

NAROPA

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Naropa University is a private, nonprofit, nonsectarian liberal arts institution dedicated to its mission of contemplative education. This approach to learning integrates the best of Eastern and Western educational institutions, helping students know themselves more deeply and engage constructively with others. The university comprises a four-year undergraduate college and graduate degree programs in the arts, leadership, counseling, education, and religious studies.

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THE FIERCE URGENCY OF NOW

A Letter from the President

At Naropa's first convocation in 1974, our founder, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, energetically announced the reignition of a pilot light launching the audacious experiment to create a university integrating the deep introspection of the Eastern contemplative tradition with the Western liberal arts. Over the years, the flame of Naropa burned bright and hot, and sometimes it burned a bit dimmer and cooler, but in all cases we remained both connected to the founding vision and at the same time supportive of innovation. Every one of us actually has control over the next phase of Naropa's future. That is represented by how we care and support students, how we respect our staff and faculty colleagues, and how we serve the world that we are entrusted to protect.

A hallmark of a Naropa education is the transmission of wisdom and the practice of compassion.

It's a commitment that lies at the heart of what it means to be fully human. We study and we practice faith traditions here, but we also learn from writers and performers and visual artists, from educators, from chaplains, from environmentalists, from social activists, and from therapists. That's the Naropa cauldron that we are in together—secular and spiritual, playful and serious.

Fifty-six years ago, 250,000 people gathered in Washington, DC, to witness the magic of Dr. Martin Luther King. Dr. King said that "we have come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism." Dr. King offered a national wake-up call naming racism, gender oppression, and poverty as the poisons that must be transmuted to inclusion, radical compassion, and social equity. That exhortation, unknowingly, created the frame for our work at the 21st century Naropa University.

Just ten years after the March on Washington speech, after the shock of the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, of Dr. King, of Malcolm X, of Robert Kennedy—and the equally tragic deaths of 58,000 Americans and more than two million Vietnamese—a few visionaries, whose lives had been informed by what had happened over the decade prior, met in Boulder to imagine our university: the place where "East Meets Wests and the Sparks Will Fly."

Naropa, to some extent, was true to our often repeated origin story. It was a place of peace and



In the summer of 1974, Naropa's founder, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, and the spiritual teacher Ram Dass offered talks on alternate nights in the old Boulder Bus Barn, now Alfalfa's Market.

love, of freedom bordering on outrageous and unconventional ways of showing up. But the undercurrent was always a sense our society had deep and wide work to do, and the generation that was so impacted by the times needed to create the means to make transformative change. Two thousand people arrived to witness Trungpa Rinpoche and Ram Dass, alternating nights of

teaching—occasionally checking each other out, and then stepping away and letting the other hold the spotlight.

These two teachers and all others who were attracted here came feeling that fierce urgency. A time to reject this disease of gradualism was right then and there. While there was no puritanical rejection of bringing joy and humor and freedom to our work and study, to the founding teachers, the discipline and the commitment was essential. Each person sitting at that old bus garage downtown was urged to jump in fully.

What does all this mean for 2019 and beyond? I believe our work together now is to look back to tradition and with equal passion and inspiration and imagine an evolved future. And given what's going on right now, we have plenty to imagine.

As many of you know, our student Zayd Atkinson was aggressively confronted by eight Boulder police officers, some with weapons drawn, for the audacious act of picking up trash while being black. Zayd is entitled to tell his own story, but the story that I can tell is that there was a seismic shock felt in this city and an invitation to Naropa to collaborate in finding ways to more impactfully name racism, offer challenging and transforming ways that we can work together to disrupt how we are as a city. We can take some pride that those among us have the skills to facilitate this kind of work, and Naropa's commitment to do it in our own community is real.

We also remain engaged with the shared karma of the ethical issues that have arisen in the Shambhala Buddhist organization we have related with from our founding. Shambhala is undertaking its own deep work to address some decades of ineffectively dealing with unethical actions, notably and sadly beginning at the top. It is important, but not sufficient, that Naropa has been legally separate from Shambhala for thirty-two years. Or that at the request of me and the Naropa board, the Sakyong, who was the Shambhala leader,

resigned his honorary title at Naropa last year, just after the sexual abuse allegations were brought to light.

What we must do is look deeply and with integrity at how Naropa has evolved as an institution—what we expect of each other and what students are entitled to expect of faculty and staff. That's the conversation that we need to have. That work remains underway, and there will be many ways for those interested to engage. And to be clear, this work must be done in nonprofit, for-profit, or government institutions across the country.



Naropa's approach to learning in large part offers the tools to understand the past with an appreciative and critical mind and heart. And to imagine a future from a seed of groundedness, embodied wisdom, knowledge, and compassion—to many that defines what we mean by nowness. Trungpa Rinpoche always taught that nowness is a

place of action and possibility, not one of passivity. He said that we need to find the link between our traditions and our present experience of life. Nowness, or the magic of the present moment, is what joins the wisdom of the past with the present.

In a world of eight billion people, I think every day about the great good fortune that we have to be part of a very small number of humans who have real choices. Whose struggles are less of day-to-day survival and more about things like how to learn, how to practice, how to become inspired, and how to be of service. With that gratitude, I hope that we can launch into our future in a powerful way, so we can burn bright and hot starting right now. Thanks for being part of this Naropa community.

Warm Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles G. Lief". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "L".

CHARLES G. LIEF
PRESIDENT, NAROPA UNIVERSITY

CONTEMPLATING WARRIORSHIP

Four years ago,
Naropa University
and the U.S. Air Force
Academy in Colorado
Springs embarked
on a unique
and profound
collaboration.

By Lisa Birman

Over the last twelve years, Michelle Butler, PhD, associate professor of psychology in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the academy, has been conducting a research study focused on exposing Air Force cadets to diverse populations. Cadets have worked with students at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, graduates of Craig Hospital, and the homeless population at Marian House Soup Kitchen in Colorado Springs. "It's about getting cadets out of their comfort zone with support," she explains. Assessments have consistently shown increased cultural awareness, respect, and understanding—essential qualities for effective and compassionate leaders.



Jordan Hill, PhD, will be taking a greater leadership role in the collaboration.

introduced to yoga shortly before commencing his career in the army, Kerr had woven mindfulness practice into his experience of military service. "I was really enthused about this simple idea of introducing cadets to some contemplative practice." His firsthand knowledge of the benefits of contemplative practice in the military has been invaluable. "It helped expand my view of what it is to be a warrior living day to day... A warrior is not always fighting the enemy outside. Sometimes you're tackling those inner demons." "We talk a lot about what it means to be a

warrior," Butler adds. "In many ways, it's having the confidence to say your truth, whatever that is."

Interested in expanding the study to Naropa, she met with Professor Peter Grossenbacher in 2015, who invited her to attend Naropa's inaugural Veteran Day's event, hosted by Dennis Kerr (BA Traditional Eastern Arts, '16). About a year later, Butler got in contact with Kerr, who had since graduated and become Naropa's Americorps VISTA veteran success coordinator. Working with Naropa represents a new branch of Butler's research, with increased collaborative potential. In bringing together two undergraduate populations from very different cultures, the opportunity for learning is expanding exponentially. Students at both institutions have the chance to confront their expectations and assumptions around the "other," breaking down stereotypes and discovering common ground. In the process, they develop leadership skills and diversity awareness that serve them both personally and professionally.



Cadets in noon meal formation at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

One question that often comes up in discussions between Naropa students and Air Force cadets centers around the potential contradictions in holding a Buddhist outlook in a time of war. "It's a very conflicting question," Kerr notes, "but one that as

you dive into it more, it can open up some sort of awareness." During a visit to the Air Force Academy this January, Meredith Doherty, graduate student in Ecopsychology and undergraduate admissions counselor, was struck by a sense of shared humanity. In the Buddhist section of the multid denominational Cadet Chapel, she asked cadets how they

reconcile their shared humanity with the fact that they're potentially preparing to go into combat against other humans. She remembers the cadets confessing they "haven't been able to actualize that yet." The Buddhist chaplain noted that cadets often come to him with that very question, and that grappling with the question is perhaps more important than answering it. "It's an important thing to be thinking about," Butler agrees. "It's something they haven't processed in their own mind, but it's being cued here."

As a veteran, Naropa graduate, and dedicated yogi, Kerr was the perfect partner to help Butler expand the study to Naropa. Having been



Veteran Success Coordinator Dennis Kerr (right) accompanied Naropa faculty members Tom Weiser (second from right) and Jordan Hill (center) during an April visit to the academy.

At the core of Butler’s research are capstone projects—some traditional and some experiential, with one option being to engage with the Naropa community. Devon Burger, who graduated from the academy this spring and recently moved to North Carolina to work on aircraft maintenance for F-15Es, explains, “The capstone is a collaboration about experiential learning and inclusive leadership.” Having selected Naropa, Burger attended events hosted at Naropa and met with Naropa students, staff, and faculty at the academy. Capstone students take a leadership role in the project, recruiting additional cadets, with Butler available as a mentor and guide. “Working with Naropa taught me more about how to accomplish tasks with a totally different population of people.... I wasn’t sure what to expect when I was first given this project. I knew it had something to do with human dignity and respect, but I didn’t know how applicable it would be. Wherever I go, traveling with work or for leisure, I have gained a new respect for different groups. I am eager to be kind and take more time to listen to differing groups of people. I think both professionally and personally, I have owned the belief that what makes us great leaders is never underestimating what another person can teach you.”

The next phase of the collaboration will hopefully increase engagement by the Naropa community. “In the coming academic year and moving into the future, our aspiration is to grow and promote

a greater commitment to this project on the Naropa campus,” notes Jordan Hill, PhD, an interdisciplinary faculty member who teaches in a number of departments. Hill will be taking a greater leadership role in the collaboration while Kerr pursues a graduate degree, though Kerr also looks forward to staying connected to the project.

The implications for this collaboration stretch far beyond those immediately involved. “Getting students from Naropa and the Air Force Academy to talk, study, and work together is in many ways a microcosm of what the United States needs desperately at this particular historical moment: young adults from different ideological and political perspectives starting a dialogue and working together to build a better and more sustainable future for our nation and for the world,” Hill explains. His words are echoed by Doherty: “We oftentimes get so restricted by our expectations of the layers of society and culture. We really are just these humans trying to do what’s best for humanity, what’s best for a bigger population than just ourselves.... If we are able to put something above ourselves, like the world or our country or this earth, there’s a lot we can learn from that.”

For more information about UNITe (USFA–Naropa University Inclusion Team), email Jordan Hill at jhill@naropa.edu, Seann Goodman at sgoodman@naropa.edu, or Michelle Butler at michelle.butler@usafa.edu


A BRIDGE BETWEEN WORLDS

Cover Artist, Adreana Marie Cerda

By Cassandra Smith

For MA Religious Studies student and artist behind this year's cover image Adreana Marie Cerda, art just "runs in the family." Inspired by parents who were both artistically inclined, Cerda views painting as a way for her to bridge different worlds and connect back to her ancestry. As a Panamanian-American who spent most of her time in the United States, she sometimes struggles with the feeling of missing out on Panamanian culture being part of her daily life but has found an opportunity to connect through ritual.



