



February 11, 2007

Office of the President
Shambhala International
1084 Tower Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 2Y5

Dear President Reoch:

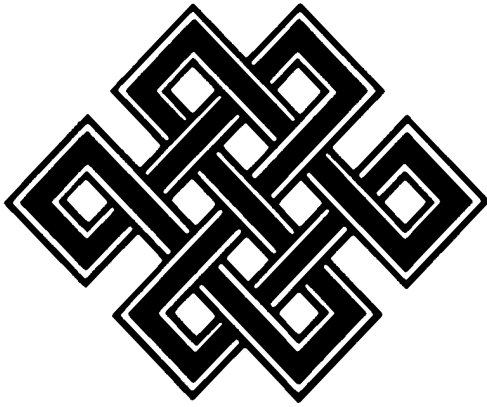
On behalf of the North American People of Color Scholarship Funds Committee: Alice Dan, William Auerbach and myself Mabinti Dennis, I am pleased to offer the final document for a North American People of Color Scholarship Fund to the Shambhala Mandala. The team has worked together over the past year to develop this scholarship with the intention of supporting the aspiration of increasing the chance of People of Color attending advanced Shambhala Buddhist programs. This will enable them to train in the dharma and be active in their centers and the Shambhala communities. As we know from the recent excellent report of the Diversity Working Group, our proposal addresses one particular area of need among many areas identified. We trust that our effort and experience will be inspiring for additional efforts worldwide.

We have worked with Carolyn in the pass two months to make additional changes that were suggested by the Sakyong Council. We are requesting that an announcement be made to the Shambhala community as soon as possible as we discussed in Halifax. As soon as the announce is made the document will be placed on the Diversity Working Group website with link to the Chicago, New York, Baltimore and Toronto Shambhala Centers website, then board members will begin to develop a strategic plan to start fundraising following the suggestions you gave us last year during our meeting.

We are so pleased to be making this offering to the Shambhala mandala and to assist the Diversity Working Group in the spirit of creating a diverse enlightened society. The committee looks forward to an announcement so that we can begin fundraising and work towards sending participants to seminary this summer.

Wishing you a very joyous Year of the Pig. Yours in the Vision of the Great Eastern Sun.

Mabinti Dennis.
For: The North American People of Color Scholarship Fund Committee.



The North American
People of Color
Scholarship Fund
(NAPOCSF)

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North American People of Color Scholar Fund

This document outlines how the **North American people of Color Scholarship Fund** will be structured and administered and provides background information on the urgent need for such a scholarship fund.

The purpose of the NAPOCSF

The purpose of NAPOCSF is to support the Shambhala mandala's aspirations related to diversity by making available financial assistance to People of Color on the Shambhala Buddhist path who aspire to attend programs that will enable them to contribute more fully to Shambhala society and to be of benefit to people who share their backgrounds.

The origin of the NAPOCSF

During the 2005 Vajrayana Seminary, several North American Shambhala practitioners met to discuss the topic of diversity within Shambhala and to explore ways of supporting people of all races and ethnicities. They concluded that Shambhala would benefit from an organized effort to cultivate the participation of larger numbers of People of Color in the Dharma and Shambhala communities who would contribute to Shambhala's vision and culture and hold positions as meditation instructors and teachers.

As meditation instructors and teachers, People of Color will contribute to the richness of Shambhalians society, transmitting the teachings of basic goodness and offering support to people who share their backgrounds. This will both benefit the entire sangha and help to alleviate suffering among a broader spectrum of people in our local communities and in our diverse world.

Why we are concerned about People of Color

As part of its intention to create enlightened society, Shambhala seeks to foster a society that is open, inclusive, and welcoming of diversity. Shambhala's racial and ethnic diversity affects our ability to relate to

people of various backgrounds who enter our centers and therefore our ability to benefit people of all backgrounds in our increasingly multicultural communities.

Who may apply for a NAPOCSF scholarship?

An individual who: (a) is a member of the Shambhala Buddhist community; (b) is a person of color residing in North America (Canada, Mexico, or the United States); (c) has applied to one of the following programs; and (d) needs financial aid in order to attend one of the following programs may apply for a NAPOCSF scholarship.

