



FINAL REPORT

JUNE 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YOU BELONG HERE

These three words became the heartbeat of the AMOT CHE Podcast Series.

They appeared in our branding. They framed every episode. They were repeated at the beginning and end of conversations. They appeared on social media, on our website, and at our community events. But more importantly, they expressed the reason this project existed in the first place. **For many LGBTQ+ Armenians, belonging is not something that can be taken for granted.**

Across generations, many queer and transgender Armenians have navigated the intersecting pressures of cultural expectations, religious traditions, family obligations, mental health stigma, and societal discrimination. For some, these experiences create isolation. For others, they create silence. Many grow up without ever hearing another LGBTQ+ Armenian openly discuss their identity, their mental health, or their journey toward healing.

The result can be profound loneliness. **AMOT CHE was created to challenge that loneliness.**

Named after the Armenian phrase meaning "Without Shame," the project was designed as a culturally responsive mental health initiative dedicated to uplifting LGBTQ+ Armenian voices, reducing stigma, increasing awareness of mental health resources, and creating opportunities for connection, healing, and belonging.

Through authentic conversations about identity, faith, recovery, healing, gender, family, culture, and resilience, the series invited LGBTQ+ Armenians to share their stories openly and honestly, many for the first time in a public forum.

The project was developed through a partnership between Break The Binary LLC, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), and Lara Vanian-Green, creator and host of Armenian Enough, a widely respected podcast dedicated to LGBTQ+ Armenian storytelling and visibility. Together, we sought to create something that extended beyond traditional mental health outreach.

We wanted to create a space where LGBTQ+ Armenians could see themselves reflected. A space where they could hear stories that sounded like their own. **A space that reminded them they were never alone.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHY THIS PROJECT MATTERS

Los Angeles is home to one of the largest Armenian diasporas in the world. The Armenian community has long demonstrated resilience, cultural pride, and a deep commitment to preserving language, traditions, faith, and family connections across generations. **Yet conversations surrounding mental health often remain difficult, particularly when those conversations intersect with LGBTQ+ identity.**

Many Armenian families continue to navigate longstanding cultural stigmas surrounding mental health. Seeking therapy, discussing emotional struggles, or accessing mental health services may be viewed as private matters rather than topics for public conversation. For LGBTQ+ Armenians, these challenges can become even more complex as individuals navigate additional fears of rejection, misunderstanding, discrimination, or exclusion.

At the same time, LGBTQ+ communities continue to experience disproportionately high rates of mental health distress, anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation due to societal stigma and discrimination.

For LGBTQ+ Armenians, these realities often overlap. The challenge is not simply finding mental health support. The challenge is finding support that understands the full complexity of their lived experience. Many LGBTQ+ Armenians are searching for spaces where they do not have to explain their culture. Others are searching for spaces where they do not have to explain their identity. Too often, finding both at the same time feels impossible.

AMOT CHE was created to help bridge that gap.

The project emerged during a particularly significant moment within Los Angeles County. Public debates surrounding LGBTQ+ inclusion in schools, particularly within Glendale Unified School District, placed LGBTQ+ Armenians at the center of highly visible and often painful conversations about identity, culture, religion, and belonging.

For many LGBTQ+ Armenians, these debates felt deeply personal. Community members found themselves watching two important parts of their identity collide in public view: their connection to Armenian culture on one side, and their right to safety, dignity, and visibility on the other.

In this climate, AMOT CHE became more than a podcast. It became a response to silence. It became a response to shame. It became a response to the growing need for culturally grounded mental health conversations led by trusted voices from within the community itself.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A VISION LARGER THAN A PODCAST

The original contract called for the production of 24 weekly podcast episodes facilitated in both English and Armenian.

As project planning progressed, the team worked closely with LACDMH to adapt the format to better fit the available timeline while preserving the project's overall goals and intended impact.

Rather than producing 24 individual interviews, **the project evolved into a series of 8 in-depth roundtable conversations featuring multiple guests per episode, along with 2 additional bonus episodes created beyond the original scope.**

This adjustment ultimately strengthened the project.

The roundtable format allowed participants to engage directly with one another, identify shared experiences, challenge assumptions, and build upon each other's perspectives in real time. Instead of hearing isolated stories, listeners experienced authentic community dialogue.

Across the series, **22 LGBTQ+ Armenian guests shared their experiences** as therapists, faith leaders, activists, artists, drag performers, storytellers, community organizers, people in recovery, transgender advocates, and mental health professionals.

Together, they explored **24 mental health topics and themes** including:

- Shame and stigma
- Spirituality and alternative healing
- Addiction and recovery
- Activism and drag performance
- School inclusion and community conflict
- Transgender identity
- Faith and religion
- Storytelling and visibility

Some conversations focused on pain. Others focused on joy. Many focused on both.

