



ཕྱི་ཆོས་སྒྲིལ་པ་ལུགས་བཟོ་རིགས་སློབ་གྲྭ།

CHOKI TRADITIONAL ART SCHOOL

"Empowering the unprivileged youth as custodians of distinct culture"



Wishing you and your loved ones a very
Happy New Year!

Principal Foreword



A very Happy New Year to all!

Every year, as we watch our graduates proudly receive their diplomas, we are reminded that life-changing opportunities are made possible at CTAS and the core promise of education is the potential to transform lives. With our deepest sincerity, we thank you because your gift has made this possible. Kadrinchey la!

The school offers its sincerest appreciation to all of you for this wonderful opportunity. Your thoughtful generosity continues to give us greater hope and inspiration to continue on this journey to bring students new opportunities that can take them to greater heights.

Our Alumni has been gaining strength and eliciting positive reflections and values. Apart from enhancing the student-to-alumni experience and connections, their approach to support and sponsor two students in 2022 was incredible and empowering. It represents a progressive understanding and vitality for shared values; to grow and to help grow.

With your blessings, 2021 has been another successful year. The students have happily moved into the new classroom building and enjoying the new facilities. The learning environment has significantly improved and the school is very grateful.

One good news is that the school has received a Khyentse Foundation Ashoka Grant to meet 30% of the OPEX budget in 2022. This is such a timely support when the sales of student products has been badly affected with COVID pandemic.

For the first time, with accreditation of its courses by the Government, students sat for National Assessment and achieved good result. The students now carry nationally recognized certificate.

The school is extremely grateful to all our supporters for your continued blessings and support. The school would also like to express its heartiest gratitude to Koenraad & Lynne and Alan & Patricia for bridging the budgetary gaps. We assure you that we will continue to work hard and maximize the benefit in imparting quality training for our students and equipping them for a better tomorrow.

Once again thank you very much and wishing you a very Happy New Year 2022.

(Sonam Choki)
Principal

CTAS Graduates 2021

Graduation is one of the most important events of the year since it celebrates the success of the students and brings closure to their time as students. The graduation evening held on November 28th was a lively occasion with bonfires, dances, and a festive atmosphere and was organized by the senior students. The sumptuous dinner sponsored by the graduating students and parents as token of appreciation to the school and staff, together with beautiful entertainment programs has made the evening most memorable and festive.



A total of twenty-two students have graduated this year; seventeen boys and five girls taking the total graduates of CTAS to 224. Koenraad and Lynne has been kind enough to gift our graduates every year with medals and special pen in recognition of their hard work and perseverance to complete the program. It has instilled a sense of pride and motivation for our students. Thank you so much!

The school is delighted to see most of the students employed and doing well in life. Towards enhancing better employment opportunities for CTAS graduates, the school has signed a Memorandum of Understanding

GRADUATES					
Sl.No	Course	Male	Female	Total	Duration
1	Lhadi/Painting	4	2	6	7 years
2	Patra/Wood Carving	6	0	6	5 years
3	Embroidery	0	3	3	5 years
4	Tailoring	2	0	2	2 years
	Total	11	5	17	
CERTIFICATE					
1	Lhadi/Painting	1	0	1	3 years
2	Patra/Wood Carving	4	0	4	3 years
	Total	5	0	5	

Duo Female Students Complete 7 year Lhadri Course

CTAS is pleased to present two female graduates in Lhadri (painting) after completion of their seven years' program. This is the second time we had female graduates in Lhadri after Manisha Rai in 2018.

Kuenzang Choden and Yangchen Tshomo are hardworking and diligent students whose perseverance and commitment are a role model to other female students. They are proud to have successfully completed their program and expressed deepest gratitude to the school and all the supporters for this wonderful opportunity. "Had it not been for this opportunity, our life certainly would be different and difficult. Today we are a proud painters and we wish to follow the steps of some of our Alumni who has become successful painters. We would like to express our gratitude to all the supporters for making our dream come true and especially to Leila and Koenraad, without whom girls' education at CTAS would not have been possible. THANK YOU SO MUCH"

Both of them have been offered with a job to work on a project for a monastery and are very excited to start working.



Blessed with support from the Khyentse Foundation

The school is pleased to share that the Khyentse Foundation, based in USA, has positively responded to our submission of grant proposal. We have been awarded the Ashoka Grant to meet 30% of the OPEX budget in 2022.

