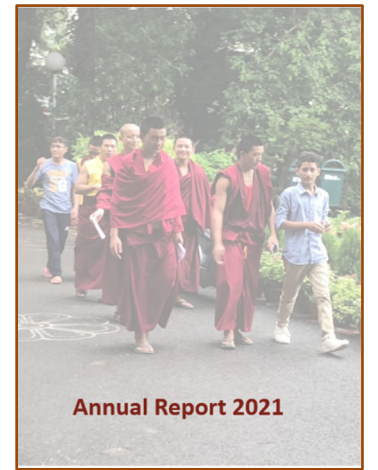
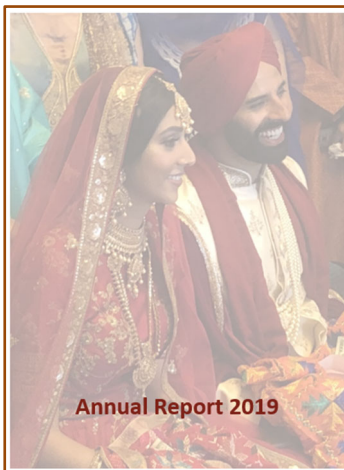
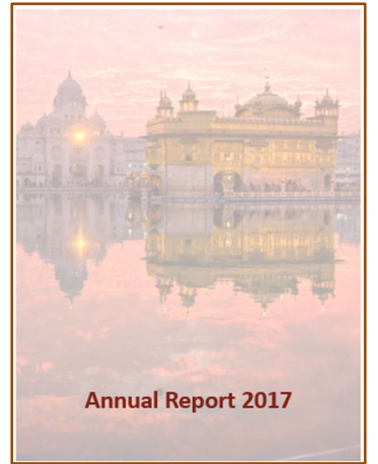
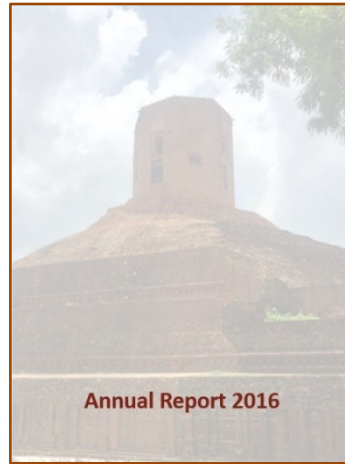
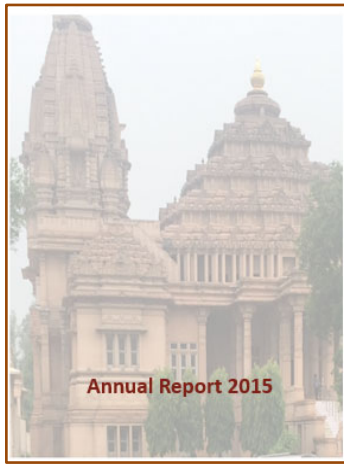
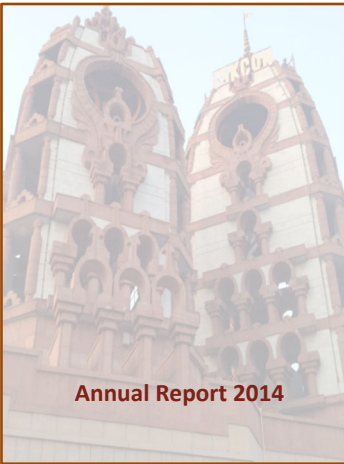
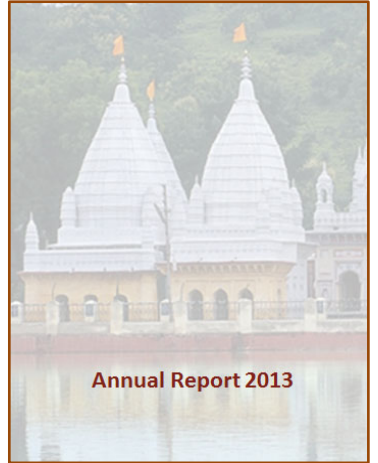
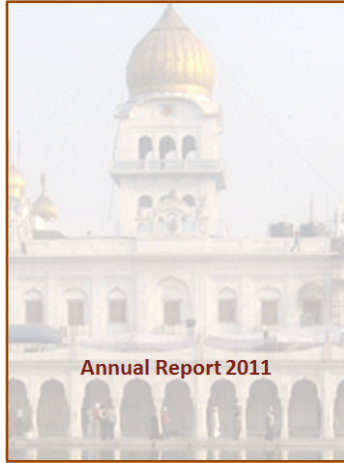


**UBEROI FOUNDATION**  
for RELIGIOUS STUDIES

# Annual Report 2021





Professor Yashwant Pathak  
Chair of the Board  
Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies

December 2021

*In a few months from now, by mid-March, we'll cross the threshold of two full years of relative isolation within a global pandemic. Sometime soon thereafter, might something akin to life as we knew it before Covid 19 begin to reemerge? Our loss of colleagues and loved ones will never be overcome, but perhaps a renewed appreciation for our world, our families, and ourselves will help to fill the void.*

*In these long months of social distancing physically, engaging virtually with global organizations like the Uberoi Foundation has helped to propel us. During this difficult and disconcerting time, I've been so very grateful for the leadership of our board of trustees, the creativity of our grantees, and the enthusiasm of our participating teachers. Despite the logistical challenges we faced this year, the Uberoi Foundation sponsored ten compelling grant initiatives, and we hosted yet another impactful session of teacher training in the Indic traditions – this time, almost entirely virtually.*

*A few weeks ago, the Uberoi Foundation completed its fourteenth year. By the time we celebrate our fifteenth anniversary in November of next year, the Foundation will have surpassed \$3M in programmatic investment since inception. Without a doubt, the vision of our founder, Mahinder Uberoi, is becoming a reality. Increased awareness of the Indic traditions is one more vital spoke in a global wheel churning toward the promotion of understanding, communication, tolerance, and peace among the diverse peoples of the world.*

*May our paths cross personally before too long, and until then, may you thrive and delight in the glory of the world around us, imperfect as it is.*

*With best wishes,*





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## **Section I:**

### **Overview of the Foundation**







## Vision and Mission

Mahinder Uberoi saw a world of many facets. He cherished the Dharmic tradition that was his birthright and felt its power as a vehicle for spiritual awakening and fulfillment. Professor Uberoi grasped the breadth of this tradition across the land of its origin and its range of experiences known as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.

The Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies is Mahinder Uberoi's legacy. After his death in November 2006, a will was read in which he wrote, "I leave all my assets for the scholarly study of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, and other related religions and their music and arts." In order to honor his wishes, the Foundation was established on November 14, 2007, to encourage and support the work of scholars in these Dharmic traditions and to extend the reach of this knowledge in the United States in particular. The Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies provides a unique opportunity for the scholars of these traditions to explore their common ties in the Dharmic source.

The mission of the Foundation is summarized in these few words: *The Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies serves to raise awareness of the four major Dharmic religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism in an effort to promote understanding, communication, tolerance, and peace among the diverse peoples of the world.*





## **Mahinder Uberoi: The Invisible Benefactor**



Mahinder Singh Uberoi was born in Delhi, India shortly after World War I, on March 13, 1924. He ultimately earned a doctorate degree in engineering and lived for most of his adult life in the United States, primarily in Boulder, Colorado. Professor Uberoi passed away in 2006 as a retired academic having chosen to live with very little pretense and ostentation. His wealth, however, was considerable, and his assets today help to raise awareness of Dharmic religions in an effort to promote understanding, communication, tolerance and peace in the world.

### **Education**

Professor Uberoi grew up in Sialkot, India, and received a bachelors of science degree from Punjab University in 1944. Subsequently, he studied in the United States, earning a masters degree from the California Institute of Technology in 1946 and a doctorate degree in engineering from the Johns Hopkins University in 1952.

### **Academic Leadership**

Professor Uberoi began his academic career on the faculty of the Department of Aeronautical Engineering at the University of Michigan from 1953 until 1963. During that period, in 1958, he earned early professional distinction as a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellow at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.

In 1963, Professor Uberoi moved to Boulder, Colorado, where he lived for more than forty years until his death in 2006. From 1963 to 1975, he served as the chairman of the Department of Aerospace Engineering Sciences at the University of Colorado. Four U.S. astronauts graduated from the Department during those years, including Ellison Onizuka who died with other members of his distinguished crew aboard the space shuttle Challenger in 1986.

As chairman, Professor Uberoi added faculty and advanced basic research in the fields of fluid mechanics, modern control systems, and the biological sciences. Adolf Busemann, the father of supersonic aerodynamics, joined the department in 1963. Much of Professor Uberoi's academic career involved research and teaching far from his adopted city of Boulder, Colorado. In 1966, he was an exchange scientist with the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Between 1972 and 1974, he was an invited professor at the

University of Quebec, followed thereafter in 1974 as a visiting scientist at the Max Plank Institute of Astrophysics in Munich. From 1975 to 1976, Professor Uberoi was an honorary research fellow at Harvard University, and he returned to the University of Colorado between 1981 and 1982 as a Croft professor.

### **Scientific Achievement**

Professor Uberoi made innumerable contributions to scholarly literature during his career, on topics such as turbulent flow, magneto-hydrodynamics, and combustion. He was the editor of *Cosmic Gas Dynamics* by Evry Schatzman and Ludwig Bierman. He served on the steering committees associated with the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics from 1966 to 1969 and with the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences from 1967 to 1969 at the University of Colorado. He organized the all-university Seminar on Environment and Public Policy from 1970 until 1975. He directed and organized a science of flight program of High School Honors Institute from 1968 to 1974, directed the Summer Institute for Disadvantaged High School Students in 1969, and directed and lectured in the Pre-Engineering Program for many years.

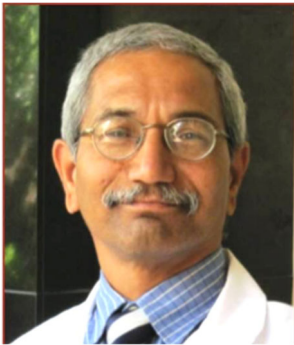
### **Posthumous Orientation**

Mahinder Uberoi passed away on November 25, 2006. He never married and had no children. In 1986, twenty years before his death, he signed his last will and testament. In that document, Professor Uberoi ordered that his assets be used to establish a foundation “for the scholarly study of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism, and other related religions and their music and arts.” In implementing his mission, he made it clear that his intent was not to proselytize. “Scholars need not have any particular faith or beliefs,” he wrote. To carry out his mission, Professor Uberoi intentionally left much judgment to the men and women who would be named as trustees of the foundation. Nevertheless, by way of example, he wrote, “Obvious candidates for support are persons who are regularly engaged in scholarly work, such as universities, institutes, and religious centers.”

Deploying the assets of Professor Uberoi upon his death, the Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies requested and subsequently received authorization as a tax-exempt private foundation by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service on December 13, 2007. The five founding trustees of the Foundation wish to express particular gratitude to a former student of Professor Uberoi, Mr. Randy Nishiyama, for his tireless and selfless work in helping to lay the groundwork for the Foundation. Along with founding trustee, Parveen Setia, Mr. Nishiyama provided a most thoughtful and invaluable service in memory of the man who was once his educator.



