

Since its founding in 2015, the GTU's Mira and Ajay Shingal Center for Dharma Studies (CDS) has welcomed students with a rich tapestry of research interests and diverse backgrounds and religions. By Fall 2019, CDS faculty will advise more than sixteen students, including ten PhD and six MA students, in various concentrations such as Hindu Studies, Comparative Theology, and Yoga Studies. At this time, it is worthwhile to take a step back and note the achievements of the Center's first cohort of PhD students, who began their doctoral programs in 2016.



**Cogen Bohanec** is an adjunct professor of Asian Humanities & World Religions at American River College in Sacramento. He was invited to present his paper on animal ethics at the national AAR Annual Meeting in Denver, Fall 2018; presented at AAR Western Region; and published articles in the *Journal of Vaishnava Studies* and in the *Journal of Dharma Studies* (pending). His chapter in the edited volume *Prayer, Worship, Ritual, and Contemplation in the Hindu World* is forthcoming (Routledge, 2019).



Presidential Scholar **Laura Dunn** is a recipient of the Chan Writing Award, a Newhall Fellow, on the Steering Committee of the AAR Proposed Program Unit in "Critical Studies in Asceticism," and has published articles in *Berkeley Journal of Religion and Theology* (Vol. 4:2, 2018) as well as *Journal of Dharma Studies* (Vol. 1: 2, 2019), where she also serves as managing editor. She is also a recipient of the Interreligious Collaborative Research Grant for a study on trauma-informed yoga.



CDS Programs Coordinator and PhD Candidate **Pravina Rodrigues** is a Newhall Fellow who served on the organizing committee and presented at the GTU Sustainability Conference in 2017. She is associate editor of the upcoming *Sustainable Societies: Interreligious, Interdisciplinary Responses* edited volume (a joint project of CDS and GTU Sustainability 360), where her conference paper will be published (Springer, 2019). She is also a recipient of the Interreligious Collaborative Research Grant for a study on trauma-informed yoga.



**Parameshwaran Ramakrishnan, MD**, is a clinical chaplain and psychiatrist whose research interests intersect at the nexus of contemplative studies and neuroscience. He is a Newhall Fellow, a presenter (for the third time) at the AAR Annual Meeting in 2018, and a published author with articles in the *Current Opinion in Psychiatry* and *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* among others. He is pursuing his certification in Supervisory Chaplaincy at Stanford Medicine.

Congratulations to our inaugural cohort for setting a high bar for incoming CDS students! Find out more at [www.gtu.edu/cds](http://www.gtu.edu/cds)