

Touching the Earth Working Group

Chairperson: Jessyca Goldstein

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Surveyed all Shambhala Centers regarding their current environmental initiatives.
2. Developed Touching the Earth liaisons from 35 Shambhala Centers.
3. Supplicated the Sakyong to write Sadhana for the Earth
4. Developed the 2009 Shambhala Green Commitment
5. Worked with the Sakyong to lay the ground for his statement "*Protecting the Earth: A Call to Contemplation and Action on Climate Change*"
6. Worked with the Sakyong to encourage the sangha to sign the "*Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change*"
7. Worked with the Translation Committee to have our documents translated.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. Offer a weekend gateway program working with sustainability and the principles of warriorship. The program will pilot at the Halifax center September 25-27, 2009
2. Develop an environmental sustainability manual to help guide and support both city and land centers
3. Create an online space for 'best practices' and blog for questions, discussion and comments from the community.
4. Launch a Touching the Earth webpage on Shambhala.org, to include a resource library with links to other sites

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. Participate and/or host International Buddhist Congress on Climate Change.
2. Develop Touching the Earth regional committees.

Find out more:

Protecting the Earth: www.shambhalatimes.org/2009/04/20/protecting_the_earth/

Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change: www.shambhalatimes.org/2009/07/10/climate-change/

Shambhala Green Commitment: www.shambhalatimes.org/2009/04/22/green_commitment/

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Governance as Path Working Group

Chairperson : Amy Conway

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Compiled the Six Ways of Ruling sourcebook which contains teachings from the Druk Sakyong, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, President Richard Reoch, and Warrior General Marty Janowitz. The sourcebook is currently being edited and published by Shambhala Media who plans to have it available at the Congress.
2. Planned and executed three Governance Academies (two in North America and one in Europe).
3. Scheduled and promoted the Warrior General's Shambhala Online talk on Mandala Principle that is now posted at <http://shambhala.org/leadership/>
4. Created an Orientation packet for new Center Directors that is sent to them along with a welcome letter upon their appointment.
5. Formed a Mentorship subgroup.
6. Transcribed leadership talks by President Reoch and Chris Tamdjidi and disseminated these to the mandala council.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. We are planning and publicizing the Governance Academy to be held at the Congress in Halifax this November.
2. The mentorship subgroup is doing a needs-assessment with new Center Directors to find out what are the main areas where leaders need support and mentorship. We plan to recruit and train a small group of mentors and pilot a mentorship program with these new Center Directors starting Fall 2009.
3. We are transcribing two more talks on the path of governance by the President of Shambhala.
4. We are reorganizing and augmenting the Governance as Path webpage of Shambhala.org website and posting transcriptions of selected Governance Academy talks.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. Evaluate the impact and outcomes of the Governance Academies and adjust the Academy content based on the feedback.
2. Continue designing and structuring a long-term curriculum of Governance Academies.
3. Continue developing a mentorship system in North America.
4. Further develop the orientation packet and process for new leaders.
5. Continue supplicating for an online teaching and/or welcome video from the Sakyong to give new leaders as part of their orientation process.
6. Set up conference calls and Shambhala Online events to support leaders, encourage networking & propagate the view of governance as path

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Accessibility and Disability Working Group

Chairperson: Hamish Maclaren

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Published the Sakyong's Letter on the Shambhala aspirations for diversity, accessibility and compassionate conduct.
2. Telephone conversations with all North American Shambhala Center directors about accessibility. They all informed us about their accessibility status and initiatives.
3. Published "Accessibility and Disability First Annual Report". The report includes:
 - Summary of Accessibility in Shambhala
 - Accessibility Initiatives of Individual Shambhala Centres
 - The Sakyong's Letter on the Aspirations
 - More Information, Guidelines, Resources, etc. for Specific Disabilities
4. Update of Shambhala "Accessibility and Disability" Web Page
5. Update of "best practices" online
6. All daily chants and many other chants, including all liturgies for Vajrayana seminary, have been converted to large font format for the visually impaired. These are now available through Shambhala Media.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. Increasing awareness and providing education to the mandala about accessibility and disability needs of their sangha members
2. Asking all Shambhala centers to appoint an Accessibility Contact Person.
3. Continue to work with all Centers on how to improve handicapped accessibility.
4. Getting information on each Center's accessibility in their profile on the Shambhala database.
5. Better accommodation of people with hearing impairments, to include providing subtitles for the teaching videos at Shamabhla.org for hearing impaired. Improve the handicapped accessibility of the Shambhala web site.
6. Collecting information regarding chairs and tables ergonomically suitable for dharma practice.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. Creating an accessibility endowment fund for mandala-wide projects and to help local centers with accessibility.
2. Further defining specific accessibility needs.
3. Making a educational video on accessibility in Shambhala.
4. Exploring how to apply the Accessible and Universal Design Guidelines to all new major building development in Shambhala.