The result was not simply a collection of podcast episodes; **It was a living archive of LGBTQ+ Armenian experiences, perspectives, and resilience.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEASURING IMPACT

While the stories shared through AMOT CHE are difficult to quantify, the project's reach demonstrates a clear community appetite for these conversations.

By June 2026, the series had generated **693 combined Spotify streams and YouTube views**, nearly seven times the original audience goal established within the contract.

The project's dedicated website, **AMOTCHE.com**, welcomed **663 visitors and 604 unique users from 47 states across the country**. Social media outreach on the podcast's Instagram profile **@amot_che** reached **more than 50,000 individuals** and cultivated a growing online community of **more than 300 followers**.

Perhaps even more significant than the numbers themselves was what they represented.

Each view, stream, website visit, and social media interaction reflected someone seeking connection.

Someone seeking information.

Someone seeking representation.

Someone seeking reassurance that they were not alone.

Throughout the project, participants repeatedly shared a common sentiment:

They felt seen.

They felt understood.

They felt represented.

And for many, they felt something that had long been missing: **A sense of belonging.**

That belonging would ultimately become the project's greatest success and would culminate in a community celebration that brought LGBTQ+ Armenians together not only online, but face-to-face.

And for one evening in June 2026, the message at the center of AMOT CHE became tangible:

You belong here.

PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

CONVERSATIONS WE WERE NEVER SUPPOSED TO HAVE

"Welcome to AMOT CHE, where we speak with LGBTQ+ Armenians in Los Angeles and hear their journeys of identity, resilience, culture, and community... You belong here."

Every episode began with an invitation. An invitation to listen. An invitation to reflect. An invitation to participate in conversations that many LGBTQ+ Armenians had spent years searching for but rarely found.

For generations, topics such as mental health, addiction, sexuality, gender identity, faith, and family conflict have often remained difficult conversations within Armenian communities. While progress continues to be made, many LGBTQ+ Armenians still grow up without hearing public discussions that acknowledge the complexity of their lived experiences.

AMOT CHE was created to change that.

Rather than speaking about LGBTQ+ Armenians, the project centered LGBTQ+ Armenians speaking for themselves. The result was a series of conversations that were honest, vulnerable, joyful, challenging, and deeply human.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST

From the beginning, **one of the greatest strengths of AMOT CHE was the involvement of Lara Vanian-Green.**

As the creator and host of *Armenian Enough*, Lara had already spent years cultivating trust within the LGBTQ+ Armenian community. Through storytelling, advocacy, and community engagement, she had built meaningful relationships with many of the individuals who would ultimately participate in the podcast series.

That trust mattered. Mental health conversations require vulnerability. Sharing personal experiences related to addiction, family rejection, faith, gender identity, recovery, or shame can be difficult under any circumstances. Sharing those experiences publicly can feel even more daunting.



PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

Because of Lara's reputation and longstanding community relationships, guests consistently expressed feeling comfortable, respected, and supported throughout the recording process.

Post-recording survey results reflected this overwhelmingly positive experience:

<i>Survey Statement</i>	<i>Average Rating (Out of 5)</i>
Participating in this podcast felt meaningful and aligned with my values/work	5.00
I felt comfortable and respected during the recording process	4.96
Lara facilitated a thoughtful and engaging discussion	4.96
I enjoyed being a guest on AMOT CHE	4.91
The conversation effectively represented LGBTQ+ Armenian issues	4.91
I felt adequately prepared and supported before recording	4.87

Most notably, 100% of respondents rated their participation as meaningful and aligned with their values and work.

These numbers reflect something that cannot easily be measured: **trust**. Guests were not simply appearing on a podcast. They were helping create a resource for a community they care deeply about.

BUILDING A LIVING ARCHIVE

The original project envisioned 24 individual podcast episodes released over approximately six months.

As planning progressed, the project team worked collaboratively with LACDMH to adapt the format to better align with available production timelines while preserving the project's goals.

The result was a more dynamic and community-centered approach.

PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

Rather than producing 24 separate interviews, AMOT CHE organized guests and topics into 8 in-depth roundtable conversations featuring multiple participants per episode. This format allowed guests to respond directly to one another, identify shared experiences, and engage in meaningful dialogue across perspectives.

The revised structure ultimately featured:

- **8 Core Episodes**
- **2 Bonus Episodes**
- **22 Unique Guests**
- **24+ Mental Health Topics Covered**
- Recording Period: March to May 2026
- Release Period: May to June 2026
- Episodes in English with Armenian Captions (YouTube)



Rather than feeling like a collection of interviews, the series became a conversation across an entire community. Each episode added another chapter to a larger story about identity, resilience, healing, and belonging.

EXPLORING THE MANY DIMENSIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health was the foundation of every episode, but the conversations extended far beyond clinical discussions. Guests explored the social, cultural, spiritual, and emotional factors that shape wellbeing within LGBTQ+ Armenian communities.

Together, the series tackled topics that are rarely discussed publicly through a specifically Armenian and LGBTQ+ lens.

