

Armenians march toward recognition

Students and young adults travel to Fresno to join 215-mile walk that aims to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide.

By Jackson Bell
The Leader

When Shaghik Aghakhani first asked her parents if she could join a symbolic march that spotlights the Armenian Genocide's anniversary, they didn't want her walking several miles a day through the Central Valley.

But for the Burbank 17-year-old, being a part of the event was just too important to back down. So one day she sat her parents down and explained just how much it meant for her to be part of the 19-day, 215-mile

trek from Fresno to Sacramento.

Though still worried about her safety, her parents reluctantly agreed to let her go, Shaghik said.

"I had to do this because I didn't know in what other way I could help the Armenian community," she said. "I have to relieve the pains of not getting recognition by walking.

"I hope our government takes the side of human rights and acknowledges what happened, because I don't want something like the Armenian Genocide to ever happen again."

Shaghik was among more than 40 area teens and young adults of Armenian descent who boarded rental vans Friday afternoon in Glendale and drove north of Fresno to join others already participating in the "March for

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