

The strength of a people is sustained by the depth of its spiritual character. No people can long survive without vision, without hope, without ideals. The viability of the Armenian people depends on our being rooted in the traditions of our shared



memories. Our future will be determined by how we relate this to the demands of our contemporary world. We can not live in the past. As Armenians we need to be part of a living process that grows and adapts to changing circumstances.

The mission of Radio Vem is to recover our tradition of faith and ethnic identity, that was eroded and almost eradicated during seventy years of an oppressive and alien ideology. To be authentic to this tradition and identity demands it to be rooted in that faith shared with us by our forefathers, that we be committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ handed on to us by them, that we be constantly renewed by the same mystery of faith, hope and love that inspired them. As a priest of the Armenian church, I rejoice in and am humbled by this opportunity to work with Radio Vem to rebuild, maintain and expand this identity of faith and culture that is our heritage as Armenians.

*Fr. Dajad Davidian, Board Member*

**Vem was established to provide spiritual protection and guidance for every Armenian household, in every country in the world, in the face of the forces of globalization, cultural diffusion, and assimila-**

## History – Fact Sheet

Date	Activity
August, 2000	Vem Radio was registered as a company, founded by Vem Charitable Association and Tufenkian Foundation
September, 2000	Vem Radio started an ambitious program with the development of the Gandzasar daily program by translating and adapting for radio broadcast the lives of saints and works of church fathers.
September, 2000	Vem Radio started translating and recording sharakans (Armenian Church hymns) at Yerevan studios
December, 2000	Vem Radio rented two premises for the radio and recording studios and started major renovations
September, 2001	State-of-the-art radio and recording equipment were delivered to the station
November, 2001	Vem Radio's broadcasting license was obtained
January 5, 2002	Vem Radio launched its experimental broadcasting
April 7, 2002	The official opening of Vem Radio took place at the Yerevan Chamber Music Hall with the participation of approximately 300 guests representing various

cultural, religious and business organizations.

- April –May, 2002 Vem Radio implemented an advertising campaign at major Armenian media outlets to raise awareness among potential listeners
- July, 2002 Vem Radio’s Board decided to create an Advisory Board to obtain important advice, as well as the expertise to network and secure funding for the station
- August, 2002 In collaboration with a local TV production studio, Vem Radio started a spiritual TV program with Archbishop Pargev Martirosian that airs on Prometheus TV
- August, 2002 Metanexus Institute awarded Vem Radio the prestigious Templeton Foundation grant to implement a 3-year program on science and religion
- September, 2002 Presentation of the 7th volume of the Gandzasar Theological Review at Vem Radio
- October, 2002 Presentation of Vem Radio in Los Angeles
- November, 2002 Vem Radio started broadcasting several programs to Karabagh and Vanadzor through local partners
- December, 2002 Another advertising campaign was launched
- December, 2002 Vem Radio launched its web site targeting the Diaspora
- February, 2003 Golos Armenii, the Russian language newspaper, started a series of articles based on Vem Radio’s ‘Values and Reality’ interview program with Fr. Mesrop Aramian
- April, 2003 Vem Radio launched its new recording studio
- May, 2003 Vem Radio started recording a 10 volume CD Anthology of Armenian Sacred Music in its new recording studio
- June, 2003 Presentation of Vem Radio in Philadelphia at Science and Religion conference
- June, 2003 Presentation of Vem Radio at Cambridge University



## Important Facts About Vem

Vem Radio is the first private non-profit media to be launched in Armenia. It broadcasts 24-hours/7 days a week, and reaches



70% of the population of Armenia.

For a broadcaster of classical music, it is imperative to have the highest standards of technical broadcasting to be able to provide a quality listening experience. To achieve this, Vem Radio uses state-of-the-art broadcasting and recording equipment, including a 500W transmitter produced by Harris Corporation, one of the leading producers of broadcasting equipment in the world.

Vem Radio is the only specialized classical station in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Moreover, Vem Radio is striving to provide only the best performances. Vem Radio is developing a huge library (35,000 pieces) of Armenian and international classical and sacred music, and has made the broadcasting process fully automated by re-recording the entire digital library including announcements and translations in Armenian.

Vem Radio's web site became the leading Armenian on-demand audio content provider on the web. The site contains a huge archive of programs already broadcast.