Reflecting on her own relationship to the living traditions of Panamá and the concepts of good and evil, Cerda believes that as a Buddhist, good and evil cannot exist independently of each other. "Without one, we wouldn't know the other," she explains. "On the spiritual path, I try to use both good and evil as opportunities to deepen my practice of being present with what is. When we practice resting in the midst of either, a profound sense of freedom and clarity begins to develop." 

"The rituals of Panamá act as an exciting exploration and discovery," explains Cerda. "Every time I visit, it's a fun journey that is continually surprising and educational." This year's cover image, *Danza de los Diablicos*, was the result of such an exploration into ritual. She says the figures in the painting are *diablicos sucios* (dirty devils), which came to Panamá from Spain during the colonialist period and incorporate various cultural elements from Indigenous and African traditions.

"Diablicos sucios were used in ritual as a strategy to scare non-Catholics into converting. Little did they know, most Panamanians never pass up the opportunity for *una buena celebración* (a good celebration)," says Cerda. "Today, the diablicos are part of a rich Panamanian folklore tradition that represents the battle between good and evil. Performers dress in elaborate diablico masks and dance in the street during certain holidays and festivals. The dancers use castanets, maracas, and bells to chase evil spirits out of town."



Photos by Sofia Drobinskaya

LEADERS FOR A NEW WORLD

By Lisa Birman

What does it mean to be a leader in today's world? Or tomorrow's? And what does it take? How do we meet the constant challenges of this ever-changing political, cultural, economic, and environmental landscape with compassion? And how do we care for ourselves and our communities—local and global, human and non-human—while we're doing the work?

Naropa University is fostering a new generation of leaders and changemakers. Our faculty, staff, alumni, and students are committed to discovering the work they are meant to do in the world, and to transforming the world for the better. This isn't work we can or should do alone. Leadership happens in community.

As we ask these questions, and as we answer them together, we not only discover ourselves, we also learn more about our world. Both on campus—through coursework, lectures, and special events—and online—through our Pilot Light blog and Mindful U podcast—Naropa is a meeting place for luminaries furthering the possibilities of interstitial and mindful leadership. Here are just a few examples of the transformative voices inviting you to join the conversation.

An Earth-Based Story of Home

Associate Professor **Jeanine Canty**'s new book, *Globalism and Localization: Emergent Approaches to Ecological and Social Crises*, explores the interconnectedness of community and the Earth. In her chapter, "The Ties That Bind: An Earth-Based Story of Home," Canty examines the need for both local and globalized planetary awareness.

We have become a rootless people. The archetype of a consumer-based, Western, globalized society features a collection of individuals no longer tied to place. Life goes on without meaningful interaction with the places we reside within. Home and relationships become disposable. This is a tragedy for all involved. When we disconnect from the locales of our communities—the landscape, plants, animals, our human co-inhabitants, and all living beings—we are no longer earth-based peoples. We lose the wisdom of being in a relationship with the land and one another. We forget our important roles as keepers of the Earth, allowing Earth and peoples to be exploited. We diminish our wellness and our power to enact democratic lifestyles based in community. To be rooted is to be tied to a specific place in a manner in which one's very being arises from the soil and soul of this land. It is to be in an interconnected relationship with a specific landscape, community—one's homeland.



Photo courtesy of Randy Thomae

Yet, if we focus solely upon our immediate community, we become unaware of the ecological and social global impacts of our existence. Very few communities meet their needs for resources within the boundaries of their bioregions. These needs are now met from a national, and more often a global, supply chain that has deep economic, political, and social impacts.

For more on the anthology, go to routledge.com

Breakthrough Communities, Underserved Populations & Community Engagement



Photo by Sofia Drobinskaya

Paloma Pavel, president and founder of Earth House Center, and **Carl Anthony**, founder of Breakthrough Communities, were keynote speakers at Naropa’s 2019 Earth Justice Day. They subsequently joined us for a Mindful U podcast, during which Pavel noted that speaking truth to power inspires grassroots organizing.

What we’re learning is that frontline communities are brilliant—frontline communities have innovation, have strategies, have indigenous knowledge of their locales that is often inaccessible to people who don’t live there and are making decisions remotely or through “big data” or through mapping processes that are often virtual and not even embodied.

So, what we’re excited about is unearthing, excavating, embodying that wisdom, knowledge, leadership, and giving it a name, a prominence, an official—that they can stand in the face of that. And what we’re finding is that when we do that—when we actually interrupt these processes, stop the trend and redesign—we find out that not only do community groups make better decisions for their own communities, but they often have solutions for the whole of society.

Anthony spoke about community organizers learning from other ecological movements.

We’ve learned so much from the environmental movement—how we appreciate endangered species.... And our communities are also endangered, and we have the opportunity to use the strength of our communities as a teaching tool and a leadership tool that will lead us from the chaos of our climate change to a social and racial justice, which can build upon a harmony of all the communities involved.

[Listen to the full Mindful U podcast at naropa.edu/podcasts](https://naropa.edu/podcasts)

A Heart of Gold

Venerable Pannavati, co-founder and co-Abbot of Embracing Simplicity Hermitage, was this year's Frederick P. Lenz Foundation Distinguished Guest Lecturer in Buddhist Studies and American Culture and Values. Her lecture, "Hearing the Cries of the World and Responding with Compassion and Power," emphasized "compassion for the welfare of many."

This habit energy, the things that we do every day, the things that we say every day, the things that we think every day, if we are not allowing the actual heart to be reflected in that, then the dharma is empty of its power. Because its power is only manifested through us through what we see and think and what we say and what we do and how we touch things in the present moment.

Reflecting on the importance of the present moment, Venerable Pannavati noted, "If the dharma can find me, I'm not lost."

Thich Nhat Hanh said something; he said the present moment is the only time over which we have dominion. And he said, the most important



Photo courtesy of Venerable Pannavati

person then is always the person you are with right now, the one who is right in front of you. For who knows if you will have dealings with any other person in the future, not even in the next moment. That is the miracle of mindfulness.

Venerable Pannavati also joined us for a Mindful U podcast. Listen at naropa.edu/podcasts

An Onsite Inquiry into Mindfulness

Naropa President **Chuck Lief** recently joined Holistic Life Foundation's (HLF) board of directors, whose "visionary and impactful work directly benefits thousands of students who deserve support." **David DeVine**, host of Naropa's Mindful U podcast, visited HLF in Baltimore for a three-part series featuring its founders and the principals and teachers of the schools where HLF works.



Photo courtesy of Bill Rigler

In the podcast, co-founder **Ali Smith** explains the importance of an early introduction to mindfulness education for emotional regulation.

I feel like the earlier you can get these skills and tools the better your life will be for a lot of different reasons. I mean just dealing with stress as you get older—stress becomes a lot more prominent in your life. Life doesn't get easier as you get older—it gets harder and it gets more stressful. So, if you can learn these skills early, you can deal with stress throughout your entire lifetime.

Vance Benton, principal of Patterson High School, likens HLF's intervention to trauma recovery for veterans.

[Students] live with the possibility of their friends or comrades dying. They may have even seen comrades and friends die. And they're impacted by this emotionally every day. However, those

soldiers get to come home ... and then they're diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. And they receive medication or assistance to treat that... However, students are not able to leave it. They are not able to be treated or diagnosed for this element that is the exact same thing as soldiers.

So, I don't label it as post-traumatic stress disorder. I began to look at it as present-traumatic stress disorder. And they're not being treated. So, we needed to do something.

[Listen to all three podcasts at naropa.edu/podcasts](https://naropa.edu/podcasts)



The Work That Reconnects

David DeVine also hit the road to visit scholar and activist **Joanna Macy, PhD**, at her home in Berkeley for a two-part podcast series on The Work That Reconnects.

Macy explained why she finds gratitude subversive in today's economic climate.



It's politically revolutionary. Now why? It's because it undermines the industrial growth or capitalistic-consumer society. It undermines it because the consumer society is always conveying to us that we're not enough. We need this. We need that. We don't look right. We don't smell right. We don't drive the right kind of car. We don't dress right.

And we are made to feel that we can never have enough or be enough. And so, we patrol the malls. So, to really feel glad to be here undermines the late stage capitalism that would keep us shopping till we drop.

She also talked about the inseparability of social justice work and the ecological crisis.

It's growing increasingly difficult if not impossible to separate the social justice from ecological environmental justice.... The people who have the least resources—thanks to our history of economic and racial and reconstruction and Jim Crow—all of that is pushing people—abandoning them to areas that are the most toxic to live in... People who have the least resources economically are now often the most afflicted in climate disruption. 🌀

[For more information about Macy's work, go to naropa.edu/jmc](https://naropa.edu/jmc)

[Listen to the two-part series at naropa.edu/podcasts](https://naropa.edu/podcasts)

THE BEAUTIFUL NEGATIVE IONS OF GOVERNANCE

Poem by Anne Waldman

Colorado Governor Jared Polis was sworn in at a historic ceremony at the state capitol on January 8, 2019. Distinguished Professor of Poetics Anne Waldman, artistic director of the Summer Writing Program, and co-founder of Naropa University's Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, was invited to read a poem at the inauguration. "The Beautiful Negative Ions of Governance" was written for the occasion.

What keeps us awake and alive?

Spirit of a new beginning!

Poetry loves contradictions

Walt Whitman said "the United States themselves

Are essentially the greatest poem"

Let's improve the poem, Colorado!

Allen Ginsberg wrote:

"Denver! Denver! we'll return roaring

Across the City and County Building lawn

Which catches the pure

Emerald flame streaming in the wake of our auto!"

But let's not play havoc with the lawn!

This is the antithesis reality, spirit of a new beginning

And "negative ions" always a linguistic challenge, which are

In fact beneficial, marvelous antidotes to toxicity

Negative ions, abundant in nature, crowded in around waterfalls,

Widespread in forests and mountains

O oxygenated ions

They neutralize free radicals!

Balance nervous system!

Revitalize cell metabolism!

Clear the air!

What keeps us awake and alive?

This is the antidote to dystopian reality

Here in our wonderful state of "continental divide"

Another paradox as

We want to unify east & west invoking powerful sister

Bodies of water: Pacific and Atlantic and also snaking
Colorado River

One of the life-lines our state poetically named in Spanish for:

This ruddy silt..... *color rado*...

Victory in this purple state open to all

With a big blue sky above, look up

The epoch belongs to the visionaries!

Our precious climate, our precious elemental world

Our magnificent topology

This is the antithesis reality

Antidote to psychotic dystopian governance

Antidote to unethical, unlawful, homophobic,

misogynistic, racist, sexist, elitist, disaster governance

Humanity on the brink with crisis with syndicates of greed

Worlds in collision, who's in charge?

World watching from its fraught cocoon

Floods, earthquakes, fires, famine, wars roiling destruction,

Cruelty, poverty, migration crisis, education crisis!

We are called to respond

Welcome to the poetry of accountable governance

What's in a name? "polis" from the Greek is a city
state or society

Characterized by a sense of communitya body
of citizens...