## Board of Trustees



**Professor Yashwant Pathak**  
**Chair, Board of Trustees**

Originally from Nagpur, India, Dr. Yashwant Pathak is a tenured professor and Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs at Taneja College of Pharmacy at the University of South Florida. He has travelled to over 80 countries, strengthening wherever possible the local Dharma diaspora. He became associated with the Uberoi Foundation shortly after its incorporation, and in January 2020, became chair of the board.

Dr. Pathak has been adjunct professor in varied universities throughout the world, including Airlangga University in Indonesia, the University of West Indies, and Witwatersrand University in South Africa. Over the years, he has supervised numerous PhD and masters students. Dr. Pathak's research includes the publication of over 50 books in the area of drug delivery systems; Nano technology in drug delivery and artificial neural network for drug design, delivery and disposition; conflict management; and Dharma studies. He also has over 250 research publications, reviews and book chapters.

Dr. Pathak has a passion for the study of ancient civilizations and traditions. He actively volunteers for the International Center for Cultural Studies and, in that capacity, has organized many Conventions of Elders of Ancient Civilizations and Cultures of the World. These events occur every three years, and hundreds of Elders represent more than 35 nations.

In 2022, Walter De Gruyter GMBH (with Co-Editor Professor LaVena Wilkins) will publish Dr. Pathak's book entitled *Handbook of Organizational Conflicts*. He has two previous books in the field of conflict management, Eastern and Indigenous perspectives on conflict resolution and organizational conflict management (with Co-editor Professor LaVena Wilkins). In addition, other edited books include *Vanaprasthashram and Sewa Vrata* and *Meanings of Old Age and Aging in the Tradition of India* (with Co-Editor Professor Srinivas Tilak).



**Professor Ramdas Lamb**  
**Vice Chair, Board of Trustees**

Dr. Ramdas Lamb is a Professor of Religion at the University of Hawai'i, where he has been teaching for more than two decades on the world's religions, with a specific emphasis on the Dharma traditions of India. From 1969 until 1978, he was a Hindu *sadhu* in the Ramananda Sampraday India, during which time he began his study and practice of traditional methods *sadhana*, including *ashtanga yoga*.

Dr. Lamb's current research includes a focus on the Ramanandis and on rural education in central India, looking at the various methods and tools that can be incorporated to help facilitate a more meaningful and useful educational experience for students. He joined the board of the Uberoi Foundation as vice chair in January of 2020.



**Mrs. Anu Bhatia**  
**Trustee**

Anu Bhatia graduated from St. Ann's Convent in Hyderabad in 1979 and then obtained a diploma in Textile Designing with distinction in 1983 from South Delhi Polytechnic for Women. Thereafter, she worked for four years in a textile printing house. Mrs. Bhatia specializes in designing traditional Indian women's wear. Her work has been in a number of exhibitions in Delhi and other cities throughout India. She married Rakesh Bhatia in 1984, and since then has been managing the family textile business. Mrs. Bhatia takes a keen interest in social activities, such as raising funds for underprivileged children and participating in discussions regarding social issues on national television. In her capacity as a trustee of the Uberoi Foundation, she is actively involved in encouraging students and teachers from the United States to engage in religious study programs conducted in India and the United States. To this end, she passionately promotes dialogue between institutions in India and the U.S. on the study of the Dharma Traditions of India. With equal passion, Mrs. Bhatia encourages women on refining their role in society. Her hobbies include light vocal music and hand painting on fabrics. She lives by the motto that all people are inherently good, and our accomplishments depend largely on developing the spiritual aspects of our personality. Mrs. Bhatia has two daughters and lives with her husband in Delhi.



**Mrs. Jyothi Bhatia**  
**Trustee**

The middle of three nieces of Mahinder Singh Uberoi, Jyothi Bhatia serves as a trustee of the Uberoi Foundation. Mrs. Bhatia lives with her husband and two daughters in Noida, on the outskirts of New Delhi. She graduated from St. Ann's High School in 1980 and completed her diploma of two years in Fashion Designing in 1982. She then worked with Paris-based garment house "Jack and Jack" for five years. Mrs. Bhatia has travelled extensively throughout India and to Nepal. She has her own fashion design studio, and she and her husband have successfully run their own business for the last 10 years. Mrs. Bhatia is actively involved in religious activities at the "Bhakti Dham Mandir," a hillside temple and ashram in Nakuchiatal, Nainital, in the Himalayas. The ashram also

serves as a school to educate poor children. She says, "I thank God for this wonderful opportunity that we have to fulfill our uncle's wishes."



**Mrs. Sneha Harjai**  
**Trustee**

Sneha Harjai is the youngest of the three nieces of Mahinder Singh Uberoi, and in that capacity, she serves as a trustee of the Uberoi Foundation. Mrs. Harjai graduated from Kamla Nehru College of the University of Delhi with a BA degree in Honors English. She studied travel and tourism and worked as a travel assistant with the Grand Hyatt Hotel for several years. She was married in 1989 to Sunil Harjai, who recently was awarded for his success as an entrepreneur in Indian small industry. She brought her love and experience in travel to her work with her husband in their shoe exporting business, "Siddharth Exports," for which she handles the interactions and correspondence with foreign buyers, especially in the UK, Germany, and Italy. The couple has two children. About the Uberoi Foundation, Mrs. Harjai says, "Our uncle left us a purpose to fulfill which we hope to achieve with the help of our dear friends who head the Uberoi Foundation. We enjoy putting forth our best efforts in moving towards the goal of our Foundation."



## Executive Staff



**Mr. James T. Polsfut**  
**Executive Director and Treasurer**

Jim Polsfut has served as the executive director of the Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies since its inception, as well as its treasurer since 2011. In addition, he serves as chair of the advisory board of the University of Denver Josef Korbel School of International Studies (the Social Science Foundation) and as the chair of the board of the IPODERAC Children's Fund in support of the IPODERAC Orphanage in Puebla, Mexico.