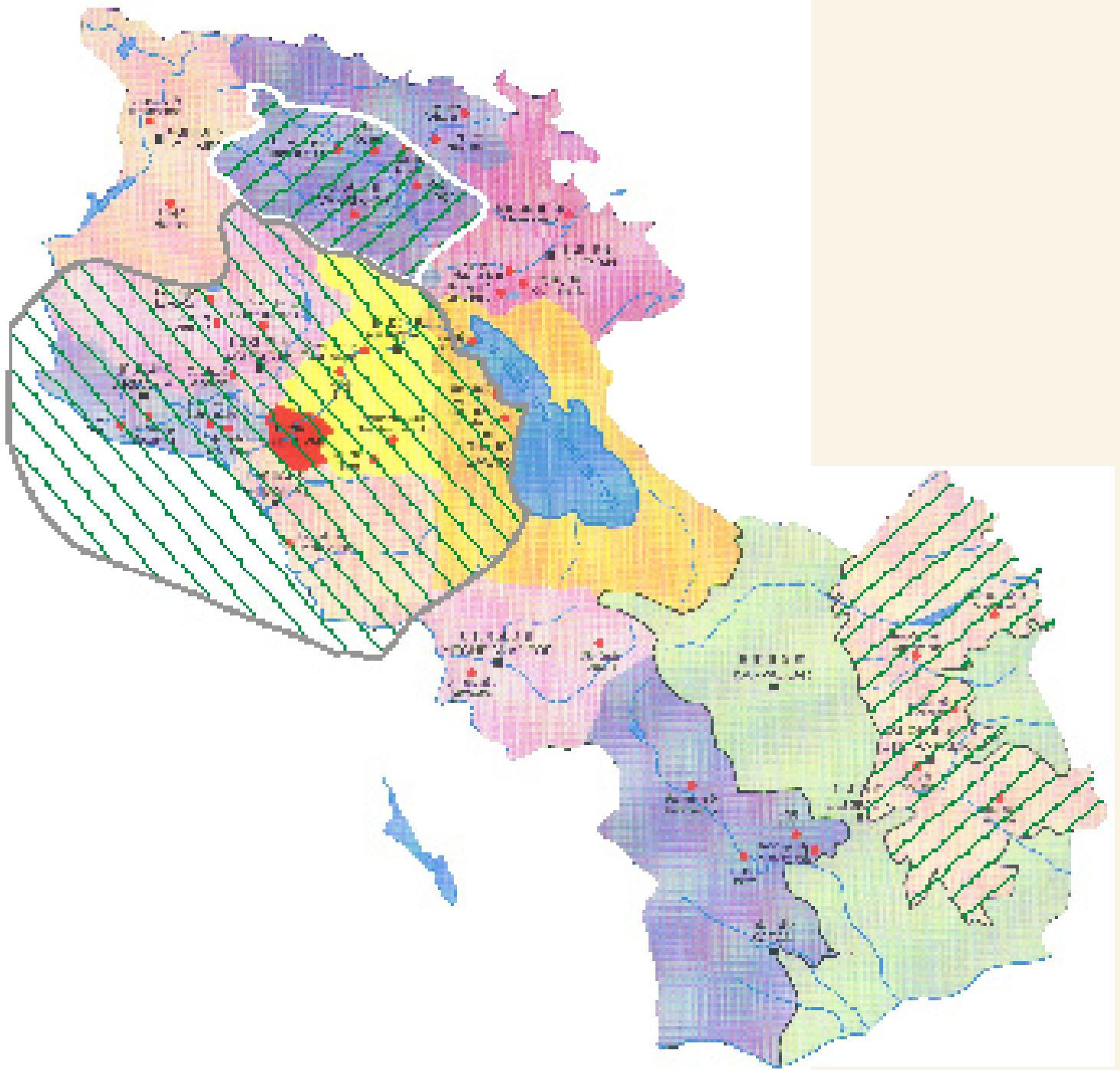
Our digital recording studio is one of the finest in Armenia and attracts some of the best talent in Armenia to record Armenian sacred and classical music. Our

goal is to create a complete digital library of Armenian spiritual music.