"Polis": leading to the "common good"

"Common ground"

Plato's *Republic* conjured here in our auspicious acropolis

Our cosmopolis, citadel of tolerance, openness, intellect
and vision

A new kind of nation state

This is the antithesis reality, a world worth living in



Photo by Joe Amon

Plus crystalline lakes, dessert-like sand dunes
 Aspens' shining autumnal golden pennies
 Shimmering in the breeze
 Cottonwoods over creeks elegant with their
 damnable allergens
 Big horn sheep in high meadows
 Pronghorn that roamed how many millennia ago?
 Solo grazing moose you don't want to provoke
 Rutting elk that scores hieroglyphs on barks of tree
 Rubbing antlers into secret inscription

Forest, mountains, high plains, mesas, canyons, plateau
 Tundra that once was ocean, ancient telluric mysteries,
 And home to Folsom Culture back over 14,000 years
 Ancient pueblo peoples, and noble Ute
 Apache, Comanche, Arapaho, Cheyenne

Feel the faint breath of the air in which human beings and
 Other planet denizens lived their lives. Here.
 This is the New Year of the Antithesis Reality
 Summoning unification on our Continental Divide
 This is the year, this is it, the inauguration of Jared Polis

These are the beautiful reinvigorating Negative Ions of
 Governance
 Of sane stewardship

The stage the arena the continuum the incubator
 A vision that includes us all, not a dream deferred
 Promise going deep Inside our skulls, little theatres of hope
 and fear
 This is the antithesis reality, a beginning again

Let's help turn this torqued troubled nation around
 Transparency, as opposed to insularity
 Leadership and compassion as opposed to exploitation,
 cynicism and cruelty
 This is the victory reality while we still have a chance

Take this to Washington,
 Evoke the natural world we can't lose touch with
 Still so vibrant and begs our help, don't tarry! don't tarry!
 Invoke the consciousness, the mind of that world, the
 Spirit-dralas of elemental presence
 Colorado is awake now in its own populace its own promise
 We are tasked with transmitting the endangered spirit of the earth
 And our endangered humanity

"We never know how high we are
 Till we are called to rise
 And if we are true to form
 Our statures touch the skies" wrote Emily Dickinson

This is the antithesis reality, antidote to atrocity,
 Breathe in the beautiful negative ions of true governance,
 Breathe out the efficacy of what we may give generously to
 the world
 Governor Polis,
 In good body, mind, spirit
 Lead us well!

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Watch the video on Naropa's Pilot Light blog at naropablog.com

REESTABLISHING MASCULINITY

By Cassandra Smith



Photos by Sofia Drobinskaya

At Naropa, the student journey is one of critical self-reflection and unlearning. Through this process, Naropa's motto, 'Transform Yourself, Transform the World' is realized through each individual. Each student's growth and transformation looks different, and for Anthony Gallucci (MA Religious Studies, '20) and Lincoln Taggart (BA Contemplative Psychology, '20), their contemplative education has involved an exploration of the cultural conditioning related to what it means to be masculine in today's world.

Inspired by the women's suffrage movements, the women's liberation movement, and the #MeToo movement, Gallucci and Taggart, along with faculty member Ramon Parish, formed a student group in the spring of 2018, called 'Reestablishing Masculinity.' Parish, assistant professor in the Interdisciplinary and Environmental Studies Departments, says he was motivated to collaborate on the initiative as he has "spoken with a number of male-identified students that have expressed some confusion about what it means to be a 'man.' Some question whether they want to link themselves to that category, given that we are in a period when many generational abuses of power on the part of men in relation to feminine identifying and non-binary persons are out in the open and no longer acceptable."

Looking at the ways these current national and global movements impact the Naropa community directly, Gallucci explained he was partially driven to start the new group in response to the recently reported "damning, illegal, and discrediting" behavior of some [male-identified] members of the Shambhala community, which he believes "appear involuntarily connected to Naropa through shared founding peoples."

For Taggart, the motivation for starting this group is also personal: "I began working with a men's group through the ManKind Project last February," he explains. "I was experiencing a degree of inner

turmoil that I could not handle on my own. I was treated with deep kindness, strength, and love." Through attending these meetings, he developed "a sort of love affair with the study of the masculine" and unearthing his shadow. Taggart adds, "I leapt at the opportunity to co-create something at Naropa to continue this exploration."



Student Lincoln Taggart is passionate about using a contemplative framework to discover life-affirming ways of being masculine.

The group held two workshops that first spring—an introductory session and a social-driven pizza party. Gallucci feels these first meetings provided a sense of relief for the participants that a group was being constructed to include space for the transformation of toxic masculinity to virtuous expressions of masculinity. He explains that from his perspective, "in addition to relief, people seemed to be becoming empowered to not passively accept misogyny as a quality of masculinity."



Assistant Professor Ramon Parish and Peace Studies student Tyler Dewey plant garden beds on Earth Justice Day.

Through their introductory sessions, the members of the 'Reestablishing Masculinity' group discovered that the theme, intention, and dedication of the group are quite unique to Naropa. Taking Naropa's contemplative framework into this work, the founders hope the group can act as a container for others to discover what their masculinity is and believe the ideal way the group unfolds is as both an individual and communal exploration.

Parish explains the approach they have been taking is "a synthesis of the mythopoetic men's movement, based in an incorporation of world mythologies and folk tales—a sort of Jungian view—and a more social justice and sociological framework that challenges male-identified folks to examine inherited gender roles, privileges, and violence that are baked into these social dynamics and our complicity in them. So we want to take both an inner and an outer approach."

"My sense is that young men, myself included, are hungry to discover and reintegrate the ancient calling to embody their masculine selves."

"My dream is that we can rediscover the beauty and majesty of masculinity through a contemplative framework," Taggart says. "It seems like the general conversation around masculinity is quite one sided, specifically around patriarchy, power dynamics, and toxic masculinity. I do not want to downplay the seriousness of these conversations nor the pain that the status quo has caused to everyone, men included. I want to honor and explore how we as men have been conditioned in ways that are destructive to ourselves and others, all the while using a contemplative framework to discover life-supporting ways of being masculine in the world that resonate with each individual's particular makeup."

Since these first sessions, the group has created a thorough and thoughtful plan of action regarding offering the reestablishing masculinity process to Naropa students. The stated intention of the group

is to “ultimately dismantle the gender hierarchy by redefining, reimagining, and re-articulating masculinity as a non-oppressive and sustainable identity; an actualization of virtuous attributes.” The next step, Gallucci explains, “is actualizing the principles we gain through the initial reestablishing process.” Once the students have a foundation, they would like to see growth in the form of trainings or groups created to support the Naropa faculty, board of trustees, and administration.

The group has also articulated several short-term goals, including drafting a public ‘list of encouragement’ for presenting skills for actualizing virtuous masculinity at all of the Naropa campuses and supporting the staff and faculty in initiating a group to reestablish masculinity among the employees of Naropa University.

“My ideal outcome for this work is that as we engage in challenging and new conversations around masculinity, each person discovers pieces of themselves that have not yet been unearthed in order to create integrated and whole people who know their values and have the courage to

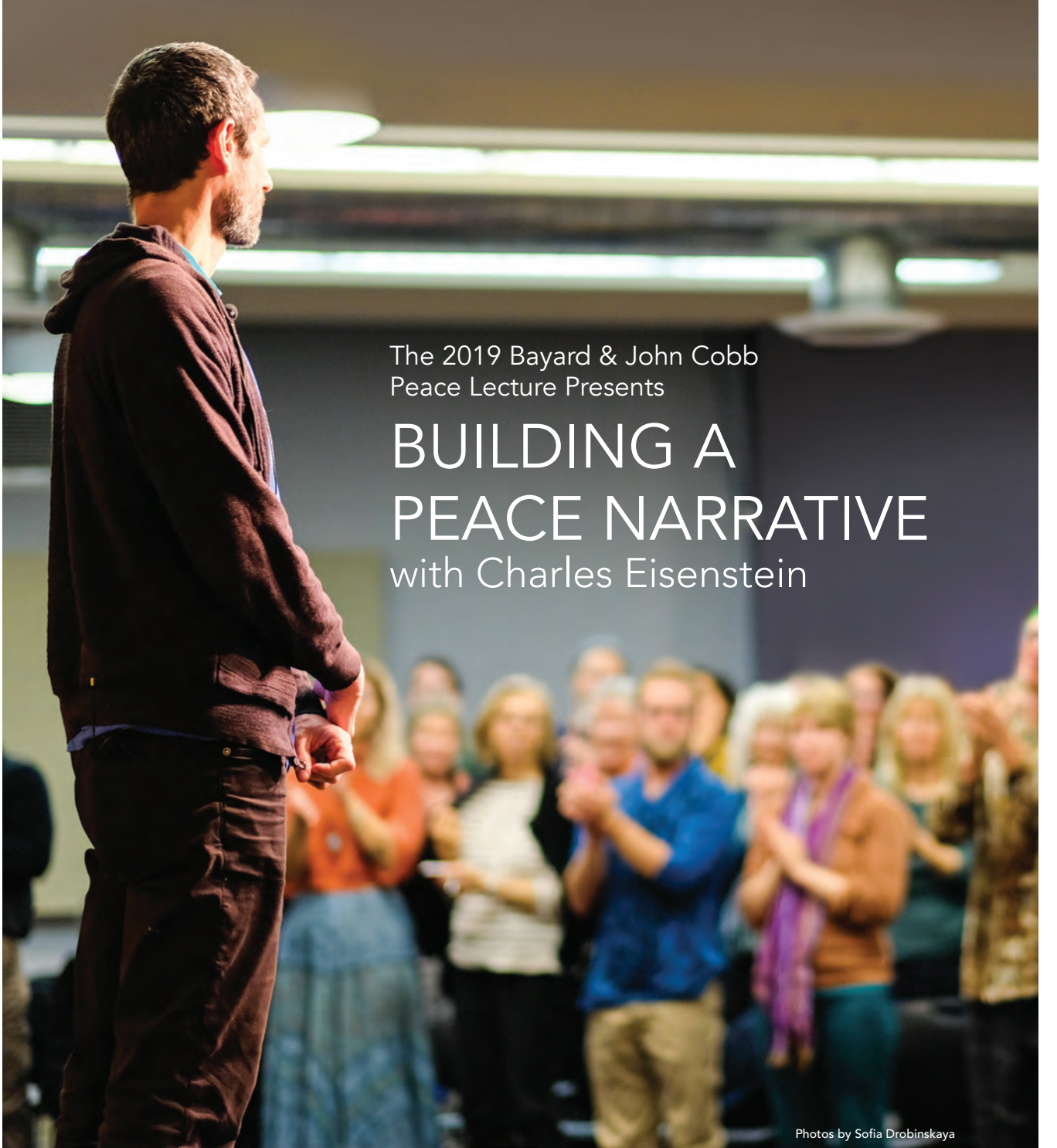
live them,” Taggart says. “Although there are limitations to what we can do in the space, my sense is that young men, myself included, are hungry to discover and reintegrate the ancient calling to embody their masculine selves.”

