



NEWSFLASH

Volume 3, Issue 5 • December 15, 2023

As we close the chapter on 2023, we reflect upon a year of remarkable achievements for the NACA. We have grown significantly as an independent, non-partisan, and professional network dedicated to Nepal related research collaboration, scholarship, and partnership. Apart from holding our on-site conference in Phoenix with several online sessions, we also reorganized our Executive Council and Committees with new faces, completed a zoominar on the growing uses of generative artificial intelligence in academia and an online workshop on proposal writing targeting our partners in Nepal, and completed several other regular activities. Many more to come.

In this final issue of the year, we bring your attention to the ongoing "The Nepal Health Research Initiative" project, led by Dr. Sadeep Shrestha, who graciously shares his experiences and insights. Moreover, our "Members Spotlight" section features three valuable members representing NACA's interdisciplinary focus and diverse expertise. These highlights are just a glimpse of the exciting content enclosed in this issue. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your continued support throughout the year. As we usher in 2024, we wish you all a Happy New Year filled with prosperity, productive collaboration, and academic excellence.

In This Edition

Research Highlights	2
New Life Member: Anil Gurung	4
Member Spotlight: Bilon Khambu and Tashi W Gurung	5
Awards and NACA Financial Update	7
Recent Publications	9
Events and Announcements	10
Nepal Corner	12
About Us	13



Submit your news and updates



Subscribe to our Newsflash issues

Research Highlights

Sadeep Shrestha, Ph.D.

The Quetelet Endowed Professorship in Public Health
Professor of Epidemiology, School of Public Health
University of Alabama at Birmingham

The Nepal Health Research Initiative



“Cervical cancer is totally preventable – WHO has launched a goal of eliminating cervical cancer so why not do that in Nepal?” With that motivation, I have partnered with Ms. Pema Lhaki and her team at Nepal Fertility Care Center (NFCC) in Nepal for the past 14 years, striving to implement cervical cancer screening methods and technologies (e.g., self-sampling for human papillomavirus (HPV) testing, Telehealth) in different communities across Nepal. One of the most important factors with any project or program is working with a passionate and diligent collaborator who can lead the groundwork and our successes have been the result of that partnership. At UAB, we

have established The Nepal Health Research Initiative (NHRI), a program that has provided opportunities for students and faculty to conduct research in our ongoing [Cervical Cancer Screen-and-Treat Continuum program](#) and other women’s health projects. Through collaborative relationships with academic institutions, NGOs, hospitals and local/central government, our team has focused on educating about cervical cancer and developing, implementing, and evaluating evidence-based strategies to scale-up the screening program.

To establish this program, our team has conducted several evidence-based science projects in Nepal over the past 14 years: (i)

HPV screening camps in multiple rural and urban geographical areas (Accham, Jhapa); (ii) knowledge and awareness studies about HPV and cervical cancer (community and medical students/professionals; (iii) screening for sexually transmitted infection (STI) clinical syndromes; (iv) evaluation of HPV screening outcomes in Solukhumbu district; (v) using mobile health (m-Health) technologies to ensure continuum of care in cervical cancer screening; and (vi) consult with updating the National Implementation Plan for Cervical Cancer Screening and Prevention. Currently, our NHRI/NFCC collaborative team has established a HPV testing laboratory in Ward No. 3 in Lalitpur district. Working with the Chairman of the Ward, Mr. Shree Gopal Maharjan, and his health team, our NHRI/NFCC team has initiated a HPV cancer

screening-and-treatment continuum for all women living in the ward. This program will be implemented as part of routine care within the Ward's health program. This model will be instrumental in developing a national cervical cancer screening program.

Our NHRI/NFCC team is also collaborating with the National Cancer Hospital and Research Center (NCHRC) to establish a hospital-based cancer registry and bio-repository for head and neck cancer, another cancer related to HPV infection.



New Life Member

Anil Gurung, Ph.D.

Professor, the Lewis College of Business
Marshall University



Dr. Anil Gurung is a Professor of Management Information Systems in the Lewis College of Business at Marshall University. Before joining Marshall University in 2010, he served as a faculty at Kansas State University and Neumann University. He received his Ph.D. in Business Administration with a Major in Information Systems and Minor in Operations Management in 2006 from the University of Texas at Arlington and MBA from Missouri State University. His publications have appeared in several reputed journals, including the *Journal of Global Information Technology Management*, *Information & Management*, *International Journal of Information Systems and Change Management*, *Journal of Organizational and*

End User Computing, and *Information Management and Computer Security*.