## Programs

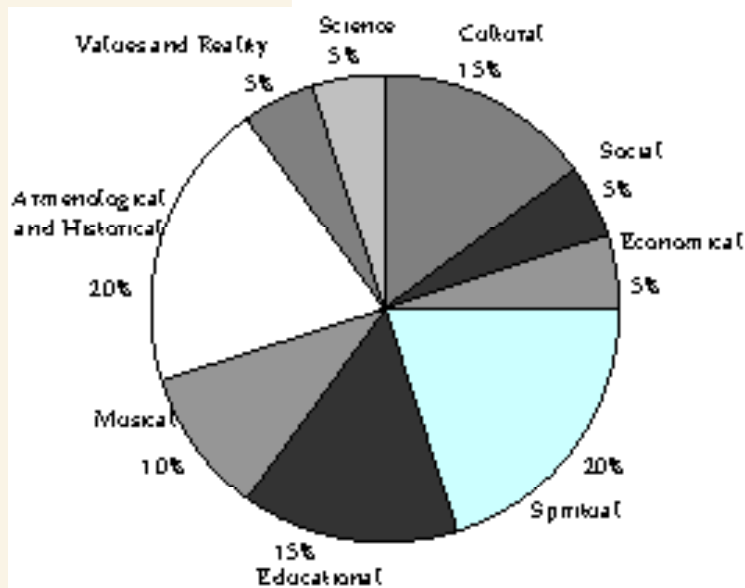
Vem Radio's programming concept is based on the core values of morality, devotion, patriotism and tradition. It incorporates several individual concepts into an innovative and coherent content: deep spirituality, classical music, cultural focus, and high intellectual standards.





Currently Vem Radio broadcasts 21 radio programs covering a wide range of topics. The *Gandzasar* daily program has become

a favorite daily companion for many people. It presents daily Bible readings according to the annual calendar of the Armenian Church, as well as the lives of saints and translated works of Church Fathers relating to the day's spiritual message. The primary content of the program is drawn from previously unpublished works that are translated from Classical Armenian (grabar), ancient Greek and other languages. As they are translated, they make their way to the airwaves. In response to audience requests, we started broadcasting the *Gandzasar* program in Russian at the beginning



of this year. The program is completely new, and is not just a repeat of the Armenian one. *Spiritual Discussions* receives the most responses and feedback from our listeners. It has become a live forum for discussion about many aspects of spiritual life. *Values and Reality* is a unique attempt to answer the sensitive questions of modern society from the viewpoint of Christianity, such as democracy, globalization, feminism, and human rights. *Catechism of Orthodox Faith* provides a complete teaching of the Armenian Church.

Leading Armenian artists, painters, musicians, poets, and cultural activist are voiced on the station's cultural shows. By covering aesthetic and intellectual issues, Vem Radio is filling a substantial gap that exists in the Armenian media. In addition to presenting Armenian culture, the station also provides a good vehicle for introducing the best pieces of world culture.

*Akunq radio-presentation* is fully devoted to Armenian issues. One of our objectives is to raise awareness about social problems such as poverty, drug addiction, prisons, orphans, elderly people, etc. These particular issues are covered by *Society and Problems*. A fundamental discussion of economic problems is pioneered by *Economy and Values*, which presents interviews with business leaders in Armenia and the Diaspora. The English language *Armenian Perspectives* program presents differing views of the Diaspora and non-Armenians living and working in Armenia. This program was launched three months ago and is the first English-language radio program produced in Armenia. We have plans to expand our programs in other languages, and make them

available to our Diasporan audience.

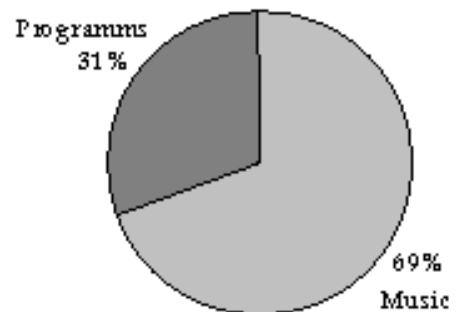
The station's programming policy is being changed and renewed constantly to meet the needs of the audience. Vem Radio encourages the journalistic community to propose new projects and ideas, and is in a constant search for better ways of disseminating its message.

## Programs of Vem Radio

1. "Gandzasar" daily program (Armenian Version), Fr Mesrop Aramian
2. "Gandzasar" daily program (Russian version), Fr Mesrop Aramian
3. "Catechism of Orthodox Faith", Fr Mesrop Aramian
4. "Spiritual Discussions", Fr. Dajad Davidian, Fr Mesrop Aramian, Manuk Hergnyan, Ara Nalchajian
5. "Economy and Values", Manuk Hergnyan
6. "Values & Reality", Fr Mesrop Aramian, Arsen Yalanouzyan
7. "Pages of Armenian History", Edward Danielyan
8. "Akunk" Armenological Program, Hasmik Goulakyan
9. "Society & Problems", Anahit Hovhannissyan
10. "Armenian Composers and Performers", Valentin Tovmasyan
11. "World Classical Music", Daniel Yerajisht
12. "Talk Show on Art", Vazgen Ghukasyan
13. "Introduction to the Bible", Grigor Darbinian
14. "Zatik" children's catechism program, Siranush Avetisian
15. "Voskeporik" Educational Program, Aida Nersessian
16. "Nor Ghevondeank", Edward Khald
17. "Hour of Fairy Tales", Sarkis Najarian & Aida Nersessian
18. "Science and Religion", Fr. Mesrop Aramian, Ara Nalchajian, Arsen Yalanouzyan
19. "Spiritual Discussions" (live), Fr. Dajad Davidian, Fr. Mesrop Aramian
20. "Armenian Perspectives", Tamar Haytayan
21. "Vardanank" program, Fr. Mesrop Aramian