Parish agrees. He knows that his students “are questing for some type of positive life serving ways to inhabit [the masculine] role, one that respects gender equity and our wholeness (e.g. our vulnerability) as persons.” “There is a revolution happening in our ideas about gender,” he adds, “and [the students] are curious about their place and responsibility in it. Female and non-binary folks [also] need to see and contribute to the formation of a safe, conscious, and embodied masculinity that has both a sense of heart and purpose. So though the group centers the inquiries of male-identified people, it is open to everyone. Come!” 🌀

More information on the Reestablishing Masculinity student group is available through the Student Life communication portal on my.naropa.edu



Naropa undergraduate students (left to right) Swechhya Rajbhandari, Tiffany Rudashevsky, Daron Hyde, and Lincoln Taggart take turns talking and listening in order to practice outer and inner listening skills.



The 2019 Bayard & John Cobb
Peace Lecture Presents

BUILDING A PEACE NARRATIVE

with Charles Eisenstein

Photos by Sofia Drobinskaya

A speaker and writer focusing on themes of human culture and identity, Charles Eisenstein has spent his life exploring the origin of the “wrongness in the world.”

He is the author of several books, most recently *Climate: A New Story* (2018), *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know Is Possible* (2013), and *Sacred Economics* (2011). Distinguished thinkers, practitioners, activists, and scholars from diverse backgrounds are invited to give Naropa University’s annual Bayard & John Cobb Peace Lecture, and the Naropa community was honored to have him join us this spring.

The stories that we tell ourselves about ourselves and about the world are what can organize us and cohere us toward a common purpose. If we want to serve peace and wellbeing for all people, a world of healing where society and all the beings on this planet are moving toward greater wholeness, we'd better make sure that we're telling the right story.

The Myth of Redemptive Violence

Today the dominant narrative, whether we recognize it or not, is a war narrative, not only on the obvious level of U.S. foreign policy, identifying enemies around the world and bombing them, but also in our basic understanding of how the world works and how to solve problems. War thinking permeates the public psyche. To build a peace narrative, we need to identify the existing foundational war narrative.

In preparing for this lecture, I read a classic essay by the Christian theologian Walter Wink called "The Myth of Redemptive Violence." Redemptive violence is the idea that the way to make a better world is to destroy something, to kill something, to extirpate evil, to overcome the forces of evil and

chaos with the forces of good and order. Wink traces it back to a Babylonian creation myth that recounts the misogynistic killing of the great mother, who was identified with chaos and the wild. The king was the incarnation of good, conquering the beasts, cutting down the forests, bringing civilization to the barbarians, domesticating the wild. This process continues today, as we take the pieces of a ruined Gaia and build civilization out of them, building the world out of the destroyed mother.

The myth of redemptive violence translates in a striking way into modern science, which says that the tendency of the universe is toward entropy, toward disorder. Only by imposing our design onto this chaotic, disorderly, and degenerating universe are we able to maintain a realm fit for human habitation; to impose good upon chaos. If you accept that nature itself hasn't any inherent intelligence, any inherent tendency toward complexity, toward the emergence of beauty and organization, but instead that it normally degenerates into disorder, then we are inescapably at war with nature all the time, subject at any moment to being extinguished by random natural



forces. Our wellbeing in that view comes through imposing more and more control on this wild, arbitrary, random nature that is outside of ourselves. For centuries, the ambition toward control has defined progress.

Here is the basic template of war thinking. First, identify the cause of the problem, the culprit, the perpetrator. Then, control, imprison, exclude, kill, humiliate, or destroy the bad guy, the culprit, the cause, and all will be well. And the better able we are to do this, the better human life is going to be. Walter Wink gives the example of *Popeye the Sailor*. Every episode has the same plot: Brutus kidnaps Olive Oyl. Popeye tries to rescue her and is beaten to a pulp by Brutus.

Then, just before Brutus can rape Olive Oyl, Popeye eats a can of spinach and beats Brutus to a pulp instead. That's the plot of *Popeye*. Wink points out that nobody ever learns anything from this encounter. The lesson is that the way to solve a problem is to overcome the enemy with force.

The War on the Symptom

The mentality of finding an enemy to overcome with force extends beyond warfare. Take agriculture, for instance. You have a problem, like declining crop yields, you identify the cause—there are weeds in the field. And the solution is to kill the weeds. Or maybe you have strep throat. What's the cause? Let's find the pathogen. That's the orientation. Ah, streptococcus bacteria. Solution? Kill them with antibiotics. Or how about crime? Well obviously crime is caused by criminals, right? So if we lock up the criminals, then we won't have any more crime. Terrorism, obviously it's caused by terrorists. So let's kill the terrorists. No more terrorism. Problem solved.

An alternative to war emerges when we see all the enemies—weeds, criminals, terrorists, calories, selfishness, laziness, and so forth—not as causes of evil, but as symptoms of a deeper condition. Focusing on the symptoms allows the deeper causes to go unexamined and unchanged. We never ask, "Why does Brutus want to kidnap Olive Oyl?" If we don't unearth that, we will be fighting Brutus again and again forever.

When we see proximate causes as symptoms, we can ask questions like, Why are weeds growing in the field? War thinking is not usually helpful with this question. Perhaps there's a lack of biodiversity in the field or the soil is depleted in some way and those weeds are coming actually to repair the soil because there's an intelligence in nature. There is nothing to fight. Why is there crime? Is it because those criminals are just bad? Or are they acting

from circumstances that we won't ever examine if we are at war with them? What are the economic circumstances? How about legacy racism? What about trauma, despair, or the loss of meaning in life?

In all cases, war thinking is a simplifying and reducing narrative. To wage war, you pretty much have to reduce

and dehumanize the enemy. It's a universal tactic in war to make them less than fully human. As war thinking infiltrates our political culture, I'm seeing more and more dehumanization and demonizing of the other side, left and right, red and blue, Democrat and Republican. Each side constructs narratives that make the other contemptible, evil, subhuman.

A Recipe for Despair

[In a war narrative], our one hope lies in overcoming [the enemy] by force because "they're never going to change." We have a formula for creating change when there's a bad guy. It's in all the movies, not just Popeye, it's in Batman, it's in the Lion King. It's in pretty much every action movie you've ever seen. It's in Star Wars. You kill Darth Vader, you kill the emperor, you destroy evil.

In the real world, our one hope is impractical. If it comes to a contest of force, who has more force? Who has more military power? Is it we hippies and peaceniks? Or is it the military-pharmaceutical-medical-financial-educational-NGO-prison-industrial complex? They have the guns. They have the money, they have the surveillance state, they have the police, they have the control of the media. So if it comes down to a contest of force, they're going to win.

"... in any fight, the resolution lies in the things that are hidden by the fight: the things that both sides agree on without even knowing it and the questions that neither side is asking."

So, domination is probably a recipe for failure unless you become so good at the technologies of war that you do tear them down—you defeat the bad guys and now you're in power. But is the fight over now? No. They are still bad guys out there. And in order to defeat those bad guys, you need to consolidate your power to protect the world from evil. It's OK to do that, because you are the good guy. George Orwell described this clearly in 1984: "The goal of the Party is power." The justification is that they're going to create a perfect world, and in order to do that, they have to have complete power. What is power? Power is the ability to make others suffer. So you end up becoming evil yourself.

The more likely scenario is that you lose the fight with the powers-that-be. And that's why so many activists fall into despair. Despair is built into the paradigm of the fight. On one level, it is because we know the powers are too great for us to win. Underneath that, there is a kind of futility: if we do win, it's the same. The science fiction writer Phillip K. Dick put it well in *Valis*: "To fight the Empire is to be infected with its derangement. This is a paradox. Whoever defeats a segment of the Empire becomes the Empire. It proliferates like a virus, imposing its form on its enemies. Thereby, it becomes its enemies." If you go to war against war, if you go to war against the empire, you have actually become part of the empire.

Consider the following as a general principle: in any fight, the resolution lies in the things that are hidden by the fight: the things that both sides agree on without even knowing it and the questions that neither side is asking.

So for example in the fight over immigration, one side says, "Immigration is harming us, they are breaking our laws, let's keep them out." The other

side says, "You horrible bigoted, intolerant people, this nation was built from immigrants. We should welcome the unfortunate masses from the world." Nobody, at least in the mainstream media, is asking why there are so many immigrants to begin with. What has made life in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and so forth, so unbearable that people are willing to risk their lives and their children's lives, willing to leave their homes and families for a totally uncertain future? What would it take for you to do that?

Foundations of a Peace Narrative

If we want to build a peace narrative, the first foundational pillar would be holistic thinking. Holistic thinking understands that everything is intimately related to everything else. That everything is a part of everything else. That to exist



is to be in relationship. That we are not separate individuals, but are interdependent both practically and existentially. That we are inter-existent. Therefore, anything that we see as an enemy is part of a constellation of relationships that includes ourselves. To use a Buddhist term, the foundation of a peace narrative is interbeing: a connected self in a living, interdependent universe, in contrast to a separate individual in a world of other.

From that foundational understanding, we seek to understand the constellation of relationship.

So if you are getting strep throat a lot, you might seek to understand, "How is the bacteria part of my body ecology?" In fact, a healthy microbiome on the mucus membranes of the throat includes friendly bacteria that secrete substances that suppress the pathogenic bacteria. Killing the strep bacteria also kills off the friendly bacteria, leaving you more susceptible. This exemplifies a general principle: war creates the conditions for war. When you bomb the terrorists, you create conditions for more terror. When you lock up the criminals and destroy families and destroy communities, you're creating conditions that breed more crime.

"The healing of Earth that we all want so much is going to require a sacrifice. We are going to have to sacrifice the identity of being on the moral, ethical, right side."

Looking through a holistic lens, the lens of interdependency and interrelationship, the base conditions that breed all the things we war against become visible. And we no longer then default to fighting something. That doesn't mean that there's never a time to fight. It doesn't mean never to run away from a robber or use antibiotics. The problem comes when we default to a fight first because we're so used to seeing the world in terms of good and evil. So a fight becomes the default, reflexive response.

The Pillar of Compassion

When we can understand the conditions that generate the behavior that we are fighting against, then there are other options, specifically, the option of changing those conditions. This leads to the second pillar, which I'll call compassion. What is compassion? It's not the superior person indulgently, patronizingly tolerating or sympathizing with the condition of the inferior person. Compassion is to feel what it's like to be somebody else. It is the experience of identifying with somebody else and knowing what it's like to be them. It comes from the question, what is it like to be you? What are the conditions that have made you into who you are?

Compassion is the opposite of the dehumanization upon which war narratives depend. Dehumanization is a simplifying narrative, which is the opposite of holism or interbeing. The habit is, for example, when addressing racism to blame it on the individual attitudes of bad people—racists. Racism is caused by racists, right? Or could it be that racists are a symptom of racism, not the cause, and that by dehumanizing them we reinforce the basic psychic template of racism. Racism is dehumanization, and it will not be solved by dehumanizing the racists. Oh, it might feel good, you get to be on 'Team Good.' But is that what you want to serve? Or would you rather serve the healing of racism?



Sacrificing Winning

I have a feeling that the healing of Earth that we all want so much, is going to require a sacrifice. We are going to have to sacrifice the identity of being on the moral, ethical, right side. For things to change, an awful lot of letting go is necessary.

