

NEWS FROM USEF NEPAL

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A Bulletin of activities and events from the Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States and Nepal

The Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States and Nepal

Post Box 380, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 444-4780, 444-4779, 441-4598(Advising)
Fax: 977-1-4410881
email: fulbcomm@fulbrightnepal.org.np
www.fulbrightnepal.org.np



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...


The Dasain holidays are now underway, and people all over Nepal are preparing for visits home, stocking up on special foods and new clothes, and contemplating time off from school and/or work. All of us at USEF Nepal wish you a Happy Vijaya Dashami wherever you may be--and we all share the same aspirations for a happy and peaceful year ahead in Nepal.

The monsoon is ebbing, and it is finishing with occasional rain and cool weather in the Kathmandu Valley. As Nepalis prepare for the holidays, more tourists than we have seen in a long time are flowing in to Nepal for sightseeing and trekking. News is dominated by party re-unifications, the support for (and critiques of) the possible constituent assembly elections in late November, petrol shortages and...the news that rocked Kathmandu and all of "greater Gorkha" in late September: that a young Nepali-speaking Tamang man from Darjeeling named Prashant had won Indian Idol--the country's hugely popular version of the American television show. You can dispute the merits of this kind of "cultural exchange"--perhaps not exactly the kind that J. William Fulbright had in mind--but one thing is certain: people in Nepal, and in wide swaths of Nepali-speaking Sikkim and northern West Bengal too, are desperate for some positive news and a local figure they can be proud of. So here's to Prashant and what he stands for, which seems to me to be a young, energetic, and determined Nepal.

Most of Nepal is young, of course; something like half of the country is under the age of 20. And yet there is also great respect for the elders among us, and most often, rightly so. They have experienced much, and can look back with hindsight and towards an uncertain future with...foresight? We need the elders, but we need the fresh vision and hopefulness of the youth too. For those of us who were at the Fulbright Commission's "Welcome Home" reception recently for seven PLUS program alumni (see inside for photos) the thrill was to listen to young people at the podium for once. These seven young Nepalis are just back from two years of college in the US, and they told us, very briefly, a bit



of what they had experienced in the US under the PLUS program, and what they were looking towards now that they had come home. Hearing them speak made many of us proud, not least their family members who had accompanied them to the reception in Gyaneshwor. The pride was in seeing young Nepalis achieve some of their dreams--because we all know that they have the talent and the drive and the intelligence to do so. And more than that, there was a pride in the fact that these seven had come home to Nepal to make and live their dreams. Despite the fact that we are living in uncertain times, and disagreements, strikes and violence are rife in the news of Nepal, there is also much to point to with hope. Seemingly everything--or almost everything--is out on the table for debate in Nepal, and that IS a great move forward. It is not going to be easy, so I thank the PLUS alumni for their hope and energy and examples. Sometimes those of us over thirty need to lend a hand, sometimes we need to get out of the way.


Peter K. Moran

Recent Arrivals

introducing the American Fulbright Grantees in Nepal for 2007-8:



FULBRIGHT SENIOR SCHOLARS

Dr. Rama Gorla is a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Cleveland State University in Ohio; he and his wife Vijaya will be staying in the Dhobighat area of Patan for the next four months. Here in Nepal, Rama is affiliated with the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Kathmandu University, where he will also be researching finite element analysis in heat transfer.

Dr. William Waldron is in Nepal with his wife Catherine, and two children Anna and Miles, for the next six months. He is currently teaching courses on the philosophies of the Yogacara school of Mahayana Buddhism at both Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University. Bill is a Professor of Religious Studies at Middlebury College in Vermont, and is pursuing research on the relation between language and consciousness in Yogacara philosophy and in contemporary cognitive science.

Drs. Fred and Sandra Connell are both Fulbright scholars in their own right, and will be teaching in the fields of Public Health and Psychiatry respectively at the BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences in Dharan. Fred is a specialist in Epidemiology, Health Policy, and Maternal/Child Health at the School of Public Health at the University of Washington in Seattle. Sandy just retired from the Seattle Institute of Psychoanalysis, where she has worked as a visiting professor supervisor and as a training psychoanalyst since 1995.

