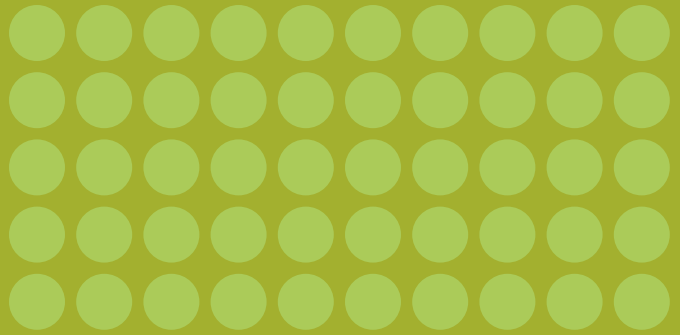


The Durfee Foundation



The first

50 years



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National Center for Family Philanthropy
1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW . Suite 220
Washington, DC 20036
202.293.3424

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Durfee Foundation Timeline

- 1960** R. Stanton (Stan) Avery and Dorothy Durfee Avery found the Avery Foundation
- 1964** Dorothy Durfee Avery passes away
- 1965-6** Stan and Dorothy's three children, Judy, Dennis and Russell Avery, join the board
- 1977** Avery Foundation is renamed the Durfee Foundation in honor of Dorothy Durfee Avery
- 1979** Foundation's first Executive Director, Robbie Macfarlane, is hired
- 1980** New grantmaking guidelines created, including an emphasis on grants to individuals and to efforts unlikely to receive other support
- 1985** American/Chinese Adventure Capital program launched in honor of Stan Avery's connections to China; Durfee runs program for over 15 years
- 1986** The first wave of the third generation joins the board Michael Newkirk and Carrie Avery become trustees
- 1989** Durfee's longest standing (and only national) program, Student Challenge Awards at Earthwatch, established
- 1992** Durfee Community Fund gives out first grants
- 1993** Carrie Avery elected board president
- 1994** Board adopts community representation on selection panels of grant programs

- 
- 1995** Jonathan Newkirk joins the board (Russell and Dennis Avery had previously retired)
 - 1996** Robbie Macfarlane retires; Claire Peeps named Executive Director
 - 1996** Board affirms its focus on grantmaking in the Los Angeles region, and to efforts that involve individuals and risk-taking
 - 1997** Sabbatical Awards Program launched; Music Fellowship Program begins
 - 1997** Stan Avery passes away at age 90, just a few weeks after attending a Durfee board meeting
 - 1998** Halina Avery joins the board
 - 1999** First ARC Awards given out; Durfee Artist Awards launched (Artist Awards Program retired in 20xx)
 - 2002** Gay and Lesbian Fund launched
 - 2006** First class of six Stanton Fellows is selected
 - 2006** Durfee Community Fund is replaced by the Springboard Fund
 - 2009** Judy Avery retires from board after nearly 50 years of service; trustees are now all third-generation family members
 - 2010** Durfee celebrates its 50th Anniversary; Durfee introduces new Board Fellows, Robin Kramer and Bill Watanabe, to its board

Avery Family Tree

R. Stanton Avery (1907 - 1997) m. **Dorothy Durfee** (1911 - 1964)

Judith Avery Newkirk (1938 -)

Michael Newkirk (1960 -) m. **Olivia Garfield**

Douglas Newkirk (1989 -)

Michael Newkirk (1991 -)

Elisabeth Newkirk (1997 -)

Caroline (Carrie) Newkirk (changed to Avery in 1990) (1962 -) m. **Jon Tigar**

William Tigar (1992 -)

Adam Tigar (1996 -)

Jonathan Newkirk (1970 -) m. **Janelle Kuhl**

Lilah Newkirk (2006 -)

Diana Newkirk (1974 -)

Robert McKee (2004 -)

Michael McKee (2005 -)

Liam McKee (2007 -)

Dennis Stanton Avery (1940 -) m. **Sally Tsui**

Halina Avery (1967 -) m. **Kim Stead**

Halina Avery-Stead (2010 -)

Christopher Avery (1984 -)

Sara Avery (1986 -)

Theodore Avery (1988 -)

Russell Avery (1942 -)

Nicholas Avery (1991 -)

Thomas Avery (1996 -)

Foreward

Chronicling the history of any family foundation is a worthwhile undertaking on so many levels. Throughout the exploration, a philanthropic family may find new meaning in the values and events that gave rise to (and continues to sustain) the foundation's mission. Grantees may be encouraged to search for possible intersections of shared goals. A public weary of tales of what's wrong with our democracy may be transported to a place where civic virtue and the remarkable workings of our nonprofit sector are evident in the simple telling of a powerful story. And these stories can inspire. Hopefully, some of that inspiration will fall on those who might establish a similar legacy.

