

DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP
Conference Calls to Discuss Global Access to Shambhala
September 9, 2006, 12 PM and 8 PM (Eastern)
NOTES

Note: To ensure the greatest possible global access to the discussion, two phone calls were held.

Present at either conference call: Raana Bastani (Iran); Hamish McLaren (USA); Cortez Rainey (USA); and Mark Turnoy (Korea).

We talked about possible reasons more people did not join the conference call: vacations, business, etc. Cortez said some people had emailed to say they would not be able to call in but would suggest recommendations later. We noted that so far most of the email responses and conference call participants have been from emerging regions. This might indicate that these groups have a greater need for help.

Those present for the call brainstormed and discussed recommendations to submit to the Sakyong's Council. Following is a brief statement of the recommendations that were suggested/discussed during either conference call.

- Develop a statement that describes the "diverse global mandala" that Shambhala envisions, and develop a plan for bringing such a mandala into existence.
- Establish a policy for improving global access to programs: In furtherance of our aspiration to create enlightened society in the world, Shambhala will support the development of Shambhala centers and study groups in Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania and South America--including sanghas in emerging regions that are geographically isolated.
- Use a set portion of the 11.5% of international program revenue that is presently being used for scholarships to establish and build principal in an educational endowment fund that perpetually provides funds for programs in emerging regions.
- Establish a Council on Global Access comprised of a representative from Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania and South America, to oversee scholarships/subsidies awarded by Core Services.
- Include funds in the annual Core Services budget for a staff person to manage international programs and scholarship/subsidy programs as well as funds for visiting teachers, translation and scholarships in emerging regions.

- Establish reporting procedures for all international programs that make transparent the performance of international programs and Shambhala's scholarship/subsidy program.
- Establish a fellowship program that annually allows two people from Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania and South America to (a) reside/study at any land center for up to 6-months and (b) participate in any Shambhala program in the mandala for which they are eligible.
- Continue to encourage centers and groups in all regions of the mandala to develop sanghas that are welcoming to groups that are underrepresented in their center/group, as suggested in *Recommendations for Improving Diversity and Accessibility in Shambhala*. Use the *Dot* and other means to make people more aware.
- Publicize Shambhala's scholarship policy and its scholarship program for international programs as well as the criteria that are used to make award decisions in different regions for international programs.
- Hold special teacher trainings for sangha members who wish to reside/teach in another country for a period of 2 or more months.
- Establish all SSBS courses online, as well as leadership, teacher, level director, assistant director, meditation instructor and guide trainings, and or video/DVD courses—with a resident (local) senior practitioner certifying satisfactory completion.

Cortez said he would send this list of recommendations to the group and ask them to email comments, questions and additions to the entire group. Afterwards, he will prepare a report for the group to review before submitting it to President Reoch and the Sakyong's Council.