

Following is a letter from the current director of Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Program (LRZTP), Isabel Arocena, dated May 21, 2004

Dear Friend,

To give you an idea of the course and its aim, I post you some information about it here. If you are interested in the program please let me know and I will contact you if there are any vacancies in the next program.

The LRZTP interpreter training program has been established by Lama Zopa Rinpoche of the Foundation For The Preservation of The Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) to fulfil the need within the FPMT to provide qualified native speaking interpreters for the resident Geshe in our Dharma centres.

The course is four years, two of classroom style language training in Dharmasala, India and two years of practical application as an interpreter in an FPMT Dharma centre. Students who are not contracted from the outset to work for a specific centre are placed by LRZTP at the end of the two years in India in a centre deemed most suitable for them (most likely in one's own country, though not always).

Students must have a very good grasp of English as classes are conducted in English. The course starts with the Tibetan alphabet and does not presume any prior knowledge of Tibetan. The cost of the course is subsidized with students paying US\$ 2700 for the two years. This includes a subsidized trip to the great Monasteries of Drepung – Ganden and Sera in South India that the class makes as a group in the second year of study. Course fees do not cover accommodation, food or travel. Students will need a minimum of US\$ 150/month for these other expenses. Once work in a centre begins the interpreter's living expenses will be covered as well as a monthly stipend.

Our teacher Geshe Sherab Gyatso is a fully qualified teacher of both Tibetan language and philosophical studies having completed his studies at the Institute of Buddhist Dialects in Dharmasala and having sat his geshe exams at Drepung Loseling Monastery. Please see his CV below.

The current program (LRZTP 4) finished in April, 2005 and the next program will be starting sometime between June 05 - Dec 05. When the dates have been decided they will be posted on this site.

With best wishes,

Isabel Arocena
LRZTP Director
Email: lrztp@vsnl.com

Geshe Sherab Gyatso, Curricula Vitae

Geshe Sherab Gyatso is an English monk. Having received a modest education in his native country, he became a Buddhist at the age of 19, and decided to devote himself to exploring the rich intellectual and spiritual heritage of the tradition. After first experiencing life in a Western Buddhist centre he went to in India, primarily to further his studies. He took novice ordination within a

month of arriving there in late 1985 (and full-ordination, from His Holiness Dalai Lama, some years later). Having spent a year in Nepal, learning Tibetan, he joined the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, McLeod Ganj, on his return to India in late 1987. There, chiefly under the guidance of the principal, Gen Lobsang Gyatso, he studied for the next twelve and a half years, finally becoming the Institute's first foreign graduate. He combined his study time with interpreting, an activity that led him to work both inside and outside the Institute, and involved interlocution during teachings on Buddhism, as well as discussions and dialogues with (amongst others) Western scientists and philosophers. He has also translated a number of books about Buddhism, including *The Four Truths* and *Bodhicitta* (both composed by Gen Lobsang Gyatso, {Snow Lion Publications}). He became the first Western geshe at Drepung Loseling Monastery, in early 2004 (the fourth Western geshe to date). With the encouragement of his mentor, the Institute's principal, he began to do some teaching outside, in 1994. He was appointed as teacher and material-writer for all subjects of the FPMT's *Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo Translator Programme* from its inception in 1996. And apart from one period in the wilderness (2002) he has held the position up until the present day. Aside from translating, writing and publishing in English, has also prepared written translations of Tibetan and has had an article published in the Tamang language (research into Tibetans dialects and related languages being one of his major areas of interest). In addition to his teaching for LRZTP, he is presently working on a number of written translations including work for the Tibetan Classics Translation Project.