

# Welcome



Dear Reader,

Samtse College of Education (SCoE) is pleased to present to you the Autumn 2018 edition of SHES-RIG PAGES, the biannual newsletter of the College.

SCoE was established and inaugurated on May 29, 1968 as a Teacher Training Institute (TTI) by our beloved Third King, Late His Majesty Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. The launching of this premier teacher education institution then marked a significant epoch and milestone in Bhutan's history of educational development and more particularly in the history of teacher preparation. From a fledgling institute that initially ran a primary teaching certificate programme with a meagre enrollment of only 41 students, SCoE today has a total student enrollment of over one thousand students including full time pre-service and in-service teachers with a diverse range of courses from Diploma to Master of Education academic programmes.

In the last 51 years of teacher education, SCoE has educated close to 6500 teachers, who represent almost two third of the overall teaching population and continues to play a pivotal role, especially in the preparation of teachers – who carry the grit and tenacity to serve under trying conditions. In fulfilling our mandate of educating teachers for the Bhutanese school system, we consciously seek inspiration in the wish and trust His Majesty our beloved Third Druk Gyalpo placed on this College of producing not only teachers who are professionally competent but also who are immersed in their rich culture and heritage and accordingly transmit these values to our younger generation of Bhutanese children. SHES-RIG PAGES is a special tribute to the most sacred gift of our Third Druk Gyalpo to teacher development and the overall education system in Bhutan.

The Autumn Semester of 2018 witnessed a change in the management of the College with me taking over the stewardship of the College from the former President, Dr. Dorji Thinley, who joined Paro College of Education as its President. Mr. Karma Gayphel, a senior faculty from the Department of Contemplative Counselling and Psychology took over the reins of the Dean of Student Affairs from Mr. Dorji S, who completed his tenure successfully with a great sense of achievement and satisfaction.

The greening project in the campus that was initiated by the former President was completed adding to the improvement in the overall ambience of the College. Autumn 2018 has also been a time where the College fraternity including the teaching faculty, staff, and students were actively involved in the historic 111th National Day Celebration at Samtse. Besides taking the primary responsibility of co-ordinating the cultural programme for this special occasion that was lauded as one of the most creative and unique performances ever witnessed by the Bhutanese populace, the participation of the College in the overall celebration has been deeply rewarding. Every faculty, staff, and student of the College have taken this as special privilege and rare honour to have contributed in the success of this grand occasion and shall always remain as a moment to cherish and treasure ever after.

We hope you will find this edition of SHES-RIG PAGES interesting and worth reading. We will appreciate your feedback and comments on it for future improvement. For an e-copy of the newsletter, please visit [www.sce.edu.bt](http://www.sce.edu.bt).

With warmest regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rinchin".

Rinchin Dorji, PhD  
President

## SHES-RIG PAGES

The Biannual Newsletter of Samtse College of Education

© Autumn 2018 Samtse College of Education. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or disseminated in any form, or by any means, without prior written permission from Samtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan, to whom all requests to reproduce material should be directed in writing.

## Teton School of Science conducts Placed Based Education workshop for M. Ed Students

On 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018, officials from Teton School of Science (TSS) conducted a workshop for the Masters students at the college on Place Based Education (PBE) in which the local places or community is being explored for better teaching and learning processes. The workshop was conducted to provide opportunity to the Masters students to learn the knowledge and skills of PBE that will enable them to implement the learning their respective schools after their graduation.

Emma Grifen, one of the resource persons from Teton Science School, said that the workshop was a success and hoped that the

Masters students have gained some additional knowledge and skills that they can practise in their classroom. She added, "Place Based Education must involve the students to go out of the class to explore the community to learn about the culture, environment and the economy of the particular place". Place Based education matters because lessons should be taught and learnt that are relevant to the students and the context needs to be more appropriate for intense learning. Officials from Teton Science School visit Bhutan once in a year to conduct such workshop for school teachers and teacher educators of Samtse College of Education and Paro College of Education on request of the Ministry of Education and the Royal University of Bhutan.



*One of the resource persons commenting on a group presentation during the workshop*

## Dramatising Poems : An Effective Way to Study Poetry



*Scenes from All the world's a stage, O Captain, My Captain and Ballad of Barbara Allen*

The students of B. Ed 4 Arts taking English dramatised poems as a part of their study and assessment. The students were divided into groups of six to seven members. In their respective groups, the students selected poems, prepared dialogue and practised for over a week before they staged their 15-minute dramatisation in full props and costume. In total, the class dramatised six poems: Lochinvar, O Captain, My Captain, Macbeth's witches' scene, King's Breakfast, All the World's a Stage from Shakespeare's play As You Like It, and Ballad of Barbara Allen.

The students shared that dramatising poems offered them a number of academic benefits. Sita Chhetri said that poetry dramatisation enhanced her creativity and was fun way to learn. "Self-created dialogues are easy

to memorise, and if we forget the dialogue, we are able to make up one instantly as we know the content of the poem," said Dorji Yuden. Deki Zam realised that when she had to get deeper into the character, it increased empathy. However, poetry dramatisation does not come easy. The students have to give their best as members of the team. Tashi Wangmo realised, "It requires combined effort and full co-operation to stage a poem successfully".

The tutor, Dr Tashi Gyeltshen, said, "We carried out poetry dramatisation as a part of psychomotor poetry, and it was a big success". The tutor has also conducted similar dramatisation while teaching short fiction and sections of novels with the B. Ed final year students in the earlier semesters.

## Pedagogy Training for MoLHR appointed teachers in Dratshangs under Samtse Dzongkhag

As requested by Samtse Dratshang, Samtse College of Education offered a three-day pedagogy training from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> August to the newly appointed English teachers in the Dratshang. The five participants who attended the training were appointed by Ministry of Labour and Human Resource (MoLHR) to teach English to the monks of the Dratshang under Samtse Dzongkhag. The Secretary of Samtse Rabdey said that the training was necessary since the newly appointed teachers did not have training and experience in teaching. The English faculty members from the Centre for Language Education and Research conducted the training focusing on the primary



*Participants performing readers' theatre*



*Participants during the training session*

school level teaching skills such as teaching of reading, writing, lesson planning, and teaching in a multi-grade setting.