Professionally, Mr. Polsfut has focused on financial services and Latin America throughout his career. Currently, he serves as the CEO and Chairman of the Board of the North American Specialty Hospital. Previously, he helped to create a private bank and trust company called First Western Trust Bank, based in Denver. In that capacity, he served as president of First Western Development Corporation, a division of the bank responsible for corporate acquisitions. Earlier in his career, Mr. Polsfut served as general manager for GE Capital in Mexico City and in the United States, as Denver Mayor Federico Peña's assistant for finance for the City and County of Denver, and as an associate in the public finance office of Smith Barney.

Mr. Polsfut earned an undergraduate degree in Government from Harvard University and an MBA from Stanford University.



**Mrs. Katharine Nanda**  
**Secretary**

Katharine Nanda, MA, JD, University of Denver, has practiced law for many years and is currently working in the criminal area through the Office of the Colorado Alternate Defense Counsel. She has been actively involved with many organizations serving the Indian community in Colorado, having served as the Chair of the Hindu Society of Colorado and a founding board member and Secretary of the Hindu Temple and Cultural Center of the Rockies (Denver).



## **Section II:**

### **Programmatic Summary**





## List of Programs Since Inception in 2008

The Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies seeks to propel the vision of its benefactor, Professor Mahinder Uberoi, in the programmatic efforts which it undertakes. The Foundation focuses principally on annual Grant Awards and an annual Experts Meeting.

The Foundation does not accept unsolicited requests for funding, but rather, extends invitations to proposed applicants based on their areas of expertise and engagement within the Dharmic traditions. A summary of the Annual Experts Meeting follows in Section III.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Total</u>
2008	Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Experts Meeting 2008: Denver, Colorado	\$14,150
2009	U of MA Dartmouth Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Teacher Training in Dharmic Traditions Experts Meeting 2009: Orlando, Florida	\$94,206
2010	San Diego State U Fndn U of MA Dartmouth Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Research on Tantric Culture Teacher Training in Dharmic Traditions Experts Meeting 2010: Denver, Colorado	\$241,902
2011	McGill University, Faculty of Religious Studies USF Foundation Inc U of MA Dartmouth Longwood University San Diego State University Research Foundation U of MA Dartmouth University of Michigan U of MA Dartmouth Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Universal Declaration of Human Rights Eastern/Indigenous Perspectives on Global Sustainability, Conflict Resolution Teacher Training in Dharmic Traditions Communications Studies & Dharmic Traditions Database and Writing Finalization of book on Dharma Sikhism Workshop Science and Vedanta Symposium Experts Meeting 2011: Los Angeles, California	\$231,565
2012	So CA School of Theology Hindu American Foundation U of MA Dartmouth U of MA Dartmouth U of MA Dartmouth Hindu University of America, Orlando So CA School of Theology So CA School of Theology University of Michigan Cambridge in America SDSU Research Foundation California State University Foundation Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Int'l School for Jain Studies (ISJS) Dharma education outreach efforts Teacher Training in Dharmic Traditions Vedic Traditions Research/publishing on books by R Malhotra Hindu Perspective of Ageing, Death, Dying Dharma Studies Publishing Project Confluence Integrative Studies Institute Sikh 7-Day Seminar PhD of Varun Khanna at U of Cambridge Database and Writing TeachIndia! Teacher training Experts Meeting 2012: Denver, Colorado	\$247,591

<u>Year</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Total</u>
2013	So CA School of Theology Hindu American Foundation Loyola Marymount University Maharishi University of Management U of MA Dartmouth U of MA Dartmouth Meru Education Foundation Himalayan Academy CSULB Foundation Himalayan Academy Loyola Marymount University Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Ahimsa High School Teachers Program in India HAF Director of Education and Curr. Reform Master's of Arts in Yoga Studies Perennial Philosophy of the Dharmic Religions Teacher Training in Dharmic Traditions Indigenous Institutions of the Vedic Tradition Meru Curriculum Leadership Training Review of Calif. School Textbook Framework TeachIndia! Project at California State University Long Beach and Northridge Documentary Resource on Hinduism and Indic Heritage Doshi Bridgebuilder Award Experts Meeting 2013: Dartmouth, Massachusetts	\$228,010
2014	Himalayan Academy Himalayan Academy Calif. State Univ. Long Beach Fnd Loyola Marymount University Claremont Lincoln University Hindu University of America University of Colorado Foundation University of Michigan Hindu American Foundation Inst. of Adv. Sciences University of Michigan Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Hindu India: 300 to 1850 CE California School Textbook Controversy Revisited TeachIndia! Project at CSU Long Beach and Northridge Master's of Arts in Yoga Studies ISSJS Ahimsa Teacher Training Teachers Empowerment on Hindu Dharma Annual Lecture Series in Buddhist Studies at the Univ. of Colo. and Naropa Teaching Sikhism Comprehensive Education Reform Teacher Training in Dharmic Traditions Indian Religions Encyclopedia Colorado Teacher Training Program Experts Meeting 2014: Boulder, Colorado	\$242,273
2015	Hindu University of America Inst. of Adv. Sciences McGill University Insight Meditation Community of Colorado Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Int'l Documentary Asn Hindu American Foundation University of Michigan Himalayan Academy Forum for Rel. Freedom SSU Development Foundation CSULB Research Foundation Himalayan Academy Loyola Marymount University Inst. of Adv. Sciences Himalayan Academy Inst. Of Adv. Sciences Uberoi Foundation, Internal Program	Denver Teacher Training Program Nationwide Teacher Training Program World Religions Conference in Sep 2016 Earth Sila Project: Dharma-Based and Interfaith Int'l Summer School for Jain Studies (ISSJS) Creation of Center(s) for Sikh and Jain Studies American Veda Documentary Project HAF Director of Education and Curr. Reform Translation of Punjabi Clarifying Publications History of Hinduism Documentary Part 3 Writing on Vedic Correlation with Dharma OH Forum: Indian Cultural Heritage in Global Age TeachIndia week-long training California School Textbook Controversy Revisited Master in Yoga Studies Uberoi Teacher Training in India (UTTI) Program TeachIndia classroom material Uberoi Teacher Training in India Experts Meeting 2015: Tampa, Florida	\$324,706
2016	McGill University Inst. Of Adv. Sciences True Dharma International Himalayan Academy Himalayan Academy Himalayan Academy Himalayan Academy Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Hindu University of America CSULB Foundation Hindu American Foundation	World Religions Conference in Sep 2016 Nationwide Teacher Training Program "Good Death, Auspicious Rebirth" resource book Indian Monasticism: Ramananda Sampraday History of Hinduism Documentary Part 4 History of Hinduism Documentary Part 5 California Textbook Issues and Teaching Aids Int'l Summer School for Jain Studies (ISSJS) Scholarships -- Study of the Dharma Traditions Professorship of Jain and Sikh Studies Denver Teacher Training Program TeachIndia week-long training HAF Director of Education and Curriculum Reform Experts Meeting 2016: Montreal Unexpended Return of Grant 2015-11	\$225,611

