



FRIENDS OF TIBETAN SETTLEMENTS IN INDIA (FOTSI)

Annual Report and Newsletter for 2018-2019 Projects in Mundgod and Other Tibetan Settlements



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Newsletter

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Education, Food, Health, Shelter, Cultural & Life Support in Tibetan Resettlement Camps in India



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Financial Report for 2018 (ref. IRS Filing, Anton, Collins, Mitchell LLP)

For more, go to <https://www.sos.state.co.us/ccsa/pages/search/basic.xhtml>, click on “Search” and type FOTSI. **The 2019 Report will be in the 2019-2020 FOTSI newsletter. We wait to check that the IRS, the state of Colorado, and our FOTSI records all agree.**

Income

Donations	\$ 55,528
Interest/Investment Income and Loss from donated stock	\$ <u>376</u>
Total Income	\$ 55,904

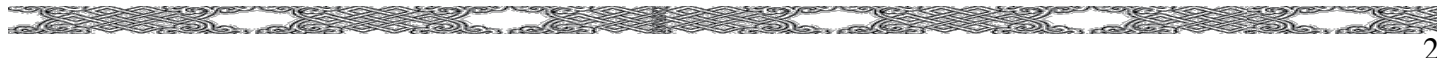
Expenses

Program service (see details below)	\$67,989
Program service expenses (mail/wire fees, supplies, copies, travel)	\$ 138
Fundraising (newsletter, mail, copies, printing, supplies)	\$ 224
Administrative (IRS report, state registration, mail, supplies, printing)	\$ <u>973</u>
Total Expenses	\$69,324

Program Service Details 2018:

Education (part of Program Service)	\$38,770
College/nursing scholarships, books, boarding school fees (TCV) Dre-Gomang School, books, teacher salaries, nuns’ education Central Tibetan School Hostel food	
Health/Hygiene/Emergencies (part of Program Service)	\$12,258
Representative’s Emergency Fund, monks/nuns medical aid Aid to laypeople by monks’/nuns’ projects, direct aid	
Sponsorships/Group Support (part of Program Service)	\$16,961
31 sponsorships through Rep. Office; 14 nuns and 23 monks sponsored and 7 aided; nuns’ building, Home for the Elderly, group/individual aid	

Our program service expenses of \$138 were \$4 for copies and \$134 for mail to India. At the end of 2018 we carried forward \$126,625, \$13,421 less than at the end of 2017. From early work as CFT/TSI, and later as FOTSI through 2006, our program and direct service expense was more than \$353,618. Since then, adding in only program service, we have sent more than **\$1,000,455** to residents of Tibetan settlements in India. As usual, **no salaries have been paid to anyone in FOTSI. We deeply thank all who donated for FOTSI’s operating expenses! We understand that many in the USA are distressed, so, to all who remember those in Tibet and struggling in camps in India, thanks so very much, from our “heartbone” as the Tibetans say!**



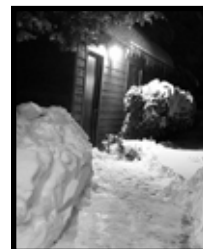
Dear Friends of Tibetan Settlements in India,

March 2020

Before beginning this newsletter, I want to extend a *heartfelt wish that all be healthy and that everyone will succeed in dealing with the unprecedented challenges of our current world health crisis*. On the Internet all faiths are offering prayers as doors have closed for large gatherings. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has asked the Tibetan monks and nuns to say the Green Tara mantra and other prayers for everyone at this time. You can watch monks at the Drepung Gomang Center for Engaging Compassion in Louisville, KY, chant prayers for healing and see them on their Facebook page construct a Medicine Buddha Sand Mandala. The crisis is affecting India and people in the camps as well as the rest of us. Assemblies of all kinds have stopped, TCV children have been sent to homes, with a few staying in place in carefully-run areas. Mail cannot be sent abroad from much of India. Two people have died from the virus in Dharamsala, home of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. Please know the rest of this letter was written earlier in March.

FOTSI works in resettlement areas (“camps”) in India that for decades received *Tibetan escapees from Tibet with nowhere else to go*. These areas can also serve temporarily as homes for distressed people from culturally related groups under duress, such as ethnic Tibetans from Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, the Arunachal Pradesh north Indian state, or Mongolia. People may go to the camps for personal reasons, or to help save their religion, culture, or traditions. *FOTSI aids the needy in the populous southern camps*, especially the *Mundgod Tibetan settlement*. We began support in 1984 as individuals, continued as part of Colorado Friends of Tibet, and since 2001, we work as an independent non-profit, tax-exempt charity. We are now the only outside non-Tibetan group in the world *significantly aiding the suddenly desperate* in Mundgod. We are the *only outside group* providing major aid to the Drepung Gomang School. The good news is that Tibetans inside and outside these camps have increased their work on various projects there. Unfortunately, most aid from the Indian government and international groups has ended, putting stress on all involved.

In 2019, I was finally able to return to the Mundgod settlement after being unable to do so for 3 years due to 5 surgeries. Throughout my journey, I experienced and saw that change was the constant reality in every conceivable aspect of life, including climate, politics, finances, health, joy, and sorrow. The trip began with a historic snowstorm in Boulder County after I’d just learned of “excess heavy rainfall destroying most crops” in India’s Mundgod settlement. It took 3 days of shoveling and the help of a neighbor to clear a path for a shuttle to reach me, but I made it to Denver



Part of Shoveled Path -Boulder

International. At the airport I was shocked to learn that I would have to check my carry-on with no



Plane Circling Bangalore

lock on it to Bangalore and pay them \$150 for the privilege. As I had planned to live out of it for several days, I had to suddenly overstuff my tiny “personal item.” That was stressful, but I was more worried about *my Singapore flight that was scheduled to stop in Hong Kong for an hour. Recent news had shown major protests in Hong Kong affecting the airport.* That had ceased,

but there was no guarantee as to what could happen. Fortunately, I made it to Singapore. But then, my plane to Bangalore was held up for hours, no reason given. The airport restaurants were becoming oddly crowded, too. Finally, an airport employee accidentally let it slip that *India was doing an unannounced missile test, and Indian airspace as a whole was shut down to all air traffic!* When we finally took off and reached the Bangalore area, we had to circle and fly odd patterns for a long time, as it seemed every plane on the planet was trying to land. Happily, the Tibetans meeting me got my email about a late arrival. We reached the Sri Lodge at 3:30 a.m.

The next evening my two Tibetan colleagues from the Mundgod camp and I took a taxi to the railway station (huge!) and dragged my luggage through a maze of stairs and tracks to await our train. When it was almost time for the train to leave and we still didn't see it, one of my companions suddenly realized we were at the wrong place. So we raced up a long ramp to yet more tracks just in time to climb aboard our train. I could never have done this on my own! The train ride seemed unusually bumpy, and I got bruised a bit being thrown about at night as I made my way to the



Indian toilets near each car and hung on for dear life as I used them. At 5:44 a.m. we got off, navigated stairs and pathways with all my luggage, and met the driver from the Drepung Gomang Monastery who drove us to the camp and the room that was my home for the next month and a half.

Soon after arriving in my room at the monastery, I was greeted by monks with trays of fruit, juice, and bottled water, next by nuns, also bearing fruit, who invited me to their nunnery, and finally by a resident lizard. I was excited to learn *His Holiness the Dalai Lama* would arrive soon and *planned a talk on the nature of reality* from a text dear to my heart. *But, soon I learned that thousands of people had failed to get permits to enter the Tibetan camp*, and so *half the talk would be given in Bodh Gaya* (where no permits are needed). Thus, many were scrambling to find transportation and housing there and would leave by Christmas



Some FOTSI Sponsored Nuns Greet Chela

Day. I was glad the Indian government had stopped granting permits since the crush of people like me who did get them was already over the top. But, as a result, *many monks and nuns would leave earlier than planned*. So I needed to weave in meetings with them while the Dalai Lama's talks and events were happening.