One participant expressed that he will be able to teach his students effectively after having learnt different methods of teaching. Another pointed out that he will be able to teach different grades of students together in a classroom with the knowledge of multi-grade teaching. In addition, one said that the training was inspiring and motivating.

## Language Centre tries out a new pedagogy

### SOCRATIC SEMINAR ON WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Character analysis of Heathcliff, Edgar, and Catherine  
Narrative techniques  
Social status and reputation in 19<sup>th</sup> century Theme of revenge

The members of the Language Centre experimented with Socratic Seminar (also known as Socratic questioning). Socratic Seminar was organised with the B. Ed final year English students as one of the teaching strategies to teach the novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte and poems. The students organised the seminar in the classroom taking the role of moderators, speakers and audience.

The English tutors said that they had to model the format after which students took over the conduct of the seminar in the class. The important aspects of the novel such as character analysis, narrative techniques, social status and theme of revenge were brought out as main issues during the seminar. Students taking the role of audiences posed variety of open-ended questions providing opportunities for student speakers to express their own interpretations, viewpoints and critical analysis.

The students said that the seminar was interesting since they could ask questions and clarify issues pertaining to the novel and poems

under study. While Mr Choeda organised Socratic Seminar in teaching novel, Dr Tashi Gyeltshen, employed Socratic Seminar to teach the poem *The Unknown Citizen* by W. H Auden and *An Introduction* by Kamala Das. Socratic Seminar facilitated discussion of the important themes in the poem and provoked the students to think critically and experience a non-conventional way of learning poems.

The tutors observed that students favoured Socratic Seminar and wanted to organise more lesson using it.



*Socratic seminar in session*

## Move Humanity Campaign



*Launch of 'Move Humanity' Pamphlet by Officiating President*

On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2018, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Club organised 'Move Humanity' campaign at Samtse College of Education under the auspices of Sustainable Development Solution Network (SDSN) Youth and Move Human Act Foundation. SDSN-Youth Network supports the localisation of SDGs and their implementation, develops long term transformation pathways for sustainable development, promotes education around Agenda 2030, and launches solution initiatives.

The event began with a keynote address by the Officiating President of Samtse College of Education Dr Kinley to the participants and the volunteers. In attendance were Dean of Student Affairs, faculty members, teachers and students of Samtse Higher Secondary School, student

scout leaders from various part of the country and club members of Samtse College Education.

Mr Tashi Dawa, the SDG Coordinator for RUB, Country Coordinator of Team 54, founder of Youth Volunteers and 2018 National Youth Awardee, made a presentation on the Move Humanity and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a focus on individual's role in achieving the 17 SDGs in our own small ways. This was followed by entertainment programmes and the launch of 'Project Give Away' with a display of Move Humanity T-Shirts and Pamphlets. 'Project Give Away' is a youth-led project which intends to donate materials to underprivileged and needy people through donation drive and sponsors. The first sets of T-shirts were sent to Draktso East in Trashi gang – a vocational training centre for children with



special needs during the International Day for Children with Disabilities.

In the evening, the participants took part in a cleaning campaign to create awareness and advocate on waste management in Samtse town. In addition, SDG Club organised a street show on the theme 'Move Humanity' where people showcased their talents in singing and dancing. The coordinator of the SDG club remarked, "Move Humanity campaign is one of the most successful events ever hosted by the SDG Club members. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the college administration, volunteers and everyone who took part in this event".

The Move Humanity campaign aims to help narrow financial gaps in the lowest income countries (LICs) by mobilising fund for basic health and education, critical infrastructure, and environmental conservation priorities. Move Humanity aspires to establish SDG focused philanthropy as a global norm. It does so by recognising the significant impact that 2208 billionaires can have in bridging the gap for implementation of SDGs. It was a privilege for the SDG Club members to take part in the international campaign addressing global crisis and advocating our roles in achieving 17 Sustainable development goals.



*Launch of 'Project Give Away'*



## International Youth Day

International Youth Day was observed on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of August on the theme “Safe spaces for youth”. Youth Caring Community (YCC) organised it in collaboration with Nazhoen Lamtoen. 200 youth volunteers from around the country attended the two-day festival. The festival aimed to enable youths to share their works, achievements and challenges in the field of volunteerism. The youths in different groups showcased a variety of dances, food and music.



*SCE Students on stage performing live music and song*

The first day was named “Change Maker’s Day”. The day saw different stalls set up by youths in three zones identified. The zones were named Initiative Zone, Product Zone and Entertainment Zone. Initiative Zone provided information about different organisations. Product Zone consisted of stalls set up by young entrepreneurs, business houses and individuals advertising and selling their products. Further, they met with young people and initiated to inspire them on creating one’s own job opportunity. Entertainment Zone was filled with games and music that were youth-friendly and gambling-free. The zone also provided platforms for youths to perform and showcase their talent.

Among the 200 young people participating in the festival was a group of ten students from Samtse College of Education led by their music teacher, Mr Johan West man. Johan said that the team, consisting the B. Ed 3rd year students, created a very good impression about the

College when it came to music. The College had its own music stall set up in the Entertainment Zone. The stall showcased different musical instruments among which were some rare musical instruments such as double flute and kongta. Visitors to the stall, consisting people from different age groups and some foreigners were fascinated by the vastness of our country’s traditional instruments. The group from the College entertained the visitors with live musical performance. “It was only our group that performed live band music”, said Johan. The group performed traditional songs and fusion songs (traditional instruments combined with the modern ones). Norbu Tshering of B. Ed 3rd year said, “It is indeed an honour to be able perform during the first International Youth Day. I would like to thank the college for enabling us to help promote our culture and tradition”.

