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**DREPUNG GOMANG INSTITUTE**  
**Tashi Gomang Dharma Center**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**His Holiness the Dalai Lama Louisville, 2013**

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### **HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA TO SPEAK AT LOUISVILLE'S YUM! CENTER IN 2013**

Louisville's Tibetan Buddhist Center, the Drepung Gomang Institute, and the City of Louisville will host His Holiness the Dalai Lama May 19-21, 2013. The three-day event, called "Engaging Compassion", will begin on Sunday, May 19 at the YUM! Center when the Dalai Lama will present a public talk to an expected crowd of 16,000. The Dalai Lama has been the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and the Congressional Medal of Honor and is known around the world as a spokesman for the non-violent, peaceful and compassionate resolution of human conflict.

The Dalai Lama's talk will focus on how individuals can engage with compassion from within his or her own religious tradition in order to build world peace from the local level to the world community. The two-hour presentation will include a strong interfaith component followed by interaction with local interfaith religious dignitaries and other leaders.

On Monday, May 20, the Dalai Lama will give a two-part public Buddhist teaching in the morning and afternoon. This event is expected to draw a large crowd of people wishing to explore and deepen their understanding of the Buddhist faith. The teaching is called "Attisha's Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment". Both events are open to all.

On Tuesday, May 21, His Holiness will address middle, high school, and college-aged students at the Kentucky Center. Educating young people on the path of non-violence and compassion is dear to the Dalai Lama's heart. In addition to His Holiness' speaking engagements, organizers are planning the three-day event to include a rich program of music, arts, cultural performances, dialogue and discussions that will touch the entire community of Louisville and raise awareness around the topic of compassion and kindness.

Mayor Greg Fischer, who on Nov. 11, 2011 signed the Compassionate City's Charter, a 10-year process to designate Louisville as a *Compassionate City*, said the Dalai Lama's visit will be a shining moment for the city. "I find that people want to talk about compassion, about helping others and unleashing the human potential," Fischer said. "The Dalai Lama is such an iconic figure for good and compassion that his visit will be inspiring locally and further evidence globally of what Louisville and its people are capable of."



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The first annual city-wide event to enact Mayor Fischer's commitment to promote compassion was the inspired *Give a Day* program in April 2012, when more than 90,000 volunteers and acts of compassion were in action across the city in one week. Next year's *Give a Day* week will take place April 13-21.

The host of the event, The Drepung Gomang Institute (DGI), located at 411 N. Hubbards Lane, Louisville, was established in 2001 and in 2008 was designated the official U.S. sister organization of the Drepung Gomang Monastery in Southern India, where currently more than 2,000 Tibetan monks live, work and study at its Monastic University. Many of these monks have escaped from Tibet because of the oppressive Chinese regime and now call India their adopted home.

One of those monks is Geshe Kalsang Rapgyal, a highly respected Tibetan scholar and the resident director of DGI. He is the visionary behind the Dalai Lama's visit, and commented "DGI is here to do the service of teaching compassion. We want to give the greatest service we can to the people of Louisville by inviting the Master of Compassion. He has kindly agreed to come, and this is a great honor."

For more information go to [www.dalailamalouisville.org](http://www.dalailamalouisville.org) or visit the DGI Tibetan Buddhist Center at 411 N. Hubbards Lane, Louisville, 40207.



## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. He was born on 6th July 1935, in a small village called Takster in north-eastern Tibet. At the age of two, he was recognized as the incarnation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso, and began his monastic education when he was six. His Holiness was called upon to assume full political power at the age of 15.

In 1949, China invaded Tibet. Finally, in 1959, with the brutal suppression by Chinese troops of the Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was forced to escape into exile in India. Since then, he has been living in Dharamsala in the north of India which is now the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration.

From there, he has continued to work tirelessly for Tibet and has consistently advocated the "Middle Way" policy in resolving the Tibetan issue whereby Tibetans are seeking genuine autonomy within the framework of the People's Republic of China.

