

Osher Center for Integrative Medicine

Foundation Blessing Ceremony Held for Future Home of UCSF Osher Center

UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine

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Two Tibetan Buddhist monks, Khenchen Rinpoche and Thupten Tendar, performed a foundation blessing ceremony on the construction site of the UCSF Osher Center's future home. A small audience gathered, including UCSF Osher Center employees and those involved in the building project.

Rinpoche and Tendar set up two altars with items for the blessing on opposite sides of the hole, specially dug for this purpose. The hole was located in the heart of the future site. Tendar lit incense while Rinpoche chanted the blessing. The small audience observed in silence.

Among the items on the altar was a shallow silver bowl full of rice with a glass bowl containing herbs on top. An earthenware vase containing more herbs and blessings sat on top of the bowl. The earthenware vase was covered with a blue satin covering, and was the main offering to be buried in the hole. In Tibet, the hole is usually lined with stones and covered with a piece of wood to provide a protective chamber, but this time was completely made from the earth.

During the blessing, Rinpoche and Tendar chanted prayers, rang a bell, threw grains of rice and poured milk and saffron water onto the ground. Droplet-shaped food offerings created from barley flour, butter and salt were left at the edge of the hole after the ceremony.

In addition to the offerings brought by the Buddhist monks, the Osher Center provided a small bag of offerings which included a brick from the old building, a list of current employees, a copy of the invitation to the groundbreaking ceremony and a brochure describing the clinic. These items were placed in the hole next to the protective chamber and the earthenware pot.

As the final part of the ceremony, Rinpoche handed a white cloth to each of three Osher Center representatives, Leslie Murchy, Lynn Prudencio, and Jennifer Daubenmier. They held the cloth between their hands, said a prayer, and dropped the cloth into the hole.

The next day, the workers will fill the hole with soil and proceed with preparations for the foundation. Next week, the concrete pouring will begin.