Find out more: The Shambhala Accessibility and Disability web page:

www.shambhala.org/community/da.php

Shambhala Diversity & Accessibility Best Practices web page:

www.shambhala.org/members/share/bpmain.php?catid=4

Families and Children Working Group

Chairperson: Susan Williams

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Created the family version of "End of Year Practices for Clearing Away Obstacles"
2. Distributed a Families and Children Survey to all Shambhala Centres and Groups

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. A web page for Families and Children on the Shambhala.org website
2. Evaluation and dissemination of the information gathered from the Families and Children Survey
3. Editing a guide for Centres which includes: a) How to Start a Bodhi School, b) Parenting as Path, and c) Shambhala Culture for Families.
4. Further development of the Children and Families working group membership

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. Developing a 'Baby Naming Ceremony'
2. Expanding the web-page to include a blog for parents and teachers
3. Organizing the second Families and Children's conference with the emphasis on the practices of parenting and teaching children.

Find out more: Family Camp at Dorje Denma Ling, Nova Scotia
www.dorjedenmaling.com/program_details.php?id=29)

Sun Camp at Dorje Denma Ling, Nova Scotia
www.antigravitystudios.com/suncamp/

Family Camp at Karme Choling, Vermont
www.karmecholing.org/registration.php?program_id=3960&action=view-program-details

Teen Retreat at Karme Choling, Vermont - Nov. 13 - 15, 2009
www.karmecholing.org/registration.php?program_id=4085&action=view-program-details

Family Camp and/or Sun Camp at Dechen Choling (Limoge, France)
www.dechencholing.org/english/

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Care of the Aging Working Group

Chairperson: Dave Whitehorn

MISSION: The Shambhala Working Group on Aging was established in March 2008. The group has been exploring the questions: 'what does it mean to grow old in an enlightened society?'

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Creation of a blog on which ideas, inspiration and challenges about both aging and caring for the aging may be shared. The link for this blog is www.onaginginshambhala.blogspot.com/

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. Development of formal and informal ceremonies and practices within Shambhala culture to help us as individuals and as a society to work with the issue presented by growing old.
2. Exploration of options and initiatives, consistent with the principles of enlightened society, through which we can care for one another as we grow old.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

The group will briefly present information from the two activities above at the Congress. We particularly look forward to engaging delegates to the Congress in conversation so as to learn about the views, needs and activities at the various Centers in regard to aging. Future objectives could emerge out of this sort of conversation.

Find out more: The current membership of the working group and a collection of information and ideas that have been gathered to date are available on the two websites established by the group:

www.shambhala.org/community/aging/index.php

www.onaginginshambhala.blogspot.com/

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Mandala Governance and Structure Working Group

Chairperson: Joe Inskeep

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. In conjunction with Dorje Denma Ling's Board of Directors, development of their local governance manual.
2. Review and recommendations for governance improvements at the level of the Sakyong Council.
3. Review and recommendations for governance at the level of the Mandala Council.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. In conjunction with the forming Council of Halifax, the development of their local governance manual.
2. Review of governance at the level of local centers, including groups formed to work in the areas of
 - a. A review group focused on the definition of local leadership roles, the composition of local councils, and succession, appointments and oaths.
 - b. A review group focused on the interface between local and mandala wide governance.
 - c. A review group focused on governance issues specifically related to small centers and groups with membership of 50 or less.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. Review of governance at the level of local centers, including groups formed to work in the areas of
 - a. A review group focused on local governing boards (whether they are called governing boards or councils). This refers to the body that provides local direction for the executive, develops policy, and performs the oversight or assessment function.
 - b. A review group focused on governance issues specifically related to large centers that have significant paid staff.
 - c. A review group focused on the principles and practices that lead to effective decision making.

Find out more: watch the governance webpage for new materials coming from the work of the review groups. (<http://www.shambhala.org/community/governance.php>)

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Diversity Working Group

Chairperson: Sekayi Stringer (to be succeeded by Charlene Leung in fall, 2009)

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Creation of a "Teachers of Color" list for the mandala.
2. Development and implementation of People of Color meditation retreats, as well as Shambhala Training Level One programs for People of Color.
3. A People of Color Scholarship Fund has been created.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. Ongoing People of Color conference call meetings
2. Charlene Leung is transitioning into the role of diversity working group chairperson during the early fall 2009.
3. Working on an diversity week-end program to offer to Shambhala Centers.
4. Creating diversity resources for Shambhala Center leadership.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

Due to the current transition in the leadership of this working group, the next directions of the group are wide open at this point. The group is open to directions for future initiatives arising out of the 2009 Shambhala Congress, as well as out of general community feedback.