Such a chronicle is particularly meaningful when it comes from a distinguished and deeply respected family foundation – even more so when it is told with humility, generosity and honesty. That is the case with this story of the Durfee Foundation of California.

For 50 years, the Durfee Foundation has been a model of creative grantmaking and respectful partnerships. Assets some might characterize as modest have never constrained the boldness of vision or the personal attention given to each grantee relationship. The entrepreneurial spirit and humanity that were so important to founders R. Stanton and Dorothy Durfee Avery are still very much present in those who carry their work into the 21st Century. In reading Deanne Stone's account, I was overwhelmed with the richness of the diverse programs, the imagination and sheer hard work that has gone into developing and administering those programs, and the remarkable dignity with which each is carried out.

I believe the freshness of the Durfee approach is a product of a foundation committed to constantly learning – learning from those in their fields of interest, from their foundation and grantee partners, and from one another. Their willingness to share some of that learning with us is more remarkable because they share process, mistakes, course corrections, and the frank opinion of others – even willing to risk that those opinions won't be the most complimentary. As a rich resource of great work, the former is essential; as a real learning resource for philanthropy, the latter is critical.

I am privileged and delighted to offer my congratulations to the Durfee Foundation Board of Trustees and Staff – and to all of Stan and Dorothy Avery's family – for 50 years of outstanding grantmaking. This story of compassion and creativity enriches our understanding not only of Durfee's work but of the power and promise of all family philanthropy. We add a rich resource to our field's archive and that, I hope, will encourage other families to begin their own journey.

Virginia Esposito, President
National Center for Family Philanthropy
Washington, D.C.
October 2010

Preface

I've had the pleasure to write about the Durfee Foundation twice. The first time was in 1999 when the National Center for Family Philanthropy asked me to write about the foundation's grantmaking. Aptly titled *Creative Family Grantmaking*, it covered the history of the Durfee Foundation from 1960 to 1999. The second time was in 2010 when the Durfee Foundation commissioned me to write the next chapter of its history to celebrate Durfee's 50th anniversary. It isn't often that a writer has a chance to write a sequel to a story written a decade earlier, so I am particularly pleased to have both pieces brought together under one cover.

When I first met the Durfee Foundation, it was little known outside of Los Angeles. Ten years later, it was recognized nationally for its distinctive approach to philanthropy: innovative grantmaking practiced with exceptional respect for and openness to its grantees.

The second and third generation trustees could not have asked for better examples than the foundation's founders, R. Stanton Avery and Dorothy Durfee Avery. Stan was an inventor and entrepreneur. The small business he and his wife started grew into the Avery Dennison Corporation. Unchanged by success, Stan and Dorothy remained modest and gracious people who used their wealth to encourage good ideas and individual initiative.

The second generation set the foundation on its course of bold and imaginative philanthropy, an approach embraced by the third generation. Long before the young trustees developed a vocabulary to describe their grantmaking philosophy, they started referring to grant proposals under consideration as "very Durfee" or "not very Durfee." The meaning was clear to them. Proposals that demonstrated Durfee family values of creativity, risk-taking, and originality were definitely "very Durfee"; those that recycled old ideas or aimed at second guessing what trustees wanted to hear were definitely "not very Durfee."

The Durfee Foundation's "quirky" grantmaking, as they call it, defies a boilerplate description. Its 2009 revised mission statement comes closest to summing up the foundation's philosophy and practices: developing genuine partnerships with individuals and institutions, building community by bringing together outstanding nonprofit leaders across sectors, taking chances on individuals and organizations with promising ideas not fully developed or tested and, above, all, seeking out and supporting "extraordinary people who make things happen."

The Durfee Foundation's relationships with grantees have set a high standard for grantmakers. As grantees quoted in this publication attest, the Durfee staff is unusual in the time, care, and courtesy they show to grantseekers at every stage of the grantmaking process—and after. The trusting relationships developed between grantors and grantees have had reciprocal benefits for both parties. Besides receiving grants from the foundation, grantees know they can call on the Durfee staff for advice or just to listen; in turn, the board has frequently called on grantees past and present for guidance in reworking programs. It was by inviting grant-

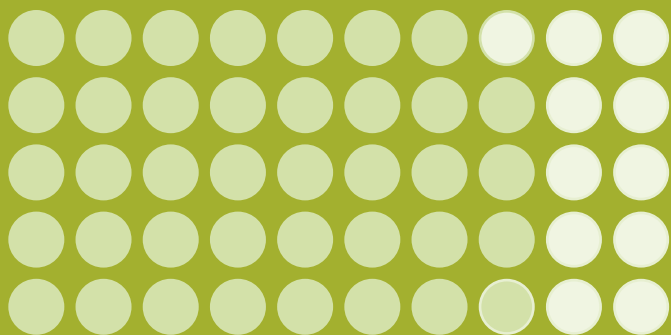
ees' feedback that the board developed the Stanton Fellowships Program, transformed the Springboard Fund and the Artists' Resource for Completion Program, and made one of the foundation's biggest grants to support a program for gay and lesbian youth.

