Tibetan Aid Project: Celebrating Its Fortieth Anniversary

Founded in 1969 by Tarthang Tulku, a high lama living in exile, Tibetan Aid Project initially provided food, clothing, medicine, and other humanitarian aid to exiled Tibetans in Asia. As those needs became less urgent, the focus shifted to restoration and construction of monasteries and schools of higher learning for Tibetans in exile and also in Tibet.

Since 1989, the Tibetan Aid Project's primary program has been support for printing and distributing sacred materials needed for the preservation of Tibet's heritage. Over 2.5 million texts, 4.3 million sacred art prints, and 123,000 prayer wheels have been distributed. Many of the books that are given away at the ceremony cannot be purchased anywhere in the world at any price.
On the 40th Anniversary of the Tibetan Aid Project, I am filled with heartfelt gratitude for the many supporters who have partnered with us over the years in the daunting task of helping to preserve and rebuild the Tibetan heritage. It is sad but true that Tibetan culture shall never be the same as it once was, but the question remains relevant, as it was 40 years ago when the Tibetan Aid Project was founded by Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche: should we do something to contain the loss, or should we turn a blind eye, or at the most just watch as mere spectators?

For 35 years, I have seen this organization grow before my eyes. The Tibetan Aid Project initially worked to fulfill the basic needs of refugees. Twenty years later, we began to focus on the distribution of sacred Tibetan texts, which has become increasingly important for the transmission and preservation of Tibetan culture as traditionally trained teachers age and pass away. I remember the humble beginning of this project: in 1989, only 800 books were distributed. Today, I can report with joy and utter satisfaction that we have distributed over 2.5 million sacred texts.

There is still a long road to traverse, but there is also the luminous hope that, with the generous support and unflinching care of our supporters, the beautiful Tibetan culture will once more flourish under the clear blue sky for the benefit of all.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Rosalyn White

Treasures of Wisdom Campaign

A three-year drive to fund the printing and distribution of books containing the sacred Tibetan teachings on wisdom and compassion. Its goal is to raise $1.08 million by the end of 2009.

Balance Sheet
- Change in net assets: $100,250
- Net assets at beginning of year: $149,903
- Net Assets at end of year: $250,153

Other Information
The Tibetan Aid Project’s financial records are reviewed annually by a Certified Public Accountant. Please contact the Tibetan Aid Project office for more detailed financial information, including audited financial statements.

Board Members
Tarthang Tulku
Wangmo Dixey
Pema Gellek
Tsering Gellek
Jack Petranker
Rosalyn White
2008 Financial Summary

Program Activities
The Tibetan Aid Project spent $291,050 on program services in 2008. Of this amount, 92% was devoted to the production, shipment, and distribution of Tibetan texts, art, and prayer wheels.

Functional Expenses
- Total expenses were $425,437. Program services accounted for 69% of total expenses.
- Total fundraising expenses were $103,383 and accounted for 24% of total expenses.
- Total administrative expenses were $31,002 and accounted for 7% of total expenses.

Funding Sources
- Total revenues and support were $525,687.
- Contributions from individuals accounted for 77% of income.
- Event-related income such as ticket and auction item sales generated 20% of income, not including pledges to the Fund-A-Library campaign.

Mission Statement
The Tibetan Aid Project rebuilds, preserves, strengthens, and perpetuates Tibet’s cultural and spiritual heritage for the benefit of the Tibetan people and all humanity.

Tibetan Aid Project and its affiliates are 100% volunteer organizations, which means staff wages are not part of program service expenditures.
**Why is the Tibetan Aid Project needed?**

In 1959, the invasion of Tibet forced thousands of Tibetans to flee their country. Monasteries and schools were destroyed, and Tibetans lost nearly all their sacred books, art, and teachers. Fleeing over the high mountain passes into India, over 100,000 Tibetans sought refuge.

Today, many Tibetan people are still living in exile, cut off from their own land and traditions. They have limited capacity to reproduce the sacred texts that were once the foundation of their culture.

The great heritage of Tibetan civilization is at risk of extermination. Tibetan culture may not survive into the next generation without intensive education efforts.

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**Support for Monks & Nuns**

Nagi Gompa ($1,600)

Drepung Monastery, Gaden Mahayana Monastic University, Sera Je Monastery ($1,500 each)

Gyudmed Tantric University, Gyuto Tantric University, Tashi Lhunpo Monastery ($1,000 each)

Support for Individuals ($300)

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**PRAYER WHEELS: 10,000**

Contents: Avalokiteshvara Mantra, Amitayus Mantra, Vajra Guru Mantra, and the Prajnaparamita Section of the Kanjur (the 18 major Perfection of Wisdom texts)

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**Text & Art Production: $197,700**

**Shipping & Distribution: $70,880**

**Ceremony Support: $3,200**

**Support for Monks & Nuns: $9,400**

**Other Grants: $9,640**

**Miscellaneous Bank Fees: $230**
SACRED ART: 3 million Thankas

Buddhas

Eight Mahabodhisattvas (Great Beings)
Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, Vajrapani, Maitreya, Samantabhadra, Kshitigarbha, Akashagarbha, Sarvanivarana Vishkambin

Enlightened Feminine Manifestations
Dharmapalas (Protectors)
Including Mahakala, Pehar, Vajrasadhu, Palden Lhamo, Ekajati, Rahula

Arhats
Including the 16 Arhats and Disciples

Nyingma Yidams (Meditation Deities)
Including Eight Herukas, Lama dGongs-‘dus, Visions of mKhyen-brtse

Padmasambhava
Including Eight Manifestations, Copper Mountain Mandala, Twenty-five Disciples, Life Story, Lineage, Guru Drakpo

Masters and Kings
Including Six Charioteers, Founders, Nyingma and Sarma Masters, History of Dharma, King Gesar, Shambhala Kings, Mahasiddhas

Mandalas, Dakinis, Lokapalas

Tibetan Aid Project Programs

- Funding the production, shipment, and distribution of sacred texts, art, and prayer wheels for donation to institutions and individuals in the Himalayan region.
- Sponsoring ceremonies important to sustaining the lineages of all Tibetan Buddhist schools.
- Providing financial support for monastic centers, lamas, monks, nuns, and lay people.
- Promoting awareness of Tibet’s heritage in the West through publications, presentations, exhibits, and the production and sale of culturally significant items.
In January 2009, the Tibetan Aid Project celebrated the 20th anniversary of the annual World Peace Ceremony in Bodh Gaya, India. Thousands of Tibetan monks, nuns, and laypeople gathered at the site of the Buddha’s enlightenment to make offerings, to receive books, and to pray and chant for peace. This year’s ceremony involved the distribution of 148,700 sacred texts, 10,000 hand prayer wheels, and a record 3 million sacred art prints.

The books and art distributed at Bodh Gaya are changing many Tibetans’ lives. Their availability enables more people to have access to traditional teachings than ever before. Women as well as men, young and old, are receiving texts they might never have seen in former times. Access to these books has encouraged literacy among the Tibetan population and greatly enhanced the study and practice of monks, nuns, and lay people throughout the Himalayas.