Find out more: [Shambhala.org/Diversity Resources](http://Shambhala.org/DiversityResources)

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after 9/1/09, Charlene Leung: Charlene_Leung@sbcglobal.net**

The Shambhala Commission on the Status of Women and Feminine Principle

Chairperson: Agness Au

MISSION: Our Shambhala teachings place special emphasis upon the "feminine principle" that can be characterized variously as space, awareness, wisdom, and the "mother principle that safeguards against the development of ego's impulses." This does not refer merely sociologically to women; instead, it related to a fundamental expression of sacred world. The purpose of the Commission is to enhance the blessings of the feminine principle, so that both the feminine and masculine principles can fully manifest in our Shambhala Buddhist mandala and community. The Commission wishes to identify ways of enhancing the feminine principle in the dynamics, communications, and culture of our community and its institutions, so that we may remain appropriate vessels for the blessings of our precious Shambhala and Buddhist lineages.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Compilation of a list of weekend dharma programs related to the feminine principle (see links below)
2. Creation of a booklet of essays on the Feminine Principle, released in conjunction with the August 2008 Sakyong Wangmo Empowerment.
3. Creation of the Yeshe Tsogyal banner

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. Development of a new banner of Lady Drugmo, consort to Gesar of Ling, by Cynthia Moku.
2. Monitor liturgies, chants and other Shambhala publications for gender neutral language.
3. Encourage and consult Centers regarding intentional community-building efforts.
4. Consultation to Care & Conduct issues as needed.
5. The Sakyong has accepted the Commission's invitation to design a banner for use in all Shambhala Centers that has a clear female image embodying the wisdom of feminine principle—perhaps an image of Prajnaparamita or White Tara.

Find out more: www.shambhala.org/int/sns/feminine_principle.html and www.shambhala.org/diversity/files/feminine_principle_programs.pdf

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Desung Arm of the Dorje Kasung

Debbie Coats Rupon, Desung Arm Commander

MISSION: The fundamental mission of the Desung Arm of the Dorje Kasung is to participate in the development of Shambhala society with particular focus on community care, health and social well-being issues, and the protection of harmony.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

1. Posted additional qualified desung at regional, regimental and squad levels.
2. Provided Desung training in each of the regions and supported appointed Desung Officers.
3. Supported the work of the International Care and Conduct panel in relation to particular cases.
4. Education of Desung Officers about the recent changes on the Kasung command structure.

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

1. Development of civilian/military cooperation through holding seats on the Community Care Council of the Sakyong's Council
2. Encouraging and supporting community care councils at the local level. Support to Shambhala e-mail list facilitators when working with on-line conflict or emotional distress
3. Development of health disaster response procedures at large programmes or land centres (for example, swine flu).
4. Education of the mandala, including administrators at Centres regarding the Shambhala Care and Conduct Policy.
5. Support the implementation of the new Dorje Kasung command structure.
6. Continue to develop regular regional Desung Training that includes elements drawn from the Buddhist and Shambhala wisdom lineages as well as from compatible 'neighboring' traditions (for example the Sun Tzu and Deep Democracy).

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. Enhance communication within the arm, with other arms, with civilian elements of the society through the use of web-based tools.
2. Participate in relevant task groups within the Dorje Kasung, in particular the newly forming task group on emergency preparedness.
3. Organize and conduct a gathering of the Desung Command Group at Dechen Choling in the spring of 2010.

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International Care and Conduct Panel

Report prepared by: Irene Vliegenthart, Rupon

MISSION: The Shambhala Care and Conduct Panel seeks to assist the mandala in working with the development of enlightened society. It serves to reinforce the protection we offer to all community members and participants in Shambhala activities, as set out in the Shambhala Care and Conduct Policy. This policy is based on core principles for conducting ourselves in accordance with the key teachings of the Shambhala Buddhist path. These principles also illuminate our way of dealing with conflicts and complaints within the community.

CASES ASSISTED SINCE LAST SHAMBHALA CONGRESS

The international Care and Conduct Panel was asked to assist in and subsequently resolved seven situations in different Shambhala Centers. The length of these cases varied because in some situations we were able to quickly locate local assistance to help with the matter, and in other cases there were fewer resources available.

CASES THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

There are currently two active situations that we are working to resolve

ACTIVITIES/PROJECTS WE ENVISION BEGINNING IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO

1. The Care and Conduct Panel, in conjunction with the Community Care Council, is committed to identifying methods by which communities can identify issues and problems earlier and develop the skills to address them successfully at the local level. Sometimes problems come to us that have played for a long time in a community. It would be so good to deal with them in an earlier stage. We are dedicated to finding ways of strengthening communities so they feel strong enough to be open and work with difficulties and negativities.
2. The Care and Conduct Panel will periodically review its policy document, The Shambhala Care and Conduct Policy, to ensure it provides a clear and effective basis for working with complaints.
3. Develop guidelines for child protection for the Shambhala Mandala.

Find out more: The Shambhala Care and Conduct Policy can be read at <http://www.shambhala.org/si/board/CareAndConduct20050119.pdf>

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