

# naropa!

MAGAZINE

COMPASSION IN ACTION



# naropa!

MAGAZINE

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

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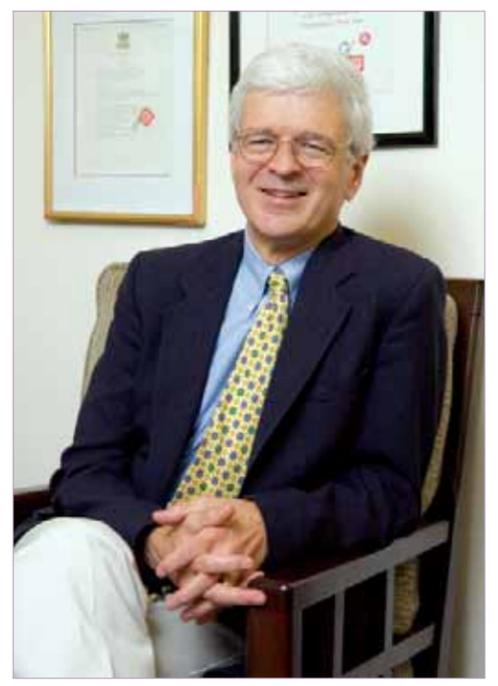
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**COVER ART: Robert Spellman**  
Core Faculty, Naropa University  
*Buddha's Hands*  
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## peace within peace without



It's common knowledge in higher education that the composition of an institution's student body is as important to student learning as the credentials of the faculty or the shape of the curriculum. That's why diversity matters: we learn more when engaging regularly with those who are not like ourselves. It's also why mainstream colleges go to such extremes to recruit intellectually talented students: they will learn a lot from one another.

Naropa recognizes the logic here, but since our mission of contemplative education distinguishes us from the mainstream, so, too, does our effort to recruit students. We are interested in finding those students who aspire, in the words of educator Parker Palmer, "to live undivided no more." This means undivided and grounded in one's own personal life. It also means recognizing and consciously affirming the ways in which our individual lives are reciprocally implicated in the lives of others and in the physical environment in which we live, so that we may be agents of change in a most needy world.

The theme of this issue of naropa! is compassion in action: how inner work produces outward results and how those results, in turn, fuel further inward growth. It is filled with examples of the work Naropans do in their various roles. Let me invite you in with some words from a current student, someone who has clearly seen the integrative, activist nature of our mission:

"The devotion to contribute to community via my love for unabashed creativity is the focus of my life. . . . I once had a dream that my grandfather came back into his body to tell me to play a song. He pointed to the piano where instead of piano music were papers that documented the swindling of land from the Native

American people. He asked me to play it. What I take this to mean is that the function of creativity is a sort of alchemy—that our spirits want us to take suffering, make it known, and in so doing make it beautiful. My dedication in life is to use my voice, which inevitably invites others to try out their voices—to speak up. I want to be a part of the catharsis of storytelling that helps us heal this planet. As part of the loving-kindness meditation goes, "May we be healed. May we be the source of healing for each other."

Can you imagine having this young woman as a fellow student—how much you would learn from each other in your shared aspiration to leave the world a better place than you found it? I can, and so can her fellow students, which is why Naropa is the first choice of 95% of our students, both undergraduate and graduate.

To describe this fundamental but often overlooked way in which our private lives are connected to those of others, peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh has coined the wonderful word "interbeing." I love this word because it so succinctly captures the movement from wisdom to compassionate action that lies at the heart of Naropa's mission, the linkage of peace within and peace without. Please read on for some wonderful examples of the musical alchemy of which our student dreams.

Thomas B. Coburn  
President

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## Eric Fretz keeps the democratic tradition alive conversations in the classroom



Eric Fretz, director of the Community Studies Center at Naropa University, tells a story that illustrates how he came to completely envision the college classroom. And the story is about Pete Seeger.

While an English student at Messiah College in Messiah, Pennsylvania, Eric wrote his thesis on the topic of American protest music. One of the figures he researched was also one of his favorite singers, Pete Seeger. As luck would have it, during that semester there was a tribute concert in Seeger's honor in nearby Philadelphia, so Eric headed to the show. During intermission, Eric was surprised to see Pete Seeger standing alone in a corner. Eric introduced himself and told Seeger about the paper he was writing. Seeger listened patiently, then said, "Well young man, I think you and I have got some talking to do." They sat down together and for the rest of the evening Seeger related stories and insights about his life and career. At the end of the evening, Seeger told Eric, "I'd really love to read your paper," and gave him his address. When Eric finished his thesis, he sent a copy off to Seeger as promised. A few weeks later, he received a package from Seeger in the mail—his thesis, complete with extensive notes and comments.

What this experience has to do with Eric's work in Naropa's Community Studies Center is simple: it was a conversation. As Eric moved into teaching at Michigan State University and then Loras College in Iowa, one thing kept nagging at him: there was no dialogue. "Something didn't seem quite right to me about what I was doing in the university classroom," he says. The problem had to do with what Eric calls the expert model, "where the professor was supposed to download information to students and act like the expert on the subject." He notes that this might work well in the hard sciences, but not in the humanities. "Learning is about doing things and solving problems together," in Eric's view. As a result, he moved into American studies and community learning

to find a more engaged way to accomplish his goals. "I wanted to craft a career in the common good and I wanted to find a way to contribute to the social good of this country."

That's exactly what he does as director of Naropa's Community Studies Center. Through the center's classes and Public Achievement project, students learn to trust themselves and work together. "I want to set up free spaces in my classroom where the gifts of my students can flourish," Eric says. "When you create those free spaces for students, they rise to the occasion."

Eric is the first to admit that it's not always easy. "It gets messy doing it this way," he says. "It's easier to tell people what to do and how to think than to create spaces for people to solve problems on their own and make mistakes." But it's also what the learning process is all about. "The marvelous thing about higher education is that it's a laboratory," he says. This attitude of experimentation might create tension, but Eric believes that's a good thing. "If you don't have conflict, you're not working together."

*"I want to set up free spaces in my classroom where the gifts of my students can flourish."*

Eric's work embodies the tradition of democracy in action. He was inspired by the long line of people who "committed their lives to strengthening the social fabric of this nation." What connects them all is "a basic unyielding belief in the potential for human beings to solve their own problems and make their communities better." Naropa is uniquely suited for this sort of effort. "In a lot of ways, it's a very American institution," he says, "because it marries seemingly radically different ideas," democratic and Buddhist values.

But what really drives Eric's passion is the students. "Our students are not here as consumers," he says. "There's something in the culture of Naropa that precludes the consumer model of education from being the dominant paradigm."

This is ultimately what fuels Eric in his role at Naropa. "I love coming to work," he says. "I feel more confident and engaged in the work I'm doing now than I ever have." The democratic conversation is very much alive at Naropa, and Eric's voice continues to enrich it. —T.B.

## PUBLIC ACHIEVEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Fall semester 2005 marked the second year of the Public Achievement Project, which pairs Naropa student coaches from the university's Democracy, Education and Social Change course with Centaurus High School (Lafayette, Colorado) students interested in improving their communities. Already, the issue-groups formed in the program are seeing great success and effecting important policy changes at Centaurus.

One issue-group was formed around the problem of undocumented students not being allowed to park in the school parking lot. Through research, coalition building and dialogue, the students worked with the school principal to change the policy. "This was the first policy change that has come out of a PA issue group at Centaurus," says Professor Eric Fretz, "and we were all delighted with how it developed."

Another issue-group worked to obtain desperately needed academic and social support for bilingual students, who make up more than 30 percent of the Centaurus population. The students submitted a proposal to form "Raza Helpers"—an after-school program to provide tutoring and mentoring in English and Spanish to any student in need. Centaurus's principal not only approved the program, but funded it as well. Joshua Cuscaden, the Naropa student coach who worked with this issue-group, notes that "seeing these students in action once again confirms to me that youth have the [degree of] social responsibility and democratic awareness to make their communities a wonderful place to live." —T.B.



Artwork by: Monika Edgar, Four Wishes

## Explorations of Self and Other Dialogue and the Art of Peacemaking

The writer and scholar William Isaacs refers to dialogue as “the art of thinking together,” and that is exactly what students learn to do in Candace Walworth’s undergraduate course Dialogue and the Art of Peacemaking. Through the collaborative hands-on learning approach of the class, students make meaningful contributions to the world through nonviolent discourse.

