



MONASTIC ACADEMY

FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE ON EARTH

CEDAR

COMMUNITY FOR THE
EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF
AWAKENING AND RESPONSIBILITY

2021
SUMMER

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 also are building an adjacent village to scale trustworthy culture and values to impact the globe.

History of OAK

OAK (Organization for Awakening and Kindness) is a monastic academy located in the California Bay Area, founded in 2018. OAK works to address problems of existential risk. OAK integrates spirituality, community, and technical research by offering spiritual practice to the existential risk community.

History of Willow

Willow is the newest monastic academy located near Toronto—the first international branch of CEDAR. It was founded in 2020 by Seishin Jasna Todorovic to bring modern monastic training to the many beautiful communities in Canada.

Center for Mindful Learning (CML)

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.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

www.monasticacademy.org
www.facebook.com/monasticacademy
www.youtube.com/c/CenterforMindfulLearning
www.twitter.com/MonasticAcademy

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

At the tail end of May, I emerged from eleven weeks of solitary cabin retreat. In my time away, the MAPLE community blossomed with more residents, ordained lay individuals, guest residential members and old residents stepping into greater leadership.

Year to date, we have had eight residents go into solitary cabin retreats on the MAPLE grounds. We expect to offer even more residents into cabin retreats this fall. This will be a record breaking year for residents doing extended awakening practice. Solitary long-term retreats, supported by a global community to pursue the spiritual journey, are a rare and life-changing experience.

MAPLE has also welcomed seven new residents thus far this year. All seven of these residents are graduates of our free apprenticeship ten-week program. The residents come from a wide background including recent college graduates, a startup founder, and a clinical therapist. All of them have demonstrated their deep care and aspiration to become awakened leaders.

On May 22, Shinzen and Soryu lay-ordained ten new lay community members and residents. They include Vīrabhadra Colin Bested, Keshin Renee Dee, Śraddhā Steven-Jango Cohen, Honshin Elliott Ge, Ānandabodhi Andrew Becker, Kishin Julia Yu, Konshin Richard Dee, Maitrī Danielle Huffaker, Karuṇādhama Sophia Gallagher, and Ādityā Adithya Raghunathan. Over the years, dozens of community members have taken lay ordination, committing themselves to following the five precepts and the spiritual path.

This year, we launched our guest Residential Members program offering people from across the country the opportunity to join MAPLE for month-long coworking stays. Thus far, we have had five members. We are excited to host more residential members.

We have been working hard to prepare for the construction of our Village. The Village marks the turning point for our community as we expand from changing the world by developing more monastic academies towards additionally creating an incubator hub in the Village. This incubator will be the space for powerful individuals to create the technologies, cultures, and systems that will scale monastic values to the world for the benefit of all beings.

COVID-19 has ravaged the world, disproportionately attacking our most vulnerable populations. As we look to the future, we see that even greater dangers loom on the horizon. These threats to life are all rooted in the same cause of humanity's deluded, collective mind. We need a global shift on every front. The question is what is the right solution? At MAPLE, we aim to do what has never been achieved: scaling awakening and scaling monastic, spiritual wisdom and love to the world so that humanity's collective wisdom and love matches humanity's great technological power. For the sake of the future of life, we dedicate ourselves to doing what is needed.

In friendship,

Peter Xūramitra Park
Executive Director



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WILLOW (CANADA)

This spring, Willow moved to be online-only while Seishin and Colin spent four months training at MAPLE. The weekly calls and internal social network have been thriving, and the community even requested and set up a second weekly call to connect with each other more. Past resident James strengthened our connection with the Authentic Relating community in Toronto (ART) and, for the month of June, ART has offered to donate all of their profits to Willow to support our mission. We are filled with gratitude to our friends at ART.

On Vesak, Colin took lay ordination and was given the Dharma name *Vīrabhadra*, meaning Auspicious Champion.

Seishin spent eighty days in solitary retreat, training intensely under Soryu's guidance. It was a beautiful and deep retreat, and she gave a rousing talk to the community upon coming out. Many people expressed being impacted by it.

In her absence, *Vīrabhadra* and *Ryūshin* continued planning the upcoming three-month intensive Willow will be offering in August. The purpose of this intensive is to create an integrated curriculum that introduces all aspects of CEDAR's monastic training and can be deployed at future centers with little friction. A second purpose of the intensive is to bring in participants who may be interested in staying on at Willow for a longer term and being leaders in bringing forth Willow's potential to be a wisdom institution in the modern world. They interviewed many potential candidates and found five very strong applicants who are extremely eager to participate in the intensive and help Willow's journey.

We are very excited for what the future has in store.



FINANCIALS



Though we are beginning to see light at the end of the global pandemic tunnel, the financial aftershocks to nonprofits are still a major risk. To meet the changing conditions, we pivoted towards an online program, shifted our coworking guests towards month-long stays, and refocused our fundraising efforts. A few new donors have stepped forward along with consistent long-term donors to bolster our budget shortfalls. As we go forward, we will still need a significant amount of guest programming and fundraising to cover our operating budget expenses as well as to fund our capital construction campaigns and repay our loans.