<u>Year</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Total</u>
2017	Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Hindu University of America Hunter College Himalayan Academy Naropa University University of Michigan SSU Development Foundation University of Colorado Foundation Institute of Advanced Sciences Hindu University of America CSU Fresno Foundation Himalayan Academy Loyola Marymount University	International Summer School for Jain Studies Professor of Jain and Sikh Studies Scholarships: Study of Dharmic Traditions 1 Day Dharmic University Program The Nay Science: Reader's Guide Teach India Videos Yoga & Hindu Studies, Naropa University Consciousness Studies in Indic Traditions Uberoi Seminar on Indian Culture and Globalization Trungpa Lecture in Buddhist Studies Nationwide Teacher Training Program Denver Teacher Training Program Women, Goddesses, Yogis, and Others California Textbook Controversies and Issues Uberoi Teacher Training in India (UTTI) Experts Meeting 2017: Denver, Colorado	\$178,020
2018	Institute of Advanced Sciences Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University True Dharma International Hindu American Foundation Manthratalk Organization Himalayan Academy Graduate Theological Union McGill Univ. School of Religious Studies Hindu American Foundation	Nationwide Teacher Training Program International Summer School for Jain Studies Scholarships: Study of Dharmic Traditions "Good Death, Auspicious Rebirth" training Hinduism 101 and Educator Professional Dvlpmnt Annual Meeting of American Academy of Indic Studies Teach India Videos GTU Global Sustainability Initiative Remedying the Misinterpretation of Hinduism Comprehensive Education Reform Project Experts Meeting 2018: Tampa, Florida	\$209,680
2019	CSU Fresno Foundation Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Buena Vista University Institute of Advanced Sciences True Dharma Int'l Buddhist Mission Hindu American Foundation University of Michigan Hindupedia California State University Fresno Foundation Loyola Marymount University	Gandhi's Global Legacy: In India and Beyond Clinical Professor of Yoga and Health Uberoi Foundation Scholarship in Dharmic Studies ISSJS Teaching for Peace Institute Uberoi Teacher Training -- Iowa Nationwide Teacher Training Program Good Death Auspicious Rebirth Training Getting Hinduism Right: Empowering Educators Indic Contemplative Traditions in College Classrooms Hindupedia's Textbook Reform Uberoi Teacher Training -- Fresno Uberoi Teacher Training India (UTTI) Experts Meeting 2019: Denver, Colorado	\$227,410
2020	California State University Fresno Foundation California State University Fresno Foundation Graduate Theological Union Hindu University of America University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Foundation Hindupedia Mahavir Vision Inc. True Dharma International Loyola Marymount University Loyola Marymount University Institute of Advanced Sciences Loyola Marymount University American University of Sovereign Nations Himalayan Academy Wellesley College Manthratalk Organization Boston Center of Excellence Chandan Shamala Library	Support of Guru Nanak's birthday symposium and writing project Gandhi's Moral Methods and His Global Influence Graduate Certificate in Yoga Philosophy & Applications Mainstreaming Dharmic Perspectives in International Relations Four Dharmas: Mantra and Lectio Textbook reform International Jain Winter School 2019-2020 Good Death Auspicious Rebirth Training Yoga Studies -- Clinical Professorship Yoga Studies -- Scholarships for MA Students Uberoi Foundation Fellow program of teacher training Dharmic Traditions and Higher Education Native American and Dharmic Wisdom Dharmic Temple Student Tours Sounding Gurbani: Experiencing Sikh Scripture Indian History and Culture Conference Intermittent Fasting in Dharmic Traditions Impact of Indian Culture on Second Generation Indians	\$197,500

<u>Year</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Total</u>
2021	Mahavir Vision, Inc. Himalayan Academy Graduate Theological Union Loyola Marymount University California State University Foundation Jain Academic Foundation of North America (JAFNA) GTU Center for Dharma Studies Cal State Fullerton Philanthropic Foundation American University Loyola Marymount University	<i>Lectureship in Jain Studies at UCLA</i> <i>Vedic Agriculture: Ancient wisdom for modern challenges</i> <i>Yoga Immersion Project: Contemplative, Consciousness, &amp; Cognitive Studies in Yoga</i> <i>Two MA in Yoga Studies Scholarships (2021-22 and 2022-23)</i> <i>Interdependence and Interconnectedness: Jani-Hindu Symposium</i> <i>Symposium on Jainism and Mathematics at MIT</i> <i>Yoga &amp; Contemplative Arts: Ecopsychological Healing</i> <i>Jain Studies Bhagwan Shantinath Lectuership</i> <i>Buddhism and Non-Violence</i> <i>Uberoi Teacher Training in India, Preparations for 2022</i> <i>Uberoi Teacher Training in the United States 2021</i>	\$238,077