The course encourages students to engage in public work from a ground of awareness and self-examination. According to Candace, in this approach to learning “we start by exploring the principles of dialogue in our own lives, noticing when we listen from a ground of silence and when we’re inundated by our own chatter. As we experiment with a variety of forms of dialogue in the classroom, we learn about our personal and cultural histories with regard to conflict. Bit by bit, we do the hard work of examining our own assumptions and habits of thought, both personal and cultural.”

The conversation quickly expands beyond the classroom, and at mid-semester students design and facilitate a public dialogue. In fall 2005, the class invited three peacemakers—Ron Forthofer and Dick Williams from Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) and Elizabeth Roberts, who served on peace teams in Nicaragua, Burma and Iraq—to participate in the dialogue. Student Benjamin Woodard, a Contemplative Psychology major, noted that this conversation taught him “to go beyond the barriers of *us and them* and into the collective vulnerability.”

*“It doesn’t take long for students to ‘test’ the principles of dialogue outside the classroom. Some start right off with conducting dialogues in highly polarized situations while others start by sitting down with their roommates around domestic conflicts.”*

—Candace Walworth

Candace sees the public dialogue as the “ignition for the course” that sparks student inquiry into issues about which they are passionate. Last fall students developed community studies projects with topics ranging from restorative justice to women’s human rights, the Nonviolent Peaceforce to the Rocky Flats clean-up and education on American Indian reservations.

Religious Studies major Alison Campbell remarked on the many questions that the class brought to the surface for students: “It pushes your buttons, demands that you take a closer look at yourself and the way you function in the world. . . . It will make you raw.” It is from this rawness that Alison was moved to act. For her community studies project, Alison did the research and planning required to participate in a ten-person delegation to Hebron with a Christian Peacemaker Team on what she calls a “reconnaissance mission.” This May she will accompany full-time CPT members as they use principles of nonviolent direct action to transform conflict. An important part of CPT work is education and advocacy: when she returns to Boulder, Alison will share with others in the community what she has experienced.

According to Alison, the inclusion of experiential activities in the class allowed a greater depth to the academic work. “We would discuss different means of conflict transformation and then immediately apply it to our lives,” she says.

The seed for Contemplative Psychology major Kathryn Elliot’s project was her encounter with the music and culture of the Shona people when she traveled to Zimbabwe in 2002. As a student of mbira and African drumming, Kathryn was inspired to explore issues of cultural appropriation in relation to the study of African music and dance in the United States. She recognized that

African music is often studied by “good people who have a vast array of cultural assumptions that, when unconscious, can be unintentionally disrespectful.” These assumptions, she says, “include unconscious racism and a sense of entitlement to help oneself to whatever is there, including traditions from other cultures, without consideration of their roots or connection to people.” Kathryn facilitated two dialogues in the community to discuss “what it means to study an art that is not native to one’s race.”

The class provided a context for Kathryn to deeply examine herself. “When I began to research racism, I dug inside myself . . . to relentlessly become conscious of my own cultural programming.” This study, she says, “woke me up to layers of myself that shocked me. I received powerful tools to begin to face the world and its pain.” The most important lesson for Kathryn has been learning how to listen. As she explains, “Allowing space through listening to others from a quiet place of assumption that what they say has value, even if it differs from your own opinion, can be the tool to truly begin to create a bridge.”

The Dialogue and the Art of Peacemaking course encourages student exploration, which is at the heart of contemplative education: an approach to learning through which self-inquiry accompanies and informs academic research, culminating in effective action in the world. “And,” says Candace, “students often find that taking action in the world leads to renewed curiosity about their own motivations, projections and desires.”

—Danielle Poitras

# The Life AND Example of CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA, RINPOCHE

By Reggie Ray



*if anyone had good reason to give up on the world, to abandon any attempt to help others as a hopeless prospect, it was Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche.*

Consider the first thirty years of his life. He was born the child of Tibetan nomads, living in the treeless wastes of eastern Tibet. At eighteen months, he was recognized as a tulku or incarnate lama, the 11th in the line of Trungpa Tulkus. Brought to a monastery for training, from his earliest years he was taught that his only life purpose was to embody the Mahayana bodhisattva ideal of compassion and to devote himself to relieving suffering wherever he might find it. He was schooled in practices of viewing all people with equality: high and low, men and women, “friends” and “enemies.” In meditation, he learned to develop a heart that was tender, open and pure toward all. Like other Tibetans, he grew up with great faith and confidence in Buddhism and a belief that its teachings of loving-kindness and sympathy could overcome all obstacles.

Then, out of nowhere, the Chinese invaded Tibet and began a policy of ravaging the culture, the people and their Buddhist tradition. Monasteries were shelled and destroyed, libraries were burned, great teachers were humiliated, tortured and killed, and the people were thrown into poverty and terrible need. At the same time, the Tibetans’ cries for help were met with the world’s silence. Trungpa Rinpoche’s teachers told him, “The old order is dead. You won’t have the cultural and religious support we have all been accustomed to. You need to strike out on your own and see what you can do. Don’t give up. You must help this world.” Then, abruptly, they disappeared from his life for good, captured and imprisoned or killed.

In 1959, as the Chinese occupation was becoming increasingly brutal and repressive, Rinpoche crossed the Himalayas in a hair-raising and near fatal escape, and arrived in India. There he found Tibetans who had fled before him living in desperate straits, completely preoccupied with simply trying to survive from one day to the next. Still, Rinpoche held within him the idea that he must try to be of benefit to others, and so spent several years in India attempting to help where needed. Increasingly aware of how beleaguered the dharma was in Asia and hopeful that it might have a chance in the West, in the mid-1960s he traveled to England, and began to teach the dharma there. Still, his troubles were not over. The more he opened himself to the larger world of his Western students, the more he found himself criticized and ostracized by his Tibetan friends and colleagues. In his wife Diana Mukpo’s report, they felt all Tibetans should band together and hunker down, so to speak, and attempt to preserve the last shreds of their cultural identity and national dignity. But Rinpoche saw himself simply as a human being called to the work of compassion among other human beings. For his inspiration, he was finally condemned by his countrymen and, literally, turned out from the center he had founded, unable even to teach there.

Perhaps many in his position would, at this point, simply have given up. But Rinpoche—one of whose mottos was “The bodhisattva never gives up in his attempt to help others” —turned his eyes toward the United States as a place where he might be able to carry on his life’s mission of compassion. Arriving here in 1970, he found two things that deeply inspired him: an unbelievable amount of confusion and suffering, but also great openness to the message of dharma. He began teaching and, with his students, initiated a series of altruistic projects the

scope and impact of which could hardly have been imagined in Tibet or, for that matter, anywhere else in traditional Asia.

The center of Rinpoche's dharma was meditation practice and his teaching here had two aspects. First, of course, meditation quiets and stills the mind, so that we can experience the depth, vastness and perfection of our basic nature. But second, out of those depths arises, in a completely spontaneous way, the selfless inspiration, the irresistible desire to engage others with compassion. The peace of meditation and the call to compassion were, of course, the essence of Rinpoche's own training, and now he was sharing the teachings and practices to help his own students replicate that very same journey. He wanted them to give birth to the intense and overwhelming yearning to help the world, just as he had.

Diana Mukpo commented often that her husband's only human desire was to be of benefit to others and that he spent his entire life, every waking and even sleeping moment, every breath and heartbeat, trying his best to fulfill that inspiration. Truly, to look at the seventeen years that he was in America is to witness a whirlwind of compassion that touched countless people and gave birth to a stunning array of lectures, articles, books, meditation centers, retreat facilities, projects oriented to business, education, many of the classical Western arts, selected Asian arts, and

spiritual and social forms of all kinds. And of course, out of this ocean of creativity emerged Naropa University, which has decisively impacted the lives of many thousands of students and come to be a voice and a beacon of sanity within the contemporary world of higher education.

Though seventeen years have passed since Trungpa Rinpoche's death, his life, his work and his example are tremendously important for us just at this moment of history, when our world seems to be falling deeper and deeper into chaos, confusion and suffering. His writings and recordings, of course, present us with an intelligent, coherent and convincing picture of an indestructible goodness that ever abides in the hearts of all. The projects, centers and institutions he founded, among which Naropa University is at the forefront, offer places where we can come to study, meditate and discover for ourselves the sanity, kindness and wisdom he taught. And, most of all, his life example stands before us as a kind of brilliant light, encouraging us to emulate the journey he made, not only in finding peace within ourselves but, even more important, spontaneous compassion that continually turns outward and never gives up. Things may be very bad in our world right now, and may even sometimes seem hopeless, but his message is always present and always so simple: touch your own depths, find your own freedom and then give yourself without reservation to those in need.

