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WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Alumni

Warm greetings from Kathmandu.

This is my first newsletter since taking over from Philippe in January. It is a privilege to be a part of RYI, and to follow in the footsteps of Philippe and Greg.

The RYI team is spread across the world as we continue to run RYI’s programs online, with the Spring semester and Summer Program complete, and the Fall semester about to begin. Given the uncertainty created by the Covid pandemic, illustrated by the second wave in Nepal that is currently overwhelming the health system, we expect RYI courses to be online through the end of the Spring semester 2022.

Taking on-campus courses online has been a significant learning experience for academic institutions worldwide, and RYI is no exception. Surprisingly we have seen an increase in numbers of students. Many of these new students are people who do not have the time or resources to come to Nepal, but are able to study online.

Once the pandemic is over, we plan to launch a scaled-up online program that will provide many more offerings than the current Moodle-based program and will blend the flexibility of asynchronous learning with the power of live online classes. We hope the new program will enable us to reach even more people, will provide our degree students with the opportunity to mix periods of study in Nepal with periods studying from home, and will mean you too can join our online courses and classes and promote them to your friends and acquaintances.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter. Please keep in touch.

Best regards,
Roger Hodgson

Principal, RYI
WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF STUDENT SERVICES

Dear Alumni,

I hope all of you are healthy and safe.

Due to the passing away of one of our students and due to the intensified Covid crisis in India, Nepal, and other areas in the world, this spring semester has been very challenging for many. Now Nepal is under a strict lockdown with many Covid cases in Boudhanath and many day-wage earners struggling even to have enough food for the day. At the same time, many students and prospective students are struggling to find the funds to follow their passion of studying at RYI. As several of you have asked me how to contribute, I’ve included these links:

- Supporting the monastery https://shedrub.org/contribute/
- Donating towards scholarships for RYI students https://ryi.org/projects/ryi-alumni-fund
- Shenpen – providing food and hygiene articles during the Covid crisis. https://www.shenpenpndal.org/program/covid-relief/

Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche has expressed many times that he is keeping all of you in his heart and prayers, and that our monastery and RYI are here for you. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us.

Warmly,

Tina Lang

Head of Student Services

student.services@ryi.org
EVENTS

First Virtual Alumni Event

It was so wonderful to see so many of you at our first virtual alumni event! At your request, the highlight of this event was a teaching by Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. We are very grateful to him for his extraordinarily profound advice. A big thank you to RYI alumnae Michelle Nevarez and Yanneke Jitta for helping to organize this event.

In case you missed it and would still like to watch it, you are welcome to contact student.services@ryi.org for the link.

Annual RYI Fall Seminar Held in May

As the annual RYI fall seminar had to be postponed, Choky Nyima Rinpoche kindly agreed to give a virtual seminar at the beginning of May 2021. Rinpoche taught on Buddha Nature, and several alumni mentioned to me that they felt as if Rinpoche had stepped right into their room.

There were more than 2000 participants, and it was wonderful to see and hear some of you. Congratulations to the many translators, many of whom were RYI alumni. They did fabulous translations into Spanish, German, Portuguese, Russian, Ukrainian, Nepali, Chinese, English, and Vietnamese. A big thanks also goes out to the organizers and the tech team, who are also RYI alumni.

However amazing this online event was, we still hope that we can all meet soon again in Nepal for the next RYI seminar (and an in-person alumni event).
Convocation Ceremony 2020

Congratulations again to all our RYI graduates! The convocation ceremony took place in December 2020 at Kathmandu University, and due to the Covid crisis students were also able to join online.
Although the online format has certainly changed the RYI Student Society’s way of interacting and its activities, the Student Society has still remained active, organizing events and get-togethers virtually for all students, as well as physically for those in Boudha. Here is a quick recap of this spring’s activities:

**Tree planting:** In 2019, students wanted to start a tree planting project in Kathmandu, and a small amount of money was raised for this cause. However, with restrictions and uncertainty due to the global pandemic, these plans had to be postponed. In 2021, the plans were brought back to life. Along with community members from Boudha and the monks from Shechen monastery, RYI students planted trees inside Shechen monastery as a part of the Bhumi-parsha (2021) project by Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche. This project aims to plant 84,000 trees all over the world. The plan is to plant hundreds of trees in and around the Kathmandu Valley.