The second day was named the “Jomo” day which means “Ant” inspired by the attributes of ants,

notably its strength, flexibility, perseverance, teamwork and leadership. The ants collectively make a huge impact, irrespective of their size. The day was characterised by an award ceremony during which some exceptional young individuals from various parts of the country were recognised for their outstanding

contribution in different fields. It was the first National Youth Award festival. Tashi Dawa of B. Ed 4th year student of the college won the Youth Award for his contribution in leading the Sustainable Development Goals as Bhutan's representative to the world.

## Samtse College gears up for 111<sup>th</sup> National Day Celebration

Samtse College got busy with the full swing preparation for the 111<sup>th</sup> National Day Celebration.

The College was one of the active members with as many as 111 students involved in the cultural programme and about 300 students in public catering beside the support rendered by the staff, faculty members and the management of the college.

“The National Day is celebrated on December 17 every year to honour Bhutan's first monarch, Druk Gyalpo Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck, and his contribution in unifying Bhutan. Moreover, we celebrate the day because we have come a long way as a nation under the wisdom and guidance of our farsighted Monarchs,” said Mr Dorji Letho, faculty member of the college. “We are glad that cultural items, greening of the campus and chadri works are going on well and nearing completion. We hope that on December 17 we can put up a good show,” added Mr Dorji Letho.

Dawa Dema, a B. Ed first year student said, “I am immensely pleased to hear that the 111<sup>th</sup> National Day would be celebrated in Samtse. It's a great opportunity for us to pay our gratitude and appreciation to our dynamic

leader, the Druk Gyalpo for his undying love and support for his people.”



*The greening team taking a break*



*Greening completed in the front yard of the college guesthouse*

## SCE Academics

### Visit Indo-Global Social Service Society

Two academics from the college, Dr Kinley, Dean of Research and Industrial and Linkages and Dr Tashi Gyeltshen, Assistant Professor, visited Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS), New Delhi from 10th to 13th September. In the morning of 10th September, IGSSS organised a brief meeting with John Nelson, Executive Director, Sreya Mazumdar, Head of Programmes, and Anthony Chettri, Senior Manager. Following the introduction and welcome, Dr. Kinley provided a brief background on Samtse College of Education,

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW) programme and the up-coming international conference on social work to pave way for better understanding of the situation and expected outcomes of the visit.

The team at IGSSS shared on the vision, mission and the activities they carry out for the welfare of the poor, venerable and marginalised section of the society with special focus on women and children. They also shared about the organisational structure and how IGSSS

functions through regional branches especially in the north and north-east India. They shared about their guiding thematic focus areas of activities that include promoting sustainable livelihood, reducing urban poverty, disaster relief, rehabilitation and risk reduction, youth development and gender equity. IGSSS has plans and strategies for successful implementation of these activities. The group also discussed the future areas of collaboration such as facilitating the second social work certificate course, training SCE's BASW tutors, student field practicum, joint research and linkages.

Over the four days, the team worked on drafting and refining concept note for the



*Dr Kinley and Dr Tashi Gyeltshen at Indian Social Institute (ISI) Delhi*

international conference. With constant writing and consultation with the members at IGSSS, the concept note was finalised with clear aims and objectives, conference dates, programme schedule, fees and logistics for the participants. In addition, registration template, abstract template, full paper template, and content for the conference brochure were also drafted.

The team also had the privilege to attend IGSSS's regular monthly lecture series. This time, IGSSS had invited Baba Pangdurang Adhav, a prominent 88 year old social activist. In his lecture, he advocated the welfare of the un-organised labourers with emphasis on their rights and privileges.

In the morning of the last day, the team visited Indian Social Institute (ISI) Delhi. They had an opportunity to meet and interact with the Executive Director Dr. Denzil Fernandes S. J. He briefed on the institute and the work they do for the cause of the poor. Some of ISI's major tasks include offering training programmes, writing and executing projects, running clubs and doing extensive research and publishing journals and newsletters. ISI Delhi is very strong

in social research – the areas in which Samtse College of Education can collaborate or seek their support in the future. Overall, the institute strives to inform the government on the actions they need to take and to inform and train the poor, especially the youth about their rights, privileges and opportunities.

Dr Fernandes emphasised the need to strengthen linkages with other social work institutes such as Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Don Bosco, Nirmala College of Social Work and Indian Social Institute, Bangalore. He believes that linkages can enable sharing of financial burden, resources, experiences and expertise in the form of knowledge and skills. He said, "Through networking, we can do a lot more than doing things alone".

In the afternoon, there was presentation by Edwin Charles and his division that look after the IGSSS social work programme in northern region of India. Each of the officers was ahead and expert in the area s/he looked after, such as sustainable livelihood, youth issues and food security. They presented their plans, activities, achievements and challenges.

## Autumn 2018

### Faculty-Student Research Convention

The Biannual Faculty-Student Research Convention on the theme *Life long Learning* was conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> October. There were as many as twenty paper presentations organised at two different venues: the college Auditorium for Humanities, Professional and Counseling centres and the Student Dining

Hall for Science and Mathematics centres. The paper presenters included faculty members from the colleges under Royal University of Bhutan, schoolteachers and student researchers of the college.

A wide variety of papers were presented



*A school teacher making paper presentation during the convention*

covering conventional research reports, research proposals and action research projects. Some of the papers presented included Case study on academic writing of RUB post-graduate students, Pecha Kucha Power-Point format for classroom presentation, Causes of language learning anxieties, Enhancing essay writing skills in students, The effect of 5E cycle of learning in students, Developing the conceptual understanding of calculus, Relation

of Mathematics and astrology, Parental involvement and academic performance of students and so on. The convention attendees commented that it was a great exposure for them as they got to witness the convention proceedings. Further, they said that attending and participating in the research convention provided them with additional knowledge on research.