## reggie ray

Reginald Ray came to Naropa University in 1974 to launch the Buddhist Studies (now Religious Studies) Department, where he teaches to this day. He received his BA from Williams College and was awarded an MA in 1969 and a PhD "with distinction" in 1973 in the history of religions from the University of Chicago. In 1970, Ray became one of Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche's first American students. In addition, he was among the first group of Acharyas, or senior teachers, in the Shambhala Buddhist lineage. While at Naropa, Dr. Ray received two prestigious yearlong senior research fellowships from the NEH. His prolific published works include such books as *Buddhist Saints in India*, *Indestructible Truth* and *Secret of the Vajra World*. He currently lives in Crestone, Colorado, where, with his wife Lee, he is founder and president of the Dharma Ocean Foundation.

In fall 2005, Dr. Ray inaugurated the popular course at Naropa University entitled *The Life and Teachings of Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche*. The course, which immediately filled to capacity, provided an exploration of the lineage, background and context of Trungpa Rinpoche's life and teachings. The themes studied included the centrality of meditation practice; the tension and sometimes opposition between the "lonely journey" and community life; and the role of "crazy wisdom" in the life of a realized teacher. Although Dr. Ray will be on sabbatical during the 2006-07 academic year, he will teach the course as an online offering through Naropa University Extended Studies in fall 2006.



## a language for grief

Gretchen Story takes her Naropa education to Hospice of Metro Denver to "help people create safe places through art"



Gretchen found a ready place to apply her education through her internship at Hospice of Metro Denver (HMD). Gretchen was drawn to hospice care because it "is about embracing death as a part of life," which was for her an integral part of transpersonal therapy. Although HMD had not previously had an art therapy program, it was a natural fit. "There's no language for dying in our society," Gretchen notes, and "art therapy is a way to express what's going on when you can't find the words." Through her studies and internship, Gretchen says, "I was able to research and define for myself the field of transpersonal grief and loss art therapy." In addition, she has used her understanding of this area to design innovative programs for her patients and their loved ones.

Upon graduating, Gretchen was hired by HMD to be the first art therapist on staff, and she has recently been promoted to director of the new art therapy program. This position will allow Gretchen to expand her research and programs to benefit even more patients, as well as HMD staff. She also hopes to bring other TCP students into the hospice field. "HMD had not previously been a site that was associated with Naropa," Gretchen notes, "but it is now hopefully a practicum and internship site that Naropa's art therapy students will feel confident to enter."

Gretchen has found in her life the confluence of art, transpersonal studies and helping others. "Going to Naropa brought so many things into my life," she says. "Not only did it bring an education, but it also allowed me to be in service to the community in a way that inspires me." Ultimately, it's changed her outlook. "I see a lot of magic in my everyday life that I never saw before," she says. It has also allowed her to be fully present with others. "Each day that I enter into my work, I ask to be open to the wisdoms in front of me, particularly the wisdoms of my clients, and to be able to meet each moment with an open heart."

These connections with people are what make Gretchen's endeavors truly rewarding. "It's amazing," says Gretchen, "that I can offer people in my personal and professional life the gifts I've been given through Naropa." —T.B.

Gretchen Story (MA Transpersonal Counseling Psychology '05) was no stranger to, as she puts it, "the helping professions" when she came to Naropa University to pursue graduate studies in art therapy. She'd spent over ten years in the fields of domestic violence and sexual assault in a number of positions. After focusing on the research side of those issues for some time, though, she wanted to "get back into working with people." Gretchen knew that the idea of bringing art into the counseling process intrigued her, but, she says, "I wasn't sure such a field existed."

When she started researching possibilities, she found that the field of art therapy was indeed thriving, and Naropa felt like the right choice. "It seemed to be one of the best schools in the country in regard to art therapy," she says. What she found when she made her way to the Transpersonal Counseling Psychology program (TCP), though, was more than she'd imagined. "I didn't know what transpersonal meant until after I was accepted," says Gretchen. But she quickly discovered that this aspect of her education gave her resources beyond her expectations. "Meditation and mindfulness have enriched my ability to work with others. I am able to know how to replenish myself and know what replenishing really means," she says. This allows her to work deeply with her patients without feeling depleted. This is what made Gretchen's studies particularly significant in her life. "Art therapy drew me to Naropa," she says, "but everything about Naropa influences me and has profoundly affected me."



IMAGES OF CLIENT WORK  
COURTESY OF GRETCHEN STORY

*“We . . . recognize the absolute necessity in today’s world of espousing and realizing sustainability in our values and actions, and we must model this necessity in our own institutional behavior.” —Thomas B. Coburn, Naropa Directions 2005–08*

## walking lightly on the earth

Sustainability at Naropa University



Paul Montgomery, work-study recycling coordinator

The heart of Naropa University is contemplative education—a philosophy that asks each community member to live in awareness of and respect for one another and the world. Sustainable environmental practices are an essential element of this mission.

Viewed through the lens of contemplative education, sustainability is not just a theory, but the root of all healthy action. Becoming aware of how one relates to and interacts with others and the world is one aspect of a contemplative life. Through such an awareness, one learns to walk lightly on the earth.

Naropa’s Facilities Department is dedicated to environmentally sound practices. This past year, they have taken a number of steps, including converting all campuses to 100 percent wind energy, improving the recycling and composting programs, updating office equipment to save paper and promoting alternative transportation.

Each member of the Naropa community brings his or her awareness and wisdom to this ongoing effort, ensuring that Naropa will continue to lead the way in campus sustainability and environmental stewardship. —T.B.

*The Environmental Studies Department has been a leader in sustainability efforts on Naropa’s campuses. Because sustainability is a thread that runs through the department’s curriculum, students can create projects with real long-term impact. As John Engel, instructor and BA program director, notes, “The mechanisms by which we do sustainability work need to be sustainable if they are to be effective.”*

**ECO-AUDIT** The ninth and tenth classes of MA Environmental Leadership students conducted ecological audits to assess campus practices. The students’ findings resonated throughout the administration and staff. ✨ **CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY DAY** Naropa University celebrated National Campus Sustainability Day for the first time in 2005. Students and facilities staff members distributed information, and a national panel of environmental leaders was webcast in the Goldfarb student lounge, for which an Environmental Studies student was selected to phone in a question. Plans are now under way for the next Campus Sustainability Day on October 25, 2006. ✨ **ZERO WASTE** The fall 2005 new student orientation was carried off as a Zero Waste Event. Paul Montgomery, the Facilities Department’s work-study recycling coordinator, was at the center of this achievement, creating partnerships among facilities, Eco-Cycle and the Student Affairs Office. All future orientation events will follow this trend. ✨ **EARTH DAY** Earth Day 2005 was celebrated on campus with great success. Environmental Studies students set up tables to disseminate information and to showcase their sustainability projects. Earth Day will become Earth Week in 2006, with a host of earth-awareness activities to be held during the week of April 17.

Don Rasmussen spends his days caring for Naropa’s campus, but it’s his caring for the people that makes his job a mission

## making a space for everyone

IF YOU ASK **DON RASMUSSEN**, director of facilities, what makes his job rewarding, he has a ready answer: “It’s the people.” Don joined Naropa as maintenance supervisor six and a half years ago, and he knew right away that it was a special place. “It just felt good being here,” he says of his first campus visit. Since that time, Don has been an essential member of this community. Promoted to assistant director in 2001 and director in 2004, Don’s attitude of teamwork permeates everything he does.

The work of the Facilities Department might seem invisible to many students, faculty and staff as they go about their daily lives on campus, but it underlies every activity of the university. Don sees his department’s goal as providing a nurturing physical space in which Naropa can carry out its mission. In Don’s words, “We’re here at Naropa to educate, and we need to provide an environment that’s conducive to learning.” This includes a host of considerations: overseeing vendors, landscape, security, maintenance, recycling, transportation, building construction and renovation, business services and in general keeping things “spruced up.” “We have a proactive approach to facilities maintenance—we’re out there every day,” Don says. This outlook springs from a genuine wellspring of compassion. As Don says, with characteristic understatement, “I think we do a pretty good job of letting our community know how much we care.”

