

A Mayan Wedding

At the end of July, 2023, Alex and I were lucky enough to have a big beautiful wedding at Maya, the place where we came to meet in 2018 while teaching. It was always our dream to have a wedding here, in the magical place that brought us together. Even though monsoon season could be an intense time for a party, we embraced the small rain and took a chance.

We invited our friends and family from all over the world to share with them what our lives are like here. They were thrilled to spend time in the community and meet everyone who makes up a part of this incredible foundation.



Matisse and Alex in their Wedding Dress

There was singing, dancing, and beautiful performances from our former and current students. Some gave speeches that brought us to tears, and some played guitar to make us feel light. My little brother Dane was so inspired by the whole ordeal that he ended up staying to teach English for five months! After seven years of coming to Maya we decided to build a home here. It seems that no matter where Alex and I end up this is always the place that makes our heart feel full. While I am away I try to stay connected to Maya by posting updates on the Children of Everest account, Maya's American NGO.

Reflection as a Hostel Warden

(Student Boarding House)

Maya Universe Academy Hostel isn't just a place to stay; it's a home away from home. The laughter, friendships, and shared experiences make our hostel a special place where lifelong memories are created.



Saphal Bohara, who is also the elected village representative is also our hostel warden. He is the class teacher for this eighth-grade class, pictured with the students.

One of the most rewarding aspects has been building connections with the students. Out of the 250 students who go to Maya, 90 live at our student hostel. To get to know them, learn their way of life and help them during their problems has been a routine for me. The diverse backgrounds, talents, and aspirations within our community has created a dynamic tapestry that makes being a hostel warden an enriching experience.

We value open communication here in the hostel. Maintaining a clean and organized living space, addressing the hostel rules regarding cleanliness, security and solving any maintenance issues and ensuring a comfortable environment for everyone are my duties here.

Working as a team with Alice miss, Yoon sir, Clara miss and Guille sir is a pleasure to face the challenges that are inevitable, together we've faced them head-on. Whether resolving conflicts, addressing maintenance issues, or adapting to unforeseen circumstances, our resilience have been commendable.

Thank you for entrusting me with the role of hostel warden. This organization and enthusiasm made this journey truly rewarding. Here's to the continued growth and success of our Maya Universe Academy Hostel community!

Warm regards,

Saphal Bohora
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My Life

Hi! I am Umita Rai, an alumni of Maya. I study high school in Damauli and volunteer at Maya during the rest of the time.

Volunteering at Maya is exciting for me after witnessing the contributions of past alumni for Maya in many different ways. I help cook and teach at Maya. It was a struggle at the beginning, to interlink all these roles in my life.



When I wake up, the clouds are still surrounding the village. I go to my school in Damauli and when I come back to Maya I help cooking for the teachers and volunteers from 10:30 to 1:30. I have good times with the cooking team in the kitchen. I get to meet and know people from all over the world. We don't only focus on cooking, we also listen to music, share our ideas, and enjoy our time together. By being in the kitchen, I learned how to cook dishes from other cultures and I even taught the volunteers how to cook Nepali dishes which they eagerly enjoy!. Now, in the kitchen we have Shakshuka from the Middle East, pumpkin gnocchi with tomato sauce from Italy, fried rice with coriander, basil and spinach from our farm, parathas or noodles with green vegetables, and the star is my egg curry which is the favorite of the volunteers.

I truly enjoy teaching at Maya. I arrived at Maya at the same age as my students now. I see myself in them. This motivates me to teach and guide them in a good direction. I have signed up for two years and volunteering here enables me to learn how to organize my time and duties in my daily life. I believe that I'll use this knowledge in the coming years. I'm so thankful for this great opportunity. Being part of the Maya team teaches me life lessons that are not taught in school.

Umita Rai
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Kindergarten Growth

Maya Kindergarten has experienced significant growth over the past months, expanding its reach beyond the Nursery level to include both LKG and UKG classes. This development is characterized by the introduction of an adapted curriculum, emphasizing a holistic approach to early childhood education. The new methods include a variety of activities such as table games, art, songs, and practical exercises, creating a dynamic and engaging learning environment.



