

NACA NEWSFLASH

News and Events for the Friends of NACA

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NACA Introduction

A growing number (over 500, by some estimate) of Nepali academics hold key academic, research, and administrative positions at various higher education and research institutions in the United States. Their fields of expertise are diverse covering humanities and social sciences to natural sciences, medicine, and engineering. Their research outputs and professional activities have made significant contributions to our understanding and practice across many areas. Many have also built and maintained strong ties with Nepali scholars in the United States as well as those from academic institutions and professional communities in Nepal. These efforts, however, are mostly limited at the individual level, justifying the need for a network that provides a collective voice and allows intellectual synergy and professional growth. Through a dedicated and collaborative network, NACA aims to harness the intellectual capital of this diverse group and make a meaningful contribution to the personal and professional growth and well-being of Nepalis globally.

Our vision, mission, and objectives

NACA envisions to build a thriving and vibrant Nepal and Nepali communities through research, innovation, and knowledge production. The mission of NACA is to serve as an independent and strong professional network of



Nepali academics in the United States and advance the interests of its members for professional growth, collaboration, and high impact academic, research, and service initiatives in the United States, Nepal, and beyond. The main objectives of this network include:

1. Building a strong and committed network of Nepali academics and scholars;
2. Providing a common platform and voice where members can share their ideas, challenges, experiences, projects, and solutions;
3. Enhancing collaborations on academics, research, service, and other areas of professional growth and development;
4. Engaging with policymakers, planners, and practitioners for evidence-based analysis and understanding of the emerging policy issues in Nepal; and
5. Providing information and resources for young professionals, post-doctoral researchers, and doctoral students aspiring to be future academics and scholars.

Members Spotlight

Dr. Sadeep Shrestha



Dr. Sadeep Shrestha is a Professor of Epidemiology at the School of Public Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He received his doctoral degree in Epidemiology in 2004, with a concentration in genetic epidemiology, from the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University. He then completed a one-year post-doctoral training in the Laboratory of Genomic Diversity at the National Cancer Institute in Frederick, Maryland. He joined UAB in 2005 as an Assistant Professor, and received the *Quetelet Endowed Professorship in Public Health* in 2018.

Dr. Shrestha's background spans the fields of genetics, molecular biology, epidemiology, forensic science, informatics, and big data. He has pursued a unique path during his academic career, exploring multi-faceted infection, inflammatory and immune related outcomes (e.g., Kawasaki Disease, HIV, HPV). At present, he is the director of the Program in Epidemiology of Inflammation, Infection, and Immunity (PEIII). He has developed

a national and international reputation as a scholar who has made a productive scientific contribution to the field, with over 100 peer reviewed publications and three book chapters.

Dr. Shrestha served on the editorial board of the *American Journal of Epidemiology* and *Human Immunology*. Currently, he serves on the editorial board of *Genes and Immunity* and *Kathmandu University Medical Journal* and as an associate editor for *BMC Infectious Diseases*. He also serves on the board and advisory committees of several organizations both in the U.S. and Nepal.

Additionally, Dr. Shrestha has initiated an HPV screening project in Nepal (<http://www.hpvnepal.org/>) in collaboration with the local government, academic institutions, Nepal Cancer Hospital and Research Center, and a local NGO, Nepal Fertility Care Center (NFCC) that has tremendous outreach access. The established research infrastructure and collaborations have provided research opportunities for his MPH and PhD students as well as colleagues through the Nepal Health Initiative, which he has established and directs. Dr. Shrestha has a passion to mentor students and junior colleagues, exemplified by the *Graduate Dean's Excellence in Mentorship Award* that he received in 2013. He coordinated a public health session at the NACA Inaugural Conference in April and is planning to moderate a Zoominar on COVID-19 this summer.

Members Spotlight

Dr. Bhuwan Thapa



Dr. Bhuwan Thapa is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Agroforestry, University of Missouri, Columbia. He completed his Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Arizona, Tucson, in 2018. Before joining the Agroforestry Center, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow at Indiana University—Purdue University Indianapolis from 2018 to 2020. His research broadly focuses on climate change adaptation and resilience of food systems, agroforestry, water resources, and urban green infrastructure. As an interdisciplinary scholar, he uses concepts and methods from Economics (econometric modeling), Data Science (machine learning), Spatial Science (GIS and remote sensing), and Public Policy (institutional analysis of commons).

Dr. Thapa's current research projects include developing a spatial decision support tool for identifying marginal land for tree crops in Missouri and evaluating the impact of climate

change on Chinese chestnut crop suitability in the Central and Eastern U.S.

During his doctoral study, he was awarded a HI-AWARE Ph.D. Fellowship by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal. The Fellowship supported his doctoral study, including field research on climate change adaptation of irrigated agriculture in central Nepal. He is a member of the American Association of Geographers and the International Association for the Study of the Commons.

At NACA, he serves on the Membership Support Standing Committee and the Newsflash editorial team. He believes that NACA has the potential to harness the collective intellectual resources of Nepali scholars in the U.S. and abroad for mutual benefit and broader contribution to Nepal's development. In his free time, he loves reading and doing outdoor activities.