At Marshall, he teaches in undergraduate (including International program in China), graduate (Health informatics, MBA, EMBA, International MBA and doctoral programs. He has taught courses like *Business Intelligence and Analytics*, *Information Security*, *Data Communications and Networking Security*, *Project Management*, *SAP Applications*, *Database*, *Systems Analysis & Design*, *Web Development*, *MIS concepts*, *Software Applications*, and *Health Informatics*.

He has several research streams. The first stream of research looks at behavioral aspects of information security in organizations and individuals; the second stream focuses on adoption of information technologies and systems; the third stream explores pedagogical best practices for helping students to learn and use information technology and systems.

He defines his mission as being a lifelong learner and sharing knowledge. One of his recent interests is the role of IT in developing nations. Through NACA, he hopes to connect with Nepali academics and look for opportunities to collaborate.

Member Spotlight

Bilon Khambu, Ph.D.

Dept. of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
Tulane University



Dr. Bilon Khambu is an assistant professor at Tulane University School of Medicine (TUSOM), New Orleans. He received a Ph.D. from Kyoto University, followed by a four-year research fellowship at Indiana University School of Medicine where he later became Research Assistant Professor. Dr. Khambu joined TUSOM in early 2020 and started his own research team focusing on metabolic liver disease & its complications.

Over the last 10 years, Dr. Khambu has studied the pathological mechanisms associated with chronic liver disease (CLD) development

through multiple pre-clinical models. His research team at TUSOM, which currently includes two doctoral students and a research specialist, strives to understand the mechanism of CLD development- liver injury, inflammation, fibrosis, ductular reaction, tumorigenesis, and complications related to CLD like osteoporosis & systemic inflammation. He has been awarded the Abraham D. Sobel ASIP Educational Fund Scholar award, the AASLD Basic Science Young Investigator award, the BoR State of Louisiana Science award, & the COR research fellowship.

Dr. Khambu has been actively involved in transferring technology & knowledge. He helps organize the monthly Basic Biomedical Scientist seminars at the B. P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Dharan--his alma mater. He currently advises PhD students at Dhulikhel Hospital/Kathmandu University. As a member of NACA, Dr. Khambu wants to network with fellow academics interested in biomedical sciences. He also would be interested in mentoring students of biomedical sciences at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Tashi W Gurung, Ph.D.

Research Scientist, EdPlus Action Lab
Arizona State University



Dr. Tashi W Gurung is a research scientist in the Action Lab at EdPlus, Arizona State University (ASU). Dr. Gurung completed his masters from the Humphrey School of Public Policy, and recently received a Phd in *Environmental Social Science – Complex Adaptive Systems Science* from the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at ASU.

Dr. Gurung's research interests lie in the nexus of climate change adaptation, tourism, migration, sustainability, institutions, and governance. Currently, Dr. Gurung is engaged in several other projects. He is a graduate research intern for Environment and Disaster Management, WWF. He is a climate adaptation strategy consultant for a few

organizations based in Nepal. Dr. Gurung is also a co-founder in a startup Qualz.ai, an AI-powered qualitative research tool.

Dr. Gurung is actively engaged in philanthropic activities; he recently helped raise funds for flood victims in Sikkim and Mustang. His past philanthropic projects include supporting COVID-19 relief, earthquake relief, and clean water initiatives in Africa and Nepal. The University of Minnesota, Crookston honored Dr. Gurung with the "Abbey Promise Award," recognizing his contribution to transformative change, positively impacting individuals, communities, or the environment.

Since joining NACA in 2018 as a PhD student, Dr. Gurung sees NACA as a platform that connects academics with a deep commitment to Nepal. Dr. Gurung values how NACA encourages and facilitates meaningful dialogue among Nepali scholars and beyond across various disciplines. Dr. Gurung believes NACA has opened avenues for mentorship opportunities, collaboration potential, and the chance to build an extensive academic network that goes beyond traditional academia.

Awards and Updates



Dr. Alok Bohara, a member of the NACA Advisory Council and a Life Member, has been honored with the 2023 Globally Engaged Research Faculty Award by the University of New Mexico in recognition of his exemplary contributions to experiential learning and impactful research. Over the past 18 years, Dr. Bohara has dedicated his efforts to conducting interdisciplinary research related to the Himalayan region, actively involving faculty and students in projects addressing natural disasters, health, river restoration, gender hygiene, and food security.

This esteemed award underscores Dr. Bohara's commitment to community-engaged research, and positions his work as a noteworthy model for colleagues, extending its impact beyond the university setting.