**Movie screening:** As a way for students to rewind and relax in the middle of a hectic semester, the Student Society held a movie screening of the documentary film “Summer Pasture.” This film follows a man and his wife from Kham, Tibet, as increasing pressure from the outside world threatens their daily life.

**Yoga group:** While most days were spent studying in front of the computer screen, the Yoga group offered some relief in the form of weekly meetings for students to get some
physical activity. Meetings were held via Zoom and led by yoga teacher Xinzhen McMinn.

**Story-telling workshop:** Rachel See held a workshop focusing on narration and the transformative power of storytelling. This workshop explored both personal and collective narratives. Participants shared stories in a group setting and discussed concepts like “home” and “safety”.

**Mingle events:** Normally students would mingle naturally on campus, but since this wasn’t a possibility due to the current circumstances in Nepal, the Student Society also held several Mingle events for students to socialize outside of the classroom setting. The Mingle events were organized approximately every two weeks, and they were mainly quite casual meetings where anyone could join, offering a chance to see old friends and make new ones.

**Utpala:** The Utpala Cafe also provided a space for students to mingle during the semester. Although Nepal endured several lockdowns, Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery’s Utpala Cafe continued to provide free meals during the lockdowns, and later offered meals at reduced prices for students. For students living in Nepal, Utpala Cafe became a safe haven for studying outdoors, having healthy meals, and seeing familiar faces. Utpala also provided a space for other projects, such as blood donation and clothes donations, as well as farmer’s markets. Many thanks to Utpala!

**Arts Journal:** This year’s Arts Journal is still in the works, and RYI Student Society is accepting contributions from students. This time, the Arts Journal will be entirely digital. We are looking forward to seeing students’ creativity on display!

**Buddhist Art Lectures:** A series of lectures focusing on Buddhist Art were held as an integral part of the Buddhist Art course taught in Fall 2020. Professor Diane Denis invited various artists and scholars to talk about different topics, and these lectures were also made available to the public for free. To see some of the lecture material and view student artwork from this course, please visit [https://buddhistartexhibit.wordpress.com/](https://buddhistartexhibit.wordpress.com/)

By Hilda Molsa
RYI Student Society

**Student Society Clubs:**

**Chod Practice Group** meets every Thursday at 5:15 p.m. Nepal time online through Teams. We are practicing the Tersar Lujin from the Chokling Tersar. Beginners are welcome. For more information, please contact student.services@ryi.org.
With the Delta variant of Covid causing a medical crisis in Nepal, Nepal has been under a lockdown for several months now. A number of our RYI students, staff, and alumni in Nepal contracted Covid but recovered. Unfortunately, several lost family members and friends and our hearts and prayers go out to all of them.

Several RYI students and staff are involved in our monastery’s social welfare organization Shenpen which has been very active in trying to support those suffering in Nepal under this major crisis. Nepal is in dire need of more vaccines in order for the situation to become more stable.

In the interest of the health and safety of our students and staff and due to uncertainty regarding global travel, RYI decided to conduct all programs and courses for Fall 2021 and Spring 2022 online. While it is sad to be unable to convene together on campus, offering our classes online has opened new doors for many, including quite a few RYI alumni, allowing them to join classes online. We are very happy to be able to serve you again in this way.

This has also led to RYI’s decision to develop new options for delivering its courses online after classes resume on campus. Stay tuned for further updates.

Please enjoy this wonderful and informative presentation (link) created by RYI alumna Michele Nevarez. It contains lovely photos of the beginnings of RYI, as well as a summary of results from the alumni survey.

About Michele: From 1996-2001 Michele helped get RYI off the ground, served as secretary to the Board, and attended RYI classes during this time. Michele is the co-founder and CEO of Goleman EI, a company dedicated to the democratization of Emotional Intelligence. We are very much looking forward to her forthcoming book “Emotionally Intelligent Habits: A Guide to Accessing Your Full Potential” due out this Fall.
For the Online Summer Program 2021, RYI is inviting RYI alumni and current faculty members to give public talks in their area of expertise for the benefit of the summer students and the general public. Among RYI alumni, talks are being offered by both RYI degree students and visiting students. On 13th June, Kaleb Sherab Tenzin, MA student shared his experience of living and studying at the monastic shedra in Ka-Nying Shedrub Ling Monastery. Other public talks included:

Westin Harris (Senge Drayang) on “The Hideous One in the Himavat: Tales of the Siddha Virūpāksa from Nepal”, 27th June
Given the unique situation of pandemic, not only classes, even our public talks and workshops have moved online, and are accessible now to students and others in time zones throughout the world.