Dr. Mark Liechty, whose expertise is the anthropology and history of South Asia (Nepal in particular), returns to Nepal on a Fulbright Senior

Scholar Research award. His research on this visit is the history of tourism in Nepal and the history of Nepal as a tourist destination in the Western tourist imagination. Mark and his family live in Chicago, Illinois, where he teaches at the University of Illinois.

Dr. Alenka Hlousek-Radojic, an expert in Plant Biotechnology at the Richard Bland College of the College William and Mary, will be coming to Nepal in January 2008 to assist Tribhuvan University in the development of a biotechnology program. Alenka lives in Chester, Virginia.

Dr. Laura Kunreuther, who is an Assistant Professor and Director of Anthropology at Bard College, is doing research on "Public Intimacy and Political Life in Nepal" under the Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Program of the US Department of Education. She is in Nepal with her husband Daniel and son Rafael.

FULBRIGHT STUDENT RESEARCHERS

Mr. David Saunders, from Hastings, MI, just graduated from Boston College. His research focuses on tuberculosis among Tibetans in Nepal, from public health/medical anthropology perspectives.

Mr. Scott Sorrell has just completed his B.A. in cultural anthropology from Duke University and hails from Clinton, North Carolina. Scott's research focus is community-level conflict resolution, especially over claims to natural resources like water.

Ms. Beth Robertson comes from Reston, in northern Virginia, with interests in International Development,

Business and Social Responsibility. Beth graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 2007 with a B.A. in South Asian Studies and anthropology.

Mr. Sam Mowe, from Portland, Oregon, graduated from Occidental College in Los Angeles with a degree in Religious Studies. In Nepal, Sam's research focuses on "the construction of a Buddhist pilgrimage site-Lumbini."

Ms. Charis Boke is investigating the worship of "aniconic" (that is, nonanthropomorphic images) shrines by Hindus, Buddhists, and animists in the Kathmandu Valley. Charis graduated with a B.A. in anthropology from Mills College in Oakland, CA, and considers the Bay Area to be home.

Mr. Ajay Pillarisetti, of Alexandria, Louisiana, studied environmental health/public health at Emory University. His research in Nepal focuses on indoor-and outdoor-particulate air pollution.

Ms. Michelle Kaufman's study is entitled "Sexual Health and Political Instability: an Investigation into the Needs of Nepali Women." She is currently working on her Ph.D in social psychology at the University of Connecticut, and is originally from Lancaster, PA.

Mr. Tyler McMahon received his B.A Economics from Colorado College in May 2007. Interested in Environmental Economics, his work in Nepal will focus on rainwater harvesting as a water supply system in the Kathmandu Valley. Tyler is originally from Fairplay, Colorado.

Mr. Michael Piech, of Holland, NY, recently graduated from Pomona College in Claremont, CA. There he majored in political science and minored in Asian studies. His research in Nepal focuses on the workings and effects of Nepali cinema.

Mr. Justin Eure received his Bachelor's of Fine Arts from the North Carolina School of the Arts, where he

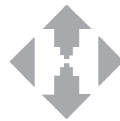
focused on Theatre. Justin is from Virginia Beach, VA, and come to Nepal to research the fusion of Western theatre with Nepali dance-drama.

Mr. Alex Yiannopoulos hails from New Orleans, and is a recent graduate of Boston College, where he studied philosophy and linguistics. In Nepal, Alex is conducting research on the central role of translation in the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism.

Mr. Raj Krishna Shrestha, who has a BBA degree in Business

Management from Pace University in Pleasantville, New York is conducting a business related research on "Social Capital: Alleviation of Poverty in Nepal through Microfinance."

Ms. Mary Alyson Prude, a Ph.D. candidate in Religious Studies at the University of California in Santa Barbara, is doing research on "A Contemporary Ethnography of Tibetan Delog" under the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program of the US Department of Education.