Learn more at [the UNM News Site](#)

NACA Financial Update

Nepali Academics in America (NACA) is a non-profit organization set up in the state of Arizona and is set as a tax-exempt (501 (c) (3)) entity. Our primary revenue sources are membership (life, annual, and student), conference registration, and conference sponsorship fees. Our recurring expenses include database management, Zoom, website, and email management fees. Ad-hoc expenses include conference-related fees such as meals, cleaning, special Zoom licenses, etc.

The information included in this report is based on the financial report presented to the executive committee on October 15, 2023, and covers information from the beginning of NACA incorporation, and ends on June 30, 2023.

For 2020, our revenue was \$3,525 and expenses were \$816 leaving with a net asset of \$2,709. The majority of revenue was from life membership fees. For 2021, our revenue was \$1,530 and expenses were \$873.66, ending 2021 with net assets of \$3,365.34. The majority of revenue was from conference registration. In 2022, our revenue was \$8,495 and expenses were \$1,622.33, ending the year with \$10,238.01 in net assets. The majority of revenue was from conference sponsorship fees. However, note that some of these expenses are to be paid next year. As of June 30, 2023, our revenue was \$6,075

and expenses were \$5,275.29 thus ending with a net asset of \$11,037.72.

Regarding our cash flows, as of the latest month-end (September 2023) before the October meeting, our cash balance was \$11,164.57. The membership count included a total of 82 active members (50 annual general members, 23 life, and nine students) and 25 with renewal overdue.

In general, we are healthy from a cash flow as well as an overall financial standpoint. A major portion of our cash balance has come from life membership fees and conference sponsorship fees. Because life membership fees do not offer a recurring revenue stream, we need to consider other revenue streams in the longer term.

Prepared by

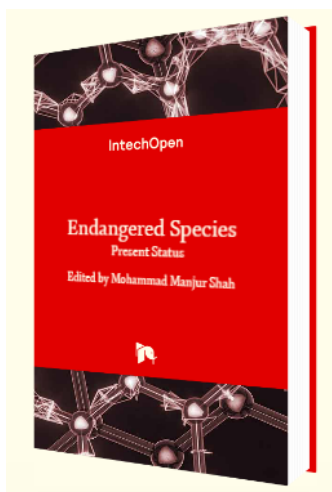
Pradeep Sapkota, PhD
Treasurer, NACA

Recent Publications



Kunwar, S. B., Khatiwada, N., Rahman, M. M., Liu, M., Thapa, S., **Bohara, A. K.**, & Wang, J. (2023). Reimagining Teaching Water Issues through Experiential Learning. *Applied Economics Teaching Resources (AETR)*, 5(3).

This paper showcases an undergraduate experiential learning course, developed by the Nepal Study Center (NSC) and administered by the economics department at the University of New Mexico (UNM). Named "Problem-Based Learning," the course seamlessly integrates doctoral research, classroom education with community outreach and international research via a study abroad program. Aligned with the principles of experiential learning theory (ELT), the course structure encompasses field-based data collection (doctoral research), problem identification, conceptual framework development, data analysis, intervention proposal, study abroad implementation, and findings dissemination. Noteworthy is the collaboration between graduate and undergraduate students, with graduate students serving as mentors. The broader impacts encompass student learning, community effects, research experience, and the potential for this program to serve as a model for other institutions.



Acharya, S. (2023). Reviving Chinese Pangolin Conservation: A Brief Knowledge Sharing. In *Endangered Species - Present Status* (Shah, M. M. Ed., pp. 17-35), *IntechOpen*. DOI: 10.5772/intechopen.113118

This book chapter reviews and synthesizes the knowledge about critically endangered small mammal Chinese pangolin and advocates for conservation of the species. The chapter shares the taxonomy, ecology, habitat, population, distribution, conservation status and threats to Chinese pangolin along with future recommendations in pangolin studies.

Events and Announcements

NACA Zoominar # 12

Botanical Medicines and Their Roles in Human Health

December 17, 2023 (10:00 AM Eastern Time in the US)

Register at: <http://tinyurl.com/nacazoominar12>

Explore the science behind the healing and immunity properties of botanical medicines like turmeric, soybean, and berries in a cross-cultural context. Join us for the NACA Zoominar #12 featuring Dr. Jeevan K. Prasain from University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Prasain's research delves into phytonutrients, their intake, metabolism, and impact on health maintenance and illness

prevention. With over 100 peer-reviewed scientific papers, health-related articles, and Nepali literary works to his name, Dr. Prasain brings a unique perspective to the discussion. Don't miss the opportunity to learn the mysteries of botanical medicines with us. The Zoominar will be moderated by Ms. Uma Sharma from Eastern Carolina University.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 10:00AM TO 11:30AM EASTERN TIME / 08:45 - 10:15 PM NEPAL TIME



