



RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

NEWSLETTER - FALL 2012

THE SANGYE YESHE MONASTIC SHEDRA



IN ASSOCIATION WITH RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE



RYI relies on Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling monastery's Sangye Yeshe monastic shedra to offer its unique blend of traditional Tibetan monastic and Western style education. The Lopons at

the Sangye Yeshe shedra have studied the traditional texts of a modern Nyingma shedra in great detail and their extraordinary depth of knowledge provides a remarkable resource for RYI.

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RYI COMMENDED FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE NEW FIVE-YEAR AGREEMENT

Following an extensive review in March 2012, Kathmandu University's School of Arts has recommended the Centre for Buddhist Studies for the University's award of Associate Centre of Academic Excellence. The external review team comprising Professor Mahesh Banskota, Dr. Bal C. Luitel and Professor Prayag R. Sharma forwarded the following citation:

"Recognizing the outstanding quality of its

academic courses and the rapid progress made in establishing a full range of globally recognized degree programmes, Kathmandu University is pleased to confer upon the Centre for Buddhist Studies, the award of Associate Centre of Academic Excellence."

Following completion of the review, RYI and KU renewed their partnership agreement for a further five years. Our thanks to all the staff and students who participated in the review!



PHD PROGRAM LAUNCHED!

RYI is delighted to welcome the first two candidates for its newly launched PhD program. Christina Monson (MA, Wisconsin) and Mort Ostensen (MA, Kathmandu) successfully defended their research proposals before a review committee comprising Professor Mahesh Banskota (KU), Dr. Sagar Sharma, (KU), Prof. John Dunne (Emory), Dr. Abraham Zablocki (Agnes Scott) and Greg Whiteside (RYI).

RYI acknowledges the support provided by Dr. Andreas Doctor in managing the PhD program and Professors Sarah Jacoby (Northwestern) and John Dunne (Emory) in supervising the two candidates. Scholarship funding for Mort has been provided by the Tsadra Foundation.

RYI wishes both candidates every good fortune in their research endeavors!



NEW BA PROGRAM TO DEBUT IN FALL 2013

As of Fall 2013, CBS will offer a four-year BA as its standard degree for all undergraduate students. Currently, there is the option of a 3-year BA or a 4-year BA with Honours degree. By studying under the new BA Honours degree program, all students will have time to master both the necessary languages and a rich spectrum of Buddhist philosophy.

At present, students normally have to choose between focusing on Classical Tibetan or Sanskrit. With an extra year added to the program, they will be able to gain greater

competency in both languages, thereby improving their all-round translation capabilities. CBS also plans to include more contextual, cultural, and meditation and reflection-related courses in the revised curriculum.

There will also be more time to study Buddhist philosophy both with the Lopons and western faculty members. This will help broaden students' understanding of the tradition, its doctrines, ethics, and practices. Stay tuned for more news about the new BA as the time draws closer!



STUDENT FEATURE

Judith Debbeler was at Gomde in Austria, when Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche started speaking of RYI. Immediately Judith thought, "I must study there!"

Now, three years later, she is well on the road to earning her BA degree.

As soon as her contract working as a dramatist at a German opera house ended, she applied to RYI. After one year of studies, she explains, "I love it! It is exactly what I expected. A wonderful program combining academics, Dharma, and Tibetan language. What makes it all so special is that one is always

surrounded by Rinpoche's activities." As for her favorite class, she has an interesting approach, "I make every class my favorite

class, so I dive deeply into everything!"

Outside of class, Judith is one of the main members of Street Dog Care, an organization supported by Shenpen's social work activities (www.shenpennepal.org). Judith feels that she has found



a new home in Nepal noting, "I like the uncomplicated and relaxed ways of Nepal. In addition, RYI is really well-organized, and one feels truly cared for."

THE SANGYE YESHE MONASTIC SHEDRA IN ASSOCIATION WITH RYI *CONTINUED*:

Sangye Yeshe monastic shedra began in 1998 and offers a nine-year program leading to the degree of Lopon, roughly equivalent to a junior professor. Following several years of teaching and other responsibilities, Lopons may then be awarded the distinguished title of Khenpo, or senior professor.