While the Durfee Foundation's focus is on supporting extraordinary individuals working in the nonprofit field, its ultimate goal is building community. Through its ongoing gatherings of Sabbatical and Stanton Fellows representing different sectors of the nonprofit field, the foundation is creating a network of exceptional thinkers and doers to tackle the stubborn economic and social problems that burden Los Angeles County.

The Durfee Foundation is a stirring example of what a family foundation with a small staff and relatively modest budget can accomplish when it's guided by an ethos of questioning, learning, and exploring and a willingness to meet the same standards of hard work, creative thinking, and excellence it expects of its grantees. In promoting leadership in the nonprofit community, the Durfee Foundation has become a beacon for the philanthropic community.

Deanne Stone
Berkeley, California 2011

Part One 1960 - 1999



R. Stanton Avery

By all accounts, R. Stanton Avery was a gentle man. His family members remember him as down-to-earth, soft-spoken, a good listener, and unfailingly polite — traits not usually associated with the entrepreneurial personality. The inventor of the first commercially feasible self-adhesive label machine, Stan founded Avery International which, since merging with Dennison Manufacturing Company in 1990, is known as Avery Dennison. His personal philosophy of promoting individual endeavors guides the grantmaking of the family foundation he and his first wife, Dorothy Durfee Avery, founded in 1960, the Avery Foundation (later renamed the Durfee Foundation). But, above all, it is the values that he and Dorothy instilled in their children and grandchildren that give the Durfee Foundation its defining spirit today.

Despite his quiet demeanor, Stan was something of a rebel in his youth. Unlike his brother who followed their father into the ministry, Stan chose to study liberal arts at Pomona College. There, he befriended a student of Chinese ancestry. Eager for adventure, they and a group of friends took a year off from their studies to travel in China. The year was 1929 and Stan was 22 years old. The trip, which he called his introduction to the real world, left an indelible mark on his life. Along the way he encountered a revolution in progress, saw firsthand the terrible poverty of the masses, and observed the lack of civil liberties. Withstanding the hardships of travel in a country with few amenities boosted his self-confidence to handle whatever situations might come his way. It also fueled his interest in social organizations and in effective ways of motivating people to accomplish goals.

Returning to California at the beginning of the Depression, Stan paid for his last year of college by working at the Midnight Mission, a nonprofit organization that aided people living on the streets of Los Angeles and which still operates in the same location to this day. After graduation, he spent two years working for the Los Angeles County Department of Charities collecting statistics on poverty. His career in the public sector ended in 1933 when the father of a college classmate, the owner of the Adhere Paper Company, offered him a job. The company made bumper stickers for cars driven in funeral processions and, ironically, provided the fertile soil for Stan's Yankee ingenuity to flourish.

A descendant of nine generations of New England farmers and clockmakers, Stan inherited his ancestors' restless curiosity and bent for tinkering. When he was a boy, his father taught him to operate the church's printing press and throughout his high school and college years, he earned pocket money by printing dance programs for campus socials. His experience running a printing press provided a bridge to the technology of making adhesive labels. Quick to spot flaws in the process, Stan experimented with different materials and parts, at one point rigging up a contraption operated with a motor from a washing machine. His tinkering paid off: within two years he had developed a new technology for producing self-adhesive labels. Stan recognized the potential of his invention but needed capital to start a business. His new bride, Dorothy Durfee, came to his rescue. She

secured a \$50 bank loan using as collateral the Ford Model “A” she had paid for with her earnings as a school teacher, leading to a long-running family joke that Stan married Dorothy for her money. In 1935 the couple launched Kum-Kleen Adhesive Products, which they ran as co-owners and equal partners.

Stan and Dorothy began by marketing their self-adhesive labels to gift shops and department stores. As the response to their mailings grew and customers suggested new uses for the labels, the couple hired additional employees. Like many of their contemporaries who came of age during the Depression, Stan and Dorothy keenly felt the economic inequities in society and discussed ways of distributing the world’s goods more fairly. When they started their business, they paid all employees the same salary, \$20 per week, regardless of their jobs and paid themselves, as owners, only slightly higher salaries.