Overview of Core Episodes:

1. Navigating Shame in Armenian Culture	5. GUSD and the Battle Over Inclusivity
2. Spirituality & Alternative Healing	6. The Trans Experience
3. Activism Through Drag	7. God, Faith, and the Armenian Church
4. Addiction & Recovery	8. The Importance of Telling Our Stories

PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

EPISODE ONE: NAVIGATING SHAME IN ARMENIAN CULTURE

Therapists explored the impact of stigma, silence, religion, family expectations, and generational trauma while highlighting pathways toward healing, visibility, and acceptance.

Featured Guests:

- **Seta Haig**, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services
- **Natalene Barbarian**, LMFT & Sex Therapist
- **Jean Donabedian**, Noor Therapy + Wellness

[Click here to access the episode](#)

EPISODE TWO: SPIRITUALITY & ALTERNATIVE HEALING

Guests discussed navigating shame within Armenian communities by using ancestral healing, body-based wellness practices, spirituality, and reclaiming both culture and queerness as sources of strength.

Featured Guests:

- **Armen Menechyan**, Somatic Therapy Practitioner
- **Taline Andonian**, Licensed Clinical Psychologist
- **Jean Donabedian**, Noor Therapy + Wellness

[Click here to access the episode](#)

EPISODE THREE: ACTIVISM THROUGH DRAG

An Armenian drag queen and drag king shared how performance can challenge stereotypes, celebrate identity, transform traditions and iconography, and create visibility for future generations.

Featured Guests:

- **Anoush Ellah**, Armenian Drag Pop Princess
- **VERA!**, Armenian-American Nonbinary Drag King

[Click here to access the episode](#)

PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

EPISODE FOUR: ADDICTION & RECOVERY

Participants discussed an often isolating issue: substance use. They discussed survival, recovery, stigma, family relationships, and the importance of breaking silence around addiction.

Featured Guests:

- **Armen Youssefians**, LMFT from Tehran, Iran
- **Zari Esaian**, Armenian-American from New York
- **Bennett James Martin**, Artist & Performer in LA

[Click here to access the episode](#)

EPISODE FIVE: GUSD & THE BATTLE OVER INCLUSIVITY

Community leaders reflected on the Glendale school inclusion debates and the emotional impact these public conflicts had on LGBTQ+ Armenians.

Featured Guests:

- **Taline Arsenian**, Glendale Teachers Association
- **Vic Gerami**, Truth and Accountability League
- **Shant Jaltorossian**, LACRC Armenian Assembly
- **Hasmig Minassian**, Berkeley High School Teacher

[Click here to access the episode](#)

EPISODE SIX: THE TRANS EXPERIENCE

In this powerful episode of Amot Che, trans Armenians share deeply personal stories about identity, survival, and belonging within a culture shaped by tradition, family expectations, and patriarchal social structures.

Featured Guests:

- **Jean Donabedian**, Noor Therapy + Wellness
- **Rudy Akbarian**, Armenian-American Veteran
- **Arev Tovmasyan**, Drag King, Artist, Event Producer

[Click here to access the episode](#)

PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

EPISODE SEVEN: GOD, FAITH & THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

Two Armenian clergy members explored the complex relationship between Christianity, Armenian identity and LGBTQ+ belonging. Topics included faith, spirituality, belonging, and the possibility of creating more affirming religious spaces.

Featured Guests:

- **Rev. Tory V. Topjian**, Senior Minister MCC & UCC
- **Julie Hoplamazian**, Priest, Faith on Pointe

[Click here to access the episode](#)

EPISODE EIGHT: THE IMPORTANCE OF TELLING OUR STORIES

This episode explored storytelling as an act of survival, healing, and visibility for queer Armenians. Through personal stories and honest conversation, the episode highlights the impact of represented in art, film, music, activism, and each other.

Featured Guests:

- **Lillian Avedian**, Nashville Banner Education Writer
- **Taleen Voskuni**, Armenian-American Author

[Click here to access the episode](#)

In addition to the core series, Lara independently created **two bonus episodes** further expanding the project's impact and preserving additional stories for the community:

INTIMATE PORTRAIT: MELANIE MORADI

Melanie Moradi, a pansexual Armenian entrepreneur whose journey of self-discovery led her not only to Armenia but towards an unexpected love, joins Lara to explore love, identity, visibility, and the courage it takes to build an authentic life while honoring one's Armenian roots.

INTIMATE PORTRAIT: HRAYR VARAZ

Queer Armenian linguist **Hrayr Varaz** joins Lara to explore how language shapes identity, belonging, and the way we understand ourselves. The conversation examines efforts to expand and modernize Armenian vocabulary so LGBTQ+ Armenians can speak authentically about their lives.

PODCAST DEVELOPMENT

MORE THAN INFORMATION

One of the most remarkable aspects of AMOT CHE was that the conversations never felt limited to education alone.

The episodes provided information. They provided resources. They increased awareness of mental health services and support systems.