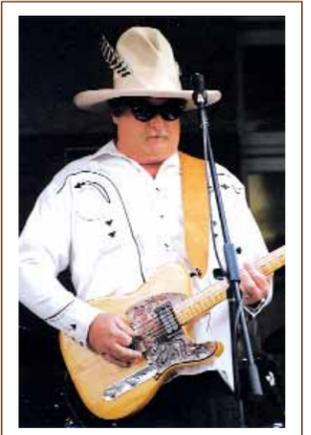
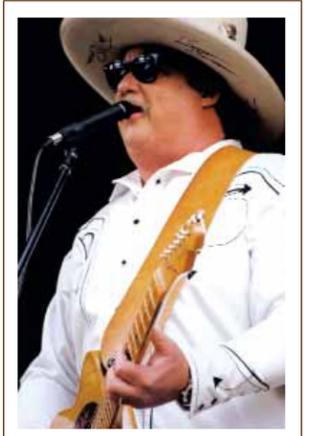
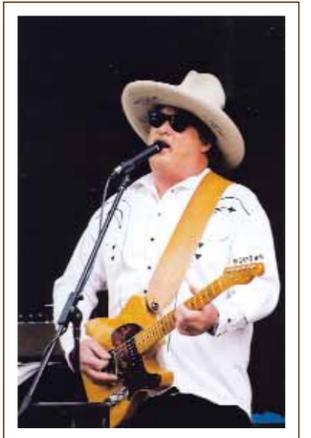
Don’s presence is known around campus in other ways as well. Many recognize him from his spirited musical performances, entertaining at university events with his skill and passion for playing guitar, mandolin and pedal steel. “Music has always been a way for me to connect with people,” he says. In fact, one of

Don’s favorite things about Naropa is that “you can put on a hat and strap on a guitar and be who you want to be.”

This sense of acceptance resonates profoundly with Don, who came to Colorado after twenty-five years as a laboratory technician at SUNY’s Stony Brook campus. After holding a variety of positions in Denver, Don says, he felt that “there’s got to be something more to this.” He sought out an academic environment because he missed being in the midst of a learning atmosphere. When he came to Naropa, he found himself right at home. “I think the thing that impressed me most was how people listened when you spoke,” he says, and he feels that sense of kinship “makes a big difference in how you approach going to work in the morning.”

“Managing facilities is fundamentally the same throughout the industry,” says Don. “It’s the people we work with every day that make what we do here special.” And this work is indeed special. By creating and supporting the physical space, the Facilities Department manifests the university’s mission in a profound and direct way. Don credits that entirely to his colleagues. “I’ve never worked in a place where there are so many good folks concentrated in one spot.” This allows him to thrive personally as well as professionally, because, as he says, “I can be accepted not only as part of facilities, but as who I am inside.”

What Don does is more than just a job—he brings the gift of his whole self to the institution. “I would like to spend the rest of my career here at Naropa,” he says. “I am still amazed at my good fortune to have landed here.” Don’s good fortune is also that of Naropa’s staff, faculty and students, who are lucky to have the university tended with such care, graciousness and good humor. —T.B.



# led by the land

On Anne Parker's lifelong path of environmental stewardship, all roads lead back to the land

As a faculty member and collaborative chair of Naropa University's Environmental Studies Department, where she has taught for more than ten years, Anne Parker keeps her life firmly rooted in the dirt at her feet.

Anne knew from an early age that her life and career would have something to do with the earth. As a child, she spent summers vacationing in the Yosemite Valley with her family. Her studies at the University of California, Berkeley, drew her into the field of conservation and land management, but she quickly became interested in a deeper view of the planet and the place of humanity on it. In her travels and studies in places such as Western Samoa, Aboriginal Australia and eastern Nepal, Anne developed a sense of the inseparability of human cultures and the environments they both occupy and shape. While studying with aboriginal tribes in Australia, says Anne, "something shifted for me. I saw my place in the universe."

That purpose has fueled her endeavors at Naropa, where she joined the newly formed Environmental Studies Department in 1994. Since then, she has held a variety of roles, including faculty member, department

chair and current member of the department's new "collaborative chair" model of administration. "I see my key role as offering inspiration and guidance to the next generation of environmental leaders and activists," she says. "My mission is to invite students to fall in love with the earth."

It's an invitation Anne herself has accepted. "I operate from a very deep calling from nature," she says, and she guides students in discovering this within themselves. The curriculum in Naropa's Environmental Studies Department is unique because, according to Anne, it urges students to develop their own spirituality while engaged in significant scientific inquiry. This allows students to enter into a powerful relationship with themselves and the natural world, and from that place they can perform truly effective action.

One key aspect of Anne's work is pilgrimage. She discovered the importance of this practice when she came to Naropa and, seeking renewal before the pressures of the school year began, sought meditative retreat in the "landscapes of the West, which I love and know well. . . . I was led into pilgrimage by the land itself," she says. In her class Pilgrimage

*"My mission is to invite students  
to fall in love with the earth."*

and Sacred Landscapes, Anne seeks to "encourage a direct, unmediated relationship with the natural world for inspiration and guidance." When students are personally inspired by nature, she feels that they can "commit to working in harmony with the earth on inner and outer planes—so that their work on behalf of the environment is sustainable, dedicated and takes into account multiple views."

This sense of direct interaction is integral to Anne's teachings. Anne has immersed herself in a wide variety of cultures and landscapes, all of which help drive her personal journey. "Pilgrimage is always about transformation," she says. Most recently, Anne spent her sabbatical in Europe, getting in touch with her own heritage. She traveled through England and France, developing her own connection with the landscapes. "I had to get below the Roman Empire to see the relationships to the earth," she says. This "healing through the layers" allowed her to unite in new ways with her ancestral surroundings.

Ultimately, Anne has made her life about serving the world through environmental protection and education. "I do believe in devoting one's life to serving others," she says, and this intention reverberates



in her teaching and writings. "It joins my spiritual and academic dimensions," she says. She has been instrumental in honing Naropa's Environmental Studies curriculum—a curriculum that allows students to see their own hearts within the whole fabric of the universe. Anne notes that, "here we have found a clear path and key principles to unify it," and this allows students to experience, as she does, a profound connection to the land.

Anne certainly feels that connection, and she generously shares it with the world. "I am keen to take my skills and work to a larger level of service," she says. No matter what her future projects entail, Anne's presence will continue to be an inspiration to her community and her students, whom she advises to remember, in the course of their studies and lives, to "put your hands in the earth."

—T.B.



# rebuilding a bit of the world with poetry

A lifelong New Orleans resident, Megan Burns has devoted herself to making spaces where art and poetry can thrive. In 2000 she and her husband, the poet Dave Brinks, founded the New Orleans School for the Imagination, the biannual Festival for the Imagination and the weekly 17 Poets! reading series, housed in their French Quarter business, the Gold Mine Saloon. “We wanted to create a place that could be a real nexus for the artistic community,” she says. In 2004 they launched YAWP magazine, an art and poetry journal, and began Trembling Pillow Press. Megan is an accomplished poet in her own right. Her work has appeared in a number of journals, she’s produced a chapbook and several broadsides, and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. In fall 2004, Megan entered the low-residency MFA Creative Writing program at Naropa University. She was excited to “continue life here in New Orleans and still learn from the some of the best writers working today,” she says.

In the midst of all this activity, disaster struck. Hurricane Katrina tore through the Gulf Coast in August 2005 and wreaked havoc on the area.

“My husband, our two-year-old daughter, one dog and I (five months pregnant) evacuated the morning before the storm. We met up with my mom, brother and dad, who had also evacuated. The day after the storm we learned that the 17th Street canal levee had broken, flooding most of the neighborhood where my family members all lived and where Dave and I had just purchased our first home. We all lost our homes to the flood water.”

“While we were prevented from legally returning to our city, my husband returned several times by boat and truck to inspect our home and retrieve photos and valuables,” she says. Megan and her family were finally allowed to return at the beginning of October, and the scene they encountered was gut-wrenching. “There was no clean water, garbage everywhere, police and National Guard on every corner, very few women and children, bugs, flies, rodents and the stench of thousands of rotting fridges and dead animals. And that was in the limited habitable areas of the city; most of the city remained in total darkness, completely decimated and abandoned.”