Geshe Lobsang Ngawang, head of the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA), and *Kunga Lhundup*, Secretary of the DGBCA, were excited to take me on a *tour of the just dedicated and furnished 3rd floor of the Drepung Gomang School with its new insulated roof*. They said the whole



project was paid for by FOTSI donations and profits from the Dre-Gomang Canteen, previously funded by FOTSI. At the school, I saw students taking exams, preparations for a Science Exhibition by the Monastery's Science Center, and events celebrating a 600th Anniversary connected with the great Tibetan Buddhist teacher, Je Tsongkhapa, who died in 1419. There was a wonderful "Elocution" event put on by the students of the Drepung Gomang School. It included dramatic poetry readings, debates, quiz competitions on Lama Tsongkhapa's life and teachings, speeches, and a celebration of prizes students had won in a debate competition at which they came in second out of nine monastery schools. I was also able to follow *FOTSI's long tradition of giving out toothbrushes* while a teacher (a dynamic male nurse) gave surprisingly engaging dental hygiene advice. See photos on pgs. 15-16.



The school has had to deal with the fundamental difficulty that the Tibetan border has been locked shut *by Chinese military and police and by the restriction of travel documents.* (See more on this on pg. 9.) This is a *huge change* from the past history of the Tibetan settlements in India. Those who attend the school now may come from a Tibetan camp in India, from ethnic-Tibetan areas of Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal, the north Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, and also Mongolia. A few come from Russia (usually Kalmykia and/or Buryatia). Thus *many students arrive not knowing Tibetan*, but rather Mongolian, Nepalese, Hindi, and various Tibetan dialects spoken by ethnic Tibetans living in the places listed, with a few speaking Russian and other languages. This makes teaching at and running the school very difficult. Recently, donations from FOTSI have allowed the salaries of the lay teachers to be doubled. Hence, the *“Elocution” event presented by the school all in Tibetan was most impressive*, as well as fun to see. I was lucky to sit next to the famed expert on Tibetan language and Tibetan Buddhism, *Dr. Jeffrey Hopkins*, at this event and enjoyed meeting and talking with him.



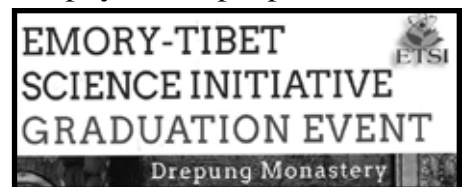
Chela and DG School Teacher Sonam Dorjee Pose with “Elocution” Award Winners



Chela, Dr. Hopkins, & 2 of His Students at the DG School Elocution Event

Next there were interesting presentations about *Emory University’s Science Initiative*

for which American college professors taught science courses for selected Tibetan monks and nuns. The presentations examined how well one can teach hard sciences like physics to people who have few higher math skills.



Chela with Tamdin in OPH Kitchen

During this period I found time to visit the *“Old People’s Home” (OPH)* and met with five elders we sponsor there, noting how well cared for they seemed in spite of staffing shortfalls at the home. Tamdin, the director, took me on a tour, and I met the hardworking kitchen staff.



Chela, S. Rindzin, & Sambhota Hostel Staff

I visited the *Sambhota School*, previously called the Central School for Tibetans (CST) but still located in Camp 3, Mundgod. This school and its hostel are now completely funded and run by Tibetans. The new principal/rector is *Mr. Sangpo Rindzin*, an experienced Tibetan educator. I was welcomed by a large fife and drum student band and given an in-depth tour of the school and its *major maintenance needs*. The Indian government stopped most upkeep for several years before their official departure.



Sambhota School Girls

With encouragement from donors, *FOTSI will continue donating to support food and supplements for the school hostel* as we did when it was the CST Hostel. We will help with some Sambhota School needs if we can. See pgs. 11-12.



School Nurse T. Lhakey & Students

While HH the Dalai Lama was giving talks and associated events were proceeding, I enjoyed good meals either where I was staying or at one of the *Gungru Khangtsen* (GK) monks' dorm buildings. Since FOTSI has aided the GK monks with health needs for a long time, I was *often invited to eat there with special guests* from Ireland and visiting Tibetan benefactors from distant places. One charming Tibetan with a handsome white "Afro" who now lives in the U.S. told me about 100 yaks grazing in the northern USA. Another day I was privileged to enjoy a *lunch with the Abbot of Drepung Gomang Monastery*. FOTSI's help with the third story and new roof at their school was applauded. That day I offered future financial support for a longtime sponsored monk, *Geshe Lobsang Dhondup of Hardong Khangtsen*, who wants to get training to be a translator. As the Abbot is the monk's teacher, it was appropriate to discuss this with him. Several donors wish to aid future Tibetan Buddhist translators. During this time, local nuns visited and insisted on altering a fancy old Tibetan chuba (dress) of mine for me to wear at upcoming events.



Sadly, *I was getting exhausted and was soon sick*. I lost my voice, a process accelerated by wearing my warm Tibetan dress in the unshaded hot sun during a talk at the Gaden Monastery. After staying in bed and finishing antibiotics from Boulder but still getting sicker, I went to the Doeguling Tibetan Resettlement Hospital (DTR) and waited with others to see *Dr. Kalsang Choedon*. She prescribed more antibiotics, a helpful iodine gargle, and other remedies. While I was recovering, but still without a voice, *I was*



Hospital Wait Behind Others



invited to meet HH the Dalai Lama and have a photo taken along with the *head of the Mundgod settlement, Mr. Lhakpa Tsering*, and a few Tibetans who had worked in the Mundgod settlement office. His Holiness could see I was not doing well and kindly stroked my head. *He smiled and said, "Thank You." This, of course, was not only for me but for all of you* and what we have done to help Tibetans. A wave of kindness spread over me and I felt much better.

I received an email that suggested I check the Internet about the *protests and riots happening all over India due to Indian President Modi's newly passed law, the "Citizenship Act."* This law ostensibly provided a path to Indian citizenship for illegal migrants of most religions, except Islam, who had fled persecution in nearby countries. But there were also stringent identity and birth record requirements clearly discriminatory to Muslims. Many non-Muslims were afraid of an influx of new migrants that might threaten their livelihoods, and many resented this unfair new law that would anger Muslims and create more division. See



Bus Torched by Protestors



Jessica Wu

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizenship \(Amendment\) Act, 2019](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizenship_(Amendment)_Act,_2019) and related sites. *The riots and protests were spreading and one train station had been burned down*. I knew I would be returning to Bangalore by train and that many friends would be traveling north to see HH the Dalai Lama while others would be returning home. In the camps we were worried about everyone. We barely missed some turmoil in nearby Hubli when we went to meet *FOTSI friend and helper, Jessica Wu*, who had come from the U.S. and flown by small plane from Bangalore to Hubli to help (see pg. 25).

By the time Jessica arrived, I had met with most monks and nuns we sponsor or have aided with health funds, but I had not begun visiting FOTSI-sponsored people in the 9 villages of the Mundgod settlement. I had been to the Home for the Elderly (OPH) in Camp 3, at which time the home's director, Tamdin, had requested that FOTSI contribute funds for *knee replacement surgeries for our longtime sponsoree, Sherap*. She said he was in the most pain and difficulty of anyone at the OPH other than those who really could not be helped. So I met him and we all agreed, after consulting 3 doctors, to proceed. Fortunately, knee replacements are much cheaper near Mundgod than in the USA. See pg. 21.



Chela & Sherap



Jinpa Gets Help

Next, Jessica and I, along with Tibetan social worker Dickyi Chodon, visited all 9 villages. I especially asked to visit *Jinpa, a needy man with one leg who had had TB, whom we had long aided through our FOTSI Emergency Fund*. At his tiny hut in Camp 7 we learned he had fallen out of a truck that had given him a ride and had *badly broken his arm*, but as he couldn't pay for a surgery to put pins into the arm, it was still untreated and time was running out. So after meeting him and villagers who were helping him, plans were made to

schedule a surgery paid for by FOTSI as soon as possible. We also visited many sponsored people and their families, including *Topgyal*, who due to increasing health issues, was eager to stop work in Camp 5 and get into the Home for the Elderly, and *Tsamchoe*, in Camp 4 who had just had her second *cataract surgery*. I had noticed that our sponsored *Kunsang Wangmo* at the Home for the Elderly had also had a cataract surgery for which she was grateful. Some



Chela & Tsamchoe

FOTSI Emergency Fund money has funded such surgeries.



