Friends of Esalen®

UPDATES AND INSIGHTS FROM INSIDE THE INSTITUTE FOR OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS
We recently celebrated Esalen’s campus renewal with a groundbreaking ceremony to honor the land and launch the first phase of a property wide facility renewal. It was a truly magical spring day marked by whales surfacing off the coast, migrating monarch butterflies, and a rainbow halo around the sun.

The celebration is really about the promise of securing Esalen’s future, ensuring that our infrastructure will be as strong and enduring as our mission impact - helping to create a more conscious and compassionate world. Breaking ground on the Lodge renovation is a first step toward a much greater vision that includes refurbishing, rebuilding and renovating, every structure on Esalen’s campus using the highest levels of sustainability to better support our guests, staff, and programming experiences.

It was especially meaningful to celebrate Esalen’s lead donors, like Trustee Chip Conley, as well as our entire Board for 100% participation (above and beyond their selfless service), and to acknowledge the generous annual support from Friends of Esalen like those who are listed in the enclosed 2014 Donor Honor Roll.

Esalen is the most cost conscious and resourceful organization at every level that I have ever known. Philanthropic support is essential to preserving our legacy and making transformative experiences available for generations to come.

We need your continued support. We cannot do this alone. We’re going to do this as a village and we appreciate every level of contribution.

Thank you, thank you so much.

We celebrated in a uniquely Esalen fashion, inviting the spiritual leaders from the Four Winds Council including the Esselen Cultural Center, Tassajara Zen Mountain Center, and New Camaldoli Hermitage to offer blessings. At the event, special guests, workshop participants, faculty, media, Trustees, and staff - all gathered together to participate in the rituals with intention and gratitude. A full line-up of speakers offered remarks including: Esalen Co-founder, Michael Murphy, with son, Mac, and nephew, John; Gordon Wheeler, Esalen President; and Chip Conley, trustee and lead donor.

Tom “Little Bear” Nason, a 7th generation descendent of the Esselen Tribe of Monterey County, gave tribute to tribal ancestors in all four directions, inviting the community to reflect on 10,000 years of ancient ground through modern day. The day’s events included a tree-planting ceremony of a Monterey cypress on the front lawn near the few remaining Monterey pines planted when Esalen first began more than 50 years ago.
**MOLLY LEEBOVE**

Every aspect of working in the Farm & Garden (F&G) is a metaphor for life.

I weed to find clarity or to let go of something not serving me. I sow seeds while setting intentions for new beginnings. When growth is what I’m after, I water seedlings and contemplate what would nourish me most. Being a Farm & Garden Apprentice has been an opportunity to serve and to nourish this beautiful land while also tending to me - the person I am and want to become.

My Esalen experience was made possible through a scholarship and, for this gift, I am tremendously grateful. Here, I have been a teacher, student, nursery manager, farm hand, and irrigator extraordinaire. I have learned and honed skills that I will have for the rest of my life. My wish is that other future farmers will also have the opportunity to experience learning and growing at Esalen with the support of scholarship funds.

This spring, I will join the University of Vermont’s student farm, and hope in the future to create a farm business of my own. Working so intimately with the earth has an unparalleled power to heal. To notice the patterns of a flower blossom, to taste the freshness of a new crop, to witness the magic of a seed unfolding into a baby plant, to feel so tired at the end of a work day that my mind is actually still for a moment - these are the reasons I am on this path.

Esalen’s Farm & Garden is a community within a community, like the heart within the heart. Together, we can heal through the power of growing and preparing wholesome food.

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**LANDON BERGER**

Something kept calling me back to Esalen.

My father had recently passed away after a lifelong battle with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Soon after, my 6-year relationship ended. The educational debt to become a clinical psychologist added to my burden. I was struggling to summon the energy to start a private practice, and felt the risk of taking on clients when I was suffering myself. Walking became difficult for me as my right foot and leg had grown progressively numb. My biggest fear was realized when I was diagnosed with MS.

I felt lost and in crisis yet something kept calling me to Esalen. Fast forward nine months later, I feel more fully alive and optimistic after serving as an Esalen Farm & Garden Apprentice. Words cannot begin to explain how incredibly healing this place has been for me - psychically, emotionally, and spiritually. The land, waters, and people have supported me through the depths of my grief and helped me in profound ways I could not have imagined.

Thank you Friends of Esalen. Scholarship funding made this experience possible for me. I will always remember your support during this important time in my life, and am committed to give back to my communities. I discovered an interest in herbaculture, and hope to learn more about treating chronic health issues with plant medicines. Having directly experienced the healing potential of relational agriculture, I am passionate about spreading this model to others farms and gardens in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.
ESALEN TRUSTEE, CHIP CONLEY, SUPPORTS CAMPUS RENEWAL PROJECT WITH $1M GIFT

Abraham Maslow, one of Esalen’s greatest teachers, said “if the only tool is a hammer, everything starts to look like a nail.” Chip Conley tells us that the inspiration behind his groundbreaking gift is that “my tool box is bigger because of Esalen, so I’m giving back because of it.”

