

Khmer Buddhist Society Inc.
2715 Liberty Rd., Greensboro NC 27406
Tel: (336) 314-7565

Dear: National Endowment For The Humanities (NEH):

Subject: Public Humanities Projects / Grant 2017111-GW

Date: January 1, 2017

In reference to the National Endowment For The Humanities grant 20170111-GW in Public Humanities Project, we the Board of Directors of Khmer Buddhist Society Inc. / Wat Greensboro Buddhist Temple (501c), located in Greensboro North Carolina, that is serving the greater Triad area's Buddhist communities would like to present a proposal that would meet the merit of this grant and provide benefits to all community members, Buddhists and non-Buddhists.

We propose a project to bring insights of humanities regarding challenging contemporary issues such as Mental Health, Depressions, and the search for Happiness from the Buddhist perspective.

The project hopes to engage the community in two-fold, 1) Through Conversation and, 2) Through Permanent Exhibition.

Engaging Through Conversation:

The power of Buddhist teaching was shared originally through conversations by the Buddha and his disciples, and after transmitted for centuries through oral traditions and chantings. The path to discover inner peace, calmness, happiness and acceptance was no less relevant then than it is now, and even more so today as our levels of stressors have magnified.

At the core of the Buddha's teaching is concept of Action/Kamma and Results/Phalla, stated in another way, Cause and Effect. The teaching of the Buddha helps us hone our concentration and perception, for us to see and become aware, to seek out and meditate on the causes of our stressors and deal with them through the cultivation of Wisdom/Panha - Wisdom that is cultivated through Samadhi (Meditation/Concentration), and Seila (Discipline in Actions/Virtues).

Propose: We hope to share these perspectives and understanding through Dharma talks and Meditation sessions, open to the public. Provided 1-2 a month. These sessions will cover and engage the public in conversation about the traditional Buddhist perspective on mental health, stress reductions, and insight cultivations. Questions and answers given by ordained Buddhist monks provided in English, Cambodian, Laos, and Thai.

Service Cost: As the Buddhist temple has traditionally been a public space of spiritual retreat for Asian cultures, it will remain so. We hope to provide and expand these services to accommodate and benefit the general public.

Material Cost: Our temple facility does not have the resources to expand and accommodate an additional meditation hall. We wish to use this grant to renovate the current temple condition and build a meditation hall to accommodate the class. We will be willing to work with NEH to assess the cost of the project if the proposal grant accepted.

Preliminary Estimated Cost: \$50,000 - \$120,000

Engaging Through Exhibition: Peace Garden

Wat Greensboro Buddhist Center is approximately 10 acres in size and much of it are still unused. The community have come together to clear out overgrown vegetations, but we envision these cleared out areas can be put to a greater public use and access, in line with our Buddhist philosophies.

Due to limited resources, our progress continues to be slow.

However, with the help of NEH grant, we envision it can be a center for meditative retreats that can be combined with our *Engagement Through Conversation* proposal, to give the community a combined holistic environment for spiritual and physical healings.

The natural bamboo growth already provides a peaceful setting, and landscape conducive for both contemplation and conversations. The Buddhist Peace Garden will create an environment to help the mind can find Peace. For this exhibition part of the proposal we have the following projects currently in progress:

- Trees and vegetation clearing
- Buddhist Natural Pond Recovery
- Pool recovery (Can be converted to Zen Buddhist Pond)
- Meditation Paths/Walkways & Landscaping
- Lighting installations for public safety

Some portion of the land is already allotted for urban farming uses by our monks to grow vegetables for their daily needs. Provided the right expertise and partnerships, we also envision incorporating this aspect into community healing - through teaching about urban farming, self-sustaining gardening, and also explore concepts of community gardening and food sharing to help address community needs.

Estimated Cost:

The cost of the required transformation will range depending on which projects or if all of the listed projects will be considered. We are willing to work with NEH to assess and procure the

expertise needed to find out and also to ensure every aspect of the work and expenses are accounted for should we receive the grant.

Our preliminary estimation would put it between **\$40,000 - \$120,000**

Total Grant Proposed: \$240,000 (Engaging Through Conversation & Exhibition)

Summary

Wat Greensboro Buddhist Center and Board of Directors believes in Engaged Buddhism and we have done this for our community since the founding of temple in 1986. We wish to extend our visions and share our philosophies to the greater communities, without prejudice or regard to race, creed, or religion. It is our hope that NEH will see the values in the services we have provided to our Buddhist and immigrant communities and can contribute to our greater host community.

For over 30 years, Wat Greensboro Center has been a place for spiritual refuge, interfaith relationships, and community refuge. We aspire and hope to continue to provide these services and to reach out and help more people through the teachings of the Buddha.

Loving-kindness, compassion, discipline and inner peace, these are needed now in our time more than ever; let us work together across communities and faiths to make sure our communities have the support environment they need to cope with challenges of contemporaries issues.

Thank you for your time, and consideration of our proposals.

Yours Sincerely,
Somsak Sambimb, President



Phramah Somsak Sambimb, President

Khmer Buddhist Society Inc (501c 3) / Wat Greensboro Buddhist Center

Wat Greensboro Board of Directors

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Reference:

501(c)(3) - Federal Identification Number: 58-1883896

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wat.greensboro/?fref=ts>

Others: <http://www.greensborodailyphoto.com/2012/09/greensboro-buddhist-center.html>