



# MONASTIC ACADEMY

FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE ON EARTH

## CEDAR

COMMUNITY FOR THE  
EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
AWAKENING AND RESPONSIBILITY

2021  
**FALL**  
QUARTERLY  
REPORT

# ABOUT US



## Description of CEDAR

CEDAR (Community for the Experience and Development of Awakening and Responsibility) is an international network of communities working together to create a more trustworthy culture through monastic training and leadership development. At CEDAR, we are creating monastic academies—twenty-first-century educational institutions for the spiritual leaders needed for this time of crisis. MAPLE in Vermont was the first established community, and we have now expanded to include Oak in California and Willow in Canada.

## History of MAPLE

MAPLE (Monastic Academy for the Preservation of Life on Earth) is a full-time residential mindfulness and leadership training program to develop awakened leaders. Founded in 2011 in Burlington, VT, MAPLE now runs a world-class monastic training center on 125 acres in Lowell, VT. We are also building an adjacent village to scale trustworthy culture and values to impact the globe.

## History of Oak

Oak is a monastic academy founded in 2018 that provides monastic training, trustworthy friendship, and spiritual guidance to those addressing society's greatest challenges in the San Francisco Bay Area.

## History of Willow

Willow is the newest monastic academy located near Toronto—the first international branch of CEDAR. Founded in 2020 by Seishin Jasna Todorovic, Willow brings modern monastic training to the many beautiful communities in Canada, particularly those in Toronto and Montreal.

## Center for Mindful Learning

Center for Mindful Learning (CML) is the legal, non-profit name of our United States 501(c)(3) organization founded in 2011. CML has supported mindfulness projects such as Modern Mindfulness for Schools (ModMind), the Monastic Academy, and Mindful City Project.

## JOIN US

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

[www.monasticacademy.org](http://www.monasticacademy.org)  
[www.facebook.com/monasticacademy](https://www.facebook.com/monasticacademy)  
[www.youtube.com/c/CenterforMindfulLearning](https://www.youtube.com/c/CenterforMindfulLearning)  
[www.twitter.com/MonasticAcademy](https://www.twitter.com/MonasticAcademy)

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

This August, I undertook a walking pilgrimage. I traveled from MAPLE to Burlington, about seventy miles across five days. I got lost in the woods. I walked along a narrow sidewalk on the interstate as cars zoomed by, inches from me. I camped in the woods and city parks. I have spent a lifetime optimizing for a comfortable lifestyle free of discomfort and poverty. This journey was my way to face my fears and to gain a glimpse of empathy for those less fortunate who must live this way. I walked to find my strength. I walked to free my mind of doubts and worries. I came back to MAPLE revitalized and grateful for the necessities of life and the support of the community.

This summer has been a period of flourishing for CEDAR. After several spring and summer months training together at MAPLE, Oak and Willow rebooted in July. Oak resident Sky Taylor has relaunched the California branch Oak as its Director. Willow has begun its three-month intensive with five participants led by Seishin, Vīrabhadra, and Ryūshin Daniel Thorson.

At MAPLE, we've broken ground in many ways. We started construction of our second zendo, a majestic 700-square-foot space. Work has begun on excavation and utilities for the Dees' future villager house, and we began renovations on Soryu's cabin. We hired Ānanda as a long-term employee to care for our buildings and grounds.

This past summer, we hosted a number of new programs. In July, we ran our first Circling & Emotions Retreat. Reflecting the diverse depth of experience in our community, several of us led different workshops and sessions from Circling to emotional processing to working with our values. In August, we also successfully ran, for the first time this year, two Vision Quests with over twenty participants questing on the land.

Darren Silver, our Vision Quest guide, shared a question from one of his elders. He asked, "Are you willing to let go of your dreams to live your vision?"

We are also breaking ground within. Many of us have dreams. What's the difference between a dream and a vision? A dream is about myself. A vision, a vow, includes everyone. At MAPLE, our practice goes a further step to not only become aware and free of our cultural, societal, and trauma patterns but even our personal, limited dreams. We free our minds of the imprisonment of dreams based on unconscious conditioning.

Together, we strive every day to offer a community where people can realize and live their true vision. Where we can transform the systems ruling the global society so that our collective visions lead to the preservation and flourishing of life based in ethics, virtue, and peace.