But they also offered something much more personal: **They offered recognition.**

Listeners heard:

- Therapists discussing shame they had experienced themselves.
- Faith leaders discussing inclusion.
- Transgender Armenians talking openly about survival and joy.
- Artists, activists, drag performers, and people in recovery describing experiences that many listeners had never heard reflected publicly before.

For some listeners, these conversations provided new information. For others, they provided validation. For many, they provided both.

The series demonstrated that mental health is not separate from culture, faith, family, identity, or community. It is woven through all of them.

And by creating space for those conversations to happen openly, AMOT CHE helped transform experiences that are often carried in isolation into stories that could be shared, witnessed, and understood.

In doing so, the podcast accomplished something powerful:

It reminded LGBTQ+ Armenians that their stories matter. And that they deserve to be heard.

POSTING & MARKETING

BUILDING A HOME ONLINE

One of the central goals of AMOT CHE was not simply to create content: It was to create connection. From the beginning, AMOT CHE was designed to be more than a podcast series. **It was designed to become a gateway to stories, support, community, and belonging.**

The project team understood that a podcast episode can be powerful, but its impact grows significantly when listeners are also able to access resources, learn about community organizations, discover affirming spaces, and connect with others who share similar experiences.

To accomplish this, the project team developed AMOTCHE.com, a centralized online hub where visitors could access podcast episodes, learn about guests, discover affirming organizations, and connect with mental health resources specifically relevant to LGBTQ+ Armenians and their families.

CREATING A RESOURCE HUB FOR THE COMMUNITY

Each episode of AMOT CHE discussed not only personal experiences, but also pathways toward healing and support. To ensure listeners had direct access to those resources, **the website featured a carefully curated directory of organizations serving LGBTQ+ Armenians, LGBTQ+ communities, and individuals seeking mental health support.**

Visitors could access information and links to organizations including:



Each organization was represented visually through its logo and linked directly to its website, making it easy for visitors to access support, educational resources, community events, advocacy opportunities, and mental health services.

By placing these organizations alongside the podcast episodes, AMOT CHE helped bridge the gap between awareness and action. **The project was not simply encouraging people to seek support. It was helping them find it.**

POSTING & MARKETING

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Recognizing that audiences engage with content in different ways, the project team intentionally created multiple pathways for participation.

Episodes were available in both video and audio formats, allowing visitors to engage in the format most comfortable and accessible to them:

- **Video episodes were hosted through YouTube** and included Armenian captions, increasing accessibility for Armenian-speaking community members.
- **Audio versions were distributed through Spotify**, making it easier for listeners to engage with episodes while commuting, exercising, working, or spending time at home.

By centralizing these options through AMOTCHE.com, visitors could access everything in one location without needing to search across multiple platforms. This approach created a seamless experience for listeners while ensuring that mental health resources remained only a click away.



WEBSITE REACH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

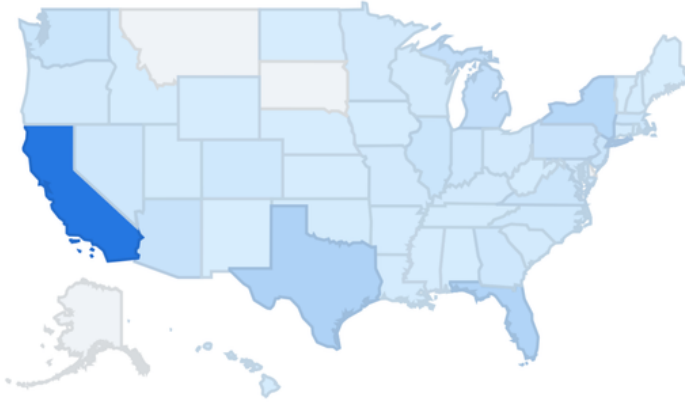
The response to the website exceeded expectations. Within less than one month of launching, AMOTCHE.com attracted visitors from across the United States, demonstrating the widespread need for LGBTQ+ Armenian storytelling and mental health resources.

Website Launch Date	May 28, 2026
Total Website Visits	663
Unique Visitors	604
Visitors from Instagram & Facebook Ads	494

POSTING & MARKETING

While the project was designed primarily to serve Los Angeles County, **visitors arrived from nearly every corner of the country.**

The highest numbers of visitors came from:



California	193
Texas	47
Florida	43
New York	37
Michigan	24
Arizona	19

This geographic reach highlighted something important: **The need for LGBTQ+ Armenian representation extends far beyond Los Angeles.**

For many visitors, AMOT CHE may have been one of the few readily accessible resources specifically centered on LGBTQ+ Armenian experiences.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing discoveries emerged when the project team reviewed website traffic patterns: **The most active period for website visits consistently occurred on weekday evenings between 8:00 PM and midnight.**

While there is no way to know exactly why visitors chose these hours, the pattern sparked reflection among the project team:

- Was this simply when people had free time?
- Or were some visitors waiting until they had privacy?
- Were they exploring the website after roommates went to bed?
- After parents had fallen asleep?
- After a long day of carrying questions they did not feel comfortable asking publicly?