## Academics attend EU-grant writing workshop at Paro College of Education



*Lecturers attending EU-grant writing workshop at Paro College of Education*

A two-day workshop on European project proposal writing was organised at Paro College of Education on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October. The workshop was facilitated by Karine Hindrix and Liesbeth Spanjers from University College of Leuven-Limberg. Five lecturers from Samtse College of Education attended the workshop.

As part of the KA1 European Project – mobility for students and staff between the University College Leuven-Limburg (UCLL), Belgium and Royal University of Bhutan, Karine and Liesbeth visited Samtse College of Education Samtse.

The project aimed to build capacity of faculty

members of the two colleges of education in areas such as writing grant for European Union projects and identify of areas of collaboration between UCLL and the two colleges of education.

The two-day workshop on grant writing helped stimulate interest and skill in the exploration of grant opportunities in the respective departments at Samtse College. As a result, science faculty members have initiated two EU grant proposal writing, one on raising learning outcome of Science Education in Bhutan and the other on promoting environmental literacy to produce environmentally literate citizens in the school community.

## College succeeds in securing Linnaeus-Palme Project

Samtse College of Education, in partnership with Malmö University (MU) in Sweden won Linnaeus-Palme project. Linnaeus-Palme is a Swedish exchange programme introduced in May 2000 for teachers and students at undergraduate and master's level of higher education. The project aims at strengthening co-operation between institutions of higher education in Sweden and developing countries. The programme is administered by the International Programme Office for Education and Training and financed by Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (SIDA). The project has possibility to be extended up to eight years.

The current Linnaeus-Palme project covers two scholarships. The first is Linnaeus scholarships for outbound Swedish participants abroad since it was the custom of Carl von Linné to send his apprentices out into the world to gather information. The second is Palme scholarships for foreign participants as Palme was deeply involved in the conditions faced by developing countries and their opportunities for development. The underlying idea is mutual co-operation between institutions of higher education that will provide a basis for broader partnerships between them.

The Centre for Innovation in Mathematics and IT Education and Research (CIMITE) and the Department of Natural Science, Mathematics and Society (NMS) with the Faculty of Education and Society of MU in a joint venture successfully



*Inauguration of Linnaeus-Palme project at SCE*

achieved SEK 80000 (equivalent to Nu 6,59,200 -Bhutanese Currency) grant for travel to prepare exchange projects.

The two institutions have both short and long term goals to be achieved from the project. Short term goals include developing international and global perspectives in Mathematics teacher education courses at NMS and SCE; orienting faculty members and students to the new global context of mathematics teaching and learning; enhancing knowledge and skill in ethno mathematics, and critical mathematics teaching practices. Long term goals include developing research collaboration in a culturally responsive teaching and learning context in mathematics in Sweden and Bhutan.

In order to kick-start the project, two phases of visit and planning were conducted between the faculty members of Samtse College and Malmö University. As a result, the two institutions have drawn action plan for student and faculty exchange and research and development. The delegates from Malmö University conducted professional development seminars for the students and faculty of mathematics department.

## Tendrel Ceremony for the new Dean of Student Affairs

The College organised handing-taking over and Tendrel ceremony of the new Dean of Student Affairs (DSA) on October 10, 2018. The teaching faculty, administrative staff and the student leaders offered Tashi Lekdhar to Karma Gayphel, the new DSA. During the programme, Dr Rinchen Dorji, the

education and educational change. Similarly, Mr. Karma Gayphel shared his aspirations and commitments towards students' wellbeing that include improving living conditions and food quality which is directly linked to improving the students' health, strengthening community cohesion and providing and diversifying



*The out-going DSA handing over the student affairs file to the new DSA*

President of the college, shared his aspirations for the college. He expressed his aspirations to develop this college as the central stage in addressing any educational issues in the country with a special emphasis in the enhancement of teacher quality and standards. Also he said that he will focus on making this college an innovation hub and epicenter of research in

counseling services. Mr. Dorji S, the out-going DSA, briefly highlighted his experiences as DSA and thanked the SCE members for extending their cooperation during his tenure as the DSA. He said that he got to know more about management practices and how it functioned. He availed many opportunities to put in some of the visions that this college upholds into action.



At the same time he found it challenging to meet the demands and expectations of the students as there are protocols and administrative procedures that had to be followed by the management.

Karma Gayphel has worked as a lecturer in the college since 2007. He has taught Educational Psychology and Counseling modules across the B. Ed and PgDE programmes and has played an instrumental role in designing the Contemplative Counselling programme and launching it successfully. Currently, he trains counselors at Postgraduate Diploma in Contemplative Counseling Psychology and Master of Arts in Contemplative Counselling Psychology levels.

He is also involved in the project collaboration between the faculty members of Samtse College of Education and Naropa University, Colorado, USA on multicultural perspectives and research in contemplative counselling. He has been conferred International Certified Addiction Professional-I certificate by the International Centre for Credentialing and Education, Colombo Plan Secretariat in July 2015. He offers student and community counselling services.

Karma Gayphel graduated from Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia with a Masters in Human Services Counselling.

## The 3<sup>rd</sup> University Toilet Day observed at SCE

The members of College Bhutan Toilet Organization (BTO) club at the College observed 3<sup>rd</sup> University Toilet Day on 8th October. The day's theme was Toilet and Nature. The 23 member volunteers cleaned 14 toilets in the college. The club aims to provide safe and clean toilets for the members of the college as they are important spaces that need to be maintained but are often neglected.

Mr. Tashi, BTO Ambassador of Samtse Dzongkhag said, "Lack of proper sanitation is a serious issue in most of the developing countries and this issue can be solved if only every individual becomes responsible user. The importance of hygienic toilets

lies in an effort to prevent diseases that are transmitted through human waste". He further stressed that safety and cleanliness of the toilets should be an utmost priority.



