



## Teaching the teachers: Birmingham high school teachers to get character promotion lesson from Dalai Lama scholar

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**BIRMINGHAM, Alabama** --Birmingham high school teachers are getting a chance to become students themselves and receive lessons on promoting good character from an international scholar.

Tenzin Priyadarshi, founder of the **Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values at Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, will conduct an intensive "Transformative Teachers" workshop for Ramsay High School Teachers Aug. 11 and 12.

Priyadarshi's lecture focuses on teaching ethics and non-violent resolution skills to middle and high school-aged students.

"The idea is to lead the teachers in an exercise where they begin to reflect on their own core values," Priyadarshi told AL.com in an interview. "Our kids spend more time with school teachers than anyone else in their day to day life."

**Information on signing up for the seminar can be found here.**

The Indian-born, Harvard-educated Buddhist monk and philosopher said his program puts teachers in groups and allows them to talk about some of their own struggles. He called it a "fellowship of teachers."

"Part of the process is that this program is not prescriptive, but the program includes tools for reflection," Priyadarshi said. "We'll then recommend to them some tools that they can try in their own classroom."

Priyadarshi's Birmingham lecture is in conjunction with an October visit by the Dalai Lama.

**The Dalai Lama will be in Birmingham Oct. 24 - Oct. 27. The highlight of the Birmingham tour will be a public appearance Oct. 26 at Regions Field.**

Priyadarshi founded the Dalai Lama Center for Ethics and Transformative Values at in 2009 to promote ethical and humane dimensions of life. The organization is a nonpartisan and non-religious think tank.

Priyadarshi named his center to honor the Dalai Lama for his work to promote human and global ethics. Priyadarshi was a student of the Buddhist monk who is regarded as an international human rights activist, religious figure and the exiled leader of Tibet.

**Priyadarshi in April appeared in Birmingham to participate in a lecture associated with the Dalai Lama's upcoming visit.** His lecture this month is complimentary return visit to the city at the invitation of Mayor William Bell.

Bell has said he wanted the Dalai Lama's visit to provide an education opportunity for all Birmingham citizens by including a series of lecture and appearances that underscored the significance and universal themes promoted by the international figure.

"I travel a fair amount, so we are bringing versions of this program not only to parts of the United States but also other parts of the world," Priyadarshi said. "These are qualities as values that are needed around the world. We are living in a world that is encountering a leadership deficit."

In addition to providing academic skills and test-taking, Priyadarshi said a complete education also includes character development.

"The teachers and people in the education system in Birmingham should see this as a wonderful opportunity and a process for reflecting on some of the deeper values and some of the values we see lacking in society, and try to understand why we constantly complain the values are lacking and why we can't generate these values," he said.

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