<b>Total Programmatic Outlay Since Inception in 2008: \$2,900,700</b>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

## **Section III:**

### **Uberoi Teacher Training**







## Uberoi Teacher Training

For 13 consecutive years, the Uberoi Foundation has made it a programmatic priority to train middle and high school teachers in the United States about the Dharma traditions. Initially, beginning in 2009, the Foundation provided grantmaking funds for this purpose to Dr. Bal Ram Singh at the University of Massachusetts. Teachers gathered for five days at the Dartmouth campus in July each summer from 2009 through 2013. For another seven years, from 2014 through 2020, Dr. Singh continued to lead the training program, but now through the Institute of Advanced Sciences. Other states beyond Massachusetts gradually joined the mix, including most notably Colorado via Indira Walia and Iowa via Swasti Bhattacharyya. In 2016 and 2018, the Foundation broadened its training to include a month-long segment in India, led first by Dr. Singh in 2016 and then in 2018 by Dr. Chris Chapple of Loyola Marymount University.

The teacher training focus by the Foundation has evolved, therefore, into two primary facets:

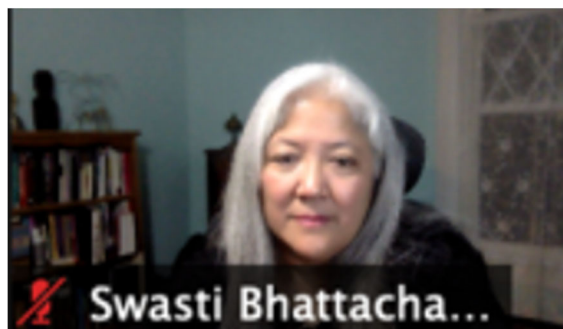
1. **UTT-US:** The *Uberoi Teacher Training* program in the United States is a nationwide endeavor, comprised of a four or five-day course each summer for 50 or more middle and high school teachers.
2. **UTTI:** The *Uberoi Teacher Training* program in India is a month-long program for 15 or more high school teachers who visit four cities in exploration of each of the four Dharma traditions – Delhi for Jainism, Amritsar for Sikhism, Sarnath for Buddhism, and Varanasi for Hinduism.

Due to Covid 19, the UTTI program previously scheduled in 2020 and then also in 2021 needed to be postponed. The Foundation is hoping to re-open UTTI once again in July of 2022. Similarly, due to Covid 19, the UTT-US program also was impacted greatly – but not to the extent of postponement. Rather, the manner in which UTT-US is directed evolved significantly. Specifically, UTT-US is now almost entirely conducted virtually.

In the pages which follows is a summary of Uberoi Teacher Training in 2021, featuring UTT-US singularly given the postponement of UTTI due to the pandemic.

## UTT-US in 2021

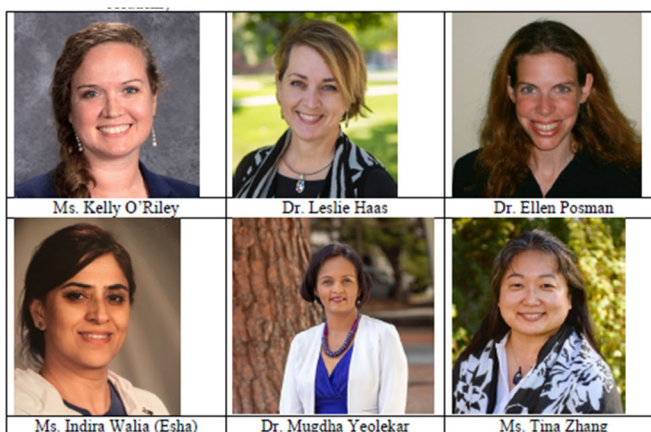
Beginning in 2021, the Uberoi Foundation implemented UTT-US as an internal program rather than an external grant. Implemented during five days from June 21 to 24, and almost entirely as a virtual program via Zoom, UTT-US was led by **Dr. Swasti Bhattacharyya**, contracted by the Foundation as UTT-US program director.



*Dr. Bhattacharyya leading UTT-US via Zoom*

As program director, Dr. Bhattacharyya recruited six regional coordinators to support her in the implementation and oversight of UTT-US, sprinkled among six U.S. states, as follows:

- **Kelly O'Riley**, 10<sup>th</sup> grade world history teacher in Kentucky
- **Leslie Hass**, curriculum director and associate professor of education at Buena Vista University in Iowa
- **Mudha Yeolekar**, assistant professor of religious studies at California State University Fullerton
- **Ellen Posman**, professor and chair of religion at Baldwin Wallace University in Ohio
- **Indira Walia**, 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher in Colorado
- **Tina Zhang**, 6<sup>th</sup> grade history and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Mandarin teacher in Connecticut



In addition to the six coordinators, Dr. Bhattacharyya also incorporated 29 presenters (including panelists, lecturers, and artists) as well as three children chanting during the UTT-US closing session and two dancers who demonstrated their craft via Zoom from Rajasthan in the middle of their nighttime on the other side of the globe.

In all, UTT-US consisted of 40 sessions over four six-hour days.

Roughly 49 teachers took part as participants. The chart at right reflects their subject areas and their grade levels.