In friendship,

Peter Xūramitra Park  
Executive Director





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2021  
**FALL**  
QUARTERLY  
REPORT



### WILLOW (CANADA)

On August 11, Willow began a three-month intensive residential program with a group of five participants, led by Ryūshin, Seishin, and Vīrabhadra. The intention of this program is to test a curriculum that integrates all aspects of CEDAR's monastic training with a newly developed conceptual model, emerging from a decade of learnings from the Monastic Academy. In this training, participants learn to harmonize five core aspects of experience: the energetic system, the psyche, relationships, ethics, and insight into emptiness.

We are now halfway through the program, and the results have been very encouraging. The coherence, growth, and harmonization of the group and individuals have been profound and beautiful to witness. Many people are discovering opportunities for healing and a depth of meaning they previously had never been able to explore. The program is not adapted to fit everyone who may be interested however, and one participant left early with our warm wishes. We continually try to balance the many factors that go into such an intensive program and will need to adjust accordingly.

This new curriculum experiment is demonstrating some very promising potential for future CEDAR training, and we are excited to see how the rest of the three-month intensive plays out.

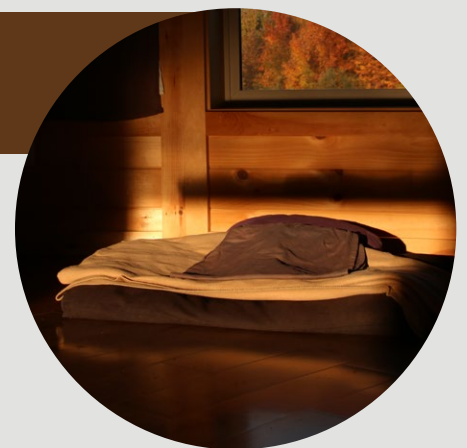
### OAK (CALIFORNIA)

After taking time for extensive training at MAPLE this spring, Oak resident Sky Taylor stepped into the position of Oak's new Director. He is excited to be of service in this new capacity in alignment with CEDAR's vision.

Earlier this year, Sky and Zev did their first extended solitary retreats at MAPLE under Soryu's guidance. These retreats allowed them to gain insight into their life paths, with Sky stepping into new leadership and Zev concluding his two-year residency. It's wonderful to see these two take on personal challenges and grow as a result. After their cabin retreats, Sky and Zev worked on rebooting Oak in South San Francisco with the help of MAPLE resident Renshin.

Sky will be returning to MAPLE in early November to begin another solitary retreat and to receive further leadership training. This will also be a chance to plan Oak's future in more detail, with the possibility of doing a similar intensive to the one occurring at Willow.

This time of reflection, integration, and transition has been rewarding for Oak, and 2022 looks to be a promising year for the Oak community.





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## FINANCIALS



MAPLE continues to demonstrate financial resilience in the face of the pandemic but is challenged by cash flow pressures balancing short-term operational budget needs versus long-term strategic projects. Construction and equipment expenditures this quarter strained our cash flow this quarter, making us especially grateful for the generous donor support and guest programming that have minimized this impact.

All of the communities (Oak, MAPLE, CEDAR) had total revenue of \$102,101 for the quarter. Whereas our total expenses for the quarter were \$100,611 resulting in a net operating profit of \$1,492. Besides traditional operating expenses, MAPLE also had significant asset purchases (CapEx) of \$117,252 that were not included in the above operating expenses. These investments were driven largely by construction costs related to the partial build of our second zendo (\$81,978) and infrastructure for the MAPLE village (\$20,881). Long-term infrastructure investments strained our cash flows with the quarterly outflow totalling \$217,863.

Regarding liabilities, currently the remaining principal balance on our Lowell mortgage is \$683,079 at 6% interest. Five lenders have graciously either forgiven their loan or reduced their interest rate to zero percent. Lenders have pledged to forgive more, which will help relieve our debt burdens and aid our growth. This quarter MAPLE undertook an additional SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) loan of \$350,000 resulting in a total SBA EIDL loan of \$500,000 at 2.75% with a thirty-year repayment period. This loan will help us compensate for lost revenue, manage revenue uncertainty, and minimize risk.

A long-time supporter has pledged a significant donation which has enabled us to invest in hiring Ānandabodhi as MAPLE's long-term groundskeeper and administrator. In addition, the funds will be utilized to cover salaries for the next year, invest into designing our future Impact Hub, and develop systems to automate operations across MAPLE and future centers.

### CEDAR 3RD QUARTER 2021

GUEST INCOME	DONATIONS & GRANTS	LOAN FORGIVENESS	TOTAL INCOME*
\$70,362	\$21,760	\$0	\$102,101

\*This includes more income than the three types listed.