But Megan had no intention of despairing. Just two weeks after returning to their devastated hometown, Megan and her husband reopened the 17 Poets! series and held the first reading since the storm. “I knew people were feeling like me,” she says, “bursting at the seams and ready to say something.” The event was an emotional outpouring. “People came from as far away as Atlanta and Houston just to hear and share their words,” says Megan. “The reading lasted over four hours. As the midnight curfew loomed, we just shut and locked the front doors and let the poets keep reading. There were some tears, a lot of laughing and almost every speaker stepped up to the mic and said, ‘It sure is good to be home.’ ”

**“I knew people were feeling like  
me, bursting at the seams and  
ready to say something.”**

Megan returned to the MFA Creative Writing program this spring and is finding the same sense of community she values in her hometown. “I think the biggest similarity between Naropa and the writers who attend our reading series is the dedication to creating a community,” she says. Megan and her husband welcomed their second child in January, and they’re already working on the next issue of their magazine. As she picks up other postponed projects and rebuilds her life, her 17 Poets! series is giving the city’s artists a place to express themselves.

Megan believes that such events are essential in rebuilding the city. “In New Orleans in particular,” she says, “music and art and writing have been intrinsic to the rhythm of the city.” This feeling has only grown stronger since the hurricane. “I’d like to think that since Katrina the reading series has become an even more important aspect of the artistic community,” says Megan. “It’s right that people have a place to celebrate and to rant and rave and find some solace.” That, she believes, “is as important as coming back and tearing out your sheetrock and treating your mold and looking for a bit of the world we all left behind in August.”

—T.B.

Megan Burns



## Long Night Moon

By Megan Burns

in the shanty town that is New Orleans  
and sleeps in the place the children played  
two stone lions, beyond arm’s reach, across the water  
are resting near the so brown earth  
that seeps beneath our feet and all the movements  
we were unaware of  
because there are no words for this yet  
we would in so many tones lie about the fear  
of the months to come  
death’s stare in slow survey from four horizons  
and to relate as no one else can  
whose lives sit whole, unfractured, home  
it’s a painful reconstruction; they miss it on the news  
it’s a fundamental metaphoric transformation  
that won’t develop on the film  
you can fill the tape again, again and capture  
no form of intentions, no extension of culture  
my god, what are we? we love the spectacle  
we love to forget it  
to die alone in a room clutching your shoe  
the city, a background, a hand moving beneath  
finely spun silk against your knowledge of desire  
the city holds everything for you  
the song of the thrush, the understanding of beams,  
the tenderness of the dove, the mystery of the long night moon  
and the potential quality of all life  
so I whisper to it, so I whisper to it  
please, fly over me



Flautist Eluard Burt performing with Poet Dave Brinks



Louisiana Poet Laureate Brenda Marie Osbey



Flautist Eluard Burt and Poet Tom LaBlanc performing with Poet Valentine Pierce

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MEGAN BURNS



Poet Elizabeth Garcia

APRIL 7 & APRIL 8, 2006

# compassion in action days

## snapshots a glimpse into the lives of our community members

### CHRIS DWYER

*n!:* what books are on your nightstand right now?

I don't read in bed because the minute my body touches the mattress, I'm out! I have, however, been reading *Callings* by Greg Levoy, *Heart of the Buddha* by Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, and Christine Caldwell's *Getting in Touch* during my rare free moments on weekends.

*n!:* which space in your home are you most drawn to and why?

The kitchen, specifically the kitchen table. It's where my family gathers for great food and conversations.

*n!:* what historical figure do you most admire?

I'm inspired by many different people, among them Winston Churchill, whose courage, wit and tenacity led his country and the world through one of the most difficult periods in modern history; Edgar Cayce, the psychic who, despite his apparently remarkable abilities, regarded love and faith as paramount. I'm also enamored with Socrates, who realized that the foundation of wisdom is to first admit that we do not know.

*n!:* what object do you carry with you at all times?

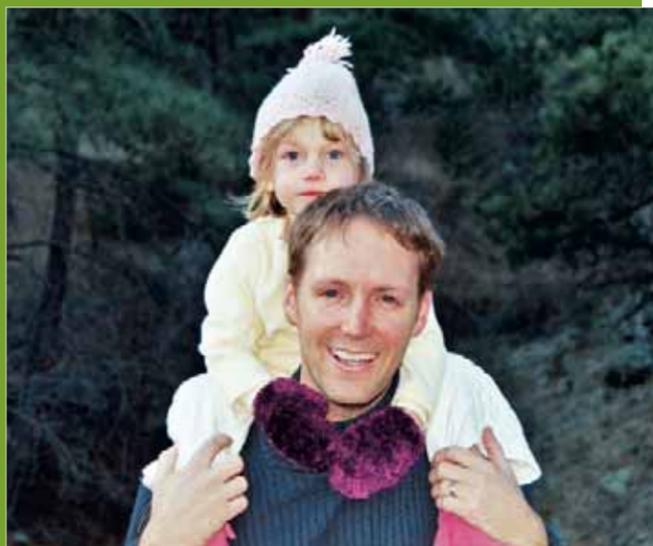
I'm not one to attach to objects, but my wife Jill says I always carry the keys to her heart!

*n!:* what's in your CD player right now?

*Barbie's Princess and the Pauper* . . . it's the current favorite of my three-year-old daughter Ahna, and I have to say, I get a little sentimental both when the King and the not-at-all downtrodden sounding Barbie Pauper sing a duet and when the Pauper sings an unconditional love song to Barbie's talking cat.

*n!:* if you could change one thing about how the world works, what would it be?

Greater awareness of self and other among all people—this is education in the greatest sense of the word. Body-mind or other awareness training—at home and in a formal educational setting—is one way to bring this about. Another way is to learn another language and live among people of another culture for an extended period of time.



Chris Dwyer, VP for Institutional Advancement, and his daughter Ahna

*n!:* what's your all-time favorite movie?

I wouldn't name a single film, but I'm often drawn to films involving epic struggles, individual perseverance and heroism. Films about human potential generally and about mystical and supernatural phenomena specifically are usually of high interest.

*n!:* what's your most interesting or unusual skill?

I can alter my hand temperature by 10 degrees through progressive relaxation techniques that I learned at age thirteen in order to combat migraine headaches. I have lucid dreams on occasion and, because of previous Russian language training and exposure, I sometimes dream in Russian.

If there is a single idea that could sum up what Naropa University hopes to instill in its students, it is the motivation to put compassion into action. And so, when the university began looking for a vehicle to raise funds for the Presidential Scholarship, there was no better way to express that mission than to set aside a time for working with others in the community to help them accomplish their goals.

Launched in 2005 (then called Community Service Day), Compassion in Action Days provide an opportunity for Naropa students, alumni, faculty, staff and trustees to offer meaningful service to the larger community and to highlight the ongoing commitment to compassionate action and engagement at the heart of Naropa's mission. On Friday, April 7, and Saturday, April 8, members of the Naropa community will donate their time to working with our community partners, area agencies that serve a broad range of Boulder County residents, with a particular focus on underserved populations. This year, our community partners are the City of Boulder Senior Center; City of Boulder Parks and

Recreation Department; Growing Gardens, which offers an organic gardening training program for youth and a horticulture therapy program; Medicine Horse Program, which works to improve mental health among at-risk teens through therapeutic programs centered around horses; MESA (Moving to End Sexual Assault), a prevention, advocacy and rape crisis program; Project YES, a youth leadership development program serving at-risk youth in Lafayette, Colorado; and the San Juan Family Learning Center, an educational center serving a largely low-income Latino community. With this event, we also hope to draw attention to the outstanding work of these organizations.

"It is widely acknowledged that helping students engage constructively with those who are not like themselves is the single most pressing educational challenge of the 21st century," notes Naropa University President Thomas Coburn. "Co-creation with others is the most direct way of meeting this need, crossing barriers of difference for mutual benefit. Compassion in Action Days is a splendid instance of this kind of co-creation!"

In addition to serving Naropa's community partners, the event will raise funds for the Naropa University Presidential Scholarship, which is annually awarded to outstanding undergraduates.

Volunteers will seek pledges from their friends and families for the hours they work. Additionally, this year, for the first time, a committee of volunteers has reached out to area businesses and organizations that share our institutional values, to invite them to sponsor the event. Sponsors of Compassion in Action Days include Gay & Lesbian Fund for Colorado; Wells Fargo; Immersive Studios; Nexus Publishing, Inc.; Vermilion Design; Walker Enterprises, LLLP; R L Security, Inc.; Sargent Bickham Lagudis; The Sherman Agency, Inc.; Taggart Insurance; and the Daily Camera (media sponsor).