So, the third pillar of a peace narrative is to end the internal war and to develop a peace narrative inside of ourselves. It is to heal the wound of self-rejection, and thus to remove the psychic engine of war—the division of the world into us and them, good and evil. The best, easiest way to establish your identity as a good person is in contrast to the evil people. So, are you willing to give that up? Are you willing to give up having been right all along? How much do you care about peace?

Earlier I described two possibilities: you either get defeated by the military-industrial complex, or you overcome them and become the new complex. What's the alternative? The alternative comes from an entirely different place: interbeing. It starts by asking [questions like], "Where does greed come from?" That question opens up insights, understanding, and new possibilities for change. We may discover that [greed] is another one of those symptoms, just like strep. It's a symptom of an experience of scarcity. It's a hunger that can never be met by the objects that are offered to feed it. If somebody is cut off from community, cut off from nature, cut off from meaning in their lives, they're going to be hungry for those things. But instead, what's offered is money, prestige, possessions, power. Those are the substitutes modern society most conspicuously offers.

A Story Is an Invitation

If you can look at the person that you call an enemy and see in them that actually, on a deep level, they want what you want and what all people want—to contribute their gifts to a more beautiful world, to be generous, to belong, to know and to be known, love and be loved, and to serve a purpose beyond themselves—if you can see that, you'll be able to speak to that, and you'll be able to create an invitation to that.

One of my mottos is that the story that we hold about a person is an invitation for them to step into that story. [Being able to invite someone into a different narrative] comes from understanding where those judgments come from. Why do we have such a need to establish ourselves as the good guys? It comes, as I've said, from a wound of self-rejection, which is also a product of war thinking, that says something is wrong with you, and virtue comes through some kind of self-conquest. It's built into school; it's built into



parenting; it's built into religion. It's ubiquitous in our culture. If you're a parent, any time you look at your child with contempt and say, "Why did you do that? How could you?" You're basically conveying, "You're bad." It is rarely an honest question—usually it is a coded condemnation. If you made it an honest question, then you'd be getting somewhere. Why did you do that? Please help me to understand, because I know who you are, divine being. Help me to understand, Monsanto executive. Help me to understand, Donald Trump. Maybe you don't ask that person specifically, but that's the orientation.

So those are some of the foundations and pillars of a peace narrative. The building blocks, the construction components are the stories that foster understanding. They could be stories that help people understand what it is like to be an immigrant, what it is like to be a racist, what it is like to be a corporate executive, or what is like to live in a ghetto. So many of our political stances

would be untenable if we really knew what it was like to be somebody else.

These stories need to be presented in a way that they can be heard. They are harder to hear if I present them with a secret agenda of making you feel ashamed and humiliated. The purpose is not to bludgeon their conscience with how much harm they've caused. That's another form of warfare. That's why these stories—the building blocks of a peace narrative, the building blocks of solidarity that doesn't require an enemy—are so much more powerful when they're presented and held in a



way where people feel safe to hear them. They have to sense that you're not trying to attack them, and you trust them, you trust their basic goodness. You trust. You take the stance of, "I know it's hard for you to go through this humiliation. I'm here for you, my brother, my sister. I'm here for you. We're in this together."


That's a peace narrative. We are in this together.

A More Beautiful World

Beyond the foundation, pillars, and building blocks of a peace narrative, we might also speak of its structure, its architecture. I call it a story-of-the-world, the "more beautiful world our hearts know is possible," that we invite people into. It's a world where everybody has a place, where everybody is valued, where everybody is welcome and is known to have a gift that is essential to make that world even richer. And nobody is left out. To speak compellingly of that world, you have to have seen it. The story we hold about the world is an invitation for the world to enter that story, too. We have to

have seen it. And I would say probably everybody in this room has seen it. You have had a glimpse of what the world could be, that the world could be peaceful. You've seen that this isn't really working for the power elite either. You might see that there's a part of them that is willing to make the courageous choice to let go of something that was precious to them, something they're starting to realize is not so precious after all.

Here we all are, having caught a glimpse or many glimpses in our lives of a world that we know is possible. And if you're like me, we don't know how to get there. The mind says it's not possible because, what's the plan? The mind is immersed in war thinking, but it's deeper than war thinking—forced-based causality. How are you going to make it happen? That's a more subtle variation on war thinking. How are you going to exert a force on a mass? That's Newtonian physics, another part of the old story of separation. Well, we don't know how it will happen. We don't have enough force and information to make it happen. If it isn't entirely up to our own force, we're going to have to trust something else. We're going to have to trust that there is an intelligence in the world greater than ourselves, that there is an organic tendency or will toward organization and beauty and complexity that is unfathomably mysterious. Therefore, we don't have to know how it's going to happen, nor do we have to fight the world to make it happen.

Instead, we start by listening. What is my part? How shall I be deployed? Where am I to be and what is mine to do? What calls to my care? And from that place, maybe we become able to speak that world story, to speak that invitation, or maybe we just carry it in ourselves and act from our deep-seated knowledge of it. In these gatherings, we remind each other that the knowledge that a more beautiful world is possible is real knowledge—because you wouldn't be here if you hadn't seen it too. The very fact of this gathering stirs my optimism. It reminds me, I'm not crazy. Even if you have come with loads of skepticism and despair, you're here. You still have hope. Life never dies. Living things die, but life itself always strives for more life. Thank you for carrying that bit, that glimpse of a more beautiful world with you, so that we can weave a peace narrative around it. 

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“My education at Naropa would not have been possible without the scholarships I received. After studying law and working in human rights activism in Moscow, Russia, I realized I wanted to focus on creating social change from the inside out, and Naropa was the only place I could go for that. I am extremely thankful for the community of donors that continue to support this magical place, and I hope many more international students will have the opportunity to experience Naropa because of your generosity.”

— **Sofia Drobinskaya**, Mindfulness-Based
Transpersonal Counseling, '20

Photo courtesy of Jewel Afflerbaugh

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TRANSFORMING ELEMENTARY

By Lisa Birman

With many schools beginning to recognize the importance of mindfulness in the elementary education classroom, the question remains as to how educators can best integrate these practices in their classrooms and their lives. High turnover due to burnout continues to contribute to teacher shortages in Colorado and across the United States—the need for intervention could not be clearer. However, already overloaded with heavy schedules and stressful environments, most teachers are given short trainings on mindfulness and are expected to figure it out on their own. As the first in the country to offer traditional licensure and credential requirements with complete integration of contemplative pedagogy, cultural responsiveness, and anti-bias training, Naropa's BA in Elementary Education is the exception, training student-teachers to be present and bring their full authentic selves to the classroom.

Matriculating with both Teacher Licensure credentialing requirements and the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education Endorsement, graduates have the grounded presence required to meet the challenges of elementary education. "This endorsement gives students a significant edge when applying for their first teaching job and allows them to create meaningful relationships with students and families," explains Betsy Leach, assistant professor and program chair. Students also get extensive experience in the classroom. "Students in the program are out in the community in elementary schools during every semester to observe classrooms and gradually begin practicing in the real world—it is experiential learning at its best."

As the program enters its second year, Leach notes, "I have been blown away by the level of curiosity, critical thinking, and passion in the first cohort of Elementary Education majors. Students are asking the hard questions about what hasn't been working for decades in education, why so many teachers and students are disengaged, and why we haven't yet been able to achieve educational equity. They are passionate about holistic education, social emotional learning, and justice."



Earlier this year, the program also welcomed a new faculty member, Jennifer Bacon, PhD, as an associate professor in the Contemplative Education Department. Bacon's expertise in special education and culturally responsive teaching from preschool through graduate school, domestically and internationally, is a boon for the program. "She brings years of experience in elementary education as well as teaching and mentoring pre-service teachers with a deep wisdom and warmth that is palpable on students' first encounter with her," says Leach.

EDUCATION

Setting a New Classroom Standard with Contemplative Pedagogy, Cultural Responsiveness & Anti-Bias Training



Photos by Sofia Drobinskaya

Elementary Education Chair Betsy Leach specializes in multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching as well as community engagement strategies and inclusivity.

"In all honesty, joining Naropa's Contemplative Education Department as core faculty, in the BA in Elementary Education program, is the fulfillment of a dream," says Bacon. As a special education public school teacher, Bacon found standardized testing and "one size fits all" teaching ineffective for both students and teachers. As a holistic educational consultant and teacher in Costa Rica, she began fusing traditional educational methodologies with more contemplative practices, inspiring engagement and passion in her students and student-teachers.

"The work that we are doing in the BA program will emphasize our future elementary school teachers integrating their full selves (mind, body, and spirit) in the classroom and inspiring their students to do the same," Bacon says. "The critical nature of becoming culturally responsive educators for a diverse (racially, ethnically, linguistically, socioeconomically, and in ability and sexual orientation) student population will also be deeply embedded throughout the program. Culturally responsive and contemplative pedagogy is inextricably linked to becoming effective and

self-reflective teachers who are committed to empowering students and embarking on a journey as lifelong learners.”

While Naropa’s integration of traditional education, contemplative awareness, and culturally responsive pedagogy is the first of its kind in elementary education training, Bacon and Leach hope it will not be the last. “It took me years of study and professional development to understand that culturally responsive pedagogy was the key to providing students with an equitable education,” says Leach. “Culturally responsive teaching cannot be separated from effective instruction or holding high expectations for all students,” adds Bacon, noting that she hopes this integration will one day become the standard in education.

As a start, Naropa’s elementary education licensure is available not just to Elementary Education degree students, but to any Naropa undergraduate. The Teacher Licensure Program, which includes the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education Endorsement, can be added to any undergraduate major with additional semesters. In addition to Naropa graduates earning valuable credentials, this infuses the elementary education system with a larger pool of mindful and compassionate teachers—truly transformational education. 🌀

For more information on the BA in Elementary Education, go to naropa.edu/elementary-education

For information on the Teacher Licensure Program, go to naropa.edu/teacher-licensure



*Jennifer Bacon, PhD, authored the book *Sisters in the Dissertation House: A Dissertation Narrative*, which addresses doctoral completion by women of color in underrepresented fields.*



A STRATEGY FOR A THRIVING & SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

By Danielle Poitras

“What might it look like if higher education were to grow and develop in the face of demographic change such that in 2035 we might say that we did not merely weather a storm but instead stepped more completely into our institutional and societal missions?”—Nathan D. Grawe, PhD, “How Demographic Change Is Transforming the Higher Ed Landscape”

In 2011, Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen, author of *The Innovative University*, predicted that half of the four thousand or so colleges and universities in the United States would “be bankrupt in ten to fifteen years.” While Christensen’s prediction seemed extreme at the time, the current rate of college closure raises serious concerns, and most small private liberal arts institutions are struggling to stay afloat in this dramatically shifting higher education landscape. In the face of changing demographics, the high cost of attending college, and growing income disparity in the United States, there is an urgent need for small mission-based liberal arts colleges to innovate and rethink their business and academic models.

Naropa University has not been immune to these challenges. At this juncture, Naropa must state its transformation argument more clearly: How does a Naropa education not only prepare students to make a positive difference in the world, but also equip them for the workplace? In other words,

how does a Naropa education translate to the world of action?