Chemi Sangmo

Our Fund also helped others we visited, including sponsored *Dawa Bhuti of Camp 6, Chemi Sangmo (young Tenzin Lhakey's sister with almost untreatable TB) in Camp 1, and Karma Dolma of Camp 8*. We enjoyed visiting sponsorees who seemed to be doing very well—*Tashi Dorjee*, and also *Goki's family* who were finally free of decades of TB. I was able to meet a few of FOTSI's scholarship holders on winter breaks, but most couldn't come to Mundgod when I was there. During this period,

Jessica and I had great help, not only from Dickyi, but also from a good driver and his vehicle. Mr. Lhakpa Tsering, head of the settlement, met me several times for detailed sessions, and we moved forward on various projects working together in a very useful, inspiring way.

While talking with some of our sponsored Tibetans like *Dolma Tsering and Gen Tashi about their children in the Indian Army*, we learned that Tibetans are not allowed to advance as quickly as native-born Indians with equivalent years of service, even though *Tibetans are known to be very valuable in guarding India's northern borders*. We visited Phurbu's family, too. *Phurbu* had reached 96, but he had spent the last few years bedridden and had needed a lot of care from his extended family. He died December 12, and I learned this just before we visited his family home in late December. Overall, *7 of our sponsored Tibetans died* from early 2019 to January 17 when I returned to Boulder. At the same time, *3 of our younger sponsored Tibetans have done well enough due to our sponsorship and our scholarship funds, that they wrote to say officially they no longer need help*—a success for all concerned! Please see pgs. 20-22 for more about FOTSI's sponsored people, uses of our *Emergency Fund, and the Home for the Elderly*.



Chinese Officer in Front of Potala Palace, Lhasa, Tibet

Most of you know how ***bad things have been in Tibet*** since China seized Tibet and has increasingly oppressed Tibet's people, land, resources and soul. That is a major reason that many of us have tried to help Tibetans in refugee areas for years. It is painful to me that I have shared so much in this newsletter about our relatively small activities to help Tibetans in settlements in India while the situation in Tibet is worsening, hidden by China's control over everything. ***Freedom House***, a group monitoring the state of freedom on our planet, ***rated the Tibetan region of China the second-least-free in the world!*** Only Syria is rated worse; North Korea is rated better. To see the "freedom" rankings, go to the site

<https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores?sort=asc&order=Total%20Score%20and%20Status> .



Security Monitoring Booth, Tibet

China's surveillance of its citizens, and especially its minorities such as Tibetans and Uighurs, is invasive and second to none. The U.S. State Department's recent Human Rights report has corroborated this severe repression. China's growing spying is omnipresent and reaches far beyond its boundaries. See savetibet.org. Scientific journal publishers Springer and Wiley, as well as many scientists, are concerned about recent Chinese DNA technology that seems aimed at tracking vulnerable minorities. See <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03775-y>.

The Chinese politicians' term, "stability maintenance," refers to a vast system exerting the Chinese Communist Party's powerful control with a budget that outstrips their military's. It includes a ***pervasive network of paramilitary forces, police, local officials, spies, censors, hackers, secret service, and dogs.*** Computer and phone software is hacked; monitoring booths and checkpoints are common. Tibetans in India say they know that the Chinese phone app "We Chat" they use to "call home" is always monitored, but that if they stuck to "Are you well?", they did not usually endanger relatives. But one said his worried parent recently said, "Don't call again."



Uighur Teens on Phones -- Dangerous Times for Them & Tibetans

In Tibet the ***Chinese language is now officially replacing Tibetan, not only in middle and high schools, but also in kindergarten and elementary schools.*** Huge numbers of Chinese teachers are being transferred to Tibet, all Tibetan teachers have to be fluent in Chinese, and rural schools are being closed with students sent to boarding schools away from Tibetan-speaking environments.

Seeking ever more control, China is escalating attempts to control the Tibetan religious incarnation system. After abducting the reincarnated Panchen Lama and his family when he was 6 years old and installing their own choice in his place, the ***Chinese Communist Party now claims the right to select the next Dalai Lama,*** even though the existing one has removed himself from all but religious status. In January 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the ***Tibetan Policy and Support Act*** objecting to this incursion into the religion of Tibetans and stating that selection of the Dalai Lama should be up to the Tibetan Buddhist community. This Act also requests an American diplomatic presence in Lhasa and continues to support human rights for Tibetans. ***In late 2018 the U.S. passed***

the *“Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act,”* an attempt to allow access to Tibet for journalists and support basic human rights in Tibet. *China has not eased up on access for reporters or human rights abuses,* but did allow one diplomatic visit from the U.S. that had been held up for some time previously.

At first *China was slow to protect its citizens from the coronavirus. Now, in addition to increasingly understanding its importance, politicians have also realized that the health situation provides another opportunity to increase surveillance and to keep much of it in place when the crisis abates.* But, in spite of the virus, there is a new campaign in Tibet described as *“sending a million police to 10 million homes” in Tibet to ensure “grass roots” integration of security forces in local communities.* Current data on COVID-19 cases in Tibet is unavailable. One case was reported and classified as “cured” on 02/13/20. Work (initiated and funded by a local Boulder group) to investigate and treat a parasitic disease blinding and killing young rural Tibetans has been halted. The kind Chinese doctor’s lab is now being used for coronavirus testing.

Up through 2008 many Tibetans escaped from Tibet through Nepal, but such migration and travel has fallen sharply since then as described on pg. 5. Now this exodus has essentially stopped due to 1) a heavy Chinese military and police crackdown near the border, 2) drastic limitation on issuance of passports and required travel documents, and 3) encouragement of criminal elements in Nepal to prey upon anyone managing to cross the border without such paperwork.



Tibetan Refugee Dragged by Nepalese Security Forces, Kathmandu 2016

See <https://www.thelap.org/2019/05/23/recent-research-on-plaint-of-tibetan-refugees-in-nepal/> for a serious study on Tibetan refugees’ journey and treatment in Nepal. You can also search on the Internet for *“Nepal detains Tibetan refugees in crackdown as China influence grows.”* I personally have spoken to many Tibetans in the Mundgod camp who escaped from Tibet and have shared some of their stories in previous newsletters. See www.kunasz.com/TSI/TSL.html .

Now *two new agreements signed by Nepal and China during President Xi Jinping’s October 2019 semi-secret visit to Nepal could seriously endanger Tibetans*—those residing in Nepal and any that might flee in the future from Tibet. The *agreement on a “Boundary Management System” commits both sides to returning “persons found while crossing the border illegally” within 7 days.* The *“Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters” potentially opens the door for China to intervene in matters related to Tibetans living in Nepal,* increasing the vulnerability of Tibetans expressing political views. There are also new *fears that Nepal and China may yet sign an extradition agreement that would represent a serious danger for long-term Tibetan residents of Nepal.* This agreement sounds *like the one Beijing tried to push onto Hong Kong’s citizens resulting in the huge protests there* recently. These concluded and potential agreements resulted from the first visit by any Chinese diplomat to Nepal in decades. *And, during that visit, Xi Jinping said that any attempt to “split China” would result in “crushed bodies and bones ground to powder.”* **Hearing this, we see again what Tibetans face, so, once more, a PROFOUND THANK YOU for helping Tibetans through FOTSI! AND PLEASE STAY SAFE as best you can!**

I wish you all a good Tibetan Iron Rat (or Mouse, as you choose) Year 2147,
With deep gratitude, *Chela Kunasz*, President, FOTSI



True Colleagues -- People at the Heart of FOTSI's Work



Ven. Tenzin Norzom



Migmar Tsering



Geshe Lobsang Ngawang



Dickyi Chodon



Dr. Kyizom

Without the wise advice and hard work of **many** Tibetans our projects would never arise and flourish the way they do. Those most **essential in 2018-19** are shown and described here. All of these colleagues helped Chela during her 2019-2020 trip to the Mundgod Tibetan Settlement in India.