Recent Departures

14 Fulbright and Humphrey Fellows from Nepal to the United States

- THEIR AWARDS, STUDY TOPICS, AND HOST UNIVERSITIES

Nepali Fulbright Masters

Students: Mr. Raju Gautam, Veterinary Epidemiology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana; Mr. Anil Poudel, Social Work, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri; Mr. Puspa Sharma, International Trade, University of Denver, Denver, CO; Mr. Kayur Shrestha, Business Administration, Suffolk University, Boston, MA; and Mr. Sijan Raj Baral, Mass Communication/Journalism, Kent State University, Kent, OH.

Nepali Fulbright Science and Technology Ph.D. Award:

Ms. Lisa Shrestha, Civil Engineering, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

Nepali Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program:

Dr. Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Natural Resource Management, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.

Nepali East-West Center Student:

Mr. Padmendra P. Shrestha, Master's in City & Regional Planning, University of Hawaii, Manoa, HI.

Nepali Humphrey Fellows: Mr. Deependra Nath Sharma, Natural

Resources & Environmental Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA; Mr. Yam Nath Sharma, Economic Development, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI; and Mr. Ashutosh Sharma (Sapkota), Banking and Finance, Boston University, Boston, MA.

Nepali Fulbright Post-Doctoral Researchers:

Dr. Kunjani Joshi, The Harvard University Herbaria, Cambridge, MA, Biological Sciences - "Phylogeny and Biogeography of Swertia (Gentianaceae) of the Mountainous Regions of Nepal;" Dr. Doj Raj Khanal, Department of Clinical Sciences at the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, Biological Sciences - "Evaluating the Interrelationship of Minerals and Khari Disease towards Determining Etiological Agents and Improving Rural Livelihoods of Buffalo Farmers of Far Western Nepal;" and Dr. Nanda B. Maharjan, Department of Physics, State University of New York, Albany, NY, Physics/Astronomy - "Investigation of Electronic Properties of Nano-Materials and Bio-Materials."

Welcome to Ambassador Powell and the New Staff of the United States Embassy in Nepal—in particular the new Chair of the Fulbright Commission Board, Mr. Mark Larsen.

The United States Mission in Nepal moved to a new compound in July 2007, and has since hosted many open house receptions for Nepali and American visitors. Many of the American staff are new, having arrived in the country over the last few months. At the helm is our new Ambassador, Ms. Nancy J. Powell. Ambassador Powell is no stranger to Nepal or to the region; she previously served in Kathmandu as a consular officer from 1980 to 1982 and as the State Department Nepal Desk Officer from 1982 to 1984. Ambassador Powell was U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan from August 2002 through October 2004, and previously served in Dhaka and Kolkata as well as a host of other assignments in Africa and in Canada. Prior to her present assignment, Ambassador Powell most recently served as the National Intelligence Officer for South Asia at the National Intelligence Council from 2006 to 2007. She is joined in Nepal by the new Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. Randy W. Berry, and the new Public Affairs Officer, Mr. Mark Larsen.

Mr. Larsen joined the Foreign Service in 1985. He first came to Nepal in the mid-1980s, where he trekked extensively in the Himalaya and came to love the country. As an Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer in Beijing, he directed the Fulbright program in China before assuming responsibilities as the Assistant Public Affairs Officer in Kathmandu in 1989. After a tour as the Public Affairs Officer in Uganda, Mark served in Washington as the Desk Officer for East Africa, and subsequently, Desk Officer for Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Afghanistan, and Nepal before moving to Chennai, India where he was Public Affairs Officer. Two years in Bangkok as the Information Officer were followed by two years as the Public Affairs Officer in Thailand.

As the Deputy Director for Citizen Exchanges in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Mark Larsen directed a new range of exchanges to promote international understanding of the U.S. Mark assumed his current responsibilities as the Public Affairs Officer for the U.S. Embassy—and the Chairman of the Fulbright Commission Board—in early September.

