

SAN DIEGO GRANTMAKERS: The Beginning...

In 1976, representatives from the San Diego State University Foundation (SDSUF) and the one-year old San Diego Community Foundation, met to form a network of grantmakers in San Diego. The first meeting was held on June 9, 1976 and featured Joe Dempsey, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Inter-Foundation Center, as a speaker.

Through the next several years the group continued to grow and evolve and in 1980 adopted the name *San Diego Grantmakers*. The San Diego Foundation (TSDF), formerly the San Diego Community Foundation, and many founding participants are still active in philanthropy in San Diego, including the Parker Foundation, the Sefton Foundation, the Willis and Jane Fletcher Foundation, Jewish Community Foundation, the Copley Foundation, the City of San Diego, and the United Way.

As it continued to grow, SDG adopted a more formal leadership structure with a rotating Steering Committee developing quarterly luncheon programs. From inception to 1993, TSDF acted as fiscal sponsor. In 1993, fiscal responsibility shifted to the Fieldstone Foundation under the leadership of the Chair, Janine Mason. In 1996, fiscal sponsorship was transferred to the Jacobs Center for Nonprofit Innovation, an operating foundation established by the Jacobs Family Foundation. In 1996 SDG was led by Co-Chairs Jennifer Vanica, Executive Director of the Jacobs Family Foundation, and Tim McCarthy, Secretary-Treasurer of the McCarthy Family Foundation.

In 1997, the dues structure was altered from a single rate of \$100 for all members to voluntary higher support levels with dues ranging from \$100 to \$1,000. Program frequency was increased from quarterly to bi-monthly and the longer term and leadership members of SDG began a strategic planning process aimed at strengthening the organization and expanding its programs. In 1998, seed capital grant proposals were sent to all members and \$75,000 was contributed by 9 organizations to develop SDG's capacity. The grants funded an 18-month transitional staffing plan, membership and program development, and expanded opportunities for collaborative grantmaking.

In November 1999, with over 40 members, SDG incorporated, receiving official 501(c)3 status. In addition, SDG joined 28 other regional associations of Grantmakers in the national Forum of RAGs.

SAN DIEGO GRANTMAKERS: The Beginning... continued

SDG's mission and general service categories at incorporation were:

San Diego Grantmakers is a network of private sector Grantmakers, committed to promoting cooperation among local, regional, and national Grantmakers, improving the effectiveness of Grantmakers to address important community issues, enhancing the skills and knowledge base of Grantmakers, and promoting the value of the nonprofit sector.

SDG's general service categories at incorporation included:

Seminars/workshops Newsletters
Research on grantmaking Funding collaborations
Professional Development

June 2000, SDG continued to evolve and hired its first full-time staff, a Director. The dues structure was revised to reflect increased services, dues range from \$350 to \$5,000 based on annual grantmaking in San Diego. In addition, the Leadership Council was inaugurated, for those contributing more than \$7,500. Charter members of the Leadership Council included: Alliance Healthcare Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, The California Endowment, California Wellness, and Qualcomm, Inc.

Looking at a more comprehensive menu of services, SDG hosted approximately 24 programs each year, with separate tracks for corporate and family foundation members; launched *Philanthropy Link*, a bi-monthly publication featuring local philanthropic topics; and moved into its first offices, provided in-kind by the San Diego National Bank. In addition, January 2000 SDG launched a website, www.SDGrantmakers.org, and the monthly online version of *Philanthropy Link*.

In December 2001, SDG consisted of over 65 grantmaking members, hosted approximately 30 programs a year including a 3-day Grantmaking Basics institute and an annual members meeting, sat on several funding collaboratives, worked closely with leaders in the nonprofit sector, and developed a leadership position with the Forum of RAGs.