The school is very grateful to the Foundation for this timely support, when it is going through a difficult time with reduced sale from COVID challenges. The school would like to assure that the support will be optimally utilized to maximise the benefit and achieve the intended outcome.

CTAS takes the National Assessment

For the first time, CTAS has sat for National Assessment after accreditation of its program by the Government. The students have done exceedingly well and we achieved a 95% success percentage in skills competency. From this year onwards, CTAS students will carry a nationally recognized certificate, which will assist them tremendously after graduation as the students go on to enter the professional world.



CTAS Alumni sponsors two students in 2022

The CTAS Alumni Association (CTAS-AA) has committed to provide sponsorship of two students in 2022 and handed over the amount to the school. It is such a thoughtful gift which elicits positive reflections and values from the alumni. The school is very proud of the alumni and pray that such values and cooperation towards the school continue to flourish.



Alumni General Meeting 2021

The Alumni General Meeting 2021 was held on 27th November 2021 to discuss and review updates on the support received from the alumni in the year 2021, including membership updates and fees collected to support the school. The meeting featured presentations from the alumni members and observed the election of the new Chairperson, Vice Chairmen and Assistants for the year 2022. The school conveyed its genuine appreciation to the Chairman and his team for the great initiative and on-the-ground involvement with his alma mater. The school is considering recognition of veteran volunteers, and essential players in the alumni association who have contributed significantly to the school by publicly recognizing them during the school foundation Day and instituting an Alumni Appreciation Award to thank them for their contributions.



Alumni Coordinated Project; Painting

Alumni Chairman Sangay Tenzin, along with four Alumni experts, carried out a month long painting project at the school in August. During the project, the students had the opportunity to validate their skills and learn new techniques befitting the market taste. They were given hand-holding support right from the beginning till the end and the project has proved to be very successful with the students being very grateful for this wonderful learning opportunity.



Alumni Coordinated Project; Embroidery

On 21st October 2021, the Alumni has coordinated and invited Mrs. Yangchen, who works at the Royal Textile Academy, to teach the students on a new embroidery design/technique (Drame Tshem). It was an insightful learning to both our teacher and students.



Alumni Project; Tailoring

For the first time, a tailoring expert Mrs. Gyem Lham, who is an alumni visited the school to share her knowledge on different techniques of tailoring especially stitching border of traditional woman dress 'kira'. It was found very useful and was greatly appreciated by the students.



Alumni Project; Carving

The Chairman of the Alumni Association also invited a carving expert, Mr. Tsheltrum Tenzin, who works with the Department of National Property, Royal Government of Bhutan to assist with carving of Choepi Lham (water goddess). During his two visits to the school, he was impressed with the overall skills of the students and offered to employ two-three of the graduates. The students were very happy. They said they have learn a lot and has enhanced their confidence to become 'job-ready'.



Thank you! Ustinov Foundation

The school would like to convey its heartiest gratitude to Sir Peter Ustinov Foundation for supporting the school for six consecutive years starting from 2016. In addition to enhancement of the creativity skills, the support has enabled the school to introduce the traditional boot-making course, which is now well institutionalized in the curriculum. It has enhanced learning of the embroidery program and adds to the list of employable skills that the students gain during their education here at CTAS.



Blessing 2021!

On the special day of the completion of the 45-day long “Monastic Summer Retreat”, a Buddhist tradition which dates from the time of the Buddha, CTAS was blessed by the presence of His Holiness Gyelsay Tenzin Rabgay, along with the Tago Dorden Buddhist University President, Khenpos and Lecturers together with 300 monks of Tago, Chari and Dodena. It was such a privilege and honor for the school to offer our ceremonial tea offering in front of the new classroom building, which is a way to seek blessings of the new building from such great spiritual leader. This is the third year that CTAS has been able to participate in such blessed ceremony and dedicate this offering of merit accumulation for benefit of all sentient beings and all our supporters



CTAS give back to community

This year, CTAS has volunteered help with the painting of the retreat center at Druk Ralung Monastery, located right above the school for three weeks duration. The students gained valuable practical work experience, values of ‘Virtuous Living’ and in living harmonious relationship with the community.



Final Year Study Tour

Every year, the school organizes a nine-day study tour program for the final year students. This year the study tour program took place on December 2 through December 10. During the tour, students visited related institutes, museums and monasteries. Apart from learning age old traditions and spiritual enhancement, it also provided the students with the opportunity to see arts, painting, carving and embroidery works, including the work carried out by the Alumni. The study tour was very successful and the students gained exposure and inspiration that will help them succeed in their respective field.