*Members of College Bhutan Toilet Organization (BTO) club*

## Annual Sports Day



*Men's 100 meter race*

The College Annual Sports Day was held at the College ground on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018 with a lot of zeal and excitement.

The event was conducted to enable students to showcase their talents and to keep themselves physically, mentally and socially healthy. The chief guest Dasho Dzungdag of Samtse dzongkhag reminded the gathering on the importance of sports in one's life. The day's programme began with oath-taking by the athletes followed by a variety of sports events for both men and women. The winners were awarded prizes and certificates.

One of the highlights of the day was a series of lottery draws that kept the guests, spectators and the athletes expectant and eager. There were also fun time special events for guests

and staff. "The sports day this year was very interesting and well organised," remarked one of the spectators. At the end of the event, prizes for the best Collaborative Groups were awarded.



*The College President awarding prize*

## Final Words by the out going President of SCE



**D**r Dorji Thinley was served as the President of SCE from August 2015 to August 2018. From August 2018 he was transferred by the Royal University of Bhutan as President of Paro College of

Education. The Shes-Rig PAGES Team (SP) interacted with him to understand his departing views.

She-Rig PAGES (SP): What inspired you to come to Samtse College of Education?

**Dorji Thinley (DT):** My own conviction back in August 2015 that a lot of good work needed to be done at Samtse College of Education(SCE) with some sense of urgency and responsibility.

**SP:** What challenges did you face at Samtse College of Education? How did you overcome them?

**DT:** Many. I highlighted and explained these challenges to my colleagues and sometimes to the students as part of my planning and execution strategy during the three years I worked at SCE: they need not be elaborated here. I have always believed that challenges can be converted to opportunities. So the question of “overcoming” is not very relevant in this case.

**SP:** What are some of the best memories that you will be taking with you?

**DT:** The thought of having given my best – all in the interest of the college and for the cause of higher education development in my country.

**SP:** As the president of SCE, you have instituted many initiatives and brought about multiple reforms. What are the ways to “adhere to” these initiatives and reforms?

**DT:** Change is the only constant thing; nothing else remains the same. Heraclitus and Buddha taught this a few thousand years ago. I don’t think anybody should really “adhere” to what went before them unless that holds goodness and wisdom.

**SP:** What is your vision for SCE?

**DT:** If I had some visions for SCE, it may be spoken about by the few good things my colleagues and I were able to do together in the past three years. I have never liked to make bold statements not accompanied by action.

**SP:** Any departing message for the SCE family?

**DT:** I would like to remind myself and have often shared this with my children that a profession in education, including teaching, is no pass-time. One can do a lot of damage without knowing about it.

## Associate Dean of Edith Cowin University (ECU), Australia visits SCE



**D**r Vicki Banham is an associate Dean at Edith Cowin University (ECU), Australia. She looks after courses related to social sciences, social work and counselling. She visited Samtse College of Education from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> August.

**She-Rig PAGES (SP):** What is your purpose of visiting SCE?

**Vicki Banham (VB):** Vice Chancellor of ECU, Professor Stephen Kenneth Chappman and Vice Chancellor of RUB Nidup Dorji signed a memorandum of understanding on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. This memorandum is for us to work together. The 12 member delegation led by Vice Chancellor of ECU, professor Chappman met with the Presidents of RUB colleges and discussed future academic collaborations, exchange programmes and research capacity building. I am working with Samtse to develop social work programme and to make sure that the college has social work programme by 2019. That is the sole reason for my visit.

**SP:** What are your experiences of working with the lecturers at SCE?

**VB:** It has been really good. We have been in frequent contacts through email since last year we met at Gaeddu. You all are lucky to have fantastic lecturers who are really committed to social work programme.

**SP:** Any interesting things that you have noticed at SCE?

**VB:** The most interesting and the one that is really hard to take out from my visual space is the incidence that took place while coming to Samtse. Along the way while on a car, the most fascinating scene was of two cows standing in a position like they were having a conversation. They came in front of the headlight and looked at us as if to say "Huh." That is the amazing memory I have in Samtse. Other things could be the food is good, the hospitality is good and the respect and care from the adolescents of Bhutan is not seen in any western country particularly in Australia.

**SP:** Would you consider coming back to Bhutan?

**VB:** Definitely I will be back. I will be bringing back my students with me on a study tour. I will be in frequent touch with the lecturers of SCE and the President to work on social work programmes.

**SP:** Do you have any advice for the students of this college?

**VB:** Teachers should be motivated. They should experience the joy when a child opens the book and reads and experience the joy when a child picks up a pen and starts to use it. Just remember that your students are travelling with you on your journey and that your work is to walk along with the students and tell them what to do.

## Tashi Dawa receives the National Youth Award

**T**ashi Dawa, B. Ed IVth year Primary student, of SCE is a member of UN, SDSN and SDG coordinator of RUB and also a member of NGO. The Shes-Rig PAGES Team (SPT) interacted with him to understand his role and achievements.

Shes-Rig PAGES (**SP**): What does a leader mean to you?

Tashi Dawa (**TD**): A leader is a person who works himself and leads others. I feel that a leader is someone who brings all together and works accordingly.

**SP**: What was the programme about and when was it held?

**TD**: It was a National Youth Award hosted by Nazhoen Lamtoen and youth caring community on the International Youth Day at Thimphu (Coronation Park). Such type of award is first of its kind in the country and I am one of the first recipients. The programme lasted for two days. I had the opportunity to interact with amazing people.

**SP**: What were the different awards?

**TD**: The different awards were:  
\* The Voluntary Award  
\* The North Star Award, and  
\* Youth Creative Award

I had the honour to receive the National Youth Voluntary Award.

**SP**: What are your feelings on being a recipient of the award?



*Tashi Dawa with the National Youth Award*

**TD**: I am glad that I could do something in my own little ways for the general good. I am happy with whatever I have achieved.