The texts studied by the monks in their first seven years include Madhyamaka, Prajñāpāramitā, Abhidharma, Valid Cognition and Vinaya texts. The last two years cover Tantras and Development and Completion stage texts.

Understanding the intensive daily routine of the shedra's monks throws light on their remarkable dedication and academic abilities. Their

day begins at 5 am with independent reading and review. After puja and breakfast, they have classes on two different philosophical texts. Self-study and review classes occupy the afternoon, followed by afternoon puja from 4 and 5:30 pm. Next is debate class until 7 pm. After dinner, the monks study until lights out at 10 pm. This schedule is followed for 5 ½ days each week - Saturday afternoons and Sundays normally being free.

The Lopons' hard work, discipline and extraordinary expertise frequently have a transformative effect on RYI's students and the Institute is privileged to count them among its most distinguished and inspiring teachers.

GROUP STUDY WITH RYI ONLINE LEARNING

A group of students from Rangjung Yeshe Gomde Lindholm Hall in the UK has begun to use Śāntideva's *The Way of the Bodhisattva* to cultivate patience in their daily lives. Using material from RYI's Online Learning course, the students study by themselves first, and then meet every two weeks to discuss their experiences and respond to prompts provided by the course moderator Mort Ostensen, PhD candidate here at RYI.

By seeking support from their own communities, students are able to use the academic material to truly explore the nature of anger and the process of developing patience. One student recently posed this

question in the interactive forum:

"If you have a lot of anger at someone very close to you, how can you tame your anger or forgive that person for what they have done in the past?"

What do you think?

Studying Shantideva's text with your Dharma group encourages application of these important skills in our lives. This may just have been what Shantideva had in mind!

Other groups are welcome — special discounted rates apply!

For more information, please contact:

tracy.joosten@ryi.org



Gomde Lindholm Hall studies and practices together

THE TRIPLE EXCELLENCE GRADUAL ONLINE MEDITATION PROGRAM

Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche and Dharmachakra Practices are pleased to announce that The Triple Excellence Gradual Online Meditation Program based on instructions given by Tara, the female Buddha of wisdom in action, is now in its 2nd year. To date, the program has benefited over 500 beginning and seasoned practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism from more than 35 countries.

Tara's profound wisdom teaching comes to us through a direct lineage of realized masters and describes the entire Vajrayāna Buddhist path in guided, step-by-step teachings and meditation sessions.

The Triple Excellence leads practitioners through three stages — each increasingly

profound. Starting with fundamental mind training, one is next guided to the Second Excellence, the Bodhisattva path of love and insight, and then to the Third Excellence, the secret paths of the higher and lower tantras.

New participants can start the online Triple Excellence program at any time by visiting www.dharmasun.org. This progressive path will give you the tools to transform stress, fear, anger and confusion into great strength, patience, kindness and clarity.

"I never thought I'd find a program like this online. It's so beautifully presented and organized and such a great opportunity. I feel blessed to be able to participate."

—Rob (USA) - First Excellence participant



CHÖKYI NYIMA RINPOCHE'S CONTINUING ACTIVITIES



PAL THUBTEN SHEDRUB LING MONASTERY: THE ENVISIONED "THOUSAND BUDDHA TEMPLE"

Currently under construction in Lumbini, Nepal, the birthplace of Sakyamuni Buddha, the Thousand Buddha Temple will one day serve as a center of monastic learning and practice, and as a source of inspiration for generations of pilgrims from all religious faiths.



NEW MONK'S QUARTERS AT KA-NYING MONASTERY

Constructed in 1975, and designed to house only 108 monks, Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery is now being expanded, according to the vision of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche, to provide living quarters, as well as practice, study & medical facilities for approximately 1,000 monks.



NEW ANI'S QUARTERS AT NAGI GOMPA HERMITAGE

Located in the mountains above the Kathmandu Valley and consecrated in 1962, Nagi Gumpa hermitage is undergoing much-needed building renovation which will support the philosophical studies, ritual practice and meditation of more than 100 nuns.

If you would like to lend your support to any of Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche's activities including Nagi Gumpa, the "Thousand Buddha Temple" in Lumbini, the Asura Cave retreat center, or the Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery building project, please contact us at development@shedrub.org or visit our website at www.shedrub.org. Your support is needed and very much appreciated!