RECEPTION FOR PLUS Partnerships for Learning, Undergraduate Scholarship-Alumni

On Friday August 24, USEF Nepal director Peter Moran hosted a "welcome home" reception for 7 young Nepali alumni of the PLUS program at the Commission in Gyaneshwar. These seven are: Mr. Ramesh Deshar, Ms. Nirmala Gyawali, Ms. Nabi Joshi, Mr. Raju Kandel, Mr. John Narayan Parajuli, Ms. Safala Shrestha, and Ms. Moksheda Thapa. Three other PLUS alumni-Mr. Man Bahadur Gurung, Mr Angjuk Lama, Mr. Kamal Paudel--could not attend. The seventy-plus attendees included Her Excellency the Ambassador of the United States, Nancy Powell-in her first visit to USEF Nepal-as well as the acting chief of Public Affairs, the mission director of USAID, the country director of Save the Children US, several prominent Nepali democracy and human rights activists, the division chief of the UN Mission to Nepal's Child Welfare unit, and a number of Nepali Fulbright, Humphrey and East-West Center alumni. The seven PLUS alumni expressed their wishes to contribute to their country and spoke briefly about their experiences in the United States. The reception was a great chance for members of the larger Nepali and foreign community to meet the PLUSers and each other. The latter part of the reception was a screening of the documentary "April Revolution", created by several of the PLUS alumni while in the U.S. The film examines Nepal's April 2006 uprising that ousted the monarchy from power, particularly examining American and wider international perspectives on the event. Many of the invited guests remarked that it was particularly refreshing to hear from such talented, and very passionate, young Nepalis, while the PLUS alumni seemed pleased to have had the chance to meet and "network" with our invited Nepali and American guests.



Ramesh Deshar, Nirmala Gyawali, Ambassador Powell, Moksheda Thapa, Nabi Joshi, Safala Shrestha, John Parajuli



Seven PLUS students and their family members.



USEF Executive Director Peter Moran welcoming guests in the Advising Center Library.

Fulbright Alumni News



from left, PLUS alumna Moksheda Thapa with new US Fulbright Student scholars Alex Yiannopoulos and David Saunders



Raju Kandel addressing the guests



from left, Anil Chitrakar, USEF Educational Advisers Gaurav Katwal and Selena Malla, and PLUS coordinator Ajay Shrestha

David Edds and his wife, **Tracy Hirata-Edds**, wrote in to tell us of their recent news. Tracy completed her Ph.D. from the University of Kansas Child Language Doctoral Program in 2006 with a dissertation entitled: "Influence of Second Language Immersion in Cherokee on Children's Development of Past Tense in Their First Language, English." Congratulations Dr. Hirata-Edds! Tracy was a Fulbright Senior Scholar Lecturer/Researcher with a specialization in TEFL/Applied Linguistics at the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, in 1996. She is currently a Lecturer in the Applied English Center at the University of Kansas. Dave was a Fulbright Senior Researcher in 1996, studying fish ecology, and was affiliated with TU's Department of Zoology (he was also a Fulbright Student Scholar studying fish ecology in Nepal in 1984-85). Now he is a Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Emporia State University in Kansas. For more on his fish related research in Nepal, please go to <http://www.emporia.edu/biosci/eddsbiol.htm>

In Memoriam: Dr. Mohan Shrestha

Dr. Shrestha, 68, died Sept. 14, 2007, near his home in Bowling Green, Michigan. He is survived by his wife and children. Dr. Shrestha was a professor emeritus of geography at Bowling Green State University, retiring June 1, 2004 after 35 years of service. He was one of the first from Nepal to travel to the United States in pursuit of a doctorate degree, which he achieved through a 1964 Fulbright Scholarship and a 1965 International Scholarship. Dr. Joseph Spinelli, retired professor, whose career paralleled Dr. Shrestha in the geography department, recalls his friend as "a very fair professor, he was very kind to students. He was a real gentle person and students liked him for that."

As a professor, his research focused on computer mapping, weather and climate, and population migration, especially in Nepal and the Himalayan region. Dr. Shrestha first went to Texas in 1964, and then transferred to University of Iowa, where he earned his Ph.D. in geography in 1969. After teaching at BGSU from 1967-69, he returned to Nepal to teach at Tribhuvan University, Katmandu. He then returned to BGSU in 1971 as an assistant professor. Dr. Shrestha was also active in the Nepalese community in the U.S. for many years. Our deepest sympathies to the Shrestha family at their great loss.

Deepesh Vaidya

A note from Brandeis University

He is currently working on his Master's in Business Administration at the International Business School of Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts.