**SP**: It is said that behind every successful person, there is someone. In your case who is that person?

**TD**: In my case there isn't a single person; there are many. My parents have always been my perennial source of motivation and inspiration. My kings have and will always be my inspiration. In addition, the youths who have been supporting me from the day I started my journey into such programmes have been my anchor.

**SP:** What challenges did you encounter in initiating and executing the programme?

**TD:** It is said, “There isn’t success without hard work”. The first challenge I faced was related to finance; sometimes it was difficult to find financial support but somehow I managed. The second challenge was the criticism I had to face but I focused on my goal and kept moving forward. The third challenge was the unavailability of a platform to showcase one’s talents. However I worked hard and succeeded.

**SP:** What plans have do you have for future?

**TD:** As I have already initiated some youth programmes, in future I would like to continue and advance these programmes and invite youths. I am involved in promoting 17 STGs and I have already initiated “Zero Waste Policy” at SCE. I would like to engage in some advocacy programmes in promoting Zero Waste Policy. I have even initiated youth groups in the country with the aim of making youth a responsible and a good citizen. Above all, I pledge to serve my country with full dedication.

## Visiting Faculty from the University of Melbourne, Australia

Three faculty members from University of Melbourne visited the college from 10<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> August. Professor Marie Connolly, Dr. Jennifer Donovan and Ms. Jacynta Krakouer were in the college to assist in the development



*Professor Marie Connolly making a presentation about Melbourne University to the faculty*

of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work and to explore areas of collaboration between the two institutions. Department of Social Work at University of Melbourne offers Bachelors, Masters and PhD programmes in social work. The team explored areas of future collaboration in terms of research, mobility and capacity development in the field of social work.

During their visit to the college, beside reviewing the BASW programme structure in the light of rigour, relevance and international standards, they conducted professional development seminars for SCE academics engaged in the development and teaching of social work.

Samtse College will launch Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, the first of its kind in the country, in July 2019. In order to offer a quality BASW programme based on local contexts and international best practice, the college is working closely with relevant government agencies,

CSOs, UNICEF Bhutan, and external institutions. The BASW programme will offer 40 modules that consist of six key thematic areas, namely Foundational modules, Core Social Work modules, Skill-based modules, Discipline-based modules, Field Immersion, and Social Innovation Project. Significant progress has been made in programme research and development, stake-

holder consultations and training, capacity building and networking.

Professor Marie Connolly is the Chair and Head of Social Work at the University of Melbourne and President of the Council of Heads of Schools of Social Work (the leading body for innovation in social work education, pedagogy and research in Australia).

## Boatsman Skolan team visits SCE

A five-member team from Sweden visited the College on 26<sup>th</sup> September. The team consisted of an Education Officer, a Principal, a Teacher Librarian, a Mathematics teacher and an English teacher from Boatsman Skolan (BS), Sweden. The visit was a part of Students-teachers Exchange Programme between Samtse Lower Secondary School (SLSS) and Boatsman Skolan, Sweden.

During their visit to SLSS they also made one-day visit to the College. The purpose of the visit was to interact with SCE management and staff for exchange of information and ideas. The delegates also visited the library, science laboratories, computer laboratory, meditation hall, music centre and some classes.

Niclas, the Principal of Boatsman Skolan shared that their visit to SLSS was to plan the Teachers-Students Exchange Programme between BS and SLSS that was established in early 2017. Boatsman Skolan is a Lower Secondary School with classes from 9 to 11.

The visitors met the B. Ed final year students in the auditorium. Niclas presented on the Boatsman Skolan: its curriculum, staff, pedagogy and assessment system. He mentioned that one of the most applied teaching methods in Boatsman Skolan is called as SPA (Self Pair All). Another teaching method they apply is Socratic Dialogue. He shared in brief the rules of Socratic Dialogue.

The visitors expressed their happiness and gratitude in having successfully organised the programme. Some books were donated to SCE library and links of other useful online resources were provided.



*Boatsman Skolan visitors entertained with music in the Lurig Centre*

## Mindfulness Retreat for Faculty members and staff



*Mindfulness retreat participants receiving instruction before session began*

**S**amtse College of Education conducted the first mindfulness retreat for the faculty members and the staff of the college on 1<sup>st</sup> August. The Centre of Contemplative Counseling Education and Research initiated the programme with the aim to give the participants some time and space away from their busy schedule. The coordinator of the retreat programme, Dechen Wangmo, lecturer at the college, said that such practice helps us relax, enhances our concentration power and helps overcome stress that we go through.

During the hour-long programme, the participants were introduced to the basics of mindfulness and mindfulness setting. The essence of the mindfulness retreat was practising to focus on

breath as breath is the present moment. “While our body is at the present moment, our mind is always on the move. So we need to practice to keep our mind too in the present moment,” said Dechen Wangmo.

The mindfulness practice is conducted regularly among the Postgraduate Diploma in Contemplative Counseling students. Dechen Wangmo reminded that mindfulness practice is not connected to any religion or spiritual groups. Unlike the Buddhist masters, who meditate on their deity, this programme is secular in nature. Anyone can participate in this mindfulness practice. She said that in the future the invitation will be sent to the members of SCE, especially the students of the college.



## Life and her Friends

Ever since I remember having friends, I remember having Ego and Anger. We were together from primary through to secondary school. We were inseparable. Ego was the tallest among three of us with a distinctive personality. Her beauty would attract anybody. Anger, on the other hand, had a frizzy hair, gloomy sunken eyes filled with rage. Ego always helped me to stand tall among the people and Anger showed me to become swirl of emotions. We would spend our good times together with the slightest care of what was happening around us.

We watched the sun go to rest, and the moon took her reign in the darkness, it was time for the when demon residing within us came out to play. We sneaked out of the hostel at night, bullied friends and brought out the worst in us. We hated everybody and loved only each other.