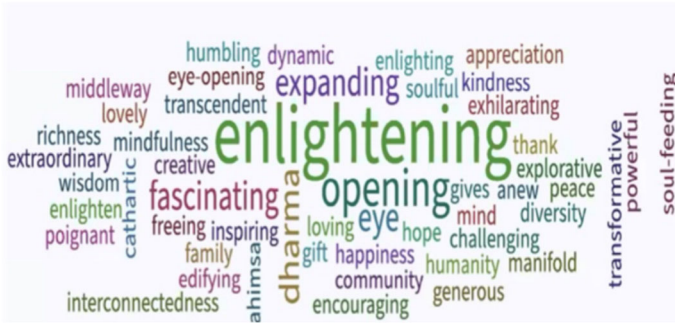
Subject Area		Grade Level	
World religion	1	Elementary	3
World Languages	2	Middle school	25
Wellness	1	High School	21
Theatre	1	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>
Technology	2		
Special Education	2		
Social Studies	11		
Science	4		
Mathematics	2		
Humanities	4		
Art/Fine Arts	4		
ESL	1		
English/Language			
Arts	8		
Elementary			
Principal	1		
eLearning	1		
ELA	1		
ECE	2		
unknown	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>		

The screenshot below depicts the flavor of the zoom sessions during UTT-US. Lively participation by the teachers was the goal, including plenty of opportunities for Q&A.



A Google Classroom site accompanied the four-day session. The site contained numerous folders with resources for the teachers, recordings of the sessions, and their assignments. Teachers who attended consistently and completed the assignments received a Certificate of Completion.

Lengthy evaluation forms documented the overwhelmingly positive feedback provided at UTT-US' conclusion by the teachers who participated. The word cloud below captures the enthusiasm.



Finally, to the extent logistically feasible, site visits to nearby temples and gurdwaras also were a component of UTT-US. In the days and weeks following the mid-June virtual session, regional coordinators scheduled visits for any teachers living in the six geographic areas of the coordinators.



## **Section IV:**

### **Annual Experts Meeting**





## Historic Summary of the Annual Experts Meeting

Beginning in its first year of operation in 2008, the Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies has placed a high priority on gathering together experts from the four Dharmic traditions – in one city and in one room, in order to share, collaborate, brainstorm, and engage. A brief recap of the Experts Meetings held since the Foundation’s inception appears below.

**2008:** During its first year of operation, in October of 2008, the Uberoi Foundation hosted in Denver, Colorado, more than a dozen renowned scholars of Dharmic traditions. The scholars used their time together to sketch out the contours of the Foundation’s work. Representatives of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism were on hand in person, and a representative of Sikhism was present by conference call. Remarkably, the scholars noted how unusual it was for them to be together to reflect on the common threads that bind these Dharmic traditions and that, as scholars, they rarely, if ever, have that opportunity. It was a wonderful and meaningful beginning to the work that the Foundation had launched.

**2009:** Over two days in late October of 2009, the Foundation organized a second opportunity to meet with scholars. To participate in its Uberoi Foundation Experts Meeting, on location in Orlando, Florida, the Foundation invited twenty academicians to collaborate with its five-member board of trustees in three joint sessions. In the months leading up to the sessions, the Foundation announced its intention at the Experts Meeting to delve deeply into the commonalities of the four Indic Dharmic traditions as well as



At the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado: The 2010 Experts Meeting

into the ways in which those traditions contribute to society. For the Experts Meeting, Shiva Bajpai prepared a paper on *Theism: The Ultimate Reality* and Arvind-Pal Mandair and Bal Ram Singh prepared a paper on *Karma*.

**2010:** The Foundation’s Experts gathered in Denver in October of 2010 at the Iliff School of Theology. Over two full days of fast-paced discourse, the Experts revealed their considerable talents and scope. In so doing, they demonstrated a high level of academic rigor in their presentations and conversations. Deliberations at the Experts

Meeting among the scholars very successfully met the lofty charge set by the organizer, Dr. Arvind Sharma, who selected the topic of *Decolonizing Indic Studies*.

**2011:** In the beginning of October in 2011, the Foundation's Experts had the pleasure of meeting over two days in Los Angeles, California, with the significant assistance of co-sponsors Loyola Marymount University and Nalanda International. The 2011 Uberoi Foundation Experts Meeting, entitled *In Our Own Voices: Dharma Education in North America*, sought to facilitate the emergence of innovative and creative theories, approaches, and methods to education and scholarship in Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and Sikh Dharma traditions. "In Our Own Voices" drew attention to the fact that Dharma traditions are not at the center of the dominant global discourse on contemporary issues and challenges. The voices (wisdom and discernment) of the Dharma traditions are currently on the margins. Yet they are of great significance and relevance to the crises that face humanity. The on-going goal is to position the insights of Dharma as integral to addressing these challenges. The term "In Our Own Voices" does not refer to who is talking or writing but rather refers to which lens is being used to define and understand the Dharma traditions.

**2012:** In mid-October of 2012, the Experts of the Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies once again had the opportunity to meet together over a period of two days. Gathering in Denver, Colorado, the Experts began with reflections on the tragic attack brought upon the Sikh Gurdwara in Wisconsin



*At the Daniels Fund in Denver, Colorado: the 2012 Experts Meeting*

earlier that year. The Experts then turned their attention to practical, in-depth discussions on the two programmatic priorities of the Uberoi Foundation – namely, training U.S. school teachers in Dharmic traditions and correcting distortions and inadequacies of Dharmic traditions in North American textbooks. The Experts concluded their time together by sharing brief presentations of pivotal work underway on each of these two programmatic priorities by likeminded organizations and experts.

**2013:** In the summer of 2013, the vitality of one of the Uberoi Foundation's primary grant-making programs served as the centerpiece of the Foundation's annual Experts Meeting. Assembling in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, the trustees gathered together a smaller, core group of Experts for reflection on the Foundation's strategy and participation in the annual teacher training program held at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Twenty Experts began their time together on July 31 with a mini-symposium in recognition of the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda and, specifically, on the impact of his travels to the western world in 1893. The mini-symposium's discussion included the participation of Uberoi Foundation chair Ved Nanda and Uberoi trustees Yashwant Pathak, Shiva Bajpai, and Bal Ram Singh. Witnessing the detail of the training provided to the teachers, the trustees took part mid-week in a focus placed on Jain beliefs, lifestyle, and culture, as well as an evening dance demonstration by UMass Dartmouth student Anuradha Tata. In a strategy session held in the afternoon of August 1, the Uberoi trustees brainstormed on how best to implement the intended mission of Professor Mahinder Uberoi, especially with regard to the Foundation's two fundamental priorities for the next several years – the training of U.S. teachers in the Dharmic traditions and the correcting of distortions about the Dharmic traditions in U.S. textbooks.