Chances are, you may recognize Chip Conley as a New York Times best-selling author, hospitality industry entrepreneur and leader (Joie de Vivre, Airbnb), and acclaimed TED Talk speaker on topics such as “measuring what makes life worthwhile.”

What you may not know is that Chip’s self-avowed “calling to explore and understand how we human beings find meaning, and how that meaning can transform our lives at work…and at home” has been shaped by his experiences here at Esalen.

Deeply rooted in our community, Chip embarked on his journey with Esalen in 1997. Over the course of the next ten years, he learned massage, attended workshops and trainings, and extensively studied psychologist Abraham Maslow’s iconic Hierarchy of Needs.

In 2008, Chip began teaching “How Great Companies Get Their Mojo from Maslow.” These workshops were based upon his popular 2007 book titled PEAK, and helped participants apply self-actualizing practices to their businesses. As a “conscious business” innovator, Chip is involved with invitational conferences hosted by the Esalen Center for Theory and Research in partnership with the Conscious Capitalism Institute, which aims to connect and cultivate fellowship among leaders in a growing movement. For example, in 2013 Chip organized and convened a three-day retreat at Esalen focused on how to integrate more conscious thinking into business and recruited a “who’s who” of business leaders under 40 years of age to participate.

In recognition for all Chip has done for Esalen and for stepping forward as a lead donor to our Campus Renewal Project with the first outright million dollar gift in the Institute’s history, the Board of Trustees has decided to name the bookstore in the newly expanded Lodge for Chip Conley.

“If the only tool is a hammer, everything starts to look like a nail.”

- ABRAHAM MASLOW
We’re incredibly grateful to Chip for his leadership and confidence in Esalen and our long-term Campus Renewal development plans. This will result in an enhanced Esalen experience through upgraded facilities, greater levels of environmental sustainability, and an expanded capacity to deliver groundbreaking educational programs to the personal seekers and cultural change-makers of today and tomorrow.

For the first time, Esalen is offering a lasting legacy for generous donors to the Campus Renewal Project. Contributors at specific levels can honor or memorialize the name of an individual, family, teacher, or evolutionary leader within the lodge (e.g. dining room, kitchen, café/bar lounge, lodge decks, new firepit), and Huxley meeting room. Gift options are also available for sustainability, accessibility, and landscaping/garden areas.

As we begin Esalen’s own journey of renewal, your support will be vital to sustaining this extraordinary place dedicated to the exploration and realization of human potential – a place that everyone in the Esalen community has made possible since our founding more than 50 years ago.

So, today I invite you to join us on our journey. To learn more about making a special gift to support Esalen’s Campus Renewal, please contact me at elizabeth.stacey@esalen.org or 831.250.1022 x253.

— CHIP CONLEY, TRUSTEE
GROUND HONORING CEREMONY
MARCH 14, 2015

“My tool box is bigger because of Esalen, so I’m giving back because of it.”

— PATRICIA WARD
‘Being the change’ is an idea we often explore at Esalen. Gandhi’s words compel us to see that as human beings, our greatness lives in our being able to remake ourselves, realize more of our own human potential, and therein rests our power to change our world.

When individuals and organizations then move beyond their own walls and find creative ways to collaborate, real social change occurs. Last year, Aaron Pereira, an Ashoka Fellow, invited Esalen to co-create a program that explores the relationship between personal growth and successful social change.

Ashoka is an international organization that supports over 3,000 Fellows working in 70 countries around the world – social entrepreneurs leading and collaborating with change-makers to solve complex problems.

A key driver behind the project, Aaron, noticed the alarming level of burnout and personal struggles that many Fellows are experiencing. He explained, “We started with deep research done through interviewing Ashoka Fellows around the world…concerned after hearing that a significant number of social entrepreneurs experience many personal struggles and that it negatively impacts the work they do. We have been inspired, however, by the very small minority (under 10%) who have actually undertaken inner work and the beauty of what emerges: healthier lives, more sustainable, collaborative and inspiring organizations, and much deeper work with the people they are engaging. We see that a profound key to the success of the many important social movements is supporting more deeply the well being of the individuals driving the movements, and more generally by connecting inner work and wellbeing with social change.”

Along with Esalen and Ashoka, several other organizations including the Fetzer Foundation, are co-creating this 18-month pilot program for 60 fellows that will provide the tools and foster the skills necessary to live more whole and balanced lives.