Stan and Dorothy put their beliefs in social justice on the line after World War II when prejudice against Japanese-Americans ran deep in California. A Japanese-American they knew returned home after having fought with a Japanese-American squadron in the United States Army. Yet when he tried to find a place for his family to live, no one was willing to rent to them. When Stan and Dorothy heard about the family’s plight, they invited the man and his family to live with them for a year. Russell Avery, who was just a small boy at the time, says it wasn’t until he was an adult that he realized just how gutsy an act that was at the time and how like his parents it was to do something like that.

After the birth of their first child, Dorothy left the day-to-day running of the business (renamed Avery Adhesive Label Company and later Avery International) to Stan but stayed involved as an advisor and, after the business was incorporated, served on the board of directors until her death in 1964. So caught up were they in the business, says their daughter, Judy, that her parents told of times when they stayed up all night talking about it.

Although Stan lacked formal training in chemistry and engineering, his perseverance and resourcefulness kept the company growing slowly through the Depression and into the forties. During World War II, the business climate became more favorable as applications for self-adhesive products multiplied. Stan hired his friend, Russ Smith, as general manager and under their leadership the company expanded rapidly, emerging in the 1950s as a national and international leader of self-adhesive technology. By 1961, Avery had become a publicly owned company traded over the counter, and six years later it obtained a listing on the New York Stock Exchange.

Contributing to the company’s success was Stan’s belief that businesses grow by encouraging their employees to grow. An inventor at heart, he understood the conditions that stimulated innovation and the satisfaction that resulted from creating something tangible in which one could take pride. To promote individual effort, he created a work environment in which talented employees could flourish. Stan admired strong, capable people who could think for themselves, and he gave them wide berth to fashion and carry out their ideas.

The evolution of Kum-Kleen Adhesive Products from a “Mom and Pop” operation to a Fortune 500 company is all the more remarkable, says Dennis Avery, given Stan’s and Dorothy’s backgrounds. “My parents were products of meager

living, Depression years, and families with certain 19th century traits of frugality.” To understand the narrow restrictions of their upbringing, says Dennis, is to “appreciate Stan and Dorothy’s enormous personal growth in spite of those times.”

As Stan came to terms with his entrepreneurial zeal and talent, he concluded that he could do the most good for the world as an entrepreneur. Leaving behind the politics of his youth, he left the Democratic Party in the 1960s and became a Republican in his later years. Although his political affiliations changed, his desire to contribute to society did not. Russell recalled an incident that demonstrated his father’s concern. While vacationing at his home in Scotland, Stan was interviewed by a local reporter. Commenting on his philanthropic activities, the reporter wrote that Stan was giving back to the community what he had taken from it. The reporter’s insinuation rankled Stan and whenever he repeated the story he would say, “I didn’t take anything. I created value that wasn’t there before. Avery provides jobs for 13,000 people and thousands of others in peripheral businesses.”

Buoyed by his growing stature in the business community, Stan overcame his reluctance to speak in public and in the 1970s he emerged as a prominent civic leader and philanthropist in southern California. He served on the boards of the Huntington Library, the California Institute of Technology, and the Board of Fellows of the Claremont Graduate School and University Center. In addition to making grants to the community through the Durfee Foundation, Stan was generous in his personal philanthropy. He remained a loyal supporter of the Midnight Mission where he had worked as a college student and gave substantial donations to established southern California cultural institutions such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Music Center. In 1995, he gave \$10 million to Caltech to build Avery House, a dormitory. Stan created the dormitory to focus Caltech science students on entrepreneurship and to bring entrepreneurs as guest speakers to Avery House, having lamented that the two disciplines were isolated from one another.

Stan’s remarkable curiosity and industriousness never diminished. Far into his eighties he was still tinkering, still inventing new products, still going to his office at Avery Dennison. In November 1997, he attended his last board meeting of the Durfee Foundation. He died the following month, on the eve of his 91st birthday.

The Family Foundation

The Early Years

The family foundation Stan and Dorothy Avery founded in 1960 was originally called the Avery Foundation and, in the early years, served as a pass-through foundation. After Dorothy Avery's death in 1964, half of her stock in the Avery Corporation was given to the foundation. At the time, the one million shares of stock had a market value of about \$1.00 per share.

Stan and Dorothy never articulated a mission for the foundation, but they did envision it as a family endeavor. During the 1960s, the foundation was giving away about \$20,000 a year. Stan distributed grants in much the same way he had written personal checks to charities: grants of under \$1,000 awarded to schools and colleges with which the family was affiliated, local hospitals and cultural societies, and traditional charities such as the Red Cross, the United Crusade, and CARE. It was not until the 1970s that the foundation made its first major grant: a \$5 million multi-year grant to the Claremont Graduate School and University Center to fund Avery professorships.