## Impact

Since the independence of Armenia, there has been an increased awareness and interest in becoming reacquainted with traditional values and preserving national identity. Generally, Vem Radio's audience comprises varied intellectual groups,



but there are specific groups of people who form well-defined segments of the station's audience. These are individuals who appreciate "quality" culture and music, individuals interested in spirituality, the intellectuals, and committed activist youth. Generally, the listeners can be referred to as shapers of opinion in society. The estimated number of our weekly audience is 40,000 people, with a core listenership of 22,000.

*I greet the spiritual works of Vem Radio, which raise issues related to life and are directed towards the greater mass. With the current difficulties we face, when evil powers try to turn life into chaos, people long for peace, beauty, and light. All of this, reflected in the best works of art, gives hope to people, and by connecting the audience with eternal values, Vem Radio is realizing its noble mission.*

Edward Mirzoyan, Composer, Professor

*There are a few things in life which are able to penetrate the soul of a person. Vem Radio is one of those things, with its programs of rich content and working professionalism. Vem Radio is a source of communication of true values in the life of our nation. I know of a listener whose friends cannot call him during the broadcasts of the spiritual programs of Vem.*

Daniel Yerajisht, Musicologist, Conductor

*In the life of a person, a year is a short time. This is also true for a newly founded organization. But in a very short time, Vem Radio has found its way naturally into the souls of many people. I am very impressed by the quality of the programs, the educated level of discourse, informative shows, and brilliant music. For a small state such as ours, it is necessary to strive for the best in order to achieve something of merit. I am glad that Vem Radio has been able to make its voice heard in other countries, thereby helping to make us heard and known by wider audiences.*

Henrik Igitian, Art critic

*In the polluted ocean of musical mediocrity and proselytizing, Vem Radio is a pure and life-giving gulf stream.*

Rafael Khazarian, Physicist, Doctor of Sciences, Professor

*First and foremost, my inner peace, strength, and sustenance come from Vem Radio. May everyone experience what I feel when I listen to the Christian word and spiritual music of Vem. In this fast-paced life of our modern times, we should not neglect or take for granted these vital needs of human life.*

Smbat Lputian, Chess Grandmaster

*Vem Radio, with its fine reputation, looms like a huge rock in our society today. Its spiritual and musical programs come from pure sources and are enriching the lives of the Armenian people.*

Tsovak Avakyan, Biophysicist, Doctor of Sciences

*Many people listen to Vem Radio, some for its high quality classical music, and others who are interested in history. I listen to the spiritual programs of Vem, which awaken the conscience of man, penetrate the heart, and lead towards repentance.*

Maurice Chakryan, Mere listener

## Working at Vem

Vem Radio cultivates its success through a dedicated team of professionals. This distinctive mission calls for unique skills and characteristics from its workforce. Only through the fusion of professionalism and dedication can a necessary base be established for implementing undertakings such as those championed by Vem Radio.

*First and foremost, as an Armenian Christian, Vem Radio is, for me, a deeply spiritual school. It is also the road of self purification and self recognition. In my creative work, I have not come across anything as unique, tasteful, dedicated, and most importantly, intellectual and spiritual, with universal qualities, all in colorful harmony. Vem Radio is peace and comfort for the soul.*

Sarkis Najarian, Announcer



## Future

Vem Radio's long-term target audience is each and every Armenian. That is why Vem Radio strives for continuous expansion and attaining new ways of disseminating its spiritual message among as many people as possible. It has three large-scale projects to be realized in the next two years:

1. Re-broadcasting to all the regions of Armenia and Karabagh.

**Thirty people are currently working at the station.**

The project requires \$87,000 as start-up costs and \$28,000 as annual operating costs.

2. Publication of the Sharaknots (Armenian Church Hymnal) and release of 10 volumes of CDs. This will contain all Armenian sharakans (ancient sacred music) in Western notation with English transliteration. Based on this, Vem Radio will record sharakans with the best local and international choirs, probably in partnership with a recognized record label for global distribution. The project calls for \$24,000 for the publication of Sharaknots and \$7,000 for the release of each CD.
3. Launching a TV studio. It is planned to develop several TV shows on contemporary issues presented with spiritual focus. To launch this project we need basic TV equipment costing approximately \$58,000.