Esalen will be hosting each cohort group as well as assisting with curriculum development and identification of participating teachers. Each group will embark on a journey that includes three facilitated 5-day intensive retreats while engaging in an array of well being practices. The curriculum supports inner emotional exploration, personal processing, somatic sensing, and integration of contemplative tools like journaling, meditation, and movement practices.

Using systems thinking and complexity science, the revolutionary Developmental Evaluation (DE) work of Michael Quinn Patton and team will help evaluate the question, “Does personal transformation really impact social transformation?” This core Esalen principle will now be measured as a result of this partnership.

Esalen looks forward to welcoming the first cohort group in November 2015. With Esalen’s 52+ year track record for changing lives, we have no doubt that this is a powerful key to the success of global social change movements, to better support its leaders. Delivering a comprehensive Esalen experience will have powerful implications for the work that social entrepreneurs do, and the tens of millions of people whose lives they touch.
Heartfelt thanks to Friends of Esalen who generously support our operations and special priorities. Your contributions are essential to Esalen’s mission of personal and social transformation. It is with gratitude that we present the following honor roll of giving.

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| Chip Conley |

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If you prefer to be listed differently, or if we inadvertently left you off the list, please contact Sheila at sheila.kern@esalen.org. In any event, please accept our apologies.
I cannot imagine what the second half of my life would have been without Esalen. I came here in 1967 as a Jesuit, preparing for my ordination about three months later. The workshop I attended was led by author and religious scholar, Huston Smith, who was the Chair of the Philosophy Department at Massachusetts Institute of Technology at that time. Fellow participants included such pioneers as psychologist Will Schutz and somatic therapist Stanley Keleman, as well as Gia-Fu Feng, a renowned Taoist teacher and translator of Taoist classics.

The experience I had at Esalen could be likened to the opening notes of a new symphony in my life, and was followed by a half-century of working out the implications of returning to my body and the body of the earth; training with Ida Rolf; leading many symposia under what is now the Esalen Center for Theory and Research (CTR); and gathering bodyworkers, biomedical researchers, philosophers, spiritual teachers, and social scientists to create what some of us have called the field of somatics.

I was only able to do all of this because of Esalen’s generosity in allowing me to use its many desirable features to entice world leaders in these various fields to spend time here working out a common vision.

Don’s work is centered as a professor in the Somatics Graduate Program, which he founded in 1983, located at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.
For thousands of years, Esalen has been a place of three sacred waters. Since the Esselen Indians, cliff-side hot springs have been used for ritual and healing. A spring-fed stream cascades through the canyon, nourishing us with fresh drinking water. The ocean and coastline provide a haven for marine wildlife including birds, sea otters, and whales, and creative inspiration for countless artists and writers. At Esalen, our sacred waters and land compel us to be the best stewards we can be.

Thanks to an anonymous donor who made a generous gift to Esalen, we implemented an eco-footprint project. The goal of this project is to create a sustainability performance baseline for a number of areas such as energy, carbon, waste, and water.

To approach this, we have installed new water meters to help us better understand, monitor and manage complicated water flows. A review of purchasing practices is also underway to make sure that they are aligned with our sustainability values, particularly in terms of water system impact. For example, the kitchen assessed even more deeply where we get our food and evaluated the sustainability of all of the products that we use.

Another exciting outcome of this philanthropic gift is Esalen’s sustainability committee, which is working cross departmentally to ensure that we are increasingly aligned with Esalen’s Beyond Green Sustainability Plan. Located in the garden, Esalen’s “living machine” processes wastewater from the laundry (a significant consumer of water on property) and the Maslow units. The system mimics tidal wetlands and uses natural biological process to treat black water, and is being updated to accommodate the new lodge. The living machine was made possible with a generous gift from the Roy A. Hunt Foundation.

Thanks to this eco-footprint project, Esalen Farm & Garden (F&G) committed to further reducing water use by maximizing water catchment and harnessing grey water. F&G are experimenting with using overflow hot springs water for food crop production and the orchard is being diversified to reduce water demands. In the F&G internship and apprenticeship program, water has become a key educational theme.

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Residential Education is recruiting leading experts to teach workshop participants and staff about wise water usage. Gazebo School is teaching children about the importance of water conservation and stewardship through experience based learning and water catchment at their 1-acre wonderland.

Our staff is dedicated to being exemplary stewards of these waters and land, to help raise awareness, and to positively influence the thousands of people who flow through Esalen each year.
FOR INFORMATION ABOUT GIVING TO THE ESALEN FUND:
831.250.1022 X255 OR MONIQUE.BARON@ESALEN.ORG

www.esalen.org

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