Eligible programs:

- Dathun
- Warrior Assembly
- Sutrayana Seminary
- Vajrayana Seminary
- Shambhala Guide Training
- Meditation Instructor Training
- Shambhala Assistant Director Training

Definition of People of Color

“People of Color” are persons who are of African, Asian/Pacific, Hispanic, Latino, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, or Native American ancestry.

How to apply for a NAPOCSF scholarship

The application process will open after we receive sufficient donations to the fund. We are in the process of fundraising. As soon as money is available for allocation, and we are ready to accept applications, we will send out another announcement about the application procedure. The applications for the programs themselves will also include instructions for applying for a NAPOCSF scholarship.

An applicant may apply for both a NAPOCSF scholarship and a Shambhala scholarship. In such instances, the amount of the NAPOCSF scholarship award will be determined in consultation with the manager of the Shambhala scholarship fund and on the basis of the number of NAPOCSF applicants, the needs of individual applicants, and the availability of funds.

How NAPOCSF scholarship award decisions will be made

A quorum of the NAPOCSF Board of Directors will review and discuss each scholarship application and make a decision in consultation with the program manager at the Practice Center where the program will be held and on the basis of the number of NAPOCSF applicants, the needs of individual applicants, and the availability of funds. NAPOCSF will notify each applicant of its decision, ideally within four to five weeks of receipt of the application.



Who is on the NCPOCSF Board of Directors.

The following individuals comprise the NCPOCSF Board of Directors:

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Who manages the NAPOCSF

The management and accountability of NAPOCSF funds will be the responsibility of the Chicago Shambhala Center. They will be financially responsible for accounting and record keeping, and will take all legal responsibility for the funds. All financial statements of the account will be made available to the Board of Directors on a yearly basis and NAPOCSF fund performance will be reported annually to the Shambhala community.

How to contribute to the NAPOCSF

Shambhalian and others wishing to contribute to the NAPOCSF will be able to do so as described below. All contributions will be held in trust and will be distributed as directed by the members of the NAPOCSF Board of Directors.

Contributors requiring a tax receipt in Canada should send a check, money order or voided check for automatic monthly withdrawal to:

Shambhala Office of Finance and Development
1084 Tower Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 2Y5

Contributors requiring a tax receipt in the United States should send a check, money order or a voided check for automatic monthly withdrawal to:

Chicago Shambhala Center
7331 N. Sheridan Road,
Chicago, IL 60637

Contributors from other countries may send a check or money order to either the Canadian or U.S. office noted above.



VISION

“As a governing board, the leadership would be grounded in practice and study first of all, and they would promote the understanding of diversity as intrinsic to creating an enlightened society”. (Response to the Practitioner Survey, fall 2004. Diversity Working Group. Shambhala practitioner of color).

- To develop a scholarship fund to support North American People of Color who are interested in furthering their practice and studies in the Shambhala Buddhist lineage.
- To provide funds to People of Color to enable them to receive the training they need to be fully active in the Shambhala Buddhist community.
- To encourage diversity among those in leadership roles.
- To benefit the community by cultivating leaders, teachers, and active participants who will support People of Color along the path and contribute to building a more diverse Shambhala society.

Our vision for initiating the NAPOSCF is to remove the barriers that limit participation in advanced Shambhala programs and to enable People of Color to further their practice and studies in Shambhala Buddhism. Our efforts are in harmony with the work of the Diversity Working Group, which is also addressing access to programs for underrepresented groups throughout the international Shambhala organization. The NAPOCSF addresses two goals identified by the Diversity Working Group: 1) to reduce costs for attending programs for underrepresented members for whom tuitions are prohibitive, and 2) to develop a diverse group of teachers, MI's, guides, etc. Our vision is to support the aspirations of People of Color to take on greater responsibility in Shambhala leadership, teaching, and mentoring roles to increase diversity at those levels within our North American community.

