

# Education and Recruitment of Gifted High-School Students in Armenia

Gagik SHMAVONYAN <sup>a,1</sup>, Lili KARAPETYAN <sup>b</sup>, Gayane SHMAVONYAN <sup>a</sup>,  
Nelli YEGHIAZARYAN <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *State Engineering University of Armenia*

<sup>b</sup> *Yerevan State University, Armenia*

<sup>c</sup> *Yerevan State Medical University, Armenia*

**Abstract.** There is an urgent need for the implementation of a systematic search for talents, their recruitment and motivation in our country nowadays. The Board of Armenia-Great Britain society (which is a non-governmental organization) undertook the difficult and at the same time rewarding task of finding ways of recruiting and educating gifted high-school students. The lectures delivered by scientists and scholars cover different scientific disciplines, such as natural sciences, ecological issues, as well as language problems. Attracting gifted students to scientific research will provide a steady basis for the improvement of science in our country.

**Keywords.** Scientific research, gifted students, education, recruitment, lectures

## Introduction

The modern world has been changing very rapidly in the recent decade. The issues of science and education are of utmost importance in our country nowadays.

The states and nations of the world should be able to catch up with the ongoing changes and developments, meet the increasing requirements and challenges of contemporary life, and respond to the various events adequately and directly. The reforms in the field of science and education can play a key role enabling people to feel the pulse of the life and react to the modern developments in conformity.

## 1. Motivation

A social consciousness of what science is about is a fundamental need of these times. Substantial and targeted education and advanced science can and should be the starting point and base of our society, thus being the pledge of the success in our state's home affairs as well as its activity in the international arena.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: Gagik Shmavonyan, State Engineering University of Armenia, 105 Teryan street, Yerevan, 0009, Armenia; E-mail: gshmavon@yahoo.com

The young generation especially should be well informed about the basics, the methods and the applications of sciences to be able to make informed choices in the future. Today's students represent the rising generation of future scientists.

In our country promotion of science is actual especially among students at the age of 15 and 17, so around high-school student age. It is very important that students should be introduced to scientific research at this age. In that case they are more likely to stay in the field they have chosen in future. Many high-school students, their parents and graduate students, who want to continue their study further are very often not oriented how to choose their further profession and they need advice from renowned scientists from universities, academies of sciences, research institutions and industry specialists.

As there are not enough governmental funds to support programs aimed towards revealing gifted students, the Board of Armenia-Great Britain society (which is a non-governmental organization) undertook the difficult and at the same time rewarding task of recruiting and educating gifted high-school students. The members of the society, (which are mostly University professors and industry professionals) and invited speakers worked on voluntary terms.

## **2. Means of fostering talent development**

Being focused on practical advances and practical knowledge of scientifically gifted high-school students and having reviewed the programs offered at the 2004 NATO-UNESCO Advanced Research Workshop on science education: Talent Recruitment and Public Understanding, as well as the programs widely promoted to students in Armenia, we organize

- Weekend Scientific Seminars and Lectures
- Science Clubs
- Olympiads and Other Competitions
- Meetings
- Workshops
- Intensive Courses for Students
- Discussions with Students' Parents
- Teacher Training Courses

It might be useful to take a harder look at the advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses of each of the above mentioned items and make adjustments. Some of them have been to the point and successful for such a long time that change is not viewed as a valuable pursuit.

We are trying to foster the youth scientific life in our republic through the above mentioned events, which are going to be regular and open to everybody engaged or interested in the spheres of our activity. To this end we are planning to publish a periodical of scientific papers of young researchers engaged in various fields. We are

really firm to the scientific and educational needs of the young scholars and we are open to any constructive national or international cooperation.

Among the scientists who accept the students in their laboratories and hold lectures and seminars for them are lecturers and professors from different higher educational establishments of Armenia, scientists from the academies of sciences, as well as members of various industrial organizations.

The talks and lectures cover different scientific disciplines, such as natural sciences (especially physics and astronomy), ecological issues, as well as language problems.

## **2. Results and future plans**

The high-school students who participated in the above mentioned events were all very enthusiastic and active during the lectures asking a number of questions which were quite to the point. The practical experiments were more exciting for the students because they were carried out by the students themselves since the best way to develop creative abilities of students is to provide them with opportunities to do creative activities ( first of all scientific research, which is a creative activity) as part of their schooling.

This is, of course, another indication of success. We think we have achieved our goal since we managed to contribute to the search for and professional improvement of high-school talents. Therefore, we think that it is in the interest of the society to provide talented students with the opportunity to participate in such-like events, which can be more structured, developed, offered at different levels, perhaps including high-school science teachers as well in the future.

The questionnaire, which was filled by the participants allowed us to improve our activities helping to choose further scientific topics and lecturers.

We also gained some experience in finding ways to educate and attract scientifically gifted high-school students to science, to help them stand out among their fellow-students and to find friends among students with the same scope of interests.

In future we will make more efforts to recruit more and more talented high-school students by organizing scientific conferences, meetings, establishing and strengthening ties with high-school students in other countries, in this way fostering exchange of experience and providing a steady basis for the improvement of science in our country.