The answer may never be known, yet the pattern served as a powerful reminder of why projects like AMOT CHE matter. **Many LGBTQ+ Armenians continue to navigate their identities in environments where privacy feels necessary.** For some, accessing support can feel risky. For others, simply searching for information can feel vulnerable.

POSTING & MARKETING

AMOT CHE provided something that many people need but rarely talk about: A confidential space to explore questions, seek resources, and hear stories from people who understand.

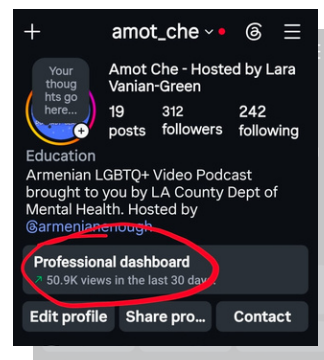
Whether visitors arrived during the middle of the day or late at night, the website remained available whenever they were ready. **No appointment required. No explanation required. Just stories, resources, and a reminder that they were not alone.**

EXTENDING THE CONVERSATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

In addition to the website, **the project launched a dedicated Instagram presence to expand outreach and engage community members where they already spend time online.**

The account **@amot_che** served as a platform for:

- Episode announcements
- Guest spotlights
- Teaser clips
- Mental health messaging
- Resource promotion
- Event marketing
- Community engagement



The Instagram platform also allowed the project to build upon the audience Lara Vanian-Green had already cultivated through years of work within the LGBTQ+ Armenian community.

As of June 2026, **the account has 300+ followers and a reach of 50,000+ profiles.**

Through reels, teaser videos, guest features, and promotional content, social media became an important tool for directing visitors toward podcast episodes, mental health resources, and community events.

More importantly, it allowed AMOT CHE's message to travel far beyond the individuals who initially participated in the project. **Every share, comment, repost, and conversation helped extend the reach of a simple but powerful message: You belong here.**

POSTING & MARKETING

LISTENING AS AN ACT OF COMMUNITY

To better understand how listeners experienced the series, **the project team also created an opportunity drawing connected to AMOTCHE.com.**



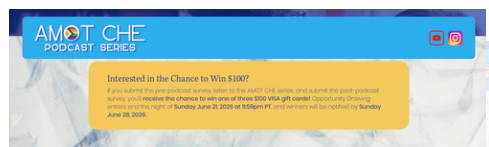
Visitors were invited to complete a **pre-listening survey**, engage with **at least three podcast episodes**, and then complete a **post-listening survey** reflecting on their experience.

A total of:

- 20 individuals completed the pre-listening survey
- 8 individuals completed the post-listening survey

Participants represented multiple states and a wide range of identities, including LGBTQ+ Armenians, allies, community advocates, and individuals seeking a deeper understanding of LGBTQ+ Armenian experiences.

Their responses would ultimately reveal something powerful: **People were not simply consuming content. They were finding pieces of themselves within the stories being shared.** And for many listeners, those stories became the beginning of a deeper sense of connection, pride, and belonging.



How to Enter the Opportunity Drawing:

Step 1: Pre-Podcast Survey ([click here](#))

Step 2: Listen to Episodes ([see below](#))

Step 3: Post-Podcast Survey ([click here](#))

This Pre-Podcast Survey allows us to gather basic info, demographic data, and initial insight. We also survey mental health factors before you listen to the series so we can measure the impact of the series.

Now that you've completed the pre-podcast survey, enjoy the AMOT CHE series! We encourage listening to at least 3 episodes before completing the post-podcast survey. All episodes available below!

After you have finished listening to the AMOT CHE podcast series, complete the **Post-Podcast Survey**. This allows us the chance to see how you were impacted by the episodes. Deadline is June 21, 2026.

complete the **Post-Podcast Survey**. This allows us the chance to see how you were impacted by the episodes. Deadline is June 21, 2026.

The impact of those stories, and the voices behind them, would become even more visible as the project moved beyond the digital world and into physical community spaces.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FROM PODCAST TO COMMUNITY

Throughout the AMOT CHE Podcast Series, guests spoke about belonging, searching for community, and the importance of seeing themselves reflected in others. Again and again, conversations returned to a simple truth: **People need spaces where they can be fully themselves.**

While the podcast created opportunities for connection through storytelling, the project team recognized that community is also built face-to-face. It is built through conversation, laughter, shared meals, music and art, and moments of celebration.

In many ways, **AMOT CHE Pride 2026** represented the physical manifestation of everything the podcast series stood for. **For one evening, the values explored throughout the series—visibility, belonging, healing, culture, joy, and community—came to life.**

A CELEBRATION WITHOUT SHAME

Although not required within the original contract scope, the project team made the decision to invest additional resources into creating a community celebration specifically for LGBTQ+ Armenians and their families.