Ven. Tenzin Norzom - Tibetan nun who facilitates FOTSI's aid to nuns and some needy lay people

Lhakpa Tsering - Tibetan Settlement Officer (TSO); current head, Office of the Representative of HH the Dalai Lama in Mundgod (ORM)

Migmar Tsering - Secretary of Drepung Gomang Monastery; works expertly, tirelessly, and kindly with all

Geshe Lobsang Sangyas - Runs our general monks' health fund; helps Chela a lot, and works at Drepung Gomang Monastery in various capacities

Geshe Lobsang Ngawang - Head of Dre-Gomang Buddhist Cultural Assn. (DGBCA) administration 2017-2019

Kunga Lhundup - Secretary of DGBCA; helps Chela in India & year long, a lot

Dickyi Chodon - FOTSI's social worker for the ORM and a big help throughout each year

Sangpo Rindzin - Principal, Sambhota School in the Mundgod settlement, and Rector of the associated hostel; our food aid is sent there through Tibetan Children's Education & Welfare Fund, Dharamsala

Dr. Kyizom - Doctor at Tibetan Medical Clinic; helps in many ways and has been very helpful during Chela's visits

Tamdin Dolma - Home for the Elderly (OPH) Director



TSO Lhakpa Tsering



Geshe Lobsang Sangyas



Kunga Lhundup



Sangpo Rindzin



Tamdin Dolma

IMPORTANT COLLEAGUES ALONG THE BOTTOM ROW

Geshe Ngawang Sopa & Ven. Gendun- Gungru Khangtsen Health Committee leaders

Office of the Representative, Mundgod, staff: Accountant **Passang Dhondup** and Cashier **Tsewang Thinley**



Geshe N. Sopa



Gendun



Passang Dhondup



Tsewang Thinley

TCEWF- Tibetan Children's Education and Welfare Fund --

Mundgod Settlement's Sambhota School Hostel Food Supplementation Donations by FOTSI



Girls at the Hostel Saying Prayers Before Dinner



Boys Enjoying Dinner and Momos They Made

Since 2010, FOTSI has provided supplementary food for students living in the hostel connected with the high school for Tibetan students in Mundgod. Over the last few years, there has been a slow handover of all the Tibetan settlement schools from the Indian government to the Tibetan Government-in-Exile in Dharamsala. The school in Camp 3 is now called the ***Sambhota School, and it and its associated hostel are entirely run and funded by Tibetans themselves.*** The hostel houses about 100 students who have special needs or who come from Tibetan settlements where NO adequate high school exists. In 2010 the hostel rector wrote that their food budget was quite inadequate, and that students' studies, general health, and even TB susceptibility were adversely affected. FOTSI donors heeded the plea for food and vitamin supplementation and began by sending \$700 in 2010. ***By 2019 we had increased our yearly donation for the student hostel food to \$4,500. This final jump in funding happened after we had thought we had to cut back to \$3000 a year after reaching \$4000 annually in 2018, but we received support from donors to instead increase aid to \$4500 a year.***

Recently, we again received many letters from the students thanking us for help with food and supplements. These were lovely and heartfelt as shown by tidbits below. On the next page there are more "thank you" quotes, photos of hostel residents and their food, as well as snapshots of the welcome Chela received on FOTSI's behalf and her visit to the Sambhota School and the hostel.

Recently we have join in boarding school, we are missing our family & home but with the great help from you always tries to fill that emptiness. With your great sponsorship we are getting all the nutritional diet for the development in physical & mental well being. Nowadays we are getting momo, "dumpling" every month and we are happy for that. With your sponsorship and great help we are not feeling homesick and enjoying hook & nook of hostel life.

Dearest sponsor.
I am a student of I.T.I. Mundgod and I live in the school hostel. I am really feeling great to write you this letter, for the support you had given us as nutritious food as extra diet, by which our student health is getting better and healthier. without you, we are like birds without wings, we won't forget you till the last breath of our life. we are like family, and you are the

Scanned Parts of Two of the Many Sweet and Grateful Thank You Letters FOTSI Received in 2019

TCEWF -- Sambhota Hostel Food Supplementation (cont.)

Last year FOTSI received a friendly letter from the Sambhota School's new principal and hostel rector, Sangpo Rindzin, expressing his gratitude for our donations supplementing the school hostel's food. He wrote of his varied and longtime service at Tibetan schools, explaining that he was from the Hunsur settlement in Mysore District and that he had served Tibetan schools for 4 years in Dalhousie, 4 years in Darjeeling, 9 years in Paonta in Himachal Pradesh, and 9 years at Pokhribong & Gangtok. When Sangpo Rindzin first became principal, he so appreciated a letter we sent to the Sambhota Hostel that he read it aloud to all of the students. He said the students were very happy with their food and that the staff used our funds carefully. In another letter he noted that the students have regularly sent us informative and grateful letters and will continue to do so.

Indeed, the letters from students are full of gratitude: *"We will never forget your love and concern for us,"* and *"We always have momos once a month. Not only that, a few unwell students get pure milk every night. Our daily meal is always nutritious—we are always having a healthy mind and body. We are cherishing it every day."* The school was most gracious in welcoming me, with many students playing fifes and drums while other pupils and staff offered me (*representing FOTSI donors*) Tibetan welcoming scarves (khatas). The band played in a Scottish style inherited from the British invasion of Tibet in the early 1900s; Colonel Francis Younghusband apologized for the invasion after his army left Tibet. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_expedition_to_Tibet



Hostel Girls Gathered to Ask Chela's Advice



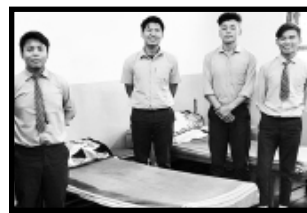
Principal/Rector Sangpo Rindzin Introduces Friendly Boys at the Hostel



Casual Hostel Meal



Girls Enjoy Milk



Boys Show Immaculate Rooms



Sambhota Class Lesson

Tibetan Children's Villages (TCV) --

FOTSI Helps 5 Students Graduate from High School in 2019, 1 to Graduate in 2020, and Sponsors 7 Through 2020

The *Tibetan Children's Villages (TCV) in India*, comprising several boarding and day schools, constitute a great educational community for poor Tibetan children-in-exile as well as those who have escaped from Tibet. See tcv.org.in for excellent photos and information about this wonderful organization, begun initially in Dharamsala in 1960 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his elder sister, Mrs. Tsering Dolma Takla. **We sent TCV \$2,045 for TCV students in 2018 and \$3,760 in 2019. If any of you wish to help with our TCV sponsorships please let us know!**

In last year's newsletter we celebrated three TCV students who graduated from the TCV high school in Bylakuppe in 2019—*Tenzin Choten (Science), Tsering Yangzom (Science), and Tsering Dechen Lama (Commerce)*.



G. Wangdak

Other sponsorees, *Gonpo Wangdak and Kunsang Dechen*, also graduated in 2019. We no longer sponsor Gonpo Wangdak, but do sponsor Kunsang Dechen in further study (see pg. 14).



T. Yangzom & T.D. Lama



Tenzin Choten

Two of our 2019 sponsored students were *Sonam Dolkar* and her sister *Tsering Youtso*. They escaped Tibet in 2009 with their mother and had great difficulty crossing the Himalayas. A relative in India helped them get admission into TCV in 2009. **Very fortunately for them, after we sponsored them through most of 2019, relatives in the USA got them asylum there. They left India and the TCV school in late 2019.** Their sponsorship was transferred to **newly sponsored students *Kalsang Khedup and Stanzin Phantok***.



Sonam Dolkar & Tsering Youtso

Kalsang Khedup was born to nomadic parents in Shesi Sichuan in Tibet. His father brought him and his sister to Lhasa in 2005 and hired guides to escort them to Nepal. They faced many difficulties crossing the mountains before reaching their destination. From Nepal they were sent to Dharamsala. With the aid of an uncle, a monk in Sera Monastery in south India, they were admitted to TCV Bylakuppe in mid-2005. In April of 2018 Kalsang completed TCV's Class 12 requirements in the Commerce stream. He is now studying Food Production and Cookery at the Industrial Training Institute in Selakui, India. As there is a great demand for cooks in the hotel industry, he is working hard to study many aspects of food preparation, baking, nutrition and menu planning in order to qualify for a good job. The course also includes a period of internship at hotels in Selakui. His aim is to become a Master Chef. He will likely complete his study and internship in 2020. **We note here that the tuition for Kalsang's excellent training is high enough that there is another sponsor, from the UK, also helping him.** We wish him well and celebrate his enthusiasm and practical choice.



