



From India:
Exceptional Women,
Exceptional Stories





Police Raid: Janpath Street merchants are mandated to share the work week. Their inventory is confiscated by police when caught conducting business on their “off” day.



Using only hand tools, laborers dig a trench to install a water line in Dharamsala.



Everyday life



Indian men tend to their daily business in
Delhi's Old City.



Working and living at the train station



Dilapidated infrastructure



Tax-paying businesses



Typical construction sites



Scraping out an existence—and happy



Automated (tuk-tuk) and bicycle rickshaws



Zonal Hospital's gurneys were donated by the local Rotary club. Sick children must have an adult with them during their stay.



Would-be patients and family wait—and sometimes sleep—in hallways until a bed becomes available. The children's ward has 40 beds.



Living on the street



Everyday life in Dharamsala



For some, their first toy



Child's play



Privileged to be getting an education



Like Ghandi, Dianne Aigaki, Sister Celia, Sonam Yangchen and Ani Tenzin Palmo are living their messages.



Dianne (Di) Aigaki

Botanical Illustrator, Tour Guide,
Teacher, Mentor, Humanitarian.



Watercolor rendering: Painting His Holiness the Dalai Lama's private garden



Di signaling for our group to join her after successfully negotiating our ride



Di taught former monk and political prisoner, Norbu Damdul English for eight hours each day.



Di hired Sonam as her gardener.
Previously, Sonam was a maid
working 16 hours a day, six days
a week for 1800 Rs/\$40 per month.



Di taught Sinni Kauer—and many others—how to write effective grant proposals. Sinni Founded Guardian Environmental Organisation and is an environmental change agent.



Di's creativity led to funding and leading a tour of 50 Tibetan monks across the United States. Sand Mandala demonstrations and the sale of Thangka paintings helped fund the tour and raise awareness about many things Tibetan.



Sister
Celia

Serving the poorest of the poor



Sister Celia leads the morning (secular) invocation at St. Mary's School.



Upside-down, broken-down tables are makeshift drum stands.



Students perform skits to educate visitors and parents of potential students about education and the opportunities that come with it.



Bright-eyed students are happy to be attending school and eager to learn.



Expanding the computer lab, constructing a playground and extending educational instruction through grade 12 are activities in progress.



Sister Celia gets by with a little help from her Sisters: Molly, Angeline, Agnus and Maria.



Ani
Tenzin Palmo

She tells it like it is.



In the face of sexual harassment and gender disparity and discrimination, Palmo chose to be a women's advocate.



Can women achieve enlightenment? As Palmo experienced, secluding oneself in a cave for twelve years is one way to find out.



From left: Sandy Steen, Dianne Aigaki, Robin Steele, Ani Tenzin Palmo,
Theresa Fogle, Caroline Sami



On a similar mission to Palmo, is Ani Tenzin Sangmo who founded Thosamling nunnery to educate and serve as a retreat for Western nuns.



Sonam Yangchen

We don't know her age—
nor does she.



Supported by the Tibetan Womens' Association, Sonam received a basic education and acquired vocational skills.



Sonam's 'hood: Hers is the door just past the chair.



Sonam's graduation gift from the
Tibetan Womens' Association



Sonam declares her passion: "I am a seamstress first."



Sonam shows one of her creations.



For now, Sonam seeks sewing opportunities and keeps Di's garden blooming.

St. Mary's School

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Dianne Aigaki

dianneaigaki.com

To buy Sonam's hand-
made lingerie bags—
\$100 for 10, send check
(payable to Dianne) and
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What is your life message?

*Write your
exceptional story.*