Compassion in Action Days will conclude with a celebration barbeque on the Naropa University campus for volunteers, community partners and sponsors. —Dana Lobell

### fresh faces: marianne lorenz

As the director of advancement services, Marianne Lorenz comes to Naropa University with a background in art museum management and fundraising. As an undergraduate at the University of Colorado, she majored in French and German and then went on to earn an MA in art history and an MBA in marketing. She began her career as a French and German teacher and spent a year as a Fulbright exchange teacher in Wurzburg, Germany. As an art museum professional, Marianne curated and co-authored the catalogue for an exhibition that explored

Vasily Kandinsky's influence on American painting. She was also the project manager for a \$16.7 million renovation and expansion project for the Dayton Art Institute's National Historic Register Building. Most recently, as the executive director of the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings, Montana, and the Las Vegas Art Museum, Marianne was deeply involved in managing the fundraising efforts of those institutions. Marianne recently returned to Boulder to be close to family and to pursue her passion for skiing.



# two milestones for the reb zalman legacy project

It has been three years since Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, then Naropa University's World Wisdom Chair, announced his intention to donate his personal archive, containing extensive documentation of his life's work, to create a special collection at Naropa. That declaration forged a partnership between Naropa and the Yesod Foundation, a Boulder-based Jewish Renewal educational organization, to launch the Reb Zalman Legacy Project.

In December 2005, the university and Schachter-Shalomi signed the formal agreement donating the collection to Naropa. The collection currently contains 1,239 audiotapes of Reb Zalman speaking or conducting classes, 37 image media items, 62 manuscripts and published works (approx. 5,000 pages), 448 digital documents, 55 musical transcriptions, 641 photos, 10 digital photos and 52 VHS tapes. By the time the agreement was concluded, Naropa University Archivist Tim Hawkins and Legacy Project Executive

Director Netanel Miles-Yepetz had already completed the initial work of listing the contents and storing it in archival-quality boxes and files. "We are delighted to receive this donation from Reb Zalman," said Hawkins. "These materials will greatly advance the university archive's efforts to document prominent figures in the history of the institution, and to provide primary source materials to students and scholars in religious studies and a range of other fields."

The mission of the Reb Zalman Legacy Project is to preserve, develop and disseminate the teachings of the Rabbi, who is widely recognized as an innovative leader in interfaith dialogue and the founder of the Jewish Renewal and Spiritual Eldering movements. As a living legacy of his work, the project aims to make the teachings available to future generations of spiritual seekers. In addition to the physical collection at Naropa, the Legacy Project is working

toward making the content available online, publishing new material in a variety of formats and offering educational programs. The archive will be of particular importance to students in the MA Contemplative Judaism program that is currently being developed at Naropa.

In February, Naropa University received a \$100,000 grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to support a number of activities of the Reb Zalman Legacy Project, with a focus on disseminating materials related to spiritual approaches to social transformation. The gift from Kellogg, the largest received to date in support of the Legacy Project, will have a significant impact on the financial sustainability of the project.

More information about the Reb Zalman Legacy Project can be found at [www.rzlp.org](http://www.rzlp.org).  
—Dana Lobell



## fresh faces: stacie sears

Stacie Sears arrives at Naropa University as the newest advancement team member and director of major gifts. She joins Angela Farone, a major gifts officer and member of the advancement team since 2001. In partnership with her colleagues, Stacie endeavors to significantly increase philanthropic support by cultivating deep partnerships with the university's alumni, parents and friends.

Previously, Stacie served eight years in higher education fundraising with two outstanding liberal arts colleges in the East—St. Lawrence University, where she received an undergraduate degree in environmental economics in 1997,

and Middlebury College. Having played a significant role on the major gifts team at St. Lawrence during their most recent \$130 million comprehensive campaign, she brings with her invaluable experience in campaign planning, relationship cultivation and frontline fundraising. As a senior development officer at Middlebury College, Stacie worked with a talented team of gift officers, raising in excess of \$30 million annually.

Having been raised in the Adirondack Mountains in New York, she looks forward to spending her down time outside in the fresh Rocky Mountain air—running, skiing, hiking and paddling.

# seeing the wisdom that is there

Kristin Suppan brings contemplative practices to early childhood education

As founder and director of Snow Lion School and the elementary school Eastern Sun Academy, Kristin Suppan (BA Education and Religious Studies '94) practices Naropa University's mission of contemplative education every day. Her dedication to Buddhist studies and teaching has carved a path for her. "I was clear from a young age that I would be working with children in some capacity," she says. The importance of this focus and her practice of Buddhism was profound. "In some sense they have both been completely with me in seed form," she says. But as she pursued her BA degree, first in California and then at the University of Colorado, these two influences began to converge.

While a student at the University of Colorado, Kristin began studying with Reggie Ray, and she took his classes "deeply to heart." "I have such appreciation for the kindness and guidance I experienced from Reggie," she says of this pivotal time in her life. After transferring to Naropa, Kristin also met her teacher Dzigar Kongtrul, Rinpoche, who was the World Wisdom Chair at the time. His spiritual teachings were a critical aspect of her time at the university. Majoring simultaneously in education and religious studies allowed her to develop a sound understanding of her own journey. "My path is to try to be helpful in the world and to work with my own mind," she says, and she sees that attitude at Naropa. "I think one of the primary educational missions in any of Naropa's programs is that students come away with a wish to put the world before themselves and really be of some benefit."

This desire to serve found an immediate outlet when Kristin graduated and formed Snow Lion School, a preschool based in contemplative ideas. The endeavor started small—just three students two days a week in her home—but it quickly grew through word of mouth. The school moved into its current building in 2000, and now has fifty students and five teachers. "I have been really blessed by incredible co-teachers and families at Snow Lion," says Kristin. "We have been able to create an intimate contemplative environment where children can become familiar with themselves and the world in a relaxed and open way." This unique classroom setting stems from Kristin's belief that "we must not skim over the fullness of what early childhood education can be." She seeks to model a sense of presence and self-reflection because "children absorb how we work with our own minds." One of the most important aspects of being a teacher, Kristin says, is to put the individual student before one's own philosophy. "You have to see what's there, not what you think should be there," she notes. If you enter teaching with an agenda, "you miss the opportunity for the child's wisdom to come forward—you miss the heart."



"I think one of the primary educational missions in any of Naropa's programs is that students come away with a wish to put the world before themselves and really be of some benefit."

This approach drives Kristin's most recent project. She and several other educators have created the Eastern Sun Academy, an elementary school based on the three journeys of intelligence, compassion and confidence, a model developed by Kristin and her colleagues. As executive director of Eastern Sun, Kristin continues to cultivate this new vision of education in an administrative capacity, but she still finds her roots in the classroom. "To administrate without teaching would be cutting off my lifeblood," she says. "Teaching is such a source of energy and joy for me—it keeps things very alive."

Educating and living a contemplative life are, for Kristin, inseparable. "Teaching is very supportive to my spiritual path," she says, and her inner work directly supports her career in the classroom. Teaching is a key to knowing one's own mind because, as she says, "there are so many opportunities to see yourself clearly." She views this clarity as one of the many gifts her calling has brought her, and she in turn shares it with the children and families she nurtures.  
—T.B.



## surrounding the dying with love

*“We shouldn’t be afraid to use prayer or contemplative practices. We can trust that something good will come from them, both internally and externally.”*

**FOR SISTER M. GERTRUDE (TRUDY) KEEFE,** Catholic nun, chaplain and hospice worker, helping people on the journey through life and death is a powerful way to connect to the sacred. She has worked with those in the final stages of life for more than twenty-two years, beginning shortly after she became certified as a chaplain. Prior to that, she served for twenty-nine years as a teacher.

Sister Gertrude is currently enrolled in the Naropa University Extended Studies Contemplative End of Life Care, a nine-month certificate program that includes on-site and online instruction with a strong emphasis on contemplative practices. Approximately one-third of her work as a chaplain is spent in hospice care in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and she is always interested in learning how to support more skillfully those who are dying and their families. She discovered Naropa’s certificate program on the Internet and became interested in the program’s unique approach.

“To me, ‘contemplative’ describes what is happening in the field today—it’s the contemporary approach to hospice care,” Sister Gertrude says. “We now have ways to help people deal with physical pain when they are dying, but how can we help these individuals when they are fearful and anxious? What have we learned from years of hospice care?” She feels that a contemplative approach is what is most needed at this time.

