

## Park Gala Benefit Celebrates Immigrants’ Contributions to the US

AUGUST 29, 2019



BOSTON —Celebrating Contributions of Our Nation’s Immigrants, a gala benefit on Wednesday, September 18, at the InterContinental Hotel Boston, will benefit the Endowed Fund for Care of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Dr. Noubar Afeyan, founder and CEO of Flagship Pioneering, is the evening’s honoree.

An extraordinary gift to the City of Boston and Commonwealth of Massachusetts from the Armenian-American community, the park is “gem of The Greenway” (Boston Globe, 2012) engaging people from all nations, all ethnicities, all ages, to unite and come together on common ground.

The benefit celebrates the immigrant experience and all who have come to our Massachusetts shores, reestablishing themselves in new and different ways, consistent with a key theme of the Park.

Afeyan is a remarkable leader and philanthropist, whose life journey has positively impacted individuals, businesses and cultures in the US, in Armenia and around the world.

Benefactors of the park from the outset, Noubar Afeyan and his wife, Anna, have endowed the park’s Fund for Public Programs, which annually supports the Genocide Commemoration and the Welcome Reception for New Citizens at the Park following their Naturalization Ceremony at Faneuil Hall.

The evening will also shine a light on the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, the philanthropic vision of founders Dr. Noubar Afeyan, Dr. Vartan Gregorian and Ruben Vardanyan, and its Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity, given to an individual for the exceptional impact their actions have had on preserving human life and advancing humanitarian causes.

During the evening, at Afeyan’s suggestion, organizations serving immigrants and refugees will be recognized. These organizations include the Greater Boston Immigrant Defense Fund, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, International Institute of New England, Irish International Immigrant Center and RefugePoint.

Afeyan has dedicated his career to improving the human condition by systematically creating science-based innovations that serve as the foundation for startup companies. At Flagship Pioneering, which he founded in 1999, Noubar has created an enterprise where entrepreneurially minded scientists invent seemingly unreasonable solutions to challenges facing human health and sustainability. They begin by asking “What if?” and iterate toward the unexpected answer “It turns out,” resulting in the creation of first-in-category companies with significant impact.

“The entrepreneurial scientists and professionals who work at Flagship Pioneering are at the heart of everything we invent and build,” said Afeyan. “Innovation is a team activity, and life-changing companies are built by creative collaborators.”



Armenian Heritage Park

Flagship has fostered the development of more than 100 scientific ventures resulting in \$30 billion in aggregate value, thousands of patents and patent applications, and more than 50 drugs in clinical development.

During his career as inventor, entrepreneur, and CEO, he has cofounded and helped build more than 40 life science and technology startups. Prior to founding Flagship Pioneering, he was the founder and CEO of PerSeptive Biosystems, a leader in bio-instrumentation that grew to \$100 million in annual revenues. After PerSeptive’s acquisition by Perkin Elmer/Applera Corporation in 1998, he became senior vice president and chief business officer of Applera, where he initiated and oversaw the creation of Celera Genomics.

He serves on the boards of a number of public and private Flagship companies, including Moderna and Evelo Biosciences, where he is chairman, Rubius Therapeutics, Seres Therapeutics, and Kaleido Biosciences. Previously, he was a member of the founding team,

director, and investor in highly successful ventures including Chemgenics Pharmaceuticals (acquired by Millennium Pharmaceuticals), Color Kinetics (acquired by Philips), Adnexus Therapeutics (acquired by Bristol-Myers Squibb), and Affinova (acquired by AC Nielsen).

He entered biotechnology during its emergence as an academic field and industry, completing his doctoral work in biochemical engineering at MIT in 1987. He has written numerous scientific publications and is the inventor of more than 80 patents. He is a lecturer at Harvard Business School and from 2000 to 2016 was a senior lecturer at MIT's Sloan School of Management. He teaches and speaks around the world on topics ranging from entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic development to biological engineering, new medicines, and renewable energy.

Noubar's commitment to improving the human condition through science and business goes hand in hand with social investments and a global humanitarian initiative. Together with his partners, he has launched philanthropic projects including the IDeA Foundation, UWC Dilijan School, 100 LIVES, and the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity to raise awareness of the world's most pressing humanitarian problems. He is a member of the Corporation of MIT (the Institute's governing body) and a member of the board of trustees of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Afeyan was born in Beirut to Armenian parents in 1962, did his undergraduate work at McGill University in Montreal, and completed his PhD in biochemical engineering at MIT in 1987. A passionate advocate of the contributions of immigrants to economic and scientific progress, he received the Golden Door Award in 2017 from the International Institute of New England, in honor of his outstanding contributions to American society as a US citizen of foreign birth. He was also awarded a Great Immigrant honor from the Carnegie Corporation in 2016, received a Technology Pioneer award from the World Economic Forum in 2012, and was presented with the Ellis Island Medal of Honor in 2008.

Advance reservations for Celebrating Contributions are required. Reservations may be made online at [ArmenianHeritagePark.org/Support](http://ArmenianHeritagePark.org/Support).