Beyond that, how can Naropa continue its evolution to become sustainable and economically viable for the long term? The Naropa University Board of Trustees asked this question at their June meeting. The board, faculty, and staff are aligned in this critical work for the benefit of current students and generations to come.

The heart of the work is curricular innovation opening access and creating flexibility. Naropa is presently reorganizing the Division of Academic Affairs, supporting the transformation of Naropa College to a more integrated undergraduate degree experience not bound by the more traditional siloed majors, building on the professional programs of Graduate School of Counseling and Psychology (our largest), and creating online options for non-psychology degree programs as well. The university is taking a fresh and creative look at marketing and enrollment management, including more interactive and intuitive uses of websites and social media resources our students expect.

Reimagining Academic Affairs

With the 2018 departure of the provost and vice president for academic affairs, the president in partnership with the faculty have been exploring different Academic Affairs leadership models. “The

emerging view was the structure of nineteen chairs and program directors, two deans, and two associate provosts was too complex for a university of one thousand residential students. It was also too expensive and somewhat ineffective," President Chuck Lief says. "We are seeking to accomplish several things simultaneously. One is to reduce the administrative burden on the faculty by supporting more time with students in and out of the classroom. We also will save costs through increased efficiency. And importantly, faculty will have the space to serve as innovation partners as we continually assess our curricular offerings, including building nontraditional models of education at Naropa, such as online, professional, and personal development, and more flexible ways for students to engage."

During the successful re-accreditation site visit of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in March, President Lief met with the HLC team chair to share Naropa's intention to take some time to consider a new structure. Naropa's plan to explore new options was enthusiastically supported by the team, so long as a chief academic officer (CAO) as the academic liaison to the HLC is named.

In June, Dr. Susan Burggraf was named the CAO for Naropa. As the CAO, Burggraf is the operational leader of the Academic Affairs Division, provides leadership of AA staff, holds oversight of the academic programs in collaboration with faculty leaders, is a member of Cauldron (the faculty senate) and the President's Cabinet, and serves as senior liaison to the Academic Affairs and Student Journey Committee of the board.

Earning her PhD in Clinical Developmental Psychology from Bryn Mawr College, Burggraf wrote her dissertation on "The Appeal of Horror Movies" despite having never watched one all the way through.

Since arriving at Naropa in 2005, Burggraf has worn many hats. She served as an associate dean and faculty for Naropa College, was the first faculty director of the Center for the Advancement of Contemplative Education, Contemplative Psychology Department chair and, most recently, she served as associate provost for assessment, leading the month-long effort to prepare for the very successful comprehensive visit by the HLC.

Burggraf defines Naropa's innovative pedagogical approach as "the precision of academic inquiry

joined with 'vastness.' A panoramic mind that results in a sense of vast potential includes playfulness, creativity, and humor.... Contemplative practice teaches us that we can achieve that openness of mind anywhere."

Transforming Naropa College

Naropa College was launched in 2015 as the entity responsible for coordinating departments, faculty, and advising at the undergraduate level to ensure a comprehensive degree experience.

The imperative to right size the budget offers Naropa an opportunity to create efficiencies and further optimize relationships across undergraduate departments. Collaboration in sharing courses, such as methods and capstone courses, mentoring students, and incorporating innovations and entrepreneurial activities into the undergraduate path all create a more cohesive and symbiotic experience. For example, the core curriculum has been expanded to include a 400-level internship course that is available to all undergraduate students and required by Contemplative Psychology and Contemplative Art Therapy majors.

According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, college enrollment has decreased for the eighth year in a row, and what we previously considered a "traditional student" is now in the minority. Of those fewer students heading to college, more are students of color and those with non-binary gender identities.

Recently, Naropa College and Curriculum and Assessment Committee (NCCAC) voted in favor of a High-Credit Transfer Policy, to allow students to transfer between 61 and 75 credits into Naropa. This expansion from the previous limit of 60 transfer credits opens the door to older students, another growing demographic.

In addition to changing demographics, delivery models also continue to evolve. Naropa recently received a grant from the Council of Independent Colleges for a consultant to advise us on developing an online program for undergraduate degree completion to make a Naropa degree accessible to students who do not desire and/or cannot afford to live in Boulder.

Creating Community

Naropa is also putting more emphasis on the community experience of the on-campus student

body. A detailed use analysis showed that both the Paramita Campus (home to the Graduate School of Counseling and Psychology) and the Nalanda Campus on 63rd Street had big blocks of time where classrooms and other spaces were significantly underutilized. At the same time, the students have consistently sought more interaction with each other and with faculty. A space-planning exercise supported the integration of GSCP into the Nalanda Campus. The sale of the Paramita Campus, with a planned move in late 2020, allowed Naropa to pay down a significant percentage of its capital debt, save operating costs, and allow for investment in the Nalanda Campus for the benefit of a much greater number of students.

Providing Visionary Leadership

After serving as the interim director of marketing and enrollment management for three months, Ashley Chitwood has been named the vice president for marketing and enrollment management. This newly created position reflects the need to bring visionary leadership and continued effort to Naropa's enrollment story. In her new role, Chitwood will examine how Naropa can more effectively structure the marketing and enrollment processes and how the talented staff members in those departments can feel most productive and supported.

Her thirteen-year professional career includes work at advertising agencies and universities in Florida, Denver, and California. Most recently, as a chief marketing officer, she was managing a staff of sixty at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, a university increasingly known for innovative marketing of programs and supporting students from inquiry to graduation.

After reading Naropa's mission of contemplative education and learning about the work of the Authentic Leadership Center, Chitwood was hooked. "I felt immediately connected to what this world could experience if these philosophies and teachings were implemented in the mainstream," she explains, "and how our workplaces could be transformed."

Chitwood is excited to join her values and who she is as a leader. "My personal and professional ideals and philosophies have a chance to be practiced and encouraged at this institution, and I am ripping at the seams to begin this important work.... Naropa can change the world as we know it, and I want to be part of it."

Improving Collaboration & Clarity

Acknowledging the symbiotic relationship between the work of Academic Affairs and the Finance Division, Vice President for Operations Tyler Kelsch was named Naropa's chief operating officer. In this new role, Kelsch will lead the work around resource allocation and operational needs, thus enabling Naropa to further expand collaboration and clarity.

In partnership with Chief Academic Officer Burggraf, a new Program Review and Resource Allocation Committee was created. This group of faculty and non-teaching staff are working across divisions to create better financial health at the university. Focusing on program viability, new program innovations, resource allocation, and creative delivery models, this committee's charge is to recommend ways to restructure Naropa to better serve students, increase traditional and nontraditional revenue, and improve faculty compensation and support.

"Within every organization exists the wisdom and knowledge necessary to realign itself and further its sustainability," Kelsch says. "It is incumbent upon the community to create the systems and structures that foster an environment that allows for the wisdom of the collective to come forth in service to the mission." 



Photo by Marek Hosek

A COLORFUL CAMPUS

By Sofia Drobinskaya



Retired professor Robert Spellman cheerfully teaches students, staff, and faculty at a workshop in April.



Leaders of the student group 'Acro-Yoga & Circus Arts Club' Evey Healy, Austin Lokey, and Sedona Moreno-Castelan.



Undergraduate student Alex Kwasna performs at the final music concert of the spring 2018 semester.



Co-chair of the Student Union of Naropa (SUN) Connor Heikkila emcees and performs at Queer Prom.

At this spring's performance of the Vagina Monologues, Naropa students Gabriella Reamer, Mirna Tufekcic and Chandra Moore perform the Moaners' Monologue.



See more of Sofia's photography at sofiadro.com

EXPERIENCE A Look Back at Some of Our Favorite Moments on Campus



Student Trustee Robin Bruce fronts the six-member band Jamiroqueen at Naropa's 2019 Queer Prom, themed *Queers in Space: Welcome to the Gaylaxy*.

Faculty member Tom Weiser leads students and staff through tai chi chuan practice at the annual Keep Naropa Weird event.



Undergraduate student Brandon Nichol performs with his band Blooming Method at the Naropa's spring 2019 School of the Arts Concert.

Recent Traditional Eastern Arts graduate Joshy Vang performs the invocation at the spring 2019 Commencement Ceremony.



Indigenous artist and activist Gregg Deal paints his mural RISE at the Arapahoe Campus on Indigenous Peoples Day 2019.

PRESENCE, COMPASSION & CREATIVITY

By Joy Redstone

Naropa's Community
Counseling Center
Holds the Sanctity of the
Human Experience



Photos by Sofia Drobinskaya

Sarah Gibson ('13), clinical supervisor and MA Transpersonal Counseling Psychology graduate (left) with Naropa Community Counseling Director Joy Redstone (center) and Lucia Cordeiro-Drever ('20), Contemplative Psychotherapy & Buddhist Psychology intern (right).

Naropa's Community Counseling Center is located in a basement suite, but there's enough light for the many plants to grow. In a fit of "Naropa weirdness," every plant has been given a name. Copies of the DSM-5 and books on measurable objectives for treatment planning litter the counter behind the front desk, and a sign proclaims "all are welcome here." Art is everywhere in this space, and every visitor is greeted with a cup of water or tea.

The vision of former faculty member and Graduate School of Counseling and Psychology founder Deborah Bowman, Naropa's Community Counseling Center (NCC) was twenty-five years in the making. In the four years since NCC opened, the clinic has offered genuine and growing support for the mental health needs of the Boulder community. With thirteen interns, three fee-for-service clinicians, three clinical supervisors, and an office manager, this once tiny clinic now serves approximately two hundred clients and runs multiple groups a week.

"Kindness, spaciousness, allowing things to happen the way they need to happen, clarity through stepping back and seeking perspective—I love being able to offer those things to my clients."

It is not always easy to reconcile Naropa's unique training with evidence-based practice, but the demands of NCC's biggest payor, Medicaid, dictate biopsychosocial assessment, diagnosis, and treatment plans with measurable objectives. In addition to providing valuable professional training for Naropa interns, this has led to outstanding client satisfaction results. Ninety-three percent indicate they feel that their therapist expressed genuine compassion during their session, and 94.62 percent report that their therapist provided a safe and trusting environment.

"Our vision was to found a counseling center that is aligned with the values of the program, such as presence, compassion, and creativity," Bowman says. "I held on to this observation for the eleven years of committee meetings it took to create the plan for NCC. When the opportunity finally came, I knew that it was right." Bowman continues to support NCC in a number of ways—in addition to mentoring Clinical Director Joy Redstone, she served on the Advisory

Committee and organized *Passing the Torch*, an event for alumni to connect with both of Naropa's counseling centers. Bowman credits the intrepid student interns of the first year as a significant part of the clinic's success—they believed so strongly in the vision that they signed on to internships that didn't yet have a site when the fall semester started.

NCC provides a compassionate workplace where Naropa student interns can learn their craft and get marketable skills while exploring what it means to have a "servant's heart."

Sarah Gibson, Transpersonal Counseling Psychology graduate and current clinical supervisor, feels that recognizing clients' basic sanity is essential. "When I came to Naropa, I learned the concept of basic goodness, which I struggled with at first, but now it is part of my spiritual paradigm," Gibson says. "I look deeper into a person, their defenses, their patterns, even if they are destructive or debilitating, and keep trying to connect with the hurt human or even beyond, the deep shred of humanity or soul that lives within them and is connected to something larger."