Originally, the board was composed of Stan, Dorothy, and two outside trustees. In 1965, following her mother's death, Judy joined the board and the following year, the outside trustees resigned to make room for Judy's brothers, Dennis and Russell. Then in their twenties, the younger generation did little more than rubberstamp their father's recommendations. "We wanted to help out," says Judy, "but my brothers and I had our own interests. We thought of the foundation as our father's; it was money earned from his efforts, and we went along with whatever he wanted to do."

To encourage his children's participation in the foundation, Stan set up a discretionary fund. Each received \$10,000 annually, later increased to \$20,000, to distribute to charities of their choice. Following their father's example, they gave gifts almost exclusively to schools they had attended and to established charities.

A New Name, A New Director

As Avery International grew, the number of gift solicitations Stan received from fundraisers also grew. To end confusion between Stan's personal charity and the foundation's grantmaking, the family suggested changing the name of the foundation to the Durfee Foundation to honor his wife, Dorothy, whose maiden name was Durfee. In 1977, the name was officially changed. The following year the company set up its own foundation, the Avery International Foundation. It is run by corporate officers and no family members have served on its board.

The foundation's corpus was growing in tandem with the increasing value of Avery stock. Recognizing that the foundation needed professional direction, in 1979 Stan hired Robert S. Macfarlane, Jr. (Robbie) as the foundation's first executive director. Robbie had wide experience working in the nonprofit sector and extensive contacts in the art world, an area of interest to the trustees. In addition to managing the administration of the foundation, Robbie provided information about and access to community resources that the trustees lacked.

The Second Generation Puts Its Stamp on Grantmaking

Prior to Robbie's hiring, Stan's children had played a passive role in awarding grants. Aside from distributing their discretionary funds, they had little say about how the money was allocated because Stan's grants amounted to most of the five percent annual payout the foundation allocated each year. Now that the foundation's assets were growing, the board would have more money to give away. Russell, in particular, felt increasingly uninvolved in and frustrated by the foundation's traditional approach to grantmaking. In 1980 he wrote what he refers to as his manifesto, outlining what he felt were the best principles and practices of grantmaking. "If I were going to go to all those meetings," he says, "I'd have to be more passionately involved. I was more interested in projects that were slightly off-center, projects that were hard sells and whose value wasn't immediately recognizable."

The manifesto Russell submitted to the board laid the groundwork for the grantmaking philosophy and practices that the foundation follows today. "The trustees of the Durfee Foundation believe that philanthropy is most effective, satisfying, and poignant when the transaction involves the interests, skills, experience, and creativity of the donor as well as the beneficiary." Instead of responding to grant solicitations as most foundations do, he recommended that "individual trustees actively seek out situations that invite a keen mutual interest."

The board endorsed Russell's manifesto and drew up new grantmaking principles and guidelines:

1. **Catalytic effect:** The Durfee Foundation is more interested in acting as a catalyst to endeavors whose success hinges on a financial boost at the right time than in assisting ongoing projects, however worthwhile.
2. **Short-term commitments:** As a general rule, the Durfee Foundation makes only single, nonrenewable grants.
3. **Projects with limited resources:** The Durfee Foundation is more interested in endeavors not able or likely to receive assistance from other resources.
4. **Magnitude of grants:** The Durfee Foundation seeks situations in which the extent of assistance given will be commensurate with both its capabilities and the needs of the beneficiary.
5. **Geographical location:** The Durfee Foundation places no restrictions on the location of projects.
6. **Cooperation with other organizations:** The Durfee Foundation will cooperate or participate with other organizations, public or private, in lending assistance, especially when such efforts will magnify the extent and impact of the assistance.
7. **Grants to individuals:** Ordinarily the Durfee Foundation makes grants to organizations with tax-exempt status. However, when Federal and State requirements can be met, grants will be made to individuals.

In keeping with the foundation's new guidelines, the second generation created programs that grew out of their own well-developed interests. Dennis, a lawyer, initiated the Durfee Awards, which were presented on three separate occasions between 1982 and 1989. The purpose was to recognize ordinary individuals who, through their private efforts, used the law or legal institutions to enhance human dignity. Dennis had full responsibility for the project, a time-consuming task. He placed ads in the Wall Street Journal and other publications soliciting nominations and, along with a team of prestigious judges he assembled, selected the finalists. The winners were honored at an award ceremony at which each received \$10,000 for their achievements. One recipient was commended for her campaign to install auditory signals at intersections to alert blind people when the light changed to green. Others were recognized for their assistance to Native Americans, immigrants, and other overlooked groups. "By design, the awardees were in no way individuals of national prominence either then or now," says Dennis. "We selected individuals working in the trenches, unsung hero types who merited recognition."