This quarter CEDAR had a total income of \$186,157 and expenses of \$94,405. The largest expenditures this quarter were salaries (\$17,200), insurance (\$9,272), the property loan interest payments (\$7,696), car loan payments and maintenance (\$6,098), and government COVID-19 relief loan payments (\$5,556). During these first two quarters, we have been reserving as much capital as possible towards the more than \$200,000 needed for the construction of our second zendo and stage 1 of our Village infrastructure costs.

In spring 2017, our Lowell property was purchased with \$1,135,000 in gifts and loans from family and friends at an annual 6% interest. We are here today only because of their faith and generosity. Currently, our remaining principal balance is \$683,079. Three lenders have fully forgiven their loan principal to us while two other lenders have opted to change their interest rate to zero percent. Many have forgiven portions of their loan to us. We also have two car loans and a government SBA loan of \$150,000 at a low 2.75% interest rate with a thirty-year repayment period.

Additionally, to meet the needs of our donors, we have embraced cryptocurrency as a fundraising tool via a crypto donation button on our website. This quarter alone, we have raised \$30,540 in crypto donations in addition to \$51,198 raised last quarter.

CEDAR 2ND QUARTER 2021

GUEST INCOME	DONATIONS & GRANTS	LOAN FORGIVENESS	TOTAL INCOME*
\$61,056	\$112,646	\$0	\$186,157

*This includes more income than the three types listed.

CEDAR 2021 YEAR-TO-DATE

GUEST INCOME	DONATIONS & GRANTS	LOAN FORGIVENESS	TOTAL INCOME*
\$84,007	\$242,677	\$0	\$354,644

*This includes more income than the three types listed.

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

Note: The reported 2021 Q1 income was off by \$577 in the last report. The above Year-to-Date table includes the accurate Q1 numbers.



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RESIDENTIAL MEMBERSHIP

This year, we launched a new offering of our Residential Membership. One of COVID-19's many unexpected consequences was the development of remote work on a mass scale. It is now possible for many people from anywhere in the world to live at MAPLE and participate in our training while working on their own projects.

Are you interested in living in a community of authentic, kind, and supportive practitioners, while taking your meditation practice to the next level? Residential Members live at MAPLE and engage in monastic training while supporting our mission financially. This is ideal for those who work remotely, are between jobs, or have financial resources that do not require them to work.

If you're a remote worker who is serious about living in community, cultivating one's character, and taking your meditation practice to the next level, you may be a good fit for our Residential Membership program, which offers long-term stays at MAPLE at a discounted monthly rate.

Residential Members have full access to the practices, retreats, and offerings at MAPLE that are available to all other monastic residents or apprentices.

If you are interested, please fill out our form at <https://www.monasticacademy.org/residential-membership/>.



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VILLAGE AND LAND



The actualization of the MAPLE Village is now in full swing. Most residents and apprentices have had a hand in land clearing with clippers, chainsaws, and axes to make way for the first Village road that will culminate at Keshin and Konshin Dee's home. We hold the impact we have on flora and fauna close as we site prep for the excavators, well technicians, engineers, and electricians.

As infrastructure evolves, so has our spectrum of engagement with future potential Villagers. Our initial vision for the Village is still vital: it is a place for lay practitioners to raise children and animal companions. It is a place where elders can live out their final years and share their wisdom with the younger generations. The Village is a place to steward the regeneration of ecosystems while living lives of virtue and harmony.

Additionally, the Village will include the next generation of innovators. These innovators such as those in the cryptocurrency or AI space will create the technologies of the future to scale the monastic culture to the global. The aim is to scale the development of trustworthy leaders and communities beyond monasteries to community homes, startup teams, organizations, and so on. While MAPLE's wisdom informs their projects, their resources support the scaling of MAPLE's vision of a community and culture based on trustworthiness. All Villagers can expect to be themselves living models of wisdom, love, and power.

We have continued building our garden and harvesting wild edibles like lambs quarters and strawberries. Initiatives are in place to decrease dependency on propane. We're moving gradually off-grid by harvesting our own firewood. We need funds for more solar panels and batteries.

This year, MAPLE received cryptocurrency donations in large part from one donor, Sandy Wu. His contribution put us over the top to begin construction of our second 31-foot diameter zendo in June. With our second zendo, we will be able to host more programming, expand our capacity for residents and guests, as well as have a dedicated space of silence for Awakening practice.

With the launch of our long-term coworking guest program and a waitlist of interested parties, our numbers are at higher capacity than ever before. The need for infrastructure like a second septic field, increased bathroom capacity, and a new building for coworking guests and prospective Villagers is increasingly urgent.

Many who have been with us since the beginning are reporting more cohesion and harmony within the community than ever before. Our hard-earned lessons in developing a harmonious community are expanding beyond monastic walls into the Village, the middle way between monastic life and lay life.



LEADERSHIP EMERGES: PROFILE ON KARUNĀDHAMMA

INTERVIEW WITH KARUNĀ:

Why did you join the CEDAR Mindfulness and Leadership training residency?