### CEDAR 2021 YEAR-TO-DATE

GUEST INCOME	DONATIONS & GRANTS	LOAN FORGIVENESS	TOTAL INCOME*
\$144,218	\$288,894	\$0	\$480,857

\*This includes more income than the three types listed.

*Figures listed do not include Willow, our Canadian location, which is a separate legal entity.*



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2021  
FALL  
QUARTERLY  
REPORT



## MAPLE ONLINE OFFERINGS

This year, MAPLE has begun expanding its marketing and online offerings. As our bedrooms are becoming increasingly full with residents, apprentices, and guest residential members, we look to scale our impact beyond these physical walls.

This past quarter, we revamped our monthly newsletter to include community updates, dharma bites, and upcoming events. Sign up for the email newsletter on our [website homepage](#).

We are also doing MAPLE Live sessions, a live 20-30 minute segment featuring live interviews, practice tips, short videos, and photos, where we also share community updates and promote our upcoming events. See sessions on the [MAPLE Live playlist](#) on our YouTube channel.

We are developing webinars. We have begun offering free online workshops reflecting the skills of our residents. Recent sessions have covered topics such as:

- Life Purpose and Vow Commitments
- Presence and Connection Games
- How to Stop Procrastinating on Your Practice

Sign up for upcoming offerings on the [upcoming events section](#) of our website. (Note: If there aren't any listed, it means there aren't any on the docket; check back soon!)

We are running our fourth [MAPLE Fundamentals Online](#) cohort training in our ecology of practices including meditation, emotional healing, and peer coaching.



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FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE ON EARTH

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**FALL**  
QUARTERLY  
REPORT

### VILLAGE AND LAND

The MAPLE Village continues to flower into fruition. The driveway and utilities for the future home of Konshin Richard Dee and Keshin Renee Dee have begun. Finally, our first young couple, Ānanda and Maitrī, plan to join and raise a family here.

Children raised in a spiritual village will have a strong foundation in self-dignity, connection to nature, and a sense of belonging and service to the world. Such children will be able to have many interactions with wise and powerful people, enabling them to develop their own deeply rooted strength. They will be surrounded by opportunities to breathe in the spiritual wisdom and worldly skills to live out their greatest vision.

Our 700-square-foot new circular zendo (meditation hall) is nearly complete. This zendo will serve as our teacher interview room as well as a dedicated space for around-the-clock Awakening practice. This additional space opens up much-needed opportunities to expand our guest offerings and run dual programs.

With a recent donation from one of our supporters, we can begin the initial work of designing our Impact Hub. The Hub will house several small apartments, a large coworking space, shared kitchen and dining rooms, and more. This building will be a collaborative place for innovators such as those in the cryptocurrency or AI space. Merging the best of contemplative community and exponential technology, the Impact Hub participants and monastics will attempt to scale the monastic culture to the globe.



## LEADERSHIP EMERGES: PROFILE ON MAITRĪ DANIELLE HUFFAKER



Maitrī grew up in Southern California in a mixed Middle-Eastern / White family. She developed an interest in cultivating her spiritual world from an early age, first encountering the divine through the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Impulses to move beyond her small suburban world and closed religious community took her to UC Berkeley. She spent time in the tech world doing marketing for fair trade and eco-friendly shopping sites at eBay. Disillusioned with the ethical contradictions of “sustainable commerce” she moved to Guatemala to do community development work in health, education, and artisan market access in Indigenous communities.

For her graduate research at the Centre for Development and Environment at the University of Oslo, she explored how Maya Guatemalans are confronting climate change through the wisdom of their ancestral traditions. She’s also involved with Integral Without Borders, GRACE Cares, and Community Finance Guatemala—continually weaving the thread between spirituality and global crisis.

### INTERVIEW WITH MAITRĪ :

#### *Why did you join the CEDAR Mindfulness and Leadership apprenticeship?*

My partner Ānanda and I decided earlier this year to become some of the inaugural members of the MAPLE village. After many years of living away from the US—in Guatemala and Norway—we’re ready to start a family, yet apprehensive about bringing children into a world hurtling towards disaster. Finding the MAPLE community was an answer to all of our longings for a future in which we could continue to deepen our spiritual paths, be of true service, and bring up children in a life-affirming culture.

I joined the apprenticeship program this summer at MAPLE with the intention of dedicating time to my meditation practice before other commitments call my attention and energy. My intention has been to become a more clear, loving, and trustworthy individual who can be of greater service in the world.

#### *How have you benefited from your time here?*

For several years my meditation practice has been sort of on autopilot. I would do annual retreats, but habitual patterns would close back in around me. It became clear my normal way of being is cluttered with mental chatter.