In partnership with GALAS LGBTQ+ Armenian Society, **the team dedicated \$5,000 toward producing AMOT CHE Pride 2026, a free cultural celebration designed to bring LGBTQ+ Armenians together in person.**

The event was held on **June 13, 2026** at **Sooki Studio & Supply in Frogtown**, a beloved gathering space for many queer Armenians throughout Los Angeles. More than a launch event, AMOT CHE Pride was designed as a community celebration where:

- LGBTQ+ Armenians could gather openly.
- Families could participate.
- Culture and queerness could exist side by side.
- People did not need to choose between different identities.

For one evening, attendees experienced what AMOT CHE had been talking about all along: **Belonging.**



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

BRINGING CULTURE, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY TOGETHER

The event intentionally reflected the diversity of the LGBTQ+ Armenian community and the many ways people engage with culture.

The evening featured programming for multiple generations and interests, including:

5:00pm to 6:00pm	Ejanish Kid's Reading Hour
6:00pm to 7:00pm	Armenian Folk Dance Workshop by Lernazang
7:00pm to 8:00pm	Drag Performance by "Cher"
8:00pm to 9:00pm	Community Celebration with DJene

Guests also enjoyed:

- A **community resource fair** featuring 10 local affirming organizations
- **Armenian coffee** and refreshments
- **Free falafel meals** for the first 100 attendees
- Mental health resources and information
- A **viewing station highlighting AMOT CHE podcast** content
- Music, dancing, and opportunities for connection

The intentional combination of cultural programming, family-friendly activities, LGBTQ+ visibility, and mental health resources reflected the project's broader vision.

**This was not simply a Pride celebration:
It was a celebration of LGBTQ+
Armenian life.**



LGBTQ+ ARMENIAN
PODCAST SERIES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

BY THE NUMBERS

The response to the event exceeded expectations:

Eventbrite Page Views	493
RSVPs	136
Total Attendance	129
Children Participating in Reading Hour	25
Armenian Folk Dance Participants	50
Free Meals Distributed	100

The strong turnout demonstrated a clear desire for spaces specifically created for LGBTQ+ Armenians and their families. Attendees traveled from throughout Los Angeles County to participate in the event, connect with community organizations, meet new people, and celebrate together.

By every measurable metric, the event was a success. **Yet the most meaningful outcomes were not captured by attendance numbers: They were visible in the interactions happening throughout the evening.**

People exchanged phone numbers. Friends introduced friends. Families danced together. Children listened to stories. Community members explored resources. Strangers became acquaintances. And acquaintances became friends.

We also successfully handed out **over 100 half-page flyers of local community resources**, as well as hundreds of swag items including **custom logo collapsable hand fans, sunscreen packets, glitter, and assorted stickers.**



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WHAT BELONGING LOOKS LIKE

For many attendees, AMOT CHE Pride offered something that can be difficult to find:

Not simply LGBTQ+ community. Not simply Armenian community. But Both.

Throughout the evening, guests moved freely between cultural celebration and queer celebration without needing to separate different parts of themselves. One moment participants were learning Armenian folk dances. The next they were cheering during drag performances. Children attended story hour while community members connected with local organizations, explored mental health resources, shared meals, and built new relationships.

Mental health remained an important part of the event. Community organizations were present throughout the evening to provide information, answer questions, and connect attendees with services and support. Lara Vanian-Green also introduced the AMOT CHE Podcast Series, highlighted available resources, and encouraged attendees to continue engaging with the stories and conversations featured throughout the project.

The event offered a glimpse of what becomes possible when people are welcomed in their entirety. Not despite who they are. Because of who they are.

Throughout the podcast series, guests repeatedly spoke about the importance of visibility, representation, and knowing that other LGBTQ+ Armenians exist. AMOT CHE Pride transformed those ideas into something tangible.

In many ways, this event and experience captured the true purpose of the AMOT CHE Podcast Series. The project was never simply about producing episodes. It was about creating opportunities for connection, increasing access to resources, and building a community where people could show up as their full selves and be welcomed with dignity, affirmation, and joy.

In other words, it was about creating a space without shame. Amot che.

IMPACT & RESULTS

THE IMPACT OF BEING SEEN

Throughout the AMOT CHE Podcast Series, guests shared stories about shame, healing, faith, identity, family, recovery, visibility, and belonging. Many spoke about experiences they had rarely discussed publicly. Others reflected on the profound impact of finally seeing themselves represented in community spaces, media, and public conversations.

Again and again, one theme emerged: **Representation matters.**

For LGBTQ+ Armenians, simply knowing that other people share similar experiences can be transformative. It can reduce isolation, challenge shame, encourage help-seeking, and create opportunities for connection.

AMOT CHE was designed to create those opportunities. The project's impact was measured through guest surveys, listener surveys, audience engagement data, and community feedback gathered throughout the implementation period.