Kalsang Khedup

Stanzin Phantok was the fourth child born to an ethnic Tibetan farming family in Ladakh. Due to a disastrous monsoon season and extreme drought (common in the Mundgod settlement this year as

TCV Students -- Current Spsorees (cont.)

well), the family became desperate and sought to have Stanzin admitted to the Bylakuppe TCV high school in 2019. The Tibetan Government Settlement Officer strongly supported Stanzin’s family’s request. She is now in Class 11 and is studying English, Tibetan, physics, chemistry, biology (her favorite), and computer science. She stays in the Science Girls Hostel, loves to play soccer, dance and sing, and she has many friends. Her goal is to be a veterinarian.



Stanzin Phantok



Phurba Dickyi

Also newly sponsored by FOTSI in 2019 is **Phurba (also called Phurbu) Dickyi**. She was born in the Tibetan settlement at Hunsur, India. Her father was a cook for TCV for 19 years, retired, and passed away in 2018 after a long illness. Her mother is a farmer and is supporting and caring for Phurba’s uncle who is mentally retarded. TCV helped in the past by lowering her fees, but FOTSI’s help of Phurba now helps both her and the school, so we agreed to sponsor her until her graduation in April 2020. She is studying English, Tibetan, economics, business, and accounting. Although she’s in the Commerce stream, she hopes to study to be a nurse. Like other sponsored students she wrote, “Thank you so much,” and enthusiastically expressed her gratitude for our help, adding that she was studying hard.

We also added two new TCV students to our sponsorees in 2020. These are **Passang Khandro and Lobsang Deshi**. Passang Khandro’s uncle and aunt accompanied her to Lhasa where they paid guides hard-earned funds to take her across the border to Nepal in 2006. Near that border, people at a reception center got them to Dharamsala. She was 6 years old! She was admitted to TCV Bylakuppe that year and is presently 20 years old studying in Class 11. She is in the Commerce stream and is studying Tibetan, English, economics, business and entrepreneurship, accounting, and computer skills. Lobsang Deshi’s parents were farmers in Kham, Tibet. Her father managed to get special permission to attend the Kalachakra Initiation in Amravati, India in 2006. He was able to bring Lobsang Deshi and managed to get her into the TCV school. She will graduate in 2021, having studied the same subjects as Passang Khandro; Lobsang Deshi wants to be a nurse.



Passang Khandro & Lobsang Deshi

Among our previously sponsored TCV students are **Kunsang Dechen, Jinpa Tashi, and Lobsang Ngodup**. **Kunsang Dechen** has graduated, as we wrote above, and is now majoring in Tibetan at the Sarah College



Kunsang Dechen & Jinpa Tashi

for Higher Tibetan Studies in Dharamsala. We continue to sponsor **Jinpa Tashi**, another student born in Tibet, who crossed the Himalayas and bore many hardships on the way to the Nepalese border. He is now 20, in 11th grade, and wants to be a pilot. **Lobsang Ngodup**, born in Kham, Tibet, is 26 and continuing his study at the Tibetan Medical Astro Institute of the Dharamsala Medical Center. He aims to become a doctor of traditional Tibetan medicine, learning the secrets of Himalayan herbs. When he graduated from the TCV Bylakuppe high school, he was judged the “best boy” of the class of 2016. He feels so lucky to have made it out of Tibet and now be able to study Tibetan medicine in freedom.



Lobsang Ngodup

FOTSI's Major Contributions to the DG School

The Drepung Gomang (DG) School, run by the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA), teaches English, Tibetan, math, science, and Buddhist courses to young monks arriving from poor, ethnic-Tibetan areas, and the very few who have been able to escape Tibet. It is also a summer school for all girls and boys of the Mundgod settlement who want to study Tibetan language and culture, so endangered now. This school has also held periodic science exhibitions.

Seven years ago, there were 120 students at the DG School. As the number of children now able to escape Tibet has dwindled to near zero, the number from poor, ethnically Tibetan families in or near northern India, like Nepal, Ladakh, Bhutan, Sikkim, and the Arunachal Pradesh Indian state, has increased. In addition, the number of Mongolian (and a few Russian!) boys at the DG School has mushroomed. The Mongolians typically come for a visa-limited period of 4 or 5 years. A hundred years ago, Lhasa's Drepung Gomang Monastery was 50% Mongolian and an important educational center for Mongolian Buddhists. It no longer serves that need due to the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Like Tibetans, many Mongolians are eager to save their traditional culture. This influx means that the **school population is now over 500**. The chaos due to students arriving at not knowing Tibetan is a big challenge. To help summer and regular students, teachers, administrators, and visitors, FOTSI has sent funds for **regular operations, new school furniture and textbooks, plumbing, lay teacher salary increases, and major construction. FOTSI funded the completion in 2019 of the school's new third floor and insulated roof** (see pg. 16).



Summer Session Girl and Winter Session Boy



*Russian Boy
Recites Tibetan
Poetry*

In 2018 we sent the school \$18,110 and in 2019 \$10,530. Previously we sent money to build a **new canteen** on DG School property; the canteen now provides a sustainable source of funds. The Drepung Gomang Monastery provides food and shelter for all students (except the summer school pupils) and has helped with water treatment. **In addition to educating over 500 children 9 months a year and many girls and boys in the summer, the school provides a livelihood for teachers.** Currently the DG School is partnering with the Sambhota Tibetan-run school system (pgs. 11-12) in many ways. The Sambhota principal, Sangpo Rindzin, sent his own young daughter to a DG School summer program.



Part of the School Canteen

At its Elocution event this winter, the school showed off successes in **maintaining Tibetan language, poetry, and literature, so important now that Tibetans who have tried to do that in Tibet are seen by China as "unpatriotic" and jailed** (see previous FOTSI newsletters and the Internet). Despite its challenges, the school



Debate Contest Celebration

celebrated this year's **second place finish in a debate contest** among 9 monastery schools in India. Important to the school's success are DGBCA Heads Geshes Lobsang Ngawang and Khenrab Choeden, Secretary Kunga Lhundup, and the DG School principal. See photos on the next page.



Geshes L. Ngawang, K. Choeden

FOTSI Makes a "Rising" Impact on School -- Photo Gallery Drepung Gomang School 2019



Drepung Gomang School -- Early 2019



Drepung Gomang School -- Late 2019, New 3rd Story, Roof!



Teacher S. Dorjee Helps Student



Teacher Tenzin Explains Dental Care 1st Grade



1st Graders Enjoy Getting Toothbrushes Chela Brought from USA



Summer Student Exam



Good Water Processing & Tanks for Students & Staff



Elocution Prizewinners, Chela, Teacher



Summer Student Prize



Student Does Classic Debate



Teacher Works Late at Science Center



Kunga Manages Little Monks



Summer Student Families Enjoy a Luncheon



Students Take Finals



Teachers Gen Tashi, Chemet Dorjee



Kunga L.



DGBCA Founder, T. Gelek Lhasawa



Students in Class



Young Q&A Contest Winners

Student Scholarships

FOTSI College and Nursing School Scholars 2018-2019

<u>Name</u>	<u>Major & Degree Sought</u>	<u>College, Location</u>
Ms. Tenzin Norzin	M.S. Nursing, completed, 2019	KLE Hospital, Belgaum
Ms. Tenzin Noryang	Basic Nursing	KLE Hospital, Belgaum
Ms. Tenzin Tseyang	Basic Nursing	St. John's Nursing School, Bangalore
Ms. Kalsang Wangmo	Bachelor of Physiotherapy	Garden City University, Bangalore
Ms. Tenzin Kunsal	M. Commerce	St. Joseph's College of Commerce, Bangalore
Ms. Tenzin Yingsel	B.A., History, Soc., Econ.	Jyoti Nivas College, Bangalore
Mr. Tenzin Youtso	B.A., History, Soc., Econ.	Mahajana College, Mysore
Mr. Tenzin Tsetan	Career	Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), Dharamsala
Ms. Tenzin Tselha	B. Comm. 1st year	Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, Bangalore
Mr. Namgyal Tsetan	Pre-Service CTA Staff Recruitment,	Higher Studies College, Dharamsala
Ms. Ngawang Namgyal	B.A., 1st year	JSS Banashankari College, Dharwad
Ven. L. Norbu Samphel	M.A., Buddhism, English, Tibetan	Namgyal Inst. for Tibetology, Sikkim
Mr. Kalsang Gyatso	B.A., Tibetan Culture, Language	(CIHTS), Varanasi

Many of our former students are now working or helping family full time. These include Tenzin Lhakey (School Nurse, Sambhota School, Mundgod), Sonam Dorjee, teaching at the Drepung Gomang School, and others. Former donor and supporter Greg Hunt let us know that Ms. Tenzin Dadon, whom he sponsored for years through FOTSI and then continued sponsoring directly, has completed her physiotherapy degree. **See more about our sponsored students on the following pages.**



T. Norzin

T. Noryang

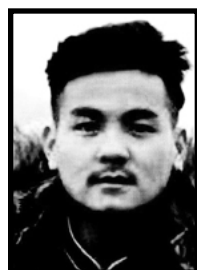
T. Tseyang

K. Wangmo

T. Kunsal

T. Yingsel

T. Youtso



T. Tsetan



T. Tselha



N. Tsetan



N. Namgyal



Ven. L. N. Samphel



K. Gyatso

Student Scholarships (cont.)