CTAS observes World Suicide Prevention Day

On September 10, CTAS observed the World Suicide Prevention Day in recognition of the severity and importance of preventing suicide. The Y-PPER students organized an awareness session through a presentation on how suicide can be prevented to create a world where few people die by suicide. This year's theme was "Creating Hope Through Action" which aims to empower people with the confidence to engage with the complexity of 'hope'. The group spread the message through a creative medium and performed a short skit that communicated the main message well and thoroughly engaged the students and staff.



Construction of a Multipurpose Hall

We would like to thank everyone for your generous support in the construction of the new classroom building, which has vastly improved the learning environment of our students. We feel so blessed and fortunate. Thank you so much for your support!

We now have been able to prepare a school campus master plan based on a recently completed topographical survey which included the additional land, measuring 6540sqft, purchased early this year.

Now we propose to take the next step in the campus master plan to solve the problem of congested meeting and dining space at the school. The existing multipurpose hall, which is used for dining, prayers, educational and cultural activities as well as for large scale meetings, is inadequate. Students have to eat their meals on the stage and sometimes outside. The same issue exists when staging religious or cultural programs and other educational activities, where around 30-40% of the students have to watch from outside, as the hall cannot accommodate all the students, teachers and guests. This situation is worse during rainy season and in winter, posing huge challenge to conduct programs.

Furthermore, the old house (300 years) where the existing school exhibition and sales room is located, has inherent dampness issues which damage the products especially the paintings and textiles with fungus. With 25% of the school operation budget being raised from the sales of student products from this shop, this has been a great concern for the school. In addition, the structure itself has suffered some major damage from the 2011 earthquake and is unsafe.

Understanding these challenges faced by the school, Alan & Patricia Bickell have once again volunteered to provide a matching grant in support for this new multipurpose hall construction proposal. They will match all gifts received until December 2023.

With this new building, the school will have a large flexible space for student meals, religious activities, large scale educational meeting and cultural programs. With the bigger and nicer facility, the school can expect to increase the sale of the school products from the existing 25% to 40%. We will create real showcase for the traditional arts and crafts of Bhutan. Further, an additional restaurant/coffee house will also be created, which will provide a conducive environment for shopping and relaxation for visitors. We now receive a number of small high end tour groups.

Peter Schmid, a Swiss architect and long-term resident of Bhutan, has carried out the technical drawings and site plan. He has extensive experience in designing Bhutanese educational facilities and government offices, including our new classroom building. The estimated cost of construction is US\$550 thousand.

In this regard, we would like to once again ask all our supporters and well-wishers to kindly support us in realizing this next project, which is aligned to the campus masterplan and greatly enhances the school's ability to provide high-quality education and sustainability.

Your kindness and support received so far has given us hope and inspiration to continue on this journey and make a huge difference to the lives of hundreds of youths in Bhutan. Your every donation means a lot and your support will go a long way to not only provide high quality art and craft education to many financially disadvantaged youths of Bhutan but will also help in preservation and promotion of our art and culture which is one of our country's pillars of Gross National Happiness. We need your support and help, together we can achieve this goal.

We are establishing the following categories of funding support:

Categories	Donate Amount
Benefactors	US\$ 50000 or more
Patrons	US\$ 10000 –US\$ 49999
Champions	US\$ 1000-US\$ 9999
Supporters	Any amount up to US\$ 999

For more information, please kindly contact

Sonam Choki (Principal)

Mobile: +975- 17603135

Email: sonamctas@gmail.com



**HAPPY
NEW YEAR!**

**WISHING
EVERY-
ONE GOOD
HEALTH
AND
HAPPINESS!**

Your support has helped us sustain the program so far and we look forward to your continuous help. Please support us through any of the contact below:

Choki Traditional Art School
Kabesa, P.O. Box 1118,
Thimphu Bhutan
Phone: + 975-2-380219
email: sonamctas@gmail.com
www.chokischool.org

Himalayan Youth Foundation
106 S. Interlachen Avenue # 619
Winter Park, FL, 32789, USA
www.hyf-us.org

Fontana Foundation
Sunnhaldenstrasse West 42
CH-8704- Herrliberg
Switzerland
www.fontana-foundation.org