

ELEGANT RECEPTION CELEBRATES DIVERSITY

More than 25 people attended an elegant dinner hosted by President Richard Reoch in recognition of Shambhalian of African, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern and Native American descent---another indication that mandala leadership is actively engaging diversity in Shambhala.

The purpose of the dinner was to acknowledge and celebrate the racial and ethnic diversity of Shambhala center's in the Mid-Atlantic region---Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.

Following up on the themes of diversity and inclusion that emerged during the 2005 Shambhala Congress, Center directors from the Mid-Atlantic region (and New York City) helped plan the dinner and/or ensure that local sangha members whose racial/ethnic groups are under-represented received invitations to the event.

The dinner was held at the Baltimore Shambhala Center on May 27th, in connection with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Shambhala Congress. In dinner remarks, President Reoch told his guests, "You are not just welcome to this dinner. You are welcome in the Kingdom of Shambhala."

Center leaders from the region joined the president in welcoming guests during a reception that preceded dinner, during which each guest had a short, separate meeting with him.

When the party entered the dining area, they found brilliant white cloth-covered tables arranged in court fashion, with elegant place settings. The colorful four dignity banners were displayed along the walls, with the Great Eastern Sun banner situated behind the head table. After the meal chant Shambhalian, immaculately attired in black and white uniforms, delicately provided exquisite table service throughout the three-course meal.

Amicable conversation and laughter filled the air, and was only interrupted by toasts from dinner guests to the Druk Sakyong, the Sakyong, President, other dinner guests and meal service staff. There was also an outburst of applause for guests who arrived late for dinner, after traveling all the way from New York and North Carolina.

There was a definite feeling of warmth, joy and community present as the dinner concluded with chanting the Dedication of Merit and singing the Shambhala Anthem.

Many thanks to all who helped get the word out about this event and to all who selflessly helped to "make it so"!