In 2018 we sent \$13,995 for student scholarships at nursing schools and colleges. After careful review, this has been adjusted a bit from the \$14,795 we quoted for scholarships in last year's newsletter. Of this, \$10,810 went through the Office of the Representative of HH the Dalai Lama in Mundgod (ORM), and \$3,185 went to students through the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association. *We sent \$13,957 for scholarships in 2019. By autumn 2019, Tenzin Norzin had completed her masters degree in nursing, and we had agreed to support at least the remaining 12 students listed on the previous summary page.* Note that we are also supporting 3 students for post-high school education through the TCV organization (see pgs. 13-14).

We continued our support of *Tenzin Noryang* who has remained #1 in her class each year of her nursing studies. She visited me during her winter break when I was in India and again expressed her *deep thanks to all FOTSI scholarship donors*. We are maintaining scholarship support for *Tenzin Tseyang*, happy and successful in her nursing program; *Tenzin Yingsel* and *Tenzin Youtso*, working for their B.A. degrees; and *Tenzin Kunsal* close to finishing her master's in Commerce so that she can support her parents.

It was a delight to visit *Kalsang Wangmo* and her mother at their home in Camp 9. Kalsang is enjoying her study and practice for a physiotherapy degree. I especially enjoyed the beautiful Christmas card she had made for me. I've benefitted so much from physical therapy, I rejoiced in her career choice.



Chela's Xmas Card



Kalsang Wangmo & Mom



Tenzin Tsetan, TIPA Dharamsala year of TIPA's intense 6-year training, upon completion of which he can pursue a career in their touring company. However, life in Dharamsala is more expensive than in Mundgod, and we learned he could really use some funds beyond his basic scholarship, so we have included him in our scholarship group. The photo of TIPA celebrating their 60th anniversary with a song of gratitude to HH the Dalai Lama is from the web address:

<https://www.dalailama.com/news/2019/celebrating-60-years-of-the-tibetan-institute-of-performing-arts>.



TIPA Celebrates Its 60th Anniversary

Student Scholarships (cont.)

Tenzin Tselha graduated from TCV School in Bylakuppe in 2019 and began studying for a B. Comm. degree in Bangalore. Her family has had many problems, including losing their home. Her mother was abused in the past and these days is just barely coping. The abuse has stopped, but a family home, or even a stable place to stay, has been a dream, so FOTSI has helped, through the Office of the Representative, with a scholarship for Tenzin Tselha, some help for her mother, and a very significant contribution to a new home for the family (see pg. 21). We hope Tenzin Tselha will be encouraged and do well! **Namgyal Tsetan**, from Mundgod's Camp 4, is studying at the College for Higher Tibetan Studies in Dharamsala. He is in training at a special recruitment program for staff employment in the Central Tibetan Administration.



T. Tselha

Nawang Namgyal is from a very poor family with uneducated parents. She has a younger sister who is in 9th grade. Her father sells tea by the roadside and manages to buy food with that. They do have a small place to live. She has begun a B.A. course at Dharwad College in Dharwad, not far from Mundgod. She wants to study geography, history, and English, and to be a teacher for Tibetan children if possible. She has faced difficulties at her local college because some of her teachers were teaching in the Kannada language local to Karnataka State. The students in the Tibetan settlement take classes in English, Tibetan, and Hindi, but not in Kannada, and while nearby Indians all know this language, the Tibetans often have only a basic, haphazardly acquired, ability to speak and understand it. Now the Dharwad school is requiring all students to study Kannada, and so while that is another challenge, she is digging in and thinks it will help with courses that might be taught in that language.



L. N. Samphel

Ven. Lobsang Norbu Samphel is a young monk who completed his B.A. (Shastri) degree after 7 years at the **Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS)** in Varanasi. He learned a lot there and met people from all parts of the world. In 2018, after speaking to others also wanting to be Tibetan-to-English translators for Buddhist monks and teachers, he decided it would be best to continue his studies at the **Namgyal Institute for Tibetology (NIT) in Gangtok, Sikkim**. So, having discussed this with Chela, he began his studies there in 2019 with FOTSI's support. After completing his studies at NIT, he plans to return to Drepung Gomang Monastery to complete his Geshe degree. Ven. L. Norbu Samphel writes lovely letters of gratitude to all who have helped him.

Kalsang Gyatso is in his third year at CIHTS in Varanasi. This university trains students for careers in translating to/from Tibetan, English, and Indian languages, and for work in cultural fields. **Tibetan monks rescued Kalsang**, who had been a kind of slave selling snacks he made, and they helped him get through high school. In recent years, besides studying at CIHTS, Kalsang has been helping poor boys, especially recent arrivals from areas in Nepal from which he originally came, adjust to the Drepung Gomang School and Monastery. He felt he was completely transformed there into an educated and compassionate person with a future in our world. He is happy that, from hearing about him, over 50 former country-mates have come to the monastery he loves. The photo here of Kalsang with some of them was taken on a day they were quite tired, as I was when I first arrived and when so much was happening in the settlement. I met many little boys like these and they seemed mischievous and happy.



K. Gyatso New Pupils

Office of the Representative of HH the Dalai Lama, Mundgod (ORM) -- Sponsorships, Emergency Fund

In 2018-2019 FOTSI aided many Tibetan refugees—families, caregivers, young people, and elderly men and women in households and at the Old People’s Home (OPH). *In 2018 (2019) we sent \$3,888 (\$3,785) to our Emergency Fund, \$265 (\$550) to the OPH for their general needs, and \$5,621 (\$4,865) as sponsorship and extra help for our 31 sponsored people. Another \$9,000 was sent in the first week of 2020* to help with special needs requested for lay Tibetans through the ORM when Chela was in India. FOTSI continues to be the only outside, non-Tibetan agency regularly helping the destitute. We have aided patients with drug resistant TB, mental illness, and have paid for crucial surgeries. We always work with the local Tibetans and their leaders. We contribute to fill in gaps and strive for good outcomes as we celebrate and support the enormous efforts of both local Tibetans and the Tibetan diaspora.

Our Tibetan social worker Dickyi Chodon, my friend, Jessica Wu (see pg. 25), and I visited many people FOTSI has aided in the 9 villages (camps) of the Mundgod settlement. We met some doing better after long struggles, like members of *Goki’s family*, who have suffered more from TB than any other family I’ve ever met. After decades of suffering and deaths from TB, they are now TB free! And, several relatives are now supporting themselves in Europe. Goki eagerly requested that I thank their longtime sponsor without whom they might have lost more family members and maybe their home. I also visited *Tsering Dolkar*, who had suffered from abuse. Now on her own, she is doing better, as is her daughter. We were happy to meet *Sonam Tsering*, 80, who had lived alone in a small space, struggling and bent over almost double with back problems, but whose local relatives are now able to help him in their home. There we met another relative who had returned to Mundgod from El Cerrito, CA, to stay for months to care for Sonam. Sonam was smiling, in spite of his medical issues, and saying prayers, especially for his longtime sponsor and family.