Helping the poor and disadvantaged in Nepal

RANGJUNG YESHE SHENPEN

Rangjung Yeshe Shenpen is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization established to alleviate poverty and to address social challenges, mainly in Nepal. Founded in 2004 by Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche and working under his regular direction, Shenpen focuses on helping the poor and disadvantaged gain access to health care, education and employment opportunities. It offers support to the elderly



Rinpoche visiting a project

and street children, and works to improve the treatment of animals. Shenpen currently runs 17 projects under its six work areas, and depends on donations from people such as yourself to support these many projects.

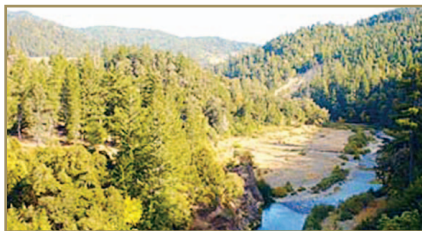
Please visit our website www.shenpennepal.org to learn more about our work. Our updated website, as well as our social networking efforts with Facebook will soon be ready for you to view.

OTHER NEWS AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS



Nepal (shedrub.org)

Structural work for the ground floor of Pal Thubten Ling Monastery in Lumbini is nearing completion. A heartfelt thanks to all our sponsors and well wishers!



USA (gomdeusa.org)

July 3-9: Chokling Rinpoche - Phowa Intensive
July 27-29: Mindroling Jetsun Khandro Rinpoche -
The Four Dharmas of Gampopa



Germany-Austria (gomde.de)

July 12-15: Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche -
Dzogchen Seminar
July 27-29: Lama Tenzin Sangpo -
Vajrasattva Practice Weekend



Denmark (gomde.dk)

Aug. 3-7: Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche -
Vajrasattva retreat
Aug. 17-19: Erik Pema Kunsang -
Padmasambhava's Direct Path II



UK (gomde.org.uk)

Aug. 9-14: Tsikey Chokling Rinpoche – Guru
Rinpoche retreat
Sept. 1: Lindholme Hall Fete
14-16 - Lama Oser, Ngondro retreat



Russia (rangjungyeshe.ru)

Construction is underway at Thubten Ling
Gompa outside of Moscow.
Group practice centres in Kiev (Saturday –
15.00 - 17.00)

Please check the websites of each of the Gomde centers for additional activities and teachings.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

Did you know that a significant source of funding for Rangjung Yeshe Institute's programs and activities comes directly from organizations and individuals around the world?

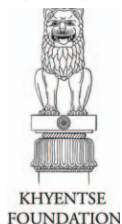
Since 2007, the Tsadra Foundation has generously supported Rangjung Yeshe Institute by providing scholarships to RYI students and funding academic programs. This past year, in addition to awarding several student scholarships, Tsadra Foundation provided funding for visiting professors Phillippe Turenne, Karin Meyers, John Dunne and Abraham Zablocki. We are very grateful for Tsadra Foundation's long and continuing support!

Our friends at the Khyentse Foundation provide annual scholarships for students and ordained sangha that allow students from all over the world to attend RYI. Khyentse Foundation granted scholarships to thirteen RYI students in the Fall of 2011, and ten students in the Spring of 2012. Thank you Khyentse Foundation!

In 2008, our Russian friends Polina and Valodiya

Vorobyev donated the seed money to start RYI's Online Learning program. With their generous support we were able to fund the filming, translation and editing of our first class: Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. Today the OLL program has grown to include six classes and provides online classes to students around the world.

This year, we are proud to announce that B. Grimm & Company, a business based in Thailand, has joined the list of RYI's generous friends. Harald Link, father of RYI student Felix Link, is the President and CEO of the company whose motto is "Doing business with compassion!" Through their commitment to the idea that compassion and business are not mutually exclusive, B. Grimm is changing the way that SE Asia does business. This year they have funded RYI's "Foundations of Buddhism" OLL course, and are supporting the development and marketing of new OLL courses in the future. We are all very grateful to the Link Family and to B. Grimm for their partnership with RYI!



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