## Advisory Board

The mission of Vem Radio's Advisory Board is to secure support and counsel for its operations. It is comprised of individuals who have provided outstanding financial and moral support, advice and networking.

# Financial Reports

Vem Radio came into being thanks to Tufenkian Foundation's initial grant. Currently its work is made possible by the continuing generous support of the Tufenkian Foundation as well as other Armenian Diasporan individuals and international organizations.

## REVENUES

### 2000

#### *Grants and Donations*

Tufenkian Foundation	44250
Carolyn Mugar	20000
Noubar and Anna Afeyan Foundation	10000
Joe Kouyoumjian	5000
Marine Aramian	5000
Vartan Gregorian	5000
<i>Interest income</i>	623
<b><i>Total Revenues</i></b>	<b>89873</b>

### 2001

#### *Grants and Donations*

Tufenkian Foundation	178608
Marine Aramian	8000
Fr. Dajad Davidian	5000
<i>Interest income</i>	952
<b><i>Total Revenues</i></b>	<b>192560</b>

### 2002

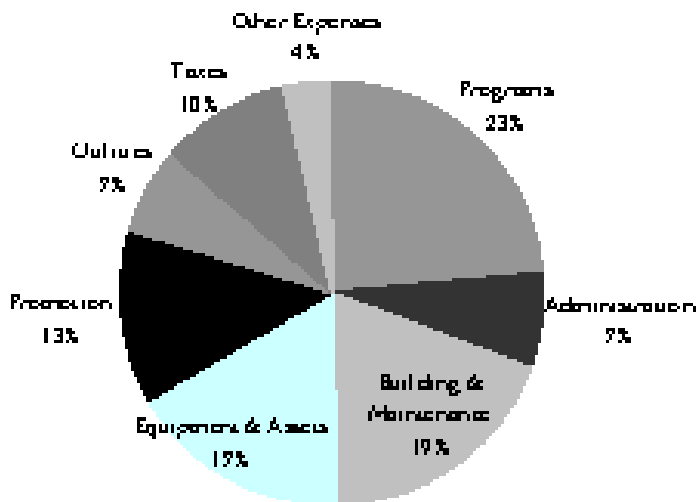
#### *Grants and Donations*

Tufenkian Foundation	81782
Carolyn Mugar	20000
Noubar and Anna Afeyan Foundation	12490
Dr. Sarkis Mesrobian	7000
Metanexus Institute	5000
Antranig Berberian	3000
Havat Fund	1000
Fr. Karekin Kasparian	300
Barlow Der-Mugerdechian	100
<i>Interest income</i>	350
<b><i>Total Revenues</i></b>	<b>131022</b>

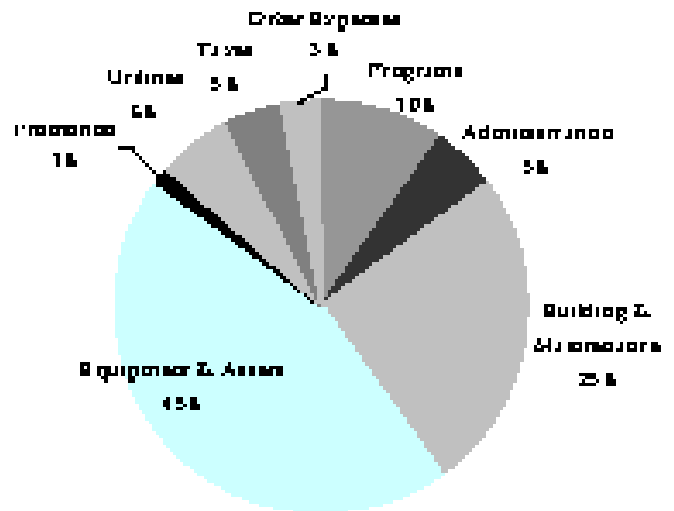
During 2000-2001 Vem Radio has received research and professional services on a volunteer basis as well as in-kind contributions valued at \$75,000 which are not reflected in the statement.

## EXPENSES

	2000	2001	2002
Programs	7020	22772	35385
Administration	2170	11808	13320
Building & Maintenance	5545	57510	9105
Equipment & Assets	5000	103785	28830
Promotion	3995	3100	16375
Utilities	1995	13515	12570
Taxes	2965	10355	14460
Other Expenses	1075	6960	9905
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<i>29765</i>	<i>229805</i>	<i>139950</i>



2001



2002