Russell, an architect who had studied in Mexico and speaks Spanish, developed a project along his line of interests. On a visit to the northern California town of Gilroy, he happened upon some murals painted by Mexican-American artists that he thought were outstanding. Knowing that the murals would soon be destroyed or allowed to fade away, Russell launched an effort to bring them to a wider audience. "I had the idea," says Russell, "but I wasn't sure where to go with it." With Robbie's help, Russell identified three sponsoring organizations that had the staff and resources to document the murals with quality slides and conduct interviews with the artists. The project was completed in time to be included in exhibits held in conjunction with the 1984 Olympics held in Los Angeles. Afterwards, the collection of Chicano mural slide documentation was moved to the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, where it is permanently housed.

Judy, whose field is American history, had been donating her discretionary money almost exclusively to schools and to the Santa Monica Heritage Square Museum, of which she was a founding member. Aware of Judy's interest in historical preservation, Robbie introduced her to the director of programming at KCET, the Los Angeles public broadcasting station. The station was seeking funding to make a pilot video to be used to raise money for a documentary on the history of California, and Judy recommended that the Durfee Foundation sponsor it. This project evolved into a multi-part documentary series on the history of Los Angeles, funded in part by the Durfee Foundation. The foundation also funded the development of a school curriculum and materials for training teachers based on the series, which was distributed throughout the Los Angeles Unified School District. That project became a springboard for other projects Judy would initiate to document the city's history. At her behest, the Durfee Foundation gave a lead grant to the Los Angeles Central Library to enable it to take its very successful Shades of L.A. project statewide as the Shades of California program. Libraries around the state, under the leadership of and with training by the central library's

staff, are building an archive of the state's diverse population using photos from family albums contributed by residents.

Judy also became intrigued by the work of Dr. Burton L. White, former director of the Harvard Pre-School Project. He was the author of a book for parents, *The First Three Years*, and producer of a television series of the same name. His studies on what went into the making of a competent child pinpointed the overwhelming importance of an empathic, approving adult who was focused on the child. With help from Dr. White and Robbie's contacts, Judy developed a program of short radio spots to spread this important message in the Los Angeles area.

Stan often talked to his children about his 1929 trip to China, which he regarded as the pivotal experience of his life. To honor their father, in 1985, Judy, Dennis, and Russell created the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program. The foundation awarded grants to students, staff, faculty, and alumni from the Claremont Colleges, Caltech and other institutions of higher learning with which Stan had been involved who wanted to pursue avocational interests related to China. The program was originally intended to run for one year but it proved so popular with participants and trustees and so pleased Stan that subsequent boards have voted to continue it as a Durfee Foundation program to this day.

Members of the Third Generation Join the Board

Although the foundation had no formal policies regarding eligibility for board membership, the trustees had a tacit understanding that it would remain an all-family board. Stan and his three children had composed the board for more than two decades. Now it was time to introduce the third generation to the foundation. In 1986, there were five grandchildren: Judy's four children —Mike, Carrie, Jon, and Diana—who then ranged in age from 26 to 12 years and Dennis's daughter, Halina, who had just turned 20. Stan invited Judy's two oldest children, Mike, then 26, and Carrie, 24, to join the board.

Neither Mike nor Carrie knew much about the family foundation and they knew even less about grantmaking. Over the years, they had seen their mother working on foundation projects which she occasionally discussed with them, but as teenagers their interests lay elsewhere. At the time, both Mike and Carrie lived out of town and flew to Los Angeles four times a year to attend board meetings. Although the foundation had no formal training program, Mike and Carrie got their feet wet by participating in the China application review before joining the board. For the most part, though, they learned on the job.

Stan was delighted to have his grandchildren on the board and frequently sent them notes from "Grandpa" in which he complimented their contributions to the foundation. In a note to Carrie, written in December 1986, he wrote, "Judy, Dennis, Russell, and I have all been very impressed with the level and quality of your participation as an advisor to the foundation. Besides that, it is always fun to have a reason for an occasion when so many members of the family can be together pursuing a common purpose."

Refining Grantmaking Goals

At the board's long-range planning meeting in 1989, the trustees set aside time to ask themselves what they had accomplished and where they were going. The trustees reaffirmed their wish to continue in the grantmaking direction originally laid out by Russell in his 1980 manifesto. In a memo from Dennis, dated November 22, 1989, the board expressed its unanimous support for "independent and unique types of sponsorships like the American/China Adventure Capital Program, the Mexican-American Murals, the Durfee Awards.... Grants unique to the Durfee Foundation and generated by Durfee trustees would be the format of the future."