Tsering Dolkar



Goki



S. Tsering, Better, Saying Prayers



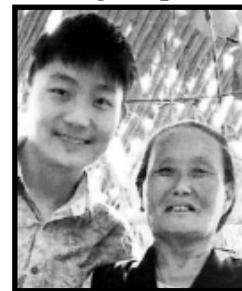
Jinpa

We also encountered many who needed our help. As mentioned on pg. 7, we met *Jinpa*, a destitute man we’ve been helping, and learned he had badly broken his arm and needed surgery to repair it properly with pins. When he suffered the injury 10 days previously, he told those who found him he had no money for the surgery. He had not been able to reach anyone to get the right help before we arrived. I promised we would pay for and get help immediately. However, I learned from the *head of the settlement, Lhakpa Tsering*, and others that although Jinpa was indeed needy, had only one leg and had had TB, he was also an alcoholic and was likely drunk when he fell and injured his arm. Some thought we should withhold our aid. Lhakpa, who hadn’t known of Jinpa’s fall, *said we should definitely help him*. He said even if our Emergency Fund was currently short of funds he would make sure the surgery happened soon, but only *on the condition that I return to Camp 7*, and in front of the villagers, especially those helping him, *give him a strong speech, in Tibetan*, saying that we would help him ONLY if he promised to stop drinking as his part of the “deal,” making it clear that his helpers must also support this plan. While all the villagers were showing thumbs up, Jinpa understood my Tibetan and passionately agreed to the deal, although we all knew this would not be easy, would take “a village” to make happen, and might take time and repeated attempts. After my speech at his hut, Jinpa was taken to a hospital, and his surgery was successful in spite of the delay. He was elated!

Office of the Representative (cont.)

Jinpa recovered well and returned home looking better than he had in a long time. I received emailed photos of him as I left India. However, sadly, after a few days at home, he was rushed back to a hospital with pains in his heart and stomach, and **died the next day**, with massive fluid around his heart. I was so sad to hear that, but glad he had received a lot of help, had looked so good, and was on a new path, supported by his village and FOTSI. I also felt good that our help for Jinpa involved a heartfelt effort by the ORM, Camp 7, our social worker Dickyi, Jinpa himself, Jessica, FOTSI, and me, all working together. Our effort remained positive for the settlement in spite of losing Jinpa.

At several meetings with Lhakpa, he had pressed me to help with a project that he was particularly eager to begin, a **plan to address the homelessness** that existed for over 30 families. These people were being housed in cramped temporary places, and now were being foisted on others with their own problems. Lhakpa asked for FOTSI's help with the first home for this project, one for which he already had land and some Tibetan-raised funds to build a house and remove a derelict building. This home was for a family including a woman who had worked for years at the OPH, her daughter in high school, another starting college with FOTSI's help, and a son who had been sponsored by FOTSI and was now teaching but did not earn enough to buy or rent a home as well as support his mother and sisters.



Hoping for a Home



Talking to Topgyal about the OPH

I was hesitant to agree to this, having concern about funding many needs. I knew **our Emergency Fund had already aided a number of destitute people, 6 HIV patients, an emergency medical worker injured on the job, and paid for crucial emergency school bus repair.**



Dawa Bhuti

Our fund had covered **medical aid for Topgyal, Dawa Bhuti, and Karma Dolma. We had also committed to covering Tsamchoe's cataract surgery.** However, after pouring over accounts for hours and encouraged by Lhakpa about the ORM's help with pending needs, I agreed to FOTSI's helping with the "Homes for the Homeless" project. Fortunately, I had received some funds appropriate for that, but I still had to combine funds from many donors to cover his request; luckily, some had sent extra help for needs encountered on my trip.



Sherap Later, After 1st Knee Surgery

At the Old People's Home (OPH), I finally said "yes" to Director Tamdin's request that FOTSI pay for two knee replacement surgeries for Sherap to be able to walk. I met sponsored **Dhondup Lhamo**, who for years ran the tidiest home in Mundgod. But after she suffered a fall, her age finally caught up with her. As she could no longer manage on her own, she was admitted to the OPH. There she joined sponsorees **Tsering Choephel (92), Kunsang Wangmo, Sherap, and Tsokyi. Topgyal** wants to join them soon.



D. Lhamo

K. Wangmo Had Cataract Surgery

I met **Chemi Sangmo**, sister of **Tenzin Lhakey** now the nurse at the Sambhota School Dispensary. We still sponsor Tenzin because she helps Chemi, who had such extremely antibiotic resistant TB that no drug in India could treat it. In 2013 Chemi Sangmo began years of treatment at Delek Hospital in

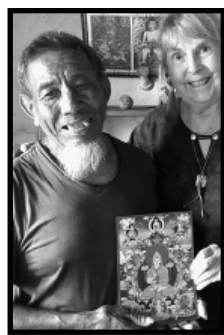
Office of the Representative (ORM) (cont.)

Dharamsala. There she volunteered to try experimental TB drug pairs before their approval in the USA. Thankfully, one pair cured her; she was joyful in spite of strong side effects. Chemi Sangmo (see pg. 7) was a *pioneer testing these drugs that later helped others*. She is now TB free but not strong. Her husband is traveling, selling sweaters; her son (9) is at the TCV school in Dharamsala. Ayurvedic Indian medicine helps her. She deeply thanks FOTSI and Western doctors for our help.

A dear friend and FOTSI donor, **Shanti Bhadriah**, passed away in early 2019. She left funds to FOTSI to help an ailing elderly **Tibetan friend** in Mundgod, her sponsored **Tsokyi** at the OPH, and monks in Drepung Gomang Monastery. I worked with the heads of the OPH and ORM, who explained how to best help their operations with the funds Shanti had designated for them. Her funds will be dispersed in 2020 and reported in next year's newsletter.



Shanti's Friend & Chela



T. Dorjee Gives Gift to Chela

I especially enjoyed visiting **Tashi Dorjee** (71) at his tiny old home with no electricity. He was so joyful! After expressing gratitude for his sponsorship, he said he didn't need anything more. He asked if I had received one of the beautiful card portraits being given out of Lama Tsongkhapa, the great Tibetan religious figure then being celebrated at Mundgod. He had received two. When he found I had not, he was thrilled to give me a special gift. Later, *his contentment and joy in giving made me smile every day*. After I reached Boulder *I was shocked to learn that he had suddenly and unexpectedly died*.



Chela Reassures Tsokyi



Chela, Dickyi At Phurbu's Home

In addition to losing Tashi Dorjee and Jinpa (pgs. 20-21), we also lost sponsored Kunsang from Camp 8 (not Kunsang in the OPH), the elder Tenzin Lhakey, and Phurbu (age 96, Camp 7). We visited **Kunsang's daughter, Karma Dolma**, whom we now sponsor in Kunsang's place, and **Phurbu's family** who cared so well for him. In 2019 we sent emergency help to **Karma Dolma** through the Drepung Gomang Buddhist Cultural Association (DGBCA). **Tenzin Lhakey's relatives** went on a pilgrimage to say prayers for her. Some of the photos on the left of our collage (p. 26) are of beloved Tibetans we lost in the last year.



Tenzin Lhakey



K. Dolma "Signs" That She Got Funds Via DGBCA

Finally, *we celebrate 4 Tibetans* whom FOTSI aided with sponsorship and/or scholarships *who no longer need help*. These include **Tenzin Phuntsok**, who got a masters in economics and has married and moved to Australia; **Tashi Lhamo**, who has successfully helped pay for a kidney transplant for her sister and is now self-sufficient; and **Tenzin Lhamo**, who got antibiotic resistant TB, recovered, and worked at a Bangalore hotel before returning to Mundgod and working with her family. **Pema Dolma** (76) requested her sponsorship stop since her children can support her. *She inquired gently if her sponsor or another FOTSI donor could help her neighbor, Dechen Palmo (52), whom I also met. Dechen Palmo has had open heart surgery and needs medication these days.*



D. Palmo & Pema Dolma

Nuns' Sponsorship, Health Aid - Jangchub Choeling Nunnery

In 2018 (2019) FOTSI sponsored *14 nuns of JCN*, sending them \$2,745 (\$2,670). We sent an additional \$270 (\$220) in 2018 (2019) to help the group with building costs and study needs. In 2018 (2019) we gave them \$3,915 (\$3,815) for medical needs for themselves, and \$200 (\$200) to aid laypeople who asked them for help. In total we sent the nuns \$7,130 in 2018 and \$6,905 in 2019.