At MAPLE, I have benefited deeply from frequent one-on-one interviews with Soryu. Time is given daily to meditation, and we are supported by one another to stay in our practice throughout the day in all we do. It is fulfilling to feel my practice deepening rapidly.

#### *What has been your biggest challenge?*

A big challenge for me has been learning to orient towards meditation as something in which we should have goals and be advancing. It is endlessly confusing to learn how to carry a sense of urgency and commitment and exert effort in a way that is totally free from grasping and ideas of self. They talk about “effortless effort,” but it can’t really be conceptualized; you just have to learn by trial and error and get it wrong many times before you somehow find a way to drop into something that is completely natural. This struggle has been really rich.

#### *What are your goals? What are you looking forward to as you continue as a Villager?*

We make space here for articulating our highest aspirations and for pursuing them wholeheartedly, even as we expect them to evolve. Right now I am holding an aspiration that feels resonant, to uncovering the deepest mysteries of life, of directly realizing Truth. More immediately, I have a goal of cultivating steadiness in my practice and of overcoming my addiction to mental chatter and control. I am so grateful to be looking forward to many years as part of the MAPLE community.



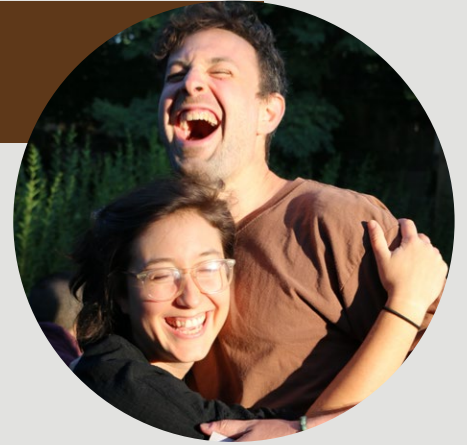


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### MOVING FORWARD



This October, two of our dear community members, Ānanda and Maitrī, were married in front of their friends and family, with Soryu officiating and the MAPLE residents in attendance. Ānanda and Maitrī have both been apprentices at MAPLE. Ānanda now works for us as our groundskeeper and administrator, and both are transitioning into MAPLE villagers. We are overjoyed to celebrate with them.

As we move into the winter period, we enter an intense Awakening period at MAPLE. We look forward to Soryu's return in November as the head teacher. A record number of residents will be entering solitary cabin retreats this winter, breaking last year's record. As our offerings and services expand, we strive to fulfill our original mission to realize Awakening and our vows for the benefit of all beings.

MAPLE is stronger than ever. Currently, we are housing sixteen residents and six apprentices, with our apprenticeship pools full until the spring. We also have five residential members staying for a month or longer. Gratifying as this is, we know we still have a ways to go. To continue the momentum, we will invest in our marketing and online offerings. We are developing our curriculum around existential risk and Buddhism. We are making documentation and backend technological systems to ease our guest, admissions, and financial processes. We will begin designing the Responsibility Impact Hub where people can work full time on developing technology to scale Awakening training to the world. Our vision is to create systems that scale the beneficial cultural and structural aspects of MAPLE across the globe.

Wildfires rage in the western US, hurricanes flood the southern gulf and eastern US seaboard, and the delta variant is overtaking our health systems. The world calls for leadership and care. We continually aim to respond in ways that honor our ancient traditions while creating novel ways to work within the unparalleled existential risks threatening life on the planet. We aim for Awakening so that we may be capable of developing new systems and responses aware and free from the very biases and ideologies that created these problems. We live in loving community to reveal and give feedback to each other in what we may not be seeing.

We do what must be done. We proactively move in the direction of death and dying to realize the further shore of true peace. Tapping into the vulnerable heart and care for all beings, we weep, we grieve, we are heartbroken, and we persevere. A life lived to care for all beings is a life without regret. Time is precious. May we all continue to care for all beings.

# FUTURE EVENTS

**October 15 - 22 2021**

Awakening Week

**November 12 - 19 2021**

Awakening Week with Soryu Forall

**December 10 - 17 2021**

Awakening Week with Soryu Forall

**January 14 - 21 2021**

Awakening Week with Soryu Forall

*All events are subject to change or cancellation based on developing news.*

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## JOIN US

If you are interested in our events please don't hesitate to reserve a spot.

You are always welcome to visit for a day, a week, a month, or longer.

Email [info@monasticacademy.org](mailto:info@monasticacademy.org) or call 802-540-0820.

**Our address is:**

**751 Page Rd**

**Lowell, VT 05847**

Together we are building a new, trustworthy culture.

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