Results suggest that the series did more than create conversations: **It helped people feel seen.**

IMPACT ON GUESTS

Before participating in the podcast, guests were invited to complete a survey exploring their perspectives on mental health, community leadership, advocacy, and access to support. Following their session, guests completed a second survey reflecting on their experience.

A total of 22 guests completed the surveys, including guests featured in the bonus episodes. **The results demonstrated overwhelmingly positive experiences.**

Guests shared that they overwhelmingly felt that:

- Participating in this podcast felt meaningful and aligned with their values and work.
- They felt comfortable and respected during the recording process.
- Lara facilitated a thoughtful and engaging discussion.
- They enjoyed being a guest on AMOT CHE.
- The conversation effectively represented issues relevant to LGBTQ+ Armenians.
- They were adequately prepared and supported before recording

IMPACT & RESULTS

Guests also reported high levels of comfort, respect, and support throughout the process, reinforcing the importance of spaces where vulnerable conversations can occur safely.

"What I enjoyed most was how exceptionally well-run the podcast was by Lara. I felt comfortable, supported, and valued throughout the process."

"Having an open and honest discussion with other queer Armenians."

For many participants, the experience was about more than recording an episode. **It was an opportunity to contribute to a resource they wished existed earlier in their own lives.**

STRENGTHENING CONFIDENCE AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

In addition to evaluating the recording experience, **surveys explored changes in guests' confidence related to mental health advocacy, coping skills, and leadership.**

Several indicators increased following participation in the project (average rating out of 5):

<i>Survey Statement</i>	<i>Pre-Survey Avg.</i>	<i>Post-Survey Avg.</i>	<i>Change</i>
I feel safe when accessing mental health services	4.32	4.78	+0.46
I see myself as a leader in my community	4.32	4.78	+0.46
I know ways to advocate for my community's mental health	4.18	4.57	+0.39
I know the steps to arrange a mental health appointment if needed	4.55	4.83	+0.28
When I am in distress, I practice healthy coping mechanisms	3.95	4.22	+0.27

While guests entered the project with strong community leadership backgrounds, the data suggests that participation further strengthened confidence in accessing support, advocating for mental health, and recognizing their own leadership within the community.

These findings reinforce an important lesson: **Storytelling can be a form of empowerment.** Sharing experiences publicly not only helps listeners, it can also strengthen the individuals telling their stories.

IMPACT & RESULTS

IMPACT ON LISTENERS

The project team also wanted to understand how audiences experienced the series. Through the website opportunity drawing, listeners were invited to complete a pre-listening survey, engage with at least three episodes, and complete a follow-up survey reflecting on their experience.

20 individuals completed the pre-listening survey, and 8 completed the post-listening survey. Respondents represented multiple states, identities, and experiences, including LGBTQ+ Armenians, allies, family members, and community advocates.

The feedback was **overwhelmingly positive** (average rating out of 5):

I enjoyed listening to or watching the AMOT CHE Podcast Series	4.88
Lara facilitated a thoughtful and engaging discussion	4.75
Listening to this podcast felt meaningful and aligned with my values	4.75
The podcast effectively represented issues relevant to LGBTQ+ Armenians	4.63

Notably, **100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed the series and believed it effectively represented issues affecting LGBTQ+ Armenians.**

Listeners repeatedly described feeling less isolated, more connected, and more hopeful after engaging with the episodes. Participants shared:

"It makes me feel less alone in my experience as a queer Armenian."

"Makes me proud to know there are so many of us around the world."

"Getting to see how big and diverse the queer Armenian community is, and hearing things named that I had never been able to articulate."

These responses suggest that the project's impact extended beyond information sharing.

The series helped create Recognition. Validation. Connection. And Belonging.

IMPACT & RESULTS

WHAT WE HEARD AGAIN AND AGAIN

Across guest surveys, listener surveys, community feedback, website engagement, and conversations during AMOT CHE Pride, several themes consistently emerged.

Visibility Matters: Many participants described never having seen LGBTQ+ Armenian experiences represented so openly and honestly before.

Community Reduces Isolation: Guests and listeners alike spoke about the importance of knowing they were not alone in their experiences.

Stories Create Healing: Participants repeatedly described storytelling as a powerful tool for processing experiences, building empathy, and reducing shame.

There Is a Continued Need: Perhaps most importantly, the project revealed a significant and ongoing need for spaces specifically created for LGBTQ+ Armenians.

The response to the podcast, website, and community event demonstrated that these conversations are not only wanted—they are necessary.

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

The most significant outcome of AMOT CHE cannot be measured entirely through website analytics, survey scores, social media reach, or attendance numbers.

It lives in the stories people shared.

It lives in the listeners who felt less alone.

It lives in the guests who chose vulnerability over silence.

It lives in the community members who discovered resources they did not know existed.

And it lives in every LGBTQ+ Armenian who encountered the project and realized that there are others like them.