While the trustees favored giving grants to individuals and to projects not likely to receive support from other sources, they allowed for the possibility of participating in joint efforts with other funders and of providing emergency funding through the California Community Foundation. The memo also states that "major gifts to institutions, grants to established charities, and funds for endowments, buildings and art forms were out of favor with trustees and simply not what they wanted to fund." This decision marked a clear break with the traditional grantmaking practices Stan had followed.

Unlike some founders who have difficulty relinquishing control, Stan was content to step back and let the next generation lead. He used to say of his business that he didn't want to ride it out to the very end like other company founders he knew who couldn't let go. Stan graciously passed the reins to his successors in his business, and he did the same in the foundation.

"My father liked to grow things and grow them well," says Dennis, "and the foundation was one of them. He wanted family members to be involved, so he let us run things. He was a gentle man and he had difficulty expressing his disapproval even when he disagreed with us, and certainly not at meetings."

While Stan remained a presence in the foundation and participated in discussions, he no longer took an active role in grantmaking. Barbara Spaulding, Stan's secretary of 31 years, recalled the pleasure with which Stan talked about the work his family was doing through the foundation. "He used to tell me how much he enjoyed sitting back in the meetings and listening to the discussions. 'They're good folks,' he used to say of his children and grandchildren. 'They're good thinkers and they've got good hearts.' He was proud of his children's contributions and he felt even more pride when his grandchildren got involved."

Fewer Meetings Requires Better Preparation

In the summer of 1992, the board held a two-day planning meeting to re-evaluate the foundation's long-range grantmaking objectives and to examine its grantmaking practices. The board had been meeting four times a year, which made it difficult for Mike, then living on the east coast, and Carrie in northern California, to attend all the meetings. The trustees voted to reduce the meetings to three times a year and to combine the summer meeting with their biennial board retreat. Fewer meetings, however, would mean fuller agendas. To ensure time to

cover all the items of business, the trustees agreed to complete as much work as possible in committees and to handle small items of business in conference calls. It was further agreed that agenda items would have to be submitted at least 10 days in advance of the meetings. That would require trustees to be well organized and the foundation to streamline mailings sent to trustees.

“We used to bring piles of loose papers with us to the meetings,” says Carrie. “Invariably someone would be missing a paper and we’d have to interrupt the discussion to xerox copies. Now, 10 days before a board meeting, each trustee receives in the mail a notebook containing all the paperwork we need for our meeting divided into sections. It’s easy to read because all the documents and reports are organized and everything is in one place.”

In reviewing its grantmaking practices, Carrie recommended that the discretionary fund Stan established in the 1960s for his children’s personal gifts be discontinued. By giving money to organizations in their own communities, she argued, trustees were acting as individuals rather than as a collective board. Furthermore, making grants to organizations, as all the trustees were doing, was problematic given the foundation’s guidelines to support individuals. Finally, by abandoning discretionary grants, the family could sidestep conflicts that might arise from political differences among the trustees. “By keeping our focus on funding individuals,” says Carrie, “we could focus on what we agreed on and avoid areas where there might be disagreements.”

In the past, trustees had given grants to organizations with which they were associated, most often as board members. Although such grants are perfectly legal and left to the discretion of trustees, Carrie thought it wise to go on record with the reminder that the board “scrupulously avoid any gifts that might have the appearance of self-dealing or of conflicts of interest and be sensitive to not making what might be called vanity or ego grants.”

Because the Durfee Foundation programs initiated by trustees were unusually labor intensive, Robbie recommended that the foundation compensate them for their time. In 1992, the board voted to pay trustees a modest annual fee and, in the case of family members who live out of town, reimbursement for travel expenses.

“I know that many foundations choose not to pay fees to trustees, and I respect that” says Carrie, “but from the perspective of a younger family member who joined the board while I was in graduate school, it helped a lot. Being on the board is wonderful, but it’s a significant time commitment.”

Leadership of the Third Generation

After serving on the board for more than 25 years, Judy, Russell, and Dennis were ready to turn over the leadership to the next generation. Dennis, who had taken an active role in the foundation and served as president of the board for 10 years, retired from the board in 1989. Remarried and the father of young children, he wanted to turn his attention to his family. Russell, then in his sixth year as board president, had also wearied of board responsibilities. Although Judy had been either vice-president or secretary during most of her years on the board, she had no interest in becoming president of the board. With the second generation

scaling back their participation, the board looked to the third generation to take a leadership role. Carrie stepped forward and was unanimously elected as the new board president.

This opportunity came at a perfect time for Carrie who was pregnant with her first child and working more than full-time as a lawyer, a hectic schedule she did not want to maintain. In the spring of 1993, Carrie replaced Russell as board president, a position now considered a part-time job. She works half time from her home office in Berkeley and travels to Los Angeles frequently to attend meetings and conduct site visits.