I often heard people say life is unfair or life is selfish. Yet I ignored them all. The more I was close to them, the more I heard that every day. Ego and Anger always insisted me to ignore them, made me believe that I was doing the right thing and I believed in them.

Soon we went to college. They were still a part of me until the day I overheard one of my classmates talk bad about us. Ego said, "She is not minding her own business, let us make her life miserable." Anger readily supported

the proposal. However, I knew she was only speaking the truth. The realisation made me numb and robotic cold. Chilly wind whispered the naked truth in my ears.

I looked skyward. To my surprise, I saw a million bright stars dotting the black canvas of the night. The eerie darkness of the night haunted me and made me lonely. I was afraid to make any new friends. However, the loneliness was also a time to reflect on my conduct. I was lost in thought. Someone patted at my back and asked, "Are you okay?" I saw someone with a broad smile. In her eyes, I saw what people call care.

I shed tears of joy. She was with her friend who looked equally caring. Upon enquiry, they said they were Happiness and Hope. That night it rained and the rain washed away the darkness in me. Moreover, I got new friend, Happy and Hope. I started to smile everyday and came across friends like Trust, Loyalty and Dream.

It amazed me how things changed. I saw people exchanging smiling back at me, enjoying my humor, and saying good things about me. Steadily the number of my friends grew. I heard them say, "Life is beautiful. Life is wonderful" and I have never been more courageous to introduce myself. Now I introduce myself with pride, "My name is Life and I feel wonderful with Happiness and Hope beside me.

Edited by Dr. Tashi Gyeltshen

## Interview with Mr. Gopi Chettri our Faculty Alumnus



### Shes-Rig PAGES (SP):

Unveiling your memories, tell us briefly your experience as a faculty at Samtse College of Education.

### Gopi Chettri (GC):

During those days, teaching was burdensome because our workload used to be 30 to 40 one-hour periods in a week and I had 35 periods a week. The main reason was shortage of faculty members in the institution. On other hand, those bygone days were beautiful and memorable one. I enjoyed teaching professional subjects, Teaching skills, Curriculum and Theories. Teaching skills were more practice oriented because the students were provided with theory input for one week and after that they were asked to do presentation or to do teaching in the classroom.

**SP:** How is your life today different from being a teacher educator and how is it similar?

**GC:** Of course, everything is different now since I have superannuated from the service. I need not have to visit college, I need not have to prepare lesson plan and finally I do not have to teach but I do reading on entertainment books sometimes.

**SP:** What is your view on Samtse College of Education then and today?

**GC:** I do not have much idea about how the Samtse College is doing nowadays since I haven't visited Samtse for last three years. Back than during our time the administration was functioning well. The modules were given according to our choices and every one of us enjoyed our stays at the College.

**SP:** Share your views on the role of Samtse College of Education for the development of teachers in the country.

**GC:** I think Samtse College of Education is playing a vital role in producing professional teacher in the country. They were trained and they understand the school's situation. They relate their theories to the content of the text and trainee were sent to nearby school to observe how other teacher's are teaching. They were also given orientation before they go for their teaching practice so that they can be well informed and be able to perform their job effectively under any circumstances.

**SP:** What is your advice to the youths of today who aspire to become teacher?

**GC:** I would say that it is a very satisfying profession whereby you get contentment out of it. I would also advise them to get into teaching if they are interested in being with the children because the children are intelligent and brighter, so we can also learn from them indeed. On other hand, you can see your own students grow up and become successful persons, which is an achievement for the teacher.

**SP:** Our society is changing and we are becoming a knowledge-based society. From your wide experiences as an educator and researcher, how should teaching learning be designed today?

**GC:** We should understand the children first and we must change our teaching methodology to fulfill the needs of the children. We must also determine the students' capability and interest so that everybody will learn. Learning should be individual since their learning differs from one another. So to become an effective teacher one must understand the children.

**SP:** What are some of the recent developments in the educational front you have seen? What challenges and opportunities you see for SCE?

**M**r. Gopi Chettri began his carrier as a teacher in 1976. From 1979 to 2008 he worked in Paro College of Education in different capacities such as a Lecturer, Principal, Dean of Student Affairs, and Officiating Director. From March 2008 to March 2016, he served as a Senior Lecturer in Samtse College of Education. Mr. Gopi Chettri comes

**GC:** Some of the changes I have seen nowadays, teachers are, time and again, called for refresher and orientation courses because the curriculum is constantly changing and we have to look at how society wants the curriculum to be and it should be covering wide range of information through research. To meet the demands of the changing scenario Samtse College of Education train teachers accordingly to fulfill the changing needs of the students.

**SP:** Samtse College of Education celebrated 51 years old this year, an opportunity for all of us to reflect on the milestones achieved as envisioned by his late majesty the Third Druk Gyalpo in 1968. What are your views on this event?

**GC:** Samtse College was started as teacher training institute (TTI) in 1968. Now there are drastic changes, they have diversified courses like B. Ed, PgDE, M. Ed, etc. It has developed a lot and people also need not have to go to Canada or India to do their masters, rather they can do it within the country. Now it has become convenient for teachers to do master within the country. And I would also suggest if pre service and fresh graduates could be also given M.Ed programmes to train them for 2 years.

from Dagapela, however, is now settled in Ugyentse, Samtse. He did his undergraduate from Mount Hermon College, Darjeeling and M.Ed from the University of New Brunswick, Canada. He also did Masters in Educational Management from the University of Leeds in England. He served as a teacher educator in the Royal University of Bhutan for 37 years.

## Interview with Mr. Kezang Wangchuk our Faculty Alumnus



### Shes-rig PAGES (SP):

Please briefly share about your education and professional journey.