I believed that this opportunity to come to US would give me more than just an academic degree. It did not take me long to experience it. Meeting with people from different parts of the world is a learning experience in itself, and it is as rewarding as taking finance classes.

I went to Miami, Florida for four days for my pre-academic orientation. There were more than 120 Fulbright scholars from more than 70 different countries. The crowd was overwhelmingly diverse

and so were their names. I, as every other, had problems pronouncing or remembering names but I enjoyed talking to them and learning about countries of which I had seldom heard. Four days of orientation gave me a good head start for my experiences in US.

I am lucky to have the same cultural diversity at the Brandeis International Business School (IBS). There were not more than 160 students in my class but they are from more than 60 different

countries and it is truly an 'Olympic village'. Because of this diversity, classes are very interesting. Whenever we discuss international issues, be it in economics, finance or business we always have someone with home country experience to make the discussions lively. Discussions are equally lively when you work in a group and can listen to different perspectives from your group members; when not actively participating one can learn more about countries and culture. I am fascinated with this diversity and strength produced within a team. My one year in IBS has really made me think globally.

As a concentration for my MBA, I am taking mostly finance courses. IBS offers good choices for finance courses taught by professors with years of profound experience in the world's leading financial institutions. I am taking all the finance courses that are helping me to understand the financial market better. Most of the courses are case-based and hence have real world examples. Currently, I am experiencing interesting discussions amidst the current crisis in sub-prime mortgage loans and its effect in financial markets. Sometime it is a challenge to understand such developed and complex models and relate to my experience of less developed capital markets in Nepal. But my limited experience also gave me an



Deepesh and friends at Thanksgiving dinner



Deepesh Vaidya at Brandeis University

opportunity to explore endless possibilities of new services to bring to the capital markets of Nepal.

I did my summer internship in Greenwich, Connecticut. I had a very good experience working as a research analyst in a high yield sector. This was my first experience working in 'Corporate America'. It was really challenging to work in a competitive environment but also satisfying to work for a Wall Street firm.

Living in Boston is definitely a different experience. I read an article in the USEF newsletter, October 2006, issue by Ms. Beenu Shrestha and I could not agree more when she wrote "Boston itself is a very international place - full of universities and intellectuals. It is difficult not to overhear or get involved in intellectual conversations." I attended a few seminars organized by the Fulbright Association of Massachusetts chapter and I am impressed to know how much effort people put into their research.

Living in Boston demonstrates that it is a young and lively city. Studies and hobbies go side by side. You can not live without hearing about the Red Sox or the Patriots or the Boston Celtics. Unknowingly, I have become a Red Sox fan and over time built some rivalry against the New York Yankees. These days, I am trying to understand football and hope to follow the college football season closely. As for myself, I have become a squash player.

SUBSCRIPTIONS & SUBMISSIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

USEF Nepal wants to ensure that all USEF grantees who wish to receive this newsletter are doing so. If your address has changed, or if you are not receiving the newsletter, let us know. Likewise, let us know if you do not wish to receive it. The current issue of the newsletter, as well as the most recent three or four newsletters, will always be posted on the USEF website at www.fulbrightnepal.org.np. If you wish to access the newsletter online only, let us know by email (fulbcomm@fulbrightnepal.org.np).

USEF Nepal welcomes submissions to the Quarterly Newsletter. If you have anything that you think might be of interest to the community of current and former USEF grantees, please send it electronically, preferably as an email attachment in MS Word, to either fulbcomm@fulbrightnepal.org.np or to peter@fulbrightnepal.org.np. Decisions on when, and whether or not, any submission will be published however, will be made by USEF Nepal.

Recent Fulbright related events in Nepal

Dr. Peter Moran was an invited guest and offered remarks at the 2nd anniversary program of the Professional Development and Research Center on July 29, 2007. The PDRC is a youth-led organization that supports and empowers qualified young people from Dalit communities through education, as well as occupational and leadership training.

