

Tides Foundation

San Francisco, CA
<http://www.tides.org>
 Est. 1976

TIDES
 WHAT'S POSSIBLE



Tides project National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum.



Open Space at Tides Momentum Conference 2009.

Photos courtesy of Tides Foundation.

Social entrepreneur Drummond Pike founded The Tides Foundation in 1976 to ease the work of philanthropists who wanted to build a better future for individuals and communities all over the world. In addition to grantmaking, Tides offers a wide variety of services to facilitate progressive nonprofit work such as fiscal sponsorship, nonprofit management, consulting, mission-related investing, advocacy and more.

Pike retired from the foundation in 2010 and board member Melissa Bradley signed on as CEO. "I had the good fortune to know most of what I was walking into. I also had a pre-existing relationship with Drummond and a healthy understanding of his desires and intentions when starting Tides, and his vision," she said.

The foundation now is celebrating its 35th anniversary, and the occasion has made people look back on all that Tides has accomplished over the years. "The first thing to reflect on is what pioneers Tides and Drummond were. Thirty-five years ago, there was not the

proliferation of donor-advised funds and the levels of fiscal sponsorship and fiscal agency that you hear about today. I also think it's noteworthy that Tides was able to identify the needs of a sector that typically is not known for innovation and really started to shift the traditional trajectory of nonprofits," said Bradley. Long-tenured staff member Tod Hill added, "I think our contribution is being multi-issue and multifaceted, taking on risks and being a place where people can experiment."

Bradley plans to maintain that versatility, and has three goals for the foundation as it moves forward:

- **Continue to be innovative**, supporting nonprofit growth and providing services by which individuals and donors can continue to give and meet their philanthropic goals.
- **Honor the shift that's happening in the sector**, with traditional investment banking firms beginning to talk about philanthropy, capitalizing on the opportunity to collaborate and raise the standard, impact

and dollars going into the sector.

- **Improve and enhance customer service delivery**, ensuring that Tides has the right products, knowledge, capacity and tools.

Hill believes that with Bradley on board, the foundation has a fresh perspective and is positioned for change. Tides started the Tides Learning Community as an institutional learning tool for everyone in the sector. It also signed on to the initiative Philanthropy's Promise.

"The ability for us as a public foundation to move money and to impact and support worthy causes or contribute to campaigns, initiatives or recovery efforts – that's really what philanthropy is all about, providing the support and resources needed to make change," said Bradley.

This Member Spotlight was written by Meredith Brodbeck, communications associate at the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (NCRP).