### Kezang Wangchuk (KW):

I started my education from Simtokha. During that time, education was looked after by the Department of Education. However, unlike today, there were no facilities such as stipend, hostel or food. The students had to manage all by themselves. After completing class 12 in 1973, I was appointed as a teacher in Jakar. Motorable road had reach Palela. If we were lucky, we would get a ride till that point from Wangdi Phodrang in army trucks. Otherwise, we would have to walk all the way to Bumthang carrying our belongings. I would take 2 days to reach Trongsa from Wangdi Phodrang. From Trongsa to Bumthang was another arduous journey.

After two years, I got transferred to the then Lungten Zampa Nursery School. Being in a nursery school, there was nothing much than to play the whole day with the children. I stayed there for a year. In the following year I got transferred to Kalikhola. After eight year, in 1984 I got transferred to Teacher Training College in Paro. There I got opportunity to teach both at the college and at the Demonstration School. It was during this time, there was a policy to introduce teaching methodology in Dzongkha. However, as traditional teaching methods as dominant then, I was handicapped. It was the language experts such as Jenny Moon and Dr Gerry who talked with the British Council and arranged to send a Dzongkha lecturer each from Paro and Samtse to the UK for one year Diploma in language teaching. In 1991, upon my return from the UK, I was posted at the then National Institute of Education in Samtse from where I superannuated after serving about 22 years.

**SP:** Unveiling your memories, tell us briefly about the changes you see as a lecturer at the erstwhile National Institute of Education during your time and at present.

**KW:** There is a sky-and-earth difference in terms of both physical facilities and academics matters. There were less than 100 trainees in 1991, which at that time seemed a lot as we had only around 25 trainees at Paro. In each class we used to have at the most 30 students. This enabled one-on-one interaction and guidance. Coming to assignments, we could mark them well and provide detailed feedback. But now, with

over 40 students in a cohort of several sections, such individual guidance is almost impossible and timely marking has become a challenge.

**SP:** The main focus of Samtse College is teacher-training. However, the College could diversify its programmes. What is your opinion?

**KW:** On the one hand, as a teacher-training institute, it can continue to focus on providing a thorough training to the students. If they get quality training, it is not necessary that they all teach in Bhutan. There are opportunities elsewhere. Time has changed. In 1970s, opportunities were aplenty. As there were very few educated people, Ministries and Departments would hunt for us. Classes 10 and 12 graduates were directly appointed as teachers. However, I for one, was passionate about teaching and I spent my whole life teaching. But now, with the change in time, students need to be given other skills besides teaching. Moreover, now the government is not able to absorb even half of what the teacher training colleges produce annually. It is difficult for a teacher graduate to get a job in other departments. Therefore, Samtse College can look for avenues to diversify programmes besides teacher-training.

**SP:** Would you have any advise to the students of the College?

**KW:** It has become difficult to give advise. In the past, we chose to become teachers because we were passionate. Despite the abundance of job opportunities I chose to be a teacher. Now, students choose teacher-training when they have run out of options. However, that is not the dead end. Some people will change if we can touch their heart or if they can take their students to their heart. With continuous dealing

with the students, you gradually develop liking for children. If I share an incidence, when I was in Kalikhola school, I would start to feel sad as the day ended because I would be separated from my students. I loved to be with students. I would look forward to the next day's class. On the other hand, if you do not like your students, students will also not like you and start to dislike the subjects you teach.

**SP:** What aspect of the Bhutanese education system concerns you as a parent and Bhutanese citizen who has a stake in education? What opportunities and challenges do you see for Samtse College of Education in addressing these concerns?

**KW:** One of my concerns is regarding importing and implementing ideas without contextualizing. This will not work. One good example is NAPE and it could have done miracles. NAPE failed miserably in Bhutan because the context of implementation was different. Nowadays, as most teachers are Bhutanese and most parents are educated, we can consult and implement what is best for our children. We can perform miracle, though it may take time.

Next, as a teacher, we need to be sensitive of the situation and adapt to it. We need to understand ways students will learn best and accordingly change our teaching strategies and techniques. One good example for younger students is Play-way-method because students learn while playing.

**SP:** Samtse College of Education is 51 years old this year – an opportunity for all of us to reflect on the milestones achieved as envisioned by His Majesty the third Druk Gyalpo when the College was established in 1968. How do you feel as an alumnus of this College

that has served the nation for 51 years in the field of teacher preparation for the Bhutanese education system?

**KW:** I can confidently say that His Majesty's dream has been fulfilled. In fact, it is more than fulfilled. We have surplus of teachers. There was a time when 90% of the teachers in Bhutanese schools used to be from outside, especially from India. Now we have Bhutanese teachers in all levels of schools. Moreover, all the developmental activities begin with knowledge and skills. This knowledge and skills come for teachers.

**SP:** Would you have any other point in addition to whatever you have shared so far?

**KW:** I think it is time to upgrade the qualification of our teachers through provision. Samtse College has created and would create more in the future. Another point is, there is no point to do away with some of the programmes the College has been offering. I believe these programmes should be retained so that there is a variety of choice for the students. The College could retain a section or two of Bachelor of Education, both Primary and Secondary. Moreover, it is a good ground for the students from different programmes to interact and learn from each other. Lastly, I would like to reiterate on the customisation of imported teaching-learning methods through research and consultative meetings.

**M**r. Kezang Wangchuk is from Khaling under Tashigang district in eastern Bhutan. After completing class 12 from the then Rigney School in Simtokha, he joined as a teacher at Jakar, Bumthang in 1973. He served as a teacher in two other schools before he joined the then Teacher Training College in Paro in 1984. In 1991, he was transferred as a lecturer to erstwhile National Institute of Education in Samtse where he served until he retired in 2013.

He did a diploma in language teaching from Leeds University, England in 1990 and masters from Royal University of Bhutan in 2007. He had contributed immensely in the development of pedagogy for Dzongkha and authored four books. Currently, he lives in Alley Pakha (Gawadrang) in Samtse.

❖❖❖❖❖❖

**The College Vision:**

CENTRE of EXCELLENCE COMMITTED  
to RESEARCH and INNOVATION in  
EDUCATION