On August 2, USEF hosted a "double bill" in the Educational Advising building auditorium: a presentation by Fulbright Senior Scholar alumnus Dr. Mark L. Hildebrandt from Southern Illinois University—Edwardsville on "Climate Change in Nepal"; followed by "Languages in Contact in Nepal: Manange, Gurung, and Nepali"

by Dr. Kristine A. Hildebrandt, of the University of Manchester (UK). What do these topics have in common? Both lectures were presented by the husband and wife team Hildebrandt, frequent visitors to Nepal, and were thoroughly enjoyed by participants.

The last of the Fulbright Alumni Association of Nepal's (FAAN) Democracy Fora was held on August 10, 2007 at the Godavari Alumni Association auditorium in Thamel, just across from USEF's old office. This last forum—the last of a ten part series that moved to neighborhoods all over Kathmandu town—focused on the timely topic of "Constituent Assembly: Foundation of Democracy." Acting

Public Affairs Officer Mr. William Humnicky, FAAN President Dr. Sangita Rayamajhi, and Dr. Peter Moran, all offered remarks, as did Fulbright alumnus and former Minister of Education and Sports, Dr. Professor Mangal Siddhi Manandhar. Dr. Manandhar helped to close the circle he himself helped to open, as he was one of the speakers at the very first Democracy forum in 2006. Expert speakers on the topic of the constituent assembly were Mr. Sushil Pyakurel, human rights defender; Ms. Sarita Giri, spokesperson for the Sadbhawana Party (Anandidevi); and Ms. Mamata Thebe, central committee member of the Nepal Student Union.

A Note from Hawai'i

After saying goodbye to many Nepali Fulbright and Humphrey grantees in August, we also said goodbye to Mr. Padmendra Shrestha, who began his studies at the East-West Center in Honolulu in early August. Below is the quick email he sent to USEF know he made it....and that he was enjoying the beginning!

Namaste,

I have reached Hawaii and am enjoying my orientation. The orientation committee here has tried their best to introduce new students to our new home in Hawaii. There are a lot of student volunteers working together to introduce us new students to Hawaii, the East-West Center and the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Everything is very well organized here; people came for the airport pickups, got into the dorms right away, went out to several markets, enjoyed the Hawaiian Beach at North Shore, had a great campus tour (all part of the orientation)....having great fun.

Hawaii is a great place to be. It has good environment with plants and trees everywhere. Beaches are fantastic and the people here are so friendly. On top of that, being in the East-West Center has a different meaning. Even the Americans feel alien in this part of

the US. There are people from 55 different countries living together and there are over 300 of them from all sorts of places. Cultural diversity is a key to the EWC's education. There is a lot to learn just by living together with people from all over the world.

Nepal has one of the big teams—seven people joining in various programs—at the East-West Center this year. Besides myself, there are 3 Asian Development Bank scholars, 2 on the Asia-Pacific Leadership Program, and 1 as a student affiliate.

I'm really enjoying the cross-cultural experience here. It does not even make me homesick. I don't know if I will be able to write to you after my classes start, so until then, I'm completely enjoying the Hawaiian life at the East-West Center.

With regards,
Padmendra

FULBRIGHT POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR NEPALI SCHOLARS

The competition for the Nepali Fulbright Post-Doctoral Scholar research grants for academic year 2008-2009 is now open. Depending on the availability of funding, the Commission will provide grants to two Nepali scholars to conduct post-doctoral research at a U.S. university during the 2008-2009 academic year for a period of six months.

The subject of the proposed research should relate directly to Nepal. Typewritten research proposals using the prescribed form will be accepted in any field. Applicants should have already established contact with and solicited expression of interest from the U.S. university where their research is to be conducted. Women are encouraged to apply. Detailed instructions and application forms are available from the Commission website www.fulbrightnepal.org.np, or through email. If you would like to receive a copy through email, please send a blank email with the subject 'Please send post-doc application' to fulbcomm@fulbrightnepal.org.np. No applications will be given out after 4 p.m., October 29, 2007. Duplicate hard copies of the complete application set must reach the Commission no later than 4 p.m., November 5, 2007.



Padmendra Shrestha (back, left) and group at the East-West Center in Hawai'i



Recipients of the Toufiq and Ulrike Siddiqi Award (from left: Padmendra, Ulrike Siddiqi, two Bangladeshi students, Touriq Siddiqi, Dean Mary Hammond, and Indian student.