Based on *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* by Sogyal Rinpoche, Naropa’s Contemplative End of Life Care program integrates Western and Eastern approaches to hospice and palliative care. Sister Gertrude appreciates the program’s Tibetan Buddhist elements and finds several parallels to her own spiritual tradition—particularly the teachings on love and compassion.

One of the program’s instructors has greatly influenced her. “Christine [Longaker] has stressed the importance of love,” Sister Gertrude says. “The dying person needs to be told over and over again that they are loved and surrounded by love. It’s also important to tell the family to continually express their love and appreciation to their dying relative, including details of shared experiences. This affirms the individual’s life.” She emphasizes this component more often in her work now, as a result of her studies at Naropa.

The meditation practices that Sister Gertrude has learned in the program have also been helpful in her work. “Meditation has provided a new avenue for me to work with the dying.” The practice known as *phowa* includes bringing to mind someone who represents love, whether it is a friend, a parent, a teacher, God, the Buddha or anyone else who has given love. The caregiver focuses on this source of love and makes the intention that this love is expressed to the dying person. Sister Gertrude has observed that a person’s composure can change through this practice; an individual will move from fear to calm, feeling the presence of love.

“Christine has emphasized that we can take the faith that we have, regardless of denomination, and allow that faith to be nourished by what is being taught in this program. This helped me to work with the teachings and practices,” Sister Gertrude says. “One of the greatest gifts is love. We shouldn’t be afraid to use prayer or contemplative practices. We can trust that something good will come from them, both internally and externally.”

She compares mindfulness meditation to the Christian practice of centering prayer in which one focuses attention on the breath and allows thoughts to enter the mind without fixating on them. Once while working with a woman who was in pain, she suggested that they breathe slowly together. This practice calmed the woman considerably, providing a sense of peace and easing her experience of pain.

To Sister Gertrude, the journey of a dying person is like the process of birth. “When a patient is dying, everyone surrounding that person is like a midwife, holding their hand, rubbing their temple. The labor in this situation is the pain of the disease, the fears and the testing of one’s faith. It is important to reassure the dying person that you are there with them, even though you cannot directly experience their pain.”

Her years of hospice work and her personal connection to death and dying have profoundly shaped who she is. A cancer survivor herself, Sister Gertrude no longer fears dying and realizes how precious it is to be alive. “It is important to work with families to help them come to terms with this chapter in life.”

Sister Gertrude defines compassion as ‘coming into passion’ to observe and assist, while not taking away from the dignity and capabilities of a patient. She is able to stay with a patient’s suffering, maintain empathy and provide support, while allowing people to do everything they can do for themselves.

After one man’s father died, he thanked Sister Gertrude for her support and compassionate approach to the dying process. “I knew it would be hard to lose my father. I didn’t know it would be so meaningful,” he said. —Cristina Willard

## naropa university extended studies program highlights

### AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP HEADS FOR NEW YORK SEPTEMBER 2006

The sixth Authentic Leadership Certificate program will take place at the Garrison Institute in New York in September 2006. This is the first time that the Authentic Leadership program will be held outside of Boulder, Colorado. “Naropa University’s Marpa Center is pleased to be working with Garrison on this project. The institute is just a one-hour train ride from New York City, providing an excellent location for Naropa’s cutting-edge leadership program,” said Mark Wilding, director of the Marpa Center. The Garrison Institute, situated in the historic Hudson Highlands, offers a year-round calendar of residential programs and retreats. For program information visit [www.naropa.edu/leadership](http://www.naropa.edu/leadership).

### CONTEMPLATIVE END OF LIFE CARE CONFERENCE AND CERTIFICATE UPDATES

Established in 2003, and under the direction of Naropa alumnus Fleet Maull (MA Psychology ’79), the Center for Contemplative End of Life Care offers programs designed for health care professionals in the end of life and senior care fields. The center offers an annual Integrating Spirit and Caregiving conference (scheduled this year for May 15–17), as well as a certificate program in partnership with Rigpa Spiritual Care. As of this May, fifty students will have graduated from the certificate program, and plans are underway for the first alumni event this fall. The certificate program, which can be taken for academic credit, will soon be presented in a shorter, four-month format that includes both residential and online instruction. For more information about the certificate, annual conference and upcoming alumni event, visit [www.naropa.edu/contemplativecare](http://www.naropa.edu/contemplativecare).

### PILGRIMAGE TO CRESTONE

This spring, Naropa University Extended Studies introduces a new course format that takes students beyond the classroom to locations that provide an experiential learning opportunity. Pilgrimage to Crestone: A Journey of Understanding, led by Ralph Abrams on May 25–28, is a three-day course that includes visits to several spiritual centers, group study and discussion, as well as interaction and practice with individuals who are dedicated to their spiritual paths. Extended Studies would like to expand such offerings in the future, developing courses that bring together travel and practice opportunities.

### THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA, RINPOCHE UPCOMING ONLINE CLASS AND CONFERENCE

Naropa University Extended Studies is proud to present a series on the life and teachings of Naropa’s founder, Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche. Forced to flee Tibet in 1959, at the age of twenty, he went on to become a primary influence in bringing the Buddhist teachings to the West. Reggie Ray’s upcoming online class, *The Founder: The Life and Teachings of Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche*, provides a deeper understanding of this visionary leader’s extraordinary life and teachings, as well as the religious and cultural context in which he was trained and taught. Offered in the fall, REL 208e/608e may be taken for 3 credits or noncredit.

Extended Studies will also be hosting a conference, *Ocean of Dharma: The Literary Teachings of Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche*, on October 20–22, 2006. The first of its kind for Naropa, the conference features Fabrice Midal, Diana Mukpo, Judith Simmer-Brown, Reggie Ray and other renowned presenters, many of whom have contributed to the recent book, *Recalling Chögyam Trungpa*.

For more information or to register for an Extended Studies program, please call 1-800-603-3117, 303-245-4800 or email [extend@naropa.edu](mailto:extend@naropa.edu).

## alumni notes

WILL CHRISTOPHER BAER, MFA WRITING AND POETICS '95. His trilogy of novels, *Kiss Me, Judas*; *Penny Dreadful*; and *Hell's Half Acre*, has just been released in one volume as *Phineas Poe* (MacAdam Cage, 2005).

AIMEE RYAN BELLMORE, MA TRANSPERSONAL COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY '00, lived in Guatemala for six months in 2002, taught English, worked at a women's correctional facility, studied Spanish and played music. From 2002–05, she worked at Metro State Prison as a senior mental health counselor and bilingual translator for all Spanish-speaking prisoners. She eventually directed a behavioral program for dual-diagnosis violent criminals which included yoga and meditation as core curriculum. She now has a private practice in a medical doctor's office that specializes in HIV treatment.

SETH BRAUN, BA INTERARTS '03, married ANA VICTORIA PABELLON, BA INTERARTS '05. Their ten-month-old daughter and four-year-old daughter are doing well. Family life is a lot of work but richly rewarding. Seth's work as a 4 Gateways Coach has evolved into a health counseling practice ([www.highenergyhealthcounselor.com](http://www.highenergyhealthcounselor.com)). He is studying at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition in Manhattan. His practice is at the Integrative Medicine Clinic, [www.bouldermandala.com](http://www.bouldermandala.com). He is also developing an educational media line for people with diabetes ([www.realdiabeticnutrition.com](http://www.realdiabeticnutrition.com)).

MAUREEN DUMMIGAN WHITE and JOSH WHITE, MA CONTEMPLATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY '01 and '02 respectively, welcomed son, Hunter Taizan Dummigan White on September 28. They live in Portland, Oregon, where they spend time with Kristin Venderbush (MA Contemplative Psychotherapy '98) and Chris Medinger (MA Contemplative Psychotherapy '01). Is Naropa Northwest far behind?

kari edwards, MA CONTEMPLATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY '98 and MFA WRITING AND POETICS '00, is the author of the poetry collections *Iduna*, *A Day in the Life of P.*, *a diary of lies, post/(pink)* and, most recently, *Obedience*—“A kaleidoscopic rumination on ‘bodies of resistance’ to the relentless erasures of time.”

CHRISTINE FISHER, MA CONTEMPLATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY '89, currently lives in Jefferson County, New York, and is the program manager for the brand new DoA Ft. Drum Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. As the program sexual assault response coordinator, she trains staff and advocates, works with victims, coordinates with departments including police, MPs, local health care, CID (Investigators), Command structure, JAG (Legal) and mental health. Christine practices regularly, teaches Reiki and works in holistic health and healing.