**2014:** As Fall colors descended upon the valley of Boulder, Colorado, the Uberoi Foundation gathered in mid-September on the historic campus of Naropa University. The Foundation's annual Expert Meeting began with a special Friday evening event organized by the University of Colorado and Naropa University called the *Chogyam Trungpa Lecture*, sponsored by Uberoi. Dr. John Makransky, professor of Buddhism at Boston University, served passionately and inspirationally as the keynote speaker. On the Saturday and Sunday which followed, the Foundation then focused exclusively on its theme for the Experts Meeting in 2014 – ***Compassion in the Four Dharmic Traditions***. A total of 21 speakers participated in the featured sessions, along with keynote speeches offered during meal times. Following the Experts Meeting, the Uberoi Foundation assembled and edited the papers delivered over the weekend into a book for subsequent publishing and dissemination.

**2015:** In the beginning of October of 2015, the Uberoi Foundation gathered once again for its annual Experts Meeting, this time in Tampa, Florida, on the campus of the University of South Florida. The Jijnnya Foundation co-sponsored the meeting, represented by its executive director, Dr. Gururaj Mutalik, among others from its network.

Uberoi Foundation Advisory Committee Chairman Dr. Yashwant Pathak was a most gracious host, as were Uberoi Vice Chairman Shri Parveen Setia and his wife, Smt. Mini Setia, who reside in southern Florida.

***Dharma Education in the United States – Challenges and Opportunities*** served as the focus of the 2015 Experts Meeting, with many first-time participants taking part, and in so



*Dr. Bal Ram Singh makes a point at the 2015 Experts Meeting in Tampa, Florida*

doing, adding tremendous value. Those individuals included Dr. Vishwa Adluri from Hunter College in New York; Dr. Narinjan Kaur Khalsa from Loyola Marymount University; Dr. A.S. Pandya at Florida Atlantic University; Prof. Andrew Schelling from Naropa University; Mr. Matthew Spurlin, a PhD student at the University of Denver; Dr. Darshan Thakkar from Boston; Dr. Lavanya Vemsani from Shawnee State University; and Dr. Alice Wood from Bethune-Cookman University.

**2016:** On September 15, the Uberoi Foundation assembled in Montreal for its annual Expert Meeting in order to attend a special program of an Uberoi grantee, McGill University. Professor Arvind Sharma, faculty member of Religious Studies at McGill and a regular expert of the Uberoi Foundation, served as the lead organizer of the ***Third Global Conference on World's Religions since September 11: From Faith to Interfaith***. Co-sponsored by the Uberoi Foundation, the Conference called upon many prominent keynote speakers, including Deepak Chopra and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. Following the Conference, members of the Uberoi Advisory Committee and of the Uberoi Grants Committee met in strategic planning sessions in order to review the programmatic priorities of the Uberoi Foundation and the implementation of those priorities through the Foundation's grantmaking process. A renewed commitment resulted with regard to the Foundation's focus on teacher training and textbook reform.

**2017:** Between September 29 and October 1, the Uberoi Foundation met in Denver in association with the Ved Nanda Center and the Sturm College of Law at the University of Denver to focus on ***The Environment, Climate Change, and Sustainability from the Perspectives of the Four Dharmic Traditions***. Professors Rita Sherma, Veena Howard, Ramdas Lamb, Mugdha Yeolekar, Bal Ram Singh, Lavanya

Vemsani, Subhash Kak, Haragopal Parsa, and Appachanda Thimmaiah provided the Hindu perspective; Professors Claude D'Estree, Joan Policastri, and Matt Spurlin the Buddhist perspective; Professor Nirinjan Kaur Khas and Mr. Dilpreet Singh Jammu the Sikh perspective; and Professor Chris Chapple, Dr. Sulekh Jain, and Professor Yashwant Malaiya the Jain perspective. A most interesting dimension of the 2017 Experts Meeting was the offering of a perspective on the topic from the U.S. indigenous tradition, led by Lakota elder Grandmother Regina Brave, Lakota leader Doug Good Feather, Professor Andrew Reid, and Professor Yashwant Pathak.

**2018:** In Mid-October, the Uberoi Foundation met once again in Tampa, Florida, and on this occasion at the Patel College of Global Sustainability on the campus of the University of South Florida. Yashwant Pathak served as the chair and the host of the 2018 Annual Experts Meeting and the inauguration of a second decade of Experts Meetings, with this now as the eleventh in a series. Over a day and a half, a total of nine sessions took place on the topic of *Human Rights and Human Dignity: Rooted in the Four Dharmic Traditions*, a theme developed thoroughly through the presentation of 28 separate abstracts.



*The 2018 Experts Meeting began with prayers from each of the Dharmic traditions.*



*Final remarks in 2019 from out-going chair Ved Nanda.*

**2019:** From October 11 through 13, the Uberoi Foundation met in its annual Experts Meeting, once again held in Denver. This year, the theme was *Health and Well-Being in the Four Dharmic Traditions*. Its focus was simple – namely, what do the Dharmic traditions reveal about how each person might live to his or her full potential? Wisdom was shared by accomplished and talented speakers from all over the country – from Florida to Hawaii and from Boston to Los Angeles.

*Editor's Note: Due to the disruption caused by the global Covid 19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, no Annual Experts Meetings were held.*

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