Gibson supervises five interns, helps with group supervision, and assists with administrative tasks. She is excited about training a new generation of therapists who believe just as passionately in NCC's mission of addressing the underserved mental health needs in the community. "I align with the mission of NCC," she adds. "We really get to teach with the heart and through the heart, guiding students to clinical skills but also guiding them back to basic goodness in terms of their clients and each other and holding the sanctity of the human experience."

Lucia Cordeiro-Drever, Contemplative Psychotherapy and Buddhist Psychology intern, feels supported in her integration of Naropa education and face-to-face clinical work. "In supervision, there is the feeling that there is not one 'right way' to do therapy," Cordeiro-Drever says. "My supervisor holds space for seeing multiple potentialities in clients."

"Brilliant sanity stands out to me," she adds. "A reminder of that in myself, it means

kindness, spaciousness, allowing things to happen the way they need to happen, clarity through stepping back and seeking perspective, and I love being able to offer those things to my clients." In working with a client who has struggled with depression and trauma for years, Cordeiro-Drever knows it is kinder and more effective to let her client go at her own rhythm. "She's not ready to directly address her trauma... I trust the brilliant sanity of her own self-chosen pace."

Mo Bankey (Contemplative Psychology & Buddhist Psychotherapy, '18), fee-for-service clinician and member of the Mindful Medicaid Team, feels strongly that social oppression is almost always coupled with economic oppression and has centered their work on the needs of the queer and trans community. "*Maitri* was core to my student experience, both relating to oneself and learning to relate to clients with this unconditional friendliness and making space for whatever a client brings in," Bankey explains. "Even though I might hold different opinions, I am able to let clients have their own experience of their lives and their direction."



Mo Bankey's work with clients has centered on the needs of the queer and trans community.



The intersectionality of oppression is seen at NCC on a daily basis. While Boulder County still lacks adequate mental health services for its low-income residents—both in terms of access and in employing the innovative mindfulness and holistic interventions afforded by a Naropa education—NCC has made a significant difference over the last years and continues to grow. Every session brings the compassionate beauty of Naropa training to people who otherwise would not be able to afford this care. 🌀

To support the work of NCC, please consider donating to our Client Access Fund, a crowd-funding campaign that provides direct financial support to clients who otherwise would be forced to drop out of treatment due to lack of ability to pay. Donate at naropa.edu/access-fund

To volunteer, please contact Joy Redstone at jredstone@naropa.edu or 303-546-3570.

MEET NAROPA'S NEW ALUMNI & FAMILY RELATIONS OFFICER

"My name is Stacey Sickler and I recently joined the Naropa community in the Office of Development. My background is in community organizing and nonprofit fundraising and programming—all rooted in relationship building. I want to listen to your story, your Naropa experience, your concerns, and wishes for Naropa's future.

I am fully committed to putting in the time to build solid relationships and becoming a reliable resource for alumni, parents, and families to help you strengthen your connection to this special place."

To connect with Stacey, email nualumni@naropa.edu or call 303-546-3594.



Photo courtesy of Stacey Sickler

TRANSLATING YOUR NAROPA DEGREE INTO A MEANINGFUL CAREER

Naropa's New Career Center

By Danielle Poitras

Photo by Sofia Drobinskaya




With the goal of investing, rejuvenating, and bringing life to career development, the Office of Community-Based Learning & Career Development recently underwent a rebranding. To make career development relevant to students from day one and best serve the community, the new Office of Career & Life Development is devising a different approach to navigating the world of work.

In February 2019, Naropa officially opened the new career center. So far, they've helped students and alumni to create their own path to take their unique Naropa education out into the world. In a 'Translate Your Naropa Degree' workshop, students from different programs came together to create a resource sheet that demystifies the insular Naropa language for those outside of our community.

Director of the Office of Career & Life Development Lyndsay Farrant and her team are committed to making the center relatable and user friendly. They are also dedicated to helping students strengthen their online presence and networking capabilities to increase their marketability and to navigate the job and internship search process effectively.

"How many times have you seen someone cringe when they are asked what they are going to do after they graduate or what major they are going to study?" Farrant asks. "These are intense questions when you have not had the opportunity or support to get in touch with your inner passions

and calling. Our vision is to provide students with the guidance needed to live a life that finds congruency between their inner values, passions, and talents and their career and life path." 

How have you translated your Naropa degree? We'd love to hear about the various ways that our alumni are shifting the narrative. Let us know how your Naropa education prepared you for your work in the world by emailing us at nualumni@naropa.edu

43%

of undergrad interns were hired following the completion of their internship.

Naropa students spent

117,596 HOURS

this academic year serving their community through internships & field placements.

CREATING SOCIALLY ENGAGED CONTEMPLATIVE LEADERS

THROUGH THE
CENTER FOR
CONTEMPLATIVE
CHAPLAINCY

By Danielle Poitras



Photos by Sofia Drobinskaya

Beginning this fall, the Center for Contemplative Chaplaincy, an offering of the Department of Wisdom Traditions, will provide Buddhist-inspired contemplative spiritual care training to Master of Divinity students and community members who are interested in pursuing professional chaplaincy and spiritually integrated approaches to related disciplines such as medicine, community nonprofit work, and spiritual leadership.

Director and primary faculty Jamie Beachy, PhD, MDiv, is an Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE)–Certified Educator who has worked for more than twenty years as a chaplain, spiritual care educator, and ethics consultant in diverse hospice, palliative care, community hospital, and academic medical settings. A former Christian minister, Jamie holds a deep interest in Buddhist and earth-based practices that informs her interreligious leadership and teaching. Jamie is currently completing her certification to teach Compassion-Centered Spiritual Health (CCSH)—a contemplative method for professional

chaplaincy developed by Emory University's Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics.

"A new generation of MDiv students is looking for educational opportunities that expand the boundaries of traditional settings and approaches to professional chaplaincy," Beachy says. "The center's Buddhist-inspired, contemplative approach prepares students to become socially engaged contemplative leaders prepared for careers in healthcare as well as more innovative and emerging settings for spiritual care such as natural disaster, movement (protest), and eco-chaplaincy contexts."


Through group process learning, contemplative practice, case review, and clinical mentoring, students learn to develop the spiritual leadership required to support and guide patients, their loved ones, clients, and colleagues as they face significant and often devastating losses. The trauma-informed, earth-based, and interreligious curriculum invites

students to develop their own unique approach to contemplative chaplaincy rooted in the students' particular values, commitments, and gifts.

The center currently offers ACPE-approved Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) internships in placement sites in the Boulder-Denver area. Internship sites include Boulder Community Health, Elevation Hospice, Colorado Mental Health Institute at Fort Logan, the Grief Support Network, Estes Park Health, Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, Trail Winds Hospice, and Sky Ridge Medical Center. Beachy is currently developing additional internship sites and hopes to establish student placements focused on serving marginalized and underserved populations in Boulder and Denver as the center expands.

Co-founded by Naropa Master of Divinity graduate Ginger Brooks ('04), Trail Winds Hospice offers a community-based, patient-centered contemplative approach to hospice and is hosting one student intern this fall. "Naropa gave me the opportunity to integrate the intellectual and experiential aspects of my Buddhist tradition," Brooks says. "This depth helped me understand the roots of the major religious traditions, opening the door for my chaplaincy work with hospice patients and families."

"The Center for Contemplative Chaplaincy will fulfill the original wishes of the people who started CPE," Brooks adds. "It provides an opportunity for people to get together for the purposes of self-reflection and thoughtful study of what it means to be a spiritual support to the dying and to their communities."

Other future plans for the center include expanding Naropa's ACPE accreditation to include supervisory training for future ACPE educators who will then extend Naropa's unique contemplative approach to spiritual care education through developing their own CPE programs. 



OFF THE BEATEN PATH

By Lisa Birman

Naropa alumni are leaders and innovators, finding unique ways to contribute to the betterment of their fields and of the planet. Here are just a few stories of how our alumni are living life to the fullest, creating new opportunities for themselves, their communities, and future generations.

Photos courtesy of Naropa Alumni



Photo by Marcos Perez



Connecting through Recovery

"As a student at Naropa University, I was already a handful of years into my own recovery from substance abuse," says **Quddus Fujita Maus** (MA Transpersonal Counseling Psychology, '15). "While at Naropa, I not only learned the tools of therapy, but my own recovery was enriched beyond description through the practices that I learned and developed."

In 2017, Maus founded Realize Recovery, an outpatient program for substance abuse in Boulder. With personalized programs that include individual and group therapy, coaching, yoga, and nutrition, there is a heavy emphasis on present moment modalities and mindfulness. "Johann Hari writes 'The opposite of addiction is not sobriety. The opposite of addiction is connection,'" Maus explains. "At Realize Recovery, we wholeheartedly agree with this idea. We assist the client in connecting with the recovery community specifically and the larger community in general, connecting with themselves and connecting with a power greater than themselves. The basic goodness that weaves through all things—it is through these connections."

For more information, go to realizerecoveryco.com

Chronic Presence

Integration of mind and body is at the core of **Tucker Shelton's** (MA Religious Studies, '16) work as a yoga and meditation teacher. "My work is all about helping people feel," he explains. "The first thing someone does when they are in pain or uncomfortable is to try to get away from those sensations. I teach my students to actually stop and feel their bodies and their restrictions. Through our work together, they start to make incremental shifts in their reactions to discomfort. This echoes out into daily life, and soon they are making small changes to improve their lives. They become little beacons of emotional coherence in the sea of the unfeeling, and this ripples out to affect their loved ones and peers."

In his weekly classes in Asheville, NC, as well as workshops, retreats, and teacher trainings around the country and internationally, Shelton specializes in "Longevity Yoga"—helping students cultivate safe and sustainable practices that are intrinsically linked to self-awareness. "Self-work is the key to the cultivation of a chronic state of presence. When we are chronically present, we work to change the world for the better."

Check out Shelton's offerings at tuckeryoga.com and follow him on Instagram at [@barkofthetree](https://www.instagram.com/barkofthetree).





Broken Whole

As an English composition instructor, **Jane Binns** (MFA Writing & Poetics, '99) devotes much of her time to her students' writing. Last year, however, her own writing was in the spotlight, with the publication of her memoir *Broken Whole*. Spanning twelve years, the book is a poignant examination of dating as a single mother and the ultimate search for self.

This deep exploration of relationship to others and self is central to how Binns lives her life. "The riches of life come from expanding our reach to be kind and thoughtful of all beings, their livelihoods and struggles, and how to present opportunities that do not diminish someone or something else's existence," she says. Binns's time at Naropa continues to influence her writing, teaching, and relationships. "The Japanese poetic form of Renku helped with sentence variation and sequencing," Binns notes. "The practice of contemplation and meditation continues to help with clarity, having courage to create and express, and trusting what is not seen."

Check out the book at janebinnswrites.com and follow Binns on Facebook at [@JBBrokenWhole](https://www.facebook.com/JBBrokenWhole).