LYNDA HILBURN, MA TRANSPERSONAL COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY '94, was just offered representation by a New York literary agency for her paranormal fiction book. It isn't about therapy or counseling (except that her main character is a psychologist).

FRANK MACEOWEN, MA TRANSPERSONAL COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY '96, lives in Jackson, Mississippi, and works as a copywriter and researcher for a media and communications firm, specializing in interactive museum development and design. He is working on his third book for New World Library, which will explore addiction, modern materialism and disconnection from nature from Celtic, Buddhist and Shambhala perspectives ([sacredmarkings.blogspot.com](http://sacredmarkings.blogspot.com)).

In spring 2005, DAVID MAGDALENE, MFA WRITING AND POETICS '98, and CHRISTOPHER LUNA, MFA WRITING AND POETICS '99, gave several readings in Washington, Oregon and California in support of their collaborative book of poems *On the Beam*. They are currently working on a follow-up.

JAMES MAIZE, BA INTERARTS '97, and his band the Girlfriend Experience will return to the studio in March to complete their full-length album *When in Rome . . . Do as the Lions* and will be back on the road on a twenty-city 2006 South by Northwest Tour with stops throughout California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas, Colorado, Idaho, Washington and Oregon during the month of May. See [www.girlfriendexperience.org](http://www.girlfriendexperience.org) and [www.myspace.com/girlfriendexperience](http://www.myspace.com/girlfriendexperience) for destinations and details.



PRIMAVERA, the daughter of PAOLA FAGGELLA, BA MOVEMENT STUDIES AND DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY '92 and MA SOMATIC PSYCHOLOGY '97, and her husband Erik.

DANIELLE MASTROGIOVANNI, BA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION '99, has a son, Gianni Matteo Maldon, who was born on February 13, 2004. She is trying to remember everything she learned at Naropa in order to be a good parent to this incredible person.

DIANE METZGER, MA BUDDHIST AND WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY '80, continues to be influenced by the teachings on ethics of openness and honesty, the approach to education as “learning how to learn,” the view of intellect and intuition as being equally important and essential in learning and in life, working with one's own mind as a basis for working with others, and the merging of rigorous discipline with joyful creativity.

SEAN MURPHY, MFA WRITING AND POETICS '95. His first novel, *The Hope Valley Hubcap King*, will be published in German and a Russian edition of his fourth novel *Time of New Weather* is also forthcoming.

JEFF PRICE, MA CONTEMPLATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY '97, is proud to announce the upcoming marriage of his son, Michael, and Melissa Gibbons, on October 7, 2006. The wedding will take place near their home in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

NICK VAIL, MA INDO-TIBETAN BUDDHISM '05, is happily working in Naropa's Development Office, becoming well acquainted with the photocopier machine and enjoying sticking around the contemplative bastion of Naropa, gleaming some valuable skills and life experiences (and not just in photocopying).

DANIEL WOLPERT, MA CONTEMPLATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY '87, has published *Creating a Life with God: The Call of Ancient Prayer Practices* (Upper Room, 2003) and *Meeting God in Virtual Reality* (Abingdon Press, 2004).

# Pamela Krasney

Alumna and trustee PAMELA KRASNEY has been a part of the Naropa University community for more than twenty-five years. What keeps her engaged with this unique institution is, she says, “my commitment to the vision of one university dedicated to contemplative education inspired by Buddhist teachings.” She was drawn to Naropa by its founder, Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, and her practice of Tibetan Buddhism. She completed the Contemplative Psychotherapy program in 1983, and what she gained there has permeated her life. “What I learned as a student of contemplative psychotherapy has served me very well in all of my encounters and relationships since then,” she says. “My training in both Buddhist meditation and studies, and east-west psychology has helped to ‘grow me up’ so that I am more able to help others.”

In addition to being a longtime board member at Naropa, Pamela serves on the boards of the Shambhala Mountain Center and the Berkeley Shambhala Center. Her dedication to the Shambhala tradition is an outgrowth of her belief that “if the whole world meditated and worked with their minds, there would be less aggression, less greed, less inhumanity and more peace and compassion.”

As a crucial member of the Naropa community and a tremendously generous donor, Pamela is an important part of furthering the university's mission. Her hopes for the future will certainly resonate with all who support Naropa's vision: “To spread the word globally about contemplative education.” —T.B.



*Jeremiah Rush Bowen \* Robert Cooper \* Timothy Crespi  
Anita Li \* Reeva Wortel*

## presidential scholarship recipients

The diverse talents and interests of Naropa University's student body are remarkable, as is their concern for the world outside the university. Among Naropa's exceptional students are the recipients of the Presidential Scholarship—undergraduate students who display an outstanding level of community engagement. Past scholarship recipients have proven to be students who were not only active in Naropa's community, but who also worked as volunteers in a broad array of countries such as Sri Lanka, Israel, Canada and India, to name a few.

As community engagement is one important criterion in determining the recipients of the Presidential Scholarship, fundraising efforts for the scholarship likewise serve as a way to bring the community together via unique events organized by the president of the university. The Presidential Scholarship was founded by former university president John Cobb, who organized a day of bird watching with faculty, trustees and alumni to raise funds. Presently, funds for the scholarship are raised through Compassion in Action Days, an event dedicated to serving Naropa's community partners and sponsored by area businesses. —*Timothy Crespi*



Clockwise from upper left: Robert Cooper, Reeva Wortel, Jeremiah Rush Bowen, Timothy Crespi (Anita Li not pictured)

NAROPA UNIVERSITY IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP:

**JEREMIAH RUSH BOWEN, BA WRITING AND LITERATURE**, has lived in Oklahoma, New Jersey, Florida and Pennsylvania. He is appreciative that the Presidential Scholarship allows him to focus on his writing. **ROBERT COOPER, BA RELIGIOUS STUDIES**, is from Topeka, Kansas. Through his studies at Naropa, he has come to a deeper appreciation of his inner voice. His scholarship funds have provided him the opportunity to explore avenues of thought that were previously inaccessible. **TIMOTHY CRESPI, BA ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AND CONTEMPLATIVE PSYCHOLOGY**, originally from Pearl River, New York, believes that community involvement and direct service to others can yield great responsibility. He appreciates that the Presidential Scholarship exists as a reciprocal exchange between a few very dedicated students and the Naropa community. **ANITA LI, BA WRITING AND LITERATURE**, is from northern Michigan and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

She was drawn to Naropa because of its connection to Chögyam Trungpa's teachings about wisdom and compassion, and because it has a shrine room where she can meditate just about any time she wants to. **REEVA WORTEL, BFA IN PERFORMANCE**, is an Oregon native who came to Naropa in search of interesting approaches to the study of dance, contemplative psychology and sociology. She found the BFA program, where she is discovering the true definition of artistic warriorship.



*Fall '06*

In the next naropa! MAGAZINE...

Our students—an issue devoted to the student body that makes Naropa a thriving community of learners

# Buddha's Hands

## buddha's hands



“Art in general can be compassionate action,” says Robert Spellman, and his painting *Buddha's Hands* fully encapsulates that idea. Robert based his painting on a photograph by Mark Standen, from his book, *Buddha in the Landscape: A Sacred Expression of Thailand* (Pomegranate, 1999). The hand is from a massive Buddha statue in the temple complex near Sing Buri. Robert was drawn to this depiction of the Buddha because, as he says, “I loved the gesture. There’s something invitational about it.” The painting was part of a series of one hundred drawings of hands—a project he does each year with his advanced drawing students.

One aspect of the painting that particularly speaks to Robert is the way the medium recalls works from many thousands of years ago. Such paintings “have the coffee stains of the ages on them,” he says. One ancient technique Robert employed in the painting is the use of a chalk grid. Artists applied this technique to make accurate enlargements for drawings, Robert notes, and he uses it “both as a visual guide for creating and also because of the way it looks.”

“There’s a long history,” Robert says, “of artworks being zones for peace.” In this way, his painting is a space for viewers to pause and seek the compassion in their own hearts. — T.B.

Robert Spellman is assistant professor of visual arts and former chair of Naropa University's Visual Arts Department. He holds a BFA from the Massachusetts College of Art and has studied Buddhist meditation and philosophy for thirty years.

*Buddha's Hands* Robert Spellman 2001 18"x21" Acrylic, charcoal and chalk line on canvas

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