At this time, due to particular needs in this region, the NAPOSCF has been created to focus on assistance for People of Color in North America. We recognize that many groups in other areas are also in need of assistance, but we are proceeding with our efforts to address a specific need within the North American

sangha. In the future, if this program operates successfully, our initiative may be expanded to cover needs in other areas. We do recognize that other members in our community have financial difficulties, however our vision in establishing this scholarship is to provide support specifically to People of Color so they may become full, participating members and contribute to the creation of an enlightened society.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During Vajrayana seminary in the summer of 2005, members of the New York Shambhala Center initiated several meetings regarding attracting and retaining People of Color to the Shambhala Buddhist path. Various ideas arose from those discussions on how to:

- attract populations that are underrepresented in North American Shambhala centers;
- maintain current members who are People of Color;
- train People of Color who are members of the community to work with their own communities; and
- encourage People of Color to attend programs such as Warrior Assembly, dathun, seminary, and teacher and meditation instructor training.

Some members of the North American Shambhala community believe there is a need for more representation of People of Color among those who teach programs and give meditation instruction. This will inspire newer People of Color to feel welcome in our community.

The racial and ethnic diversity of Shambhala affects our ability to relate to people of various backgrounds who enter our centers, and thus our ability to benefit people of all backgrounds in our increasingly multicultural communities. The NAPOCSF is designed to increase the number of qualified People of Color in the Dharma and Shambhala communities who will contribute to Shambhala's vision and culture and hold positions as meditation instructors and teachers. In these roles they will be able to contribute to the richness of our society, transmitting the teachings of basic goodness and offering support to people who share their backgrounds. This will both benefit the entire sangha and help to alleviate suffering among a broader spectrum of people in our local communities and in our diverse world.

Currently our community does not reflect the racial diversity of the larger society. Often when People of Color enter our centers for the first time, they do not feel comfortable or a part of the community. The absence of visible minorities is a barrier to their connection with the Dharma. Hence, minimizing this barrier will enable more People of Color to connect with the Dharma.

The NAPOSCF was developed to support and encourage People of Color to further develop their practice and study of Shambhala Buddhism to inspire others and to reduce the barriers for future practitioners of color. Support provided by the NAPOSCF will contribute to balancing the racial composition of our centers so it will more closely resemble that of the larger society. We believe a scholarship is critical to support and develop diversity within the Shambhala community.



Appendix 1

VOICES OF SHAMBHALIANS

"I gave up long ago the idea of trying to attend Warrior Assembly, Seminary, etc., because of the cost. ...I can assure you from my exposure over the years to many other groups, that this Shambhala/Buddhist path is generally seen as for the rich." *Response to the Practitioner Survey, fall 2004. Diversity Working Group. Shambhala practitioner of color.*

Program admission fees have been the major impediment for People of Color to continue on this path. Many minorities have been discouraged by the financial burden of attending programs and the embarrassment of soliciting donations from individuals or requesting a discount from centers. Despite recommendations made by the Shambhala Diversity Working Group to encourage sangha members to make modest donations to assist others and to encourage members to save money towards their programs, and although financial assistance is available through practice centers, it is still a financial strain for some People of Color to attend advanced programs.



APPENDIX II

STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

Bill Auerbach, New York City Shambhala Meditation Center

During Vajrayana seminary in 2005, members from the New York and other centers held several meetings to discuss diversity issues in our community and how to attract more People of Color to our community. Out of those meetings the need for a fund to support minorities was discussed. In the past year, several of us have put this proposal together. I want to express that the scholarship fund is an important tool to help us increase diversity at the New York Shambhala Center. I think the high cost of long retreats poses difficulties for many students and these obstacles are sometimes higher for People of Color. I hope that the diversity committee will support this scholarship fund as I feel it would be a great success for the community.