Nepali Academics in America

NACAZOOMINAR # 12

**Botanical Medicines and
Their Roles in Human Health**



SPEAKER



DR. JEEVAN PRASAIN
Associate Professor
Dept. of Pharmacology & Toxicology
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
AT BIRMINGHAM

MODERATOR



MS. UMA SHARMA
Research Specialist
East Carolina Diabetes & Obesity Institute
EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

This talk features Dr. Prasain's research on botanical medicines and their effects on health maintenance and illness prevention. He has authored several Nepali books: *Jeevan Jiune Kaida*, *Sadhai Tanneri*, *Waripari Nai Sarbopari* and *Dherai Ko Dhapedi*, which will be highlighted in this talk.

Register at <http://nepaliacademics.org/events/> to get more info and future updates

Follow NACA

 /nepaliacademics

 /nepaliacademics

 /company/nepaliacademics

Introducing the NACA Listserv

NACA has launched a listserv at <https://groups.google.com/g/nepaliacademics>, currently accessible to a limited number of members for testing purposes. Interested? Feel free to join our new listserv and help spread the word.

To join, visit <https://groups.google.com/g/nepaliacademics> or send an email to "nepaliacademics+subscribe@googlegroups.com"

To post a message, email "nepaliacademics@googlegroups.com"

To unsubscribe, email "nepaliacademics+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com" or adjust your subscription settings on the listserv site mentioned above.

Calling for Volunteers

NACA is actively developing a comprehensive roster/database of Nepali diaspora academics and the scholars with sustained research interests in Nepal and the Nepali diaspora. This initiative aims to expand our network and establish thematic interest or specialization groups within NACA.

We invite volunteers to contribute to this effort, particularly seeking graduate students proficient in database development and spreadsheet tools. Successful applicants will be recognized and may be eligible for a fellowship or internship based on their credentials and experiences.

For those interested, please contact us at "info@nepaliacademics.org" to apply or seek further information.

Nepal Corner

University for a New Nepal

After a decade of lobbying by educationists, the Cabinet finally passed the University Act in May 2023 that opened the door for the establishment of new institutions, including the Madan Bhandari University of Science and Technology (MB-UST) in Chitlang. This brief report highlights a new approach to science and technology education in Nepal:

<https://nepalitimes.com/here-now/university-for-a-new-nepal-grhuzufm>

Prof. Shiva L Bhusal Appointed the Vice-Chancellor of TU

Prime Minister of Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, has appointed Prof. Shiva Lal Bhusal, the Rector of Tribhuvan University (TU), to serve as the Vice-Chancellor until a new decision is made:

<https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/bhusal-appointed-tu-officiating-vice-chancellor>

Future of History and Geography Departments at TU in Jeopardy

Nepal has faced a declining enrollment in all the major higher education institutions, but the fate of TU's history and geography departments is particularly dire:

<https://www.ukaalo.com/news/20230901-study-of-history-geography-in-tu/9961>

Proposal for an Innovative and Experiential Learning Approach

<https://nepalunplugged.substack.com/p/mustang-lumbini-vertical-university>

In the recent issue of his Nepal Unplugged blog, Dr. Alok Bohara integrates his extensive field research and community-engaged activities in Nepal to introduce the innovative learning model, Education 3.0+. Coined as the Mustang-Lumbini Vertical University, this transformative concept utilizes the diverse ecosystems, people, and cultures along the north-south corridor as a living laboratory for holistic learning. Representing a paradigm shift in education, the approach underscores experiential and community-based learning for a more comprehensive understanding of the world. For further details on this model, please visit the Nepal Unplugged platform. Any inquiries or collaborative interests can be directed to Dr. Bohara at bohara@unm.edu.

Publish your accomplishments, updates, or any sharable news (e.g., grants, awards, publications, new job, promotion, fieldwork experience) in our next issue. Our members want to hear about other members, and the Newsflash has been a valuable tool to our mission: Engage, Network, and Collaborate. Submit the items [here](#).

For feedback or comments, email us at info@nepaliacademics.org.

About Us

Editorial Team

Milan Shrestha | Nilesh Timilsina | Samridhi Shrestha | Suman Acharya | Bishwa S. Koirala | Arun KC



info@nepaliacademics.org



www.nepaliacademics.org

Follow Us