For many people, being seen is where healing begins. **AMOT CHE created opportunities for that healing to happen. One story at a time.**

CONCLUSION

THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING

Throughout the AMOT CHE Podcast Series, guests, listeners, and community members returned to a common theme: **The need for connection. The need for visibility. The need for spaces where LGBTQ+ Armenians can show up authentically and be welcomed without judgment.**

While the project achieved its goals of increasing awareness, reducing stigma, promoting mental health resources, and elevating LGBTQ+ Armenian voices, it also revealed just how much work remains.

Perhaps one of the clearest indicators of the project's importance came not from survey data or website analytics, but from the stories community members shared throughout the process. Some guests requested that their photographs not be used in promotional materials because they feared negative reactions from family members, employers, religious communities, or broader social networks. Others spoke about never having met another LGBTQ+ Armenian before finding organizations such as GALAS, Armenian Enough, or AMOT CHE.

Even in a region home to one of the largest Armenian populations outside of Armenia itself, many LGBTQ+ Armenians continue to navigate isolation, invisibility, and uncertainty about where they belong. These realities underscore both the significance of AMOT CHE and the ongoing need for culturally responsive, LGBTQ+-affirming programming.

As Lara Vanian-Green reflected following the completion of the project: "I thought everyone already knew about GALAS, at a minimum, but I was surprised by the number of Armenians who had no idea that any queer Armenian organization existed. It is clear to me that this podcast series was very much needed, but it's still only a drop in the bucket."

She continued: "The message needs to be repeated over and over until it is no longer viewed as controversial or shameful."

This project was never intended to solve every challenge facing LGBTQ+ Armenians. No single project could.

Instead, **AMOT CHE sought to create openings. Openings for conversation, for healing, for understanding, for community. And perhaps most importantly, openings for hope.**

CONCLUSION

LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of AMOT CHE revealed several important lessons that may help inform future outreach efforts serving LGBTQ+ Armenians and other culturally specific communities.

Trusted Messengers Matter

The success of the project was deeply connected to the trust Lara Vanian-Green had cultivated within the LGBTQ+ Armenian community through years of storytelling and advocacy. Guests repeatedly described feeling comfortable, respected, and supported throughout the recording process, demonstrating the importance of community-led approaches to mental health outreach.

Representation Creates Engagement

The response to the podcast series demonstrated a strong appetite for culturally specific storytelling. Listeners consistently described feeling seen, validated, and understood through the stories shared by guests. When people recognize themselves in the stories being told, they are more likely to engage, seek support, and participate in community.

Community Building Matters

The overwhelming success of AMOT CHE Pride 2026 demonstrated that community members are eager for opportunities to connect in person. Attendees repeatedly expressed a desire for additional gatherings, cultural events, workshops, support groups, and community-building opportunities specifically created for LGBTQ+ Armenians.

Mental Health Conversations Must Continue

The project reinforced that conversations about mental health, stigma, identity, faith, family, and belonging remain deeply relevant within Armenian communities. Continued investment in these conversations has the potential to increase awareness, reduce isolation, and improve access to support.

LOOKING FORWARD

While the podcast series has officially concluded, **the impact of AMOT CHE continues.** The episodes remain publicly accessible through AMOTCHE.com, allowing future listeners to discover the stories, resources, and conversations featured throughout the project.

The website continues to serve as a resource hub connecting visitors with affirming organizations and mental health services.

CONCLUSION

The relationships formed throughout the project continue to strengthen the broader network of LGBTQ+ Armenian leaders, advocates, artists, healers, faith leaders, and community members working to create a more inclusive future.

Most importantly, **the stories remain**. Every guest who participated in AMOT CHE contributed to a growing archive of LGBTQ+ Armenian experiences.

Together, they documented realities that are too often overlooked; They challenged stigma; They expanded representation; They modeled vulnerability; They created opportunities for healing.

And they reminded listeners that **there is no single way to be Armenian. There is no single way to be LGBTQ+. There is no single path toward belonging.**

YOU HAVE ALWAYS BELONGED HERE

AMOT CHE began as a podcast series focused on mental health. But it became something much larger.

Over the course of ten episodes, twenty-two guests shared stories of resilience, healing, faith, identity, recovery, joy, and community. The project reached hundreds of listeners and viewers, attracted visitors from across the country, connected people with affirming resources, and culminated in a community celebration attended by more than one hundred LGBTQ+ Armenians, family members, allies, and supporters.

Yet the project's greatest achievement cannot be measured through attendance numbers, website traffic, or social media analytics.

Its greatest achievement was creating opportunities for people to feel seen, represented, understood, connected, proud, hopeful, and less alone.

In Armenian, Amot Che means "Without Shame." Throughout this project, guests, listeners, and community members demonstrated what becomes possible when shame gives way to visibility, conversation, healing, and connection.

The stories shared through AMOT CHE remind us that LGBTQ+ Armenians have always existed. They have always contributed to their communities. They have always had stories worth telling. **And they have always belonged here.**