I joined MAPLE to develop the clarity, compassion, and emotional resiliency required to be of service in times of scarcity and confusion. I knew my own mind was not yet trustworthy enough to meet the immense challenges we face and hoped to find the support I needed to cultivate such a mind through the combination of the monastic schedule, an extremely skilled teacher, and a community that holds me accountable.

I found it increasingly challenging to live in a world where we mostly ignore the compounding challenges of climate change, economic injustice, environmental degradation, and exponential technological growth. I joined MAPLE to live among people that share acknowledgement of these crises and strive to maintain an ethical commitment to each other and to all living beings.

How have you benefited from your time here?

The most significant benefit has been in facing the nature of my own suffering and clearly seeing the beliefs and patterns that perpetuate it. This is an enormous gift for someone who strives to be of service, as I've deeply benefited from witnessing how insidious and pervasive the drive for self preservation is, motivating and warping even my desire to help others. I'm grateful to have experienced glimpses of freedom from longing for the future to be the way I want, and instead be open to how the world unfolds, trusting I will respond skillfully to what comes forth. Just knowing this is possible provides the faint outlines of an exit plan from the mental patterns that cause suffering.

What has been your biggest challenge?

I've been most challenged by the responsibility training and having to meet the demands of being in a leadership position. Being part of major decisions that impact the whole organization with the time pressure of the monastic schedule has brought up many patterns of overwhelm and avoidance that have prevented me from being a trustworthy leader in the past. I'm grateful for the opportunity to see the ways that I've learned to avoid facing the impacts of my actions and decisions on others. It is both terrifying and liberating.

What are your goals? What are you looking forward to as you continue to train here?

I'm excited about the future of CEDAR and the increasing move toward integrating our work in personal training and community development with systems level work. My own vow work centers on facilitating the emergence of ethical economic systems and supporting individuals in receiving the education and relationships they need to contribute meaningfully to the communities they are embedded in and survive with.

Karunā grew up in the NYC suburbs and lived the last ten years in Atlanta with periods in Denver, Northern California forests, rural Oregon, and some stints of wandering. She has been: a depressed teenager, nomadic music festival kid, naively exuberant philosopher, monastic, nonprofit co-op founder, treehouse hermit, cow herder, academic researcher, and well-intentioned deluded do-gooder.

She received a BA in Philosophy & Communications, focusing on the hermeneutic tradition, from Oglethorpe University and later received a MS in Urban Studies, assisting on climate change resiliency research. In between degrees she started the Library of the Commons, a learning community and information resource hub for systems change, hosting a variety of education workshops and seasonal network weaving events for grassroots organizations.

Her life is driven by questions around ethics, cooperative economics, participatory decision making, knowledge coordination, resource commons, and emancipatory education.



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MOVING FORWARD

As we move into the summer and fall, many new initiatives are taking root.

OAK residents will be returning to our South San Francisco house starting in July. One of our donors has generously provided this home to us since OAK's inception in 2018. OAK will pivot to focus on community building. They will cultivate a caring, peaceful culture in the midst of the Bay's frenetic and intense culture.

MAPLE will be running unique offerings during the summer. We will have our first Circling & Emotions Retreat in late July combining emotional healing processes and interpersonal meditation practices. Darren Silver will be leading two Vision Quests in August and September. Participants will have the opportunity to spend a week in nature reconnecting to the land. Vision Quests involve participating in sweat lodges, sharing stories, and questing for about four days in solitude in nature with only water and bare essentials.

The future is always unclear. However, as the world begins to reopen its doors, we invite you to join us. Remotely, you can participate in our MAPLE Fundamentals Online cohort course starting August 8th. You can come to Vermont for a number of programs including month-long Residential Membership stays, apprenticeship programs, and retreat programs such as our Vision Quests.

At CEDAR, we aim to do impossible things. We aspire to create a twenty-first century monastic training to develop trustworthy leaders. We seek to realize the complete awakening to truth and compassion for all beings. We aspire to bring liberation and peace to all life. We are developing a collective intelligence to deal with the collective crisis. We want to partner with others to scale monastic work at an exponential level in the world. We seek to utilize spiritual training to address existential risks. And we work on existential risks to fulfill our spiritual path.

In this way, we are integrating wisdom, love, and power for the benefit of all beings. We find the faith and courage to fall short at what's most important and good rather than compromise with great success at what is unimportant and damaging.

As the world relentlessly accelerates towards destruction of life, this CEDAR community commits each day to take on the practice of doing what is skillful, to abandon what is not beneficial, to purify our minds and hearts, and to strive to live and die without regret.



FUTURE EVENTS

July 23 - 28 2021

Circling and Emotions Retreat

August 21 - 29 2021

Vision Quest with Darren Silver: August

September 10 - 19 2021

Vision Quest with Darren Silver: September

September 22 - 29 2021

Final Circling Europe SAS Facilitator Training Weekend

October 15 - 22 2021

Awakening Week with Soryu Forall

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.

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Our address is:

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