ALICE GUIYOULE, WHO HAS BEEN VOLUNTEERING WITH US EVERY YEAR SINCE 2015 ALSO SUPERVISES THE KINDERGARTEN SECTION AMONGST OTHER THINGS.

The teachers at Maya Kindergarten, featuring Susmita, Rebati, Kamala, Asmita, Puspa, and Dhanmaya, have actively engaged in self-discovery as educators, reevaluating and refining their approaches to teaching younger grades. Through collaboration, they've developed and shared their own educational games, continuously working to enhance the learning experience for students.

After months of experimentation and hard work, the positive impact of these efforts is becoming evident across all subjects. Students not only enjoy the learning process but also show improvements in various academic areas. The entire Maya team is especially eager to witness the ongoing progress of these students over the years, firmly believing that these innovative approaches will contribute significantly to their development as they grow older.

A significant part of this success is attributed to the generous support of our donors. Their contributions have played a crucial role in acquiring essential materials and books, enriching the educational resources available to both teachers and students.

Alice Guiyoule
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Meet the Agriculture Manager:

Agriculture is a fascinating field with so much potential for positive impact. Hey everyone! This is Shrisha Shrestha, Agriculture Manager at Maya Universe Academy. As the parents pay with time instead of money for the education of their children here, we use the time in productive work such as agriculture and construction. I am very happy to share my plans as an agriculture manager at Maya.



First of all, we are working to achieve a sustainable ecosystem within ourselves i.e producing our own to feed ourselves and our animals. I have been working closely with the farmers to implement sustainable practices and improve the crop production. One of my main goals is to promote the use of organic farming methods, which minimize the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

For upcoming months, I am planning for the selection of the crop suitable for the soil here which will adapt with the changing weather conditions and schedule them in the right time like mushroom, spinach, paddy and other varieties. We also aim for gundruk (dried spinach) production, poultry farming, seasonal vegetable cultivation and most importantly taking care of our lemons, bananas and avocado trees which we mass produce. I also work on irrigation strategies, harvest timelines and oversee equipment maintenance. With the helping hands from all around the world my vision will hopefully come to a reality.

Overall, I am thrilled to be part of this journey where we can make a positive difference in the lives of farmers and children, protect the environment and contribute to a sustainable future.

Regards
Shrisha Shrestha
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Maya to Law: A Journey of Growth

I'm sharing my journey from Maya to law school. After graduating, I returned to Maya as a teacher while studying law in high school. It was challenging but rewarding.



Prajwal Shahi

To deepen my understanding of law, I moved to Kathmandu, working hard to prepare for the entrance exam. Simultaneously, the first batch of Mayans, including me, took steps toward our dreams—a time of exciting collective growth.

Fortunately, I got admitted to study BALLB at Nepal Law Campus (the best in Nepal), reflecting the strong foundation from Maya.

In a new chapter, I got involved with Maya Universe Academy, contributing through online communications. I've been addressing volunteer inquiries, connecting with people in Nepal for internships, and helping bring Maya's organic products to Kathmandu.

Even though I've just started law school, my commitment to supporting Maya Universe Academy remains strong. I continue to play a vital role in online communications, bridging the connection between Maya Universe Academy and the broader community.

Grateful for Maya's experiences and connections as I navigate law school challenges.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Prajwal Shahi
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Our alumni Parbati Rai who now studies psychology in Kathmandu returned to Maya recently to organize an inter school tournament which included football, volleyball, running, quiz, speeches and workshop about women athletes from Nepal and abroad.



Mayans after winning the final in the boys futsal tournament organised in Damauli by Gorakh Kali school.

We thank you for the continuous support. We wouldn't be able to do any of this without it. Our students are in universities now and most of them help Maya one way or the other. The movement is on. We have a dedicated and passionate team of volunteers and staff but we still need funds as our community is including more children. Please let us know if you can find more scholarship opportunities for our able students - mayauniverseacademynepal@gmail.com or +9779827174908 for Whatsapp.