After having received permission from the speakers, we upload their talks to RYI's SoundCloud page or our RYI YouTube channel. Feel free to catch up on talks that interest you at your convenience in your device!
Advice for Language Learning

Quite a few alumni mentioned that they would be interested in hearing some advice on learning languages. Please enjoy the following videos, which contain such tips.

Dr. Catherine Dalton is an RYI alumna and assistant professor at RYI, where she teaches primarily in RYI’s MA program in Translation, Textural Interpretation and Philology. She received her doctorate in Buddhist Studies from UC Berkeley, where her doctoral research focused on Indian Buddhist tantra. In addition to her academic research, Catherine has worked for many years as a textual translator of Tibetan Buddhist literature and an oral interpreter for Tibetan Buddhist teachers.
Tatiana Tagle recently graduated from the RYI Translator Training Program. She is one of the key people in the Tara’s Triple Excellence team and an electronic engineer specializing in semiconductor physical design. She also volunteers her skills at many Buddhist seminars and events as an oral interpreter into Spanish.
How can we support you?

- Discount offer for certain online courses - [https://www.ryi.org/alumni](https://www.ryi.org/alumni)
- Career support
- Networking and invitation to events
- Invitation to join RYI Student Society club activities (also online)
- Become an RYI research affiliate and do your research in Nepal
- Assistance with the replacement of Kathmandu University certificates and transcripts. Contact admin@ryi.org
- Access to volunteering opportunities at Gomde centers and Dharma Houses
- Continued access to the RYI library and new Dharmachakra Library once we are back on campus

How can you support us?

- Engaging with RYI in a way meaningful to you
- As a scholar, giving guest lectures, weekend workshops, and much more
- As a potential employee, looking to work with us
- As an employer, looking for graduates with particular expertise
- As an expert, offering staff training for our employees
- Mentoring or volunteering to support students or staff
- Giving career talks
- Organizing alumni events
- Providing job and internship placements and other opportunities for our students
• Engaging with us on social media
• Writing an article for our newsletter
• Fundraising
• Donating to RYI https://www.ryi.org/get-involved
• Supporting students in need, for example, by donating to the RYI alumni fund

student.services@ryi.org
Update your contact information

Please contact us at admin@ryi.org to do so. Keeping your contact information up to date will allow us to send you our bi-annual newsletters and other important news.

Are you interested in staying connected with other activities of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche?

Would you like to find out if there is a Dharma center or a practice or study group near you? Please check out www.shedrub.org or contact student.services@ryi.org. Furthermore, you are welcome to sign up for the newsletter of Rinpoche’s activities and the student photo site for Rinpoche HERE.

Would you like to share some news about yourself?

We would love to share more information about our alumni in our newsletters. Please email student.services@ryi.org
HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF FURTHER STUDIES AT RYI?

For Fall Semester 2021 and Spring Semester 2022, Rangjung Yeshe Institute will continue to hold all programs and classes online. As well as our regular graduate and undergraduate programs RYI will also offer selection of non-credit courses that you can directly sign-up for without having to apply through one of RYI’s undergraduate programs. These courses include Colloquial Tibetan I, III and V, Classical Tibetan I, III and V, Sanskrit I, III and V, Nepali I and III, and the *Bodhicharyavatara*.

Please follow the link for more details: [https://www.ryi.org/fall-2021-online-courses-non-credit](https://www.ryi.org/fall-2021-online-courses-non-credit)

For undergraduate courses please visit: [https://www.ryi.org/programs/undergraduate](https://www.ryi.org/programs/undergraduate)

RYI also offers two Master’s programs, a PhD program, as well as a Translator Training Program. If you are interested in any of these, please visit [https://www.ryi.org/programs/graduate](https://www.ryi.org/programs/graduate) [https://www.ryi.org/programs/translator-training](https://www.ryi.org/programs/translator-training)