

# 2015 Holiday Greetings from MACA

*Sanj Altan*



Greetings for the new year 2016. I hope you and your loved ones enjoyed the happiest of holidays. With these greetings, I would like to share with you an overview of MACA activities and achievements over the past year, one in which we furthered the MACA goals as envisioned by our founders, Professor Gombojab Hangin, Tsorj Lama and Lopsang Khiyod.

MACA sponsored a reception on February 28<sup>th</sup> for the filmmaker and artist Mr. Uljiimuren, who had completed a first cut on a documentary film about Gombojab Hangin. The film was screened at the reception and met with much enthusiasm.

MACA continued the year with a co-sponsorship of the Mongolian Heritage Foundation's Tsagaan Sar celebration on March 14<sup>th</sup>, at the 28on27 facility in Manhattan, NY.

MACA again was a co-sponsor of the Mongolia Society's annual meeting held on March 29<sup>th</sup> at the University of Chicago campus.

MACA was a co-sponsor of the Mongolian Cultural Center's conference held May 8-10<sup>th</sup> at the Embassy of Mongolia in Washington DC. Scholars from the US, Mongolia and Russia made presentations furthering the study of Mongolian history, culture and society. It ended with a reception by His Excellency Ambassador Altangerel at his official residence attended by both participants and speakers.

MACA co-sponsored the 51<sup>st</sup> annual memorial service for the late Dilowa Khutugtu on May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Nitsan Temple in Howell NJ.

MACA provided significant funding through the Mongolian Children's Aid and Development Fund (MCADF) to the Wildlife Conservation Society's Nomadic Nature Trunks program in Mongolia in June. This program provides critically needed natural science and conservation education to communities in and around protected areas in Mongolia. The first Nomadic Trunk program was launched in 2007 in the Eastern Steppe region and with MACA support, has continued to thrive. MACA's support was also used to fund a special Biodiversity Day program targeted to youngsters. MACA provided \$6,000 in grants to the program in 2015 building on grants given over the previous several years. Support of the WCS represents a continuing shift in MACA's focus to environmental issues.

MACA's MCADF was a co-sponsor of the WAMCA children's festival on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Rosslyn Spectrum Theatre, in Arlington, VA.

MACA co-sponsored both the Washington Area Mongolian Community Association (WAMCA) Naadam celebration in Washington DC as well as the Mongolian Heritage Foundation's Naadam held in Central Park in Manhattan. Both events were held in July with more than 100 people in attendance at both events.

In late August, MACA sent a representative to the "Torguud Heritage" conference held in Bulgan Sum, Khovd aimag, Mongolia from August 24-28<sup>th</sup>.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, MACA celebrated the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Chinggis Khaan Memorial Ceremony at the Princeton Marriott hotel where we began with a moment of silence in memory of MACA founders Professor Gombojab Hangin, Tsorj Lama and Lopsang Khiyod. This most important of days gives each of us an opportunity to remember and reflect on the greatest Mongol in history, someone whose profound influence on each of us continues to this very day. This year represented a transitional year for the management of the ceremony, as the newly formed Chinggis Khaan Memorial Foundation (CKMF) took on an increasing role in the planning and coordination of the events of the day. Moving forward, the CKMF, comprised of a younger generation of committed individuals, will take on the major responsibility of planning the memorial celebration. Please consider lending your support to the foundation and becoming a founding member. Byambakhuu Darinchuluun of the Mongol Heritage Foundation served as the master of ceremonies. More than 200 people attended with participants from the Hazara, Buriyat, Kalmyk, Tuvan, Uvur and Aru Mongol communities. In attendance were special guests H.E. Ambassador Altangerel from the Embassy of Mongolia to the United States and newly arrived H.E. Ambassador Sukhbold from the Permanent Mission of Mongolia to the United Nations. Both Ambassadors spoke and extended congratulations on the occasion. The keynote address was given by Toba Baikai, Associate Professor at J.F. Oberlin University. Professor Baikai spoke on the topic of "Perceptions of Chinggis Khaan among the Japanese". The cultural segment included performances by Kalmyk, Mongolian, Buryat and Tuvan artists. The highlight was a special concert by the well known Tuvan group, Alash Ensemble. The 2015 Humanitarian of the Year Award was presented to Mr. Delgertsogt Manaljav, a well known Washington DC community organizer, for his tireless promotion of Mongolian cultural and community events among the greater Washington DC Mongolian community. As in 2014, an edited film story of the day's highlights will be available on DvD shortly. Many heartfelt thanks to those who made possible this year's ceremony.

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, MACA held the 24<sup>th</sup> annual memorial ceremony at the Nitsan Temple for the late Tsorj Lama, Gegeen and former Abbot of the Khorgho Sum in Western Sunid. Tsorj Lama was the second president of MACA.

MACA also continued our annual support of the MSNCA Mongolian school, the Nitsan Temple in Howell NJ, the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center in Bloomington, IN and the Gomang Monastery traveling workshop, based in India.

The MACA web page ([www.maca-usa.org](http://www.maca-usa.org)) was effectively managed by Belig Borjiged, She, along with Simon Braune, will coedit MACA's newsletter the eTolbo. Articles will be updated on a quarterly basis. Thank you very much Belig and Simon.

I close wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and much good health and success of every kind in the coming new year.

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