Finding Ground in Groundlessness

Lauren Garrett (BA Contemplative Psychology, '12, MA Somatic Counseling Psychology, '16) recalls seed phrases such as "let's sit with that" and "let's unpack that" as par for the course at Naropa. In her work with The Native American Employment and Training Program (NAETP) at Council of Three Rivers American Indian Center (COTRAIC), Garrett finds that her abilities to truly listen and hold her seat have supported her in cultivating authentic relationships and empowering others to arrive at their own organic decisions.

COTRAIC's mission of reducing unemployment among Native Americans through training, job placement, and counseling is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. In her role as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) employment and training counselor, Garrett assists participants with assessment, resume writing, job coaching, and goal setting. She also works with students on career pathways following graduation. In addition to those seed phrases, Naropa also instilled in Garrett a "need to know oneself, and center, and re-center, again and again, in order to engage in lifelong learning. This certainly has contributed to my capacity to find happiness and meaning in my life, even during challenging situations. The going sometimes gets tough and it becomes important to find the ground within groundlessness."



Learn more about COTRAIC at cotraic.org and find Lauren at [linkedin.com/in/garretllauren](https://www.linkedin.com/in/garretllauren)

Healing the Healer

As a third-year medical student at Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine, **Adriana Berusch Gerardino** (BA Contemplative Psychology, '15) is excited to finally be seeing patients. "It's the most challenging thing I've ever done, but I also cannot imagine doing anything else," she says. "For me, the greatest gift I can provide is simply showing up for my patients, listening, and validating their concerns."

A liberal arts college may seem like an unlikely route to medical school, but Berusch is grateful for the active listening, self-awareness, and self-reflection that formed the basis of her undergraduate studies. "Medical school puts you through it... I've had to continuously work on myself, slowly healing my patterns so that I can better show up for my community, patients, friends, and family alike. By doing this self-work and recognizing things that come up for me as they come up, I'm better able to put effort into healing."

Berusch also serves as an advocacy intern at the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians, streamlining documentation to keep the rapidly expanding field of naturopathic medicine fluid and cohesive. This year she attended their annual federal legislative initiative, lobbying for key initiatives for practitioners and public access to quality medicine.

Follow Berusch on Instagram at @labeledu2 and ask any questions you might have about naturopathic medicine.



Bringing Loving Kindness to Adolescent & Young Adult Recovery

Naropa love stories often ripple out to spread the joy, but no one could have predicted quite how many people would benefit when **Maureen Dummigan** (MA, '01) and **Josh White** (MA, '02) met in Naropa's Contemplative Psychotherapy and Buddhist Psychology program.

After working together in private practice and at adolescent and young adult treatment centers, Maureen and Josh founded Red Mountain Sedona in 2014. The premier mindfulness-based young adult transition program in the world, the program provides a bridge from primary treatment to full independence, offering daily group meditation and instruction, martial arts, yoga, holistic nutrition, life skills training,



case management, and academic support. "We work with young adults to help them find their purpose and passion, and learn how to be responsible, independent community members," explains Josh. "Red Mountain Sedona is based on the principles of *maitri* (loving kindness), compassion, and interdependence/connection," adds Maureen. "If we can care for ourselves the way we, hopefully, care for and accept our friends, our internal war ends right there. What emerges is a softness and spaciousness that can graciously accommodate each of us in the totality of who we are."

With many clients working with trauma and attachment issues, compassion is a core value at Red Mountain Sedona. "Compassion is what it's all about—compassion for oneself and others," notes Josh. "Building trust and connection allows [clients] to feel safe enough to do the spiritual and psychological work they need to do to overcome their obstacles and succeed in life."

The couple has an expansive and holistic view of the life lessons they learned at Naropa. Maureen speaks of "joining heart and mind in a very immediate and present way. It's invaluable in all aspects of my life from parenting to marriage to my work at Red Mountain Sedona with people who are in the depths of suffering." "Other than meeting Maureen there, which has been the greatest blessing of my life, my Naropa education prepared me by helping me bring light to all my dark places. This helps me to do the same with our students," adds Josh.

Red Mountain's offerings recently expanded to the Front Range, with Red Mountain Colorado opening just north of Denver.

For more information, check out redmountainedona.com and redmountaincolorado.com

Preparing for Success

Emily Elrod-Black (BA Contemplative Psychology, '15) wasn't too excited by the job prospects she found in the remote Wyoming town she moved to after graduation. Preferring to create her own opportunities, she spent more than one thousand hours studying how to get perfect scores on the SAT and ACT and built an online tutoring business, Alchemy Test Prep.

"One of the most important ingredients for being a great test taker is confidence," Elrod-Black explains. "I view my role in my students' lives as one that feeds on positive connection and compassion: I try my best to cultivate a learning environment that supports my students in stepping into their own power and intelligence."

Elrod-Black applies these same techniques to her own entrepreneurial endeavors. "My ability to be a person of agency, of flow, and of action comes from connecting to my worth, overcoming my obstacles, and learning to be present when I'm challenged.... For me, getting a perfect score on a standardized test is a form of being powerful that requires commitment, confidence, precision, and mental clarity. This feels very much like connecting to *lungta*." 🌀

For more information, check out alchemytestprep.com



Transforming Your Life (and Your Business)

In addition to running his own thriving counseling practice and coaching business, **Sasha Raskin** (MA Contemplative Psychotherapy and Buddhist Psychology, '17) is committed to helping other therapists and coaches build successful private practices within a twelve-month period. "There is a big gap between the knowledge that is needed to build your private practice and what's being taught in any counseling program in the world (no matter how wonderful the clinical training itself is)," he explains. "So I help therapists to build their practices, find clients, market themselves in a way that feels authentic, and charge what they are worth, which includes a lot of work with their beliefs around money."

This has been a whirlwind year for Raskin. His co-authored book, *Transforming Your Life, Volume 2*, a collection of inspiring stories by some of the world's best coaches, has been listed as a bestseller in ten countries. Raskin's latest venture is Go New, a global platform for transformational education and coaching, focusing on areas often neglected in traditional education, including relationships, career and financial coaching, and leading a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle. 🌀

For more information, check out go-new.com, truenextstep.com, and heartandmeaning.com



FACULTY UPDATES

This year, Naropa welcomes an exciting new group of women faculty, all of whom are doing incredible work in their respective fields in the realm of multiculturalism and inclusivity. One wrote *Sisters in the Dissertation House: A Dissertation Narrative*, which addresses doctoral completion by women of color in underrepresented fields. Another is teaching a course that explores the role of the counselor embedded in the milieu of the social and cultural realities of society. The third recently contributed to a new book on *Humanistic Approaches to Multiculturalism and Diversity*. The university is honored to have them here educating the next generation of contemplative activists.



New Faculty: Jennifer Bacon, PhD

Jennifer N. Bacon, PhD, joins Naropa University as an associate professor in the Elementary Education program of the Contemplative Education Department. She holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with an MEd in special education. Her areas of expertise include exceptional learners, culturally responsive pedagogy, global literacy, and creative/expressive arts and therapies. In addition to her experience in education, Bacon is trained in poetry therapy, spiritual guidance and companionship, and yoga.



New Faculty: Clarissa Cigrand

Clarissa Cigrand joins Naropa as an assistant professor in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Mindfulness-Based Transpersonal Counseling. She is currently a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision and specializes in counselor development, counseling pedagogy, and areas of supervision. She is also an alumni to Naropa and graduated from Naropa's Transpersonal Counseling Psychology program in 2015. Cigrand conducted her doctoral research building a grounded theory on the use of contemplative practices and perspectives in the counseling classroom and has research interests in contemplative pedagogy, teaching presence, authenticity in teaching, and contemplative epistemology or contemplation as a way of knowing.



New Faculty: Lisa Vallejos

Lisa Vallejos joins Naropa as an assistant professor in Clinical Mental Health: Mindfulness-Based Transpersonal Counseling. Vallejos is the author of *Shattered: How Everything Came Together When It All Fell Apart* as well as many journal articles & book chapters. Her primary interests are spirituality, anti-oppressive frameworks and cultivating intentionally inclusive spaces.



Retiring Faculty: Ethelyn Friend

Ethelyn Friend, vocalist/actor/writer is a teaching member of the Roy Hart Theatre of France, and a founding faculty member of Naropa University's MFA in Theater: Contemporary Performance. She was named a Roy Hart Teacher in 2005, after years of study with many of the original Roy Hart master teachers. At Naropa, she developed a two-year pedagogical arc for master's students applying extended vocal work to both spoken texts and music. She has been training prospective teachers in France at Malerargues in the Roy Hart Teacher Training Program since 2010. In her private practice, she works with professional performers, as well as many who are exploring vocal possibilities for the first time.



Recent Promotion: Ramon Parish

Ramon Parish was recently appointed to assistant professor, teaching in Naropa's Environmental Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies Departments. His research explores interdisciplinary study utilizing ritual and ceremony as tools for community development, intercultural understanding, ecological awareness, and personal transformation.

Naropa's Proust Questionnaire: Bhanu Kapil Associate Professor



Bhanu Kapil teaches for the undergraduate Core, Visual Arts, and Interdisciplinary Studies programs. This year, she is on sabbatical and will be furthering her creative and scholarly practice as the Judith E. Wilson Poetry Fellow at Cambridge University in England. Her most recent publication, in 2018, was *THREADS*, co-authored with Sandeep Parmar and Nisha Ramaya, and published by Clinic Publishing in the UK. This summer, she performed an original work, *HOW TO WASH A HEART*, a collaboration with visual artist Rohini Kapil, at ICA London, a stone's throw from Buckingham Palace. She is also a featured speaker at an international literature festival in Moss, Norway, where a translation of her book, *Schizophrene*, a tracing of migration, trauma, and mental illness in diasporic South Asian communities, will be launched.

1. What was your journey to Naropa?

On the night before the Summer Writing Program, in 2000, I was invited to take the place of a poet from New York who couldn't make it. I will never forget what Max Regan said on the phone: "Are you ready for the adventure of a lifetime?" I said yes. At the time, I was a massage therapist at Wildflowers Spa and Salon on Pearl Street, never imagining that I would leave that world for this one.

2. Who are the gurus in your life, real or fictional?

Right now: Representatives Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts. A guru is someone who calls out injustice in all its forms, no matter the cost. I love the joy of these non-fictional gurus, their courage, the call to connection and solidarity in the face of acute xenophobia towards immigrants, the descendants of immigrants, and anyone with brown skin.

3. How do you know where you are in a space?

As soon as I have crossed its threshold, whether briny, literal, volatile, or polished to a creamy sheen.

4. Everything that is not is. True or false?

Oh god, I need some coffee in order to answer that question.

5. Favorite way to make yourself uncomfortable?

Gesturing, vocally, towards instances of racism and misogyny in the spaces I share with others.

6. What kind of environment do you like to teach in?

Experimental studio space in a university setting, an art museum, a community center, the seashore, an airport concourse.... It doesn't matter to me!

7. What is your favorite quote about teaching?

"The teacher also has to be a person who is going a little further. I don't for a minute think that we can be teachers who invite students into radical openness if we're not willing to be radically open ourselves, if we're not willing to be a witness to our students of how ideas change and shape us, how something affects us so that we think differently than we did before."—bell hooks

8. What is your personal mantra?

SHAME MAY BE FATAL. 🌀



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