Donations to the nuns' medical fund are used for *surgeries, doctor's appointments, dentistry, eye glasses, and medical treatment needed for broken bones and after accidents such as the kitchen oil explosion disaster in 2019. Treatment for heart disease, TB, skin diseases, female problems, hepatitis B, and other issues have been covered, as have lab tests and scans.* Usually about a third to half of our donation goes to the Jangchub Choeling Education & Welfare Society General Medical Fund also supported by others. Our remaining funds are separately dispensed by *Ven. Tenzin Norzom, who makes sure that needs such as dentistry and various tests not otherwise covered are met. See photos below of some nuns aided with our medical fund.* As in the past, we also donated to the 12 nun-selected "poorest nuns." Photos of our sponsored nuns are on the bottom two rows. In India I met many FOTSI-aided nuns. They all said, "Thank you very much!"



Y. Palmo After Bad Kitchen Oil Explosion —Recovered, Greets Chela--Glasses Helped



Yama Choega Had 2 Eye Surgeries— Post Recovery



Tenzin Norzom Injured Foot —Did Her Physical Therapy



L. Choedon Had Digestive Issues & Later, TB



Thubten Palmo Had Breast Cancer, Got Mastectomy, Med Aid; Sister Nun Had Root Canal



Jangchup Lhamo Had Knee Replacement Surgery—Then Help with Physical Therapy



Thubten Palmo Had Breast Cancer, Got Mastectomy, Med Aid; Sister Nun Had Root Canal



Lobsang Choeden1



Trinley Tsomo



Tenzin Deetaen



Gyaltzen Choedron



Tenzin Namdol



Lobsang Dolma Jupa



Ngawang Jampa



Kalsang Choeden



Tenzin Dolkar



Sonam Tsekyi



Dolma Choetso



Lobsang Dolma Gapa



Lobsang Choeden2



Sponsored nun Tenzin Norzom, Chela, & Permanent Resident, Western Nun T. Choeden

Sponsorship & Health Aid for Monks

In 2018 (2019) FOTSI sent \$6,420 (\$7,455) for our 31 sponsored monks, and \$3,000 (\$2,800) for monks' medical needs. The medical aid helped monks of Drepung Gomang Monastery but also others, such as Drepung Loseling, in the Mundgod settlement. Our help sent to sponsored monks may include funds they use for health needs. In 2018 (2019) we sent \$1,140 (\$700) to Drepung Gomang Monastery, as requested by some donors, aiding all the monks there. There was a typo in last year's newsletter in which we reported sending \$1,440 in 2018 to Drepung Gomang.

Seen by the Chinese government as a threat, monks and nuns have suffered in the "Land of Snows" due to their connection with Buddhism and HH the Dalai Lama, . We help some survive refugee life in India with a different climate and problems such as the most antibiotic resistant TB in the world. Some health aid for all is available from basic hospitals at Drepung Loseling and Gaden Shartse and Gaden Jangtse Monasteries in the settlement. Drepung Gomang also runs a clinic, but surgeries, scans and other needs are not adequately met, so we help. In 2019 we sent a donor's \$500 to the Gaden Jangtse Hospital.



HH Dalai Lama At Gaden Jangtse Hospital

Sponsored monks include especially needy monks and those who help others. With our monks' health funds we have recently helped patients suffering from TB, diabetes, epilepsy, accidents, and other problems. Geshe Jampa Gyatso was head of FOTSI's Gungru Khangtsen Monks' Health Fund (GKH), but is now ill with TB and digestive issues. Ven. Palden



Ven. P. Gonpo



Geshe J. Gyatso

Gonpo's diabetes is under better control now after many consultations and much treatment. Formerly sponsored Geshe Ngawang Sopa now helps run the GKH Fund and has helped raise funds on monastery tours (see pg. 10). Ven. Tenpa Tsering was declared healthy enough to go on monastery tours and has transferred his sponsorship to Ven. Jigme Dorjee, who recovered from TB but still has hepatitis B and diabetes. Sponsored monk Ven. Lobsang Khechok had hepatitis B when he came to Drepung Gomang Monastery. Now healthy and good in English, he helps others, such as epilepsy patient Ven. Samten Norbu, consult doctors. Ven. Karma Tsultrim of Gaden Shartse Monastery, who once desperately sought help for a severe eye injury, aced his 4th-year Geshe Lharampa exam and was chosen to answer debate questions in front of HH the Dalai Lama. He now helps 3 little monks who came from Spiti. At left are two recently aided monks. All say, "Thanks!"



Vens. T. Tsering & J. Dorjee



Vens. S. Norbu, L. Khechok



Ven. D. Namgyal, Ill Monk



Old Photos: Geshe Gamar, Ven. Y. Ngodup



Ven. K. Tsultrim, Boy Monks



Chela with Monks

Geshe Gamar died of hepatitis; Ven. Yeshe Ngodup of Loseling died of old age in 2019.

Letter from Jessica Wu - Helping Chela and FOTSI in Mundgod

Chela and I have known each other for about ten years through a weekly Buddhism study and discussion group, and I have always admired the compassion and resilience that allowed her to help so many people through FOTSI. In January 2019, my mother and I treated Chela to lunch while she was visiting San Francisco. During our meal, I was very surprised and flattered when Chela said to me, "It would be nice if you could visit India and see the monasteries and people of the Mundgod Tibetan settlement." As soon as she uttered the invitation, I was determined to make this trip happen, both because I wanted to help Chela with her FOTSI work and because it was such a rare opportunity. Once I was able to get my visa and permit sorted out, I scheduled my trip for two weeks over the transition between 2019 and 2020.



Jessica Wu, Settlement Officer L. Tsering, Chela

Once I arrived in the settlement, I was awestruck by the colorful prayer flags against the blue Indian sky and the beautiful traditional Tibetan architecture of the monasteries. During my entire visit, the two "Lama Camps" where the largest monasteries of the settlement are located were fairly quiet because many had departed to attend His Holiness' teachings in north India. Despite that, Chela had a steady stream of visitors, both monastics and laypeople, all bearing greeting scarves (called khatas) which they showered on both of us. A few days into my stay, it was our turn to make visits around the various camps in the settlement. Over four days, our guide, social worker Dickyi Chodon from the Office of the Representative of HH the Dalai Lama, ably navigated us from house to house, and tirelessly translated and took notes over innumerable visits. Chela wrote notes too and used her Tibetan as best she could, until her brain got too tired and went "empty" as she would say. Throughout our dusty adventures, it was my pleasure to be Chela's personal assistant, or as she smilingly liked to call me, her "yak." Yes, she seemed to have too many notebooks, a phone, khatas, and other items to carry down the dusty paths! In this newsletter you may have noticed more photos with Chela in them; that's because I was also often a photographer while Dickyi and Chela were meeting and talking with camp residents.

At every stop we made, I observed Chela's seemingly endless supply of compassion and generosity, though she did sometimes have to be quite stern with some settlement residents. It was fascinating for me to be a fly on the wall as Chela worked, especially to see the number of complex issues that she could only tackle while she was in the settlement. Everyone we encountered greeted her with joy and gratitude for all the meritorious work she did on behalf of Tibetan refugees, and we were frequently greeted with calls of "Tashi Delek, Ama Chela!" Highlights of my visit included her collaboration and negotiations with the settlement administration, especially the Settlement Officer heading the Office, Mr. Lhakpa Tsering, and time spent at the Old People's Home, where Chela knew many of the residents by name. It was special to meet senior nuns of the Jangchub Choeling Nunnery, enjoy tours through Gaden and Drepung Monasteries, and spend time at the Drepung Gomang School.

Throughout my entire visit, I was greatly touched and amazed at the generosity of everyone I met, and I'm very grateful to everyone who made my trip such a special experience, including many people at Drepung Gomang Monastery, the people working in the settlement administration, and all of those who invited me into their homes and offered water or a delicious home-cooked Tibetan meal. Most of all, I'm grateful to Chela for giving me the opportunity to accumulate merits and good karma in what has been an unforgettable experience.

Best Wishes and Thanks to all the FOTSI donors, *Jessica Wu*