Mabinti Dennis, Toronto Shambhala Meditation Centre

Five years ago I attended Warrior Assembly and was very inspired by one of the directors who opened my heart to the passion for the Shambhala teachings. I knew then that I had found my path. Within that same year I took refuge vow with the Sakyong and started studying the Shambhala Buddhist path and attending different programs. After attending a program I am always inspired to continue my study and practice on this path. During these times I have benefited greatly from individual sangha members and from scholarships, to attend Warrior Assembly, a dathun, seminars, and the Rigden Abhisheka. I am thankful for their generosity, kindness and for their continuous support. This has helped me to move beyond my own hesitation about the path and embrace the Sakyong as my guru. I have grown to love this community and the Shambhala Buddhist path. The Shambhala Buddhists path is very vast and profound and I encourage all People of Color in our community to attend Seminary, Dathun, Warrior Assembly, and Abhisheka, and to deepen their studies and practice with the Sakyong. It is my sincere wish that by developing this scholarship fund all People of Color may benefit and that it will increase the chance for People of Color becoming senior students, to teach, guide and mentor others.

Nancy Floy, Chicago Shambhala Center

I am offering my heartfelt support of the People of Color Scholarship Fund. I believe that diversity is one of the most important issues of our Shambhala Buddhist mandala. It is imperative that we have People of Color in all areas of our community and at all levels—especially in leadership positions. In order to achieve this we must support People of Color financially to attend programs for training, studying, and practice. The People of Color Scholarship Fund will help tremendously in this respect. May this project be shared in blessings from the lineage.

Alice Dan, Chicago Shambhala Meditation Center

In Chicago, we are solidly in favor of efforts to support greater diversity in the greater Shambhala sangha. This idea to establish a fund for People of Color is an excellent way to address a group who are currently underrepresented in the North American Shambhala centers and groups. The message sent by establishing the fund will support participation by racial/ethnic minority sangha members, far beyond the amounts of money to be donated. It shows that we go beyond "lip service" in our efforts to build a more diverse community, and that we value People of Color moving into leadership positions. For these reasons, the Chicago Shambhala Center will be proud to serve as fiscal agent for the People of Color Fund. We will accept funds donated, report on donations to the Governing Committee of the fund, and disperse funds to the programs where applicants have been accepted, as directed by the Governing Committee. We will keep administrative records of the People of Color Fund separate from our own center finances. In this way, we hope to support these efforts to increase diversity throughout the Kingdom of Shambhala.

Acharya Arawana Hayashi, New York City Shambhala Meditation Center

I am certainly in support of a scholarship fund for People of Color. It is good that you have convened an initiating group to work on issues of inclusion in a sane and dharmic way. I appreciate the efforts you have all made and encourage all of us to continue to move forward.

Tal Varon, Co-director, New York City Shambhala Meditation Center

After reading the proposal for a People of Color Scholarship Fund, I feel much appreciation for your considerable efforts in spearheading this important initiative. As you well know, New York is as diverse a city as they get. Nevertheless, it is clear to me from working as full-time co-director of the Shambhala Meditation Center of New York that our major residential programs (as well as even our classes and weekend intensives here in the city) are not accessible to large parts of the city's population, and when it comes to People of Color I believe that financials probably play a considerable part in this phenomenon. People of Color do attend our classes and programs, though not in large numbers. Moreover of those who attend not many stick around for long. This may be partly because of the predominantly white middle-class vibe of the center, but I believe that financials are also in play. We on the local center level need to address this issue and the newly emerging diversity committee is a good step in that direction, which I look forward to seeing expand. On the larger program level such as Dathun, Seminary, etc, I think that a fund such as the one this proposal presents will be a great vehicle for the forwarding of more accessibility to People of Color. I believe there will be interest in our community to take part in fundraising efforts for this end. The center leadership will be happy to put energy into this area. I thank you for all you've done and look forward to hearing from you again.

Acharya Simon Luna, Santiago Shambhala Meditation Center

Your idea of a People of Color scholarship funds is very timely and important for our sangha. This is such a complex and challenging topic, involving questions of our openness as Shambhala members,

acknowledging the problems of cultural/ ethnic/racial and social blindness and respecting cultural/ethnic/racial and social differences. I am very happy to lend my support and your proposal, so please do send me information as the project develops.

John McQuade, Director, Toronto Shambhala Meditation Center

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The Toronto Shambhala Council reviewed the proposal of the Diversity Fund and would like to lend our support to this project. It will no doubt benefit both those whose circumstances are obstacles to participating in Dharma programs and the whole Shambhala community. We will be happy to support and promote the program in our center.