In recognition of his opposition to the use of violence in the Tibetan struggle, his work internationally for peace, human rights issues and global environmental problems, the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. More recently, in September 2006, he received the highest civilian honor in the United States, the Congressional Gold Medal, in recognition of his advocacy of non-violence, human rights and religious understanding.

In 2011, HH the Dalai Lama completed the process of democratization of the Central Tibetan Administration by devolving all his political authorities to the elected leadership.

Now in his seventies, His Holiness continues to accept invitations to teach and speak around the world. He is respected as a spokesman for the peaceful and compassionate resolution of human conflict and as a true spiritual teacher whose warmth, compassion and wisdom touch the hearts of all he meets.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has visited the United States regularly over the last thirty years. His last visit to Louisville was in 1994.

### **Three Main Commitments in Life**

In his talks all around the world, HH the Dalai Lama frequently mentions three essential purposes of life to which he feels committed.

"In general, I always state that I have three commitments in life. Firstly, on the level of a human being, my first commitment is the promotion of human values such as compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, contentment and self-discipline. All human beings are the same. We all want happiness and do not want suffering. Even people who do not believe in religion recognize the importance of these human values in making their lives happier. I remain committed to talk about the importance of these human values and share them with everyone I meet.

Secondly, on the level of a religious practitioner, my second commitment is the promotion of religious harmony and understanding amongst different religious traditions. Despite philosophical differences, all major world religions have the same potential to create better human beings. It is therefore important for all religious traditions to respect one another and recognize the value of each other's respective traditions.

Thirdly, I am a Tibetan and carry the name of the Dalai Lama. Tibetans place their trust in me. Therefore, my third commitment is to the Tibetan issue. I have a responsibility to act as the free spokesperson of the Tibetans in their struggle for justice.

As far as this third commitment, it will cease to exist once a mutually beneficial solution is reached between the Tibetans and Chinese. However, my first two commitments I will carry on till my last breath."



Geshe Kalsang Rapgyal  
Director of DGI

DREPUNG GOMANG INSTITUTE  
**Tashi Gomang Dharma Center**  
*Louisville's Tibetan Buddhist Center*



## The Mission of The Drepung Gomang Institute

To offer the Louisville community an opportunity to study and practice Tibetan Buddhism traditions and philosophy.

To help preserve the endangered Tibetan culture that leads a fragile existence in communities of exiled refugees living in India and Nepal, as well as Tibetan people struggling under Chinese occupation.

To foster interfaith dialogue, interaction between cultures and teachings on compassion and peace-making.

The Drepung Gomang Institute (DGI) was established in 2001 as the fruit of a partnership between leaders of the Drepung Gomang Tibetan Monastery in Southern India and committed friends in Louisville. Incorporated as the religious arm of DGI, the Tashi Gomang Dharma Center was established in 2006. DGI was later designated the official U.S. sister organization of the Drepung Gomang Monastery of India.

The Buddhist Drepung Gomang Monastic University was founded in Tibet in 1416. It was a renowned educational institution and a vital part of the Tibetan capital city of Lhasa until the 1959 invasion by the Communist Chinese government. To escape religious persecution, thousands of monks fled Tibet. In 1969, with the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, an exiled remnant of the Tibetan Drepung Gomang monks reestablished the monastery-in-exile in the Indian state of Karnataka. Today, nearly 2,000 monks live, work and study at Drepung Gomang Monastic University. They help care for the community of Tibetans that surrounds them, and they continue to work diligently to preserve their culture and way of life.

The Geshes of Drepung Gomang follow a philosophy of tolerance and compassion toward all people. Geshe Kalsang Rapgyal is Director of DGI in Louisville. He is a respected Tibetan scholar and teacher. The support of Geshe Rapgyal and DGI's outreach activities rely on the tax-deductible financial gifts of members and friends