Recent Peer-reviewed Publications

Climate Change, Resiliency, and Development

Byers, A.C., Chand, M.B., Lala, J., **Shrestha, M.**, Byers, E.A., & Watanabe, T. (2020). Reconstructing the History of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) in the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area, East Nepal: An Interdisciplinary Approach. *Sustainability* 12, 5407. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12135407>.

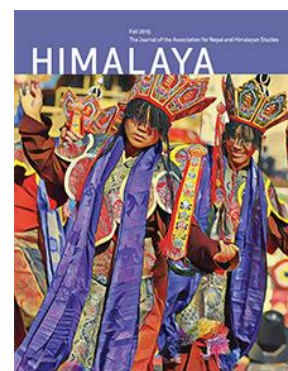
Byers, A.C., Byers, E., **Shrestha, M.**, Thapa, D., & Sharma, B. (2020). Impacts of Yartsa Gunbu harvesting on alpine ecosystems in the Barun valley, Makalu-Barun National Park, Nepal. *Himalaya* 39(2). <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/himalaya/vol39/iss2/8/>.

Venus, T.E., Bilgram, S., Sauer, J., & **Khatri-Chhetri, A.** (2021). Livelihood vulnerability and climate change: a comparative analysis of smallholders in the Indo-Gangetic plains. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-021-01516-8>

Call for Papers:

[Call for Papers on Environmental Challenges and Agricultural Sustainability in Asia: Interlinkages and Future Implications.](#)

Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) is seeking original, unpublished papers on **environmental challenges and agricultural sustainability in Asia**, their interlinkages, and future implications. Selected papers will be featured during a related conference to be held on 8-10 December 2021, either in Tokyo or virtually, and considered for publication in a special issue of the journal *Environmental Challenges*. **Deadline 30 August 2021.**



Job Opportunities

Expression of Interest for Consultant Roster-Specialists in Scaling Readiness, Publication Reporting Quality Assessment, Knowledge Graph Technology, and AR4D Indicators (Deadline: June 30, 2021)

The CGIAR System Organization (CGIAR) seeks to establish a pre-approved roster of specialists in Scaling Readiness, Publication Reporting Quality Assessment, Knowledge Graph technology, and Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) indicators. CGIAR is looking for talented and motivated specialists to work with the Program Unit to deliver a range of products and services in support of our current and future portfolio. CGIAR seeks specialists in the following areas:

- Scaling Readiness
- Publication reporting quality assessment
- Knowledge graph

- AR4D Indicators

Please find more information about the call [here](#)

Document for [Expression of Interest](#)

Nepal Corner

Shortage of healthcare workers to treat COVID patients in Nepal
<https://kathmandupost.com/health/2021/05/25/nepal-woefully-short-on-human-resources-for-covid-19-treatment>

Need for alternative to Scientific Forest Management in Nepal
<https://thehimalayantimes.com/environment/forests-experts-call-for-an-alternative-to-scientific-forest-management-work-procedure>

Procedure to develop integrated database on women, minority and differently abled initiated
<https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/provisions-for-developing-integrated-data-system>

Are Nepalis eating more rice?
<https://www.nepalitimes.com/here-now/are-nepalis-really-eating-more-rice/>

Nepal, leader in snow leopard studies
<https://www.nepalitimes.com/here-now/nepal-leads-in-snow-leopard-study/>

Mass death of vultures in Nepal
<https://www.nepalitimes.com/here-now/nepals-vultures-between-existence-and-extinction/>

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Introduction of NACA Standing Committee

Institutional Affairs:

Neelam Chandra Poudyal (Chair): Associate Professor, Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, University of Tennessee.

Omkar Joshi: Assistant Professor, Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management, Oklahoma State University.

Pradeep Sapkota: Assistant Professor, Accounting, University of North Texas.

Ramesh Paudyal: Human Dimensions Specialist, Center for Conservation Social Science Research, Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute.

Shankar Ghimire: Assistant Professor, School of Accounting, Finance, Economics and Decision Science, Western Illinois University.

Membership Support:

Dinesh Paudel (Chair): Associate Professor, Geography, Appalachian State University.

Bhuwan Thapa: Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for Agroforestry, Collect of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. University of Missouri.

Bishwa S. Koirala: Associate Professor, Department of Economics and Decision Sciences, University of North Carolina, Pembroke.

Nilesh Timilsina: Associate Professor, College of Natural Resource and Forestry, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point.

Strategic Initiatives:

Netra Chhetri (Chair): Associate Professor, Geography, Arizona State University

Arun Khatri-Chhetri: Agriculture Economist, International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)/University of Vermont.

Brijesh Thapa: Professor and Head, School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Oklahoma State University.

Nalini Chhetri: Clinical Associate Professor, College of Global Futures, Arizona State University.

Namrata Karki Kandel: Food Scientist, Product Development Manager, Ortho Molecular Products.

Rajan Parajuli: Assistant Professor, Department of Forestry and Environmental Services, North Carolina State University.

NACA Newsflash

NACA invites you to share your news updates, announcements, and events for future issues of Newsflash through google form, which we send out every month. For feedback or comments, email us at info@nepaliacademics.org.

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