“I was very excited about being president,” says Carrie. “The foundation’s assets had grown to the point where we were capable of doing much more than we had in the past. I saw this as a terrific opportunity to shape and give identity to the foundation at a critical time. I wanted to get more involved in the day-to-day operations of the foundation and plan for its future. The idea of being able to devote more attention to the foundation was very appealing.”

At the top of her agenda was the expansion of Durfee Foundation programs. The second-generation trustees had developed programs stemming from their interests, and now the third-generation trustees had a chance to do the same. Mike, a physicist, started the Student Challenge Awards to stimulate high school students’ interest in science. When Mike was a teenager, his grandfather, knowing of his interest in science, arranged for him to go to the Jet Propulsion Lab at Caltech to watch the first probe land on Mars. Mike never forgot the thrill of being in the control room with the scientists and seeing the first images of the landing. That experience inspired him to establish a program to provide similar experiences for other teenagers. Each summer the Student Challenge Awards program sends 70 to 80 talented students who excel in the arts and humanities to work at a scientific research station for two to three weeks under the direction of the project’s principal investigator.

After graduating from law school, Carrie won a fellowship from Georgetown University’s Women’s Law and Public Policy program to work on drafting civil rights legislation at the National Women’s Law Center in Washington, DC. A few years later, Congress was debating how much to cut funds for the National Endowment for the Arts. As a recipient of an award herself, Carrie was aware that the experience she gained from her fellowship program would give her entree into the competitive field of public interest law. Compared to law graduates, art students had little funding available to them. As a step toward correcting that discrepancy and bringing art to nonprofit settings usually devoid of art, Carrie created the California Institute of the Arts/Durfee Residencies to provide funding for art students to create new works in community settings.

Besides acting as the lead trustee on the Durfee Residencies, Carrie also oversees three other programs, the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program, the Durfee Sabbatical Program, and the Durfee Community Fund. (Each program is described in Part II.)

More Fine-tuning of Grantmaking Philosophy

With almost a decade of experience running programs the trustees themselves created, the board once again set aside time at their 1995 retreat to re-evaluate their grantmaking. Their experiences working closely with grantees and nonprofit organizations reconfirmed their support of the foundation's grant-making principles. It also alerted them to problems they had not anticipated. As a result, they reworked their guidelines:

Durfee grantmaking is risk-taking and entrepreneurial. We reward these qualities in people, and the foundation itself aspires to these characteristics.

- * We do not make vanity grants where we expect something back for our contribution.
- * The foundation rewards individual effort and initiative.
- * The foundation responds to creativity and imagination.
- * We make grants where our dollars will have the greatest impact.
- * We expect careful and frugal use of Durfee funds.
- * We invest in people and ideas, rather than buildings and endowments.
- * We invest in specific projects, not institutional support. However, where the organization or grant is small, a general support grant may be better than funding a specific project.
- * We consider giving grants [in cases] where the outcome may be hard to measure or not be measurable until years later.
- * We select institutions whose leadership shares our way of doing things.
- * We add our creativity and experience where appropriate to strengthen a proposal. We believe we have something more to contribute than dollars and we want to work with people who want to work with us, rather than just accept money.

Generally, we do not repeat grants. This avoids the danger of the foundation becoming a maintenance operation.

The foundation prefers to fund projects not likely to get funds from other sources.

Trustees Approaching Burnout

As the foundation created new programs and expanded existing ones, the trustees' responsibilities mounted. Several programs involved recruiting, screening, and selecting applicants, a time-consuming process in which the full board participated. Says Carrie, "We would no sooner finish reading through a box of applications for the Student Challenge Awards, then a box of applications for the China program would arrive, leaving us two weeks to prepare for the next round of meetings."

Even with Robbie managing the programs and working alongside the trustees, the board felt burdened by the workload, which had turned into a part-time job for everyone. Russell announced that he needed a break. Remarried and the father of two young children, he didn't have the time or energy to meet his board responsibilities. In 1994, he went on an indefinite sabbatical from the board. Judy, who had gone back to school for a master's degree in history, also wanted to cut back on her participation on the board. And with their careers and young families, Carrie and Mike, too, had reached their limit.

It was clear that the trustees were on the verge of burnout. The current approach was not working; they needed to figure out another way to run the programs. Mike proposed that rather than require full board participation on each project, trustees would be responsible for shepherding the programs they initiated from start to finish. To help select grantees, he suggested that the lead trustee of each project appoint a team or panel of knowledgeable people from the community. The team approach had another advantage: it would bring to the foundation a range of viewpoints from panelists of different ethnic, socioeconomic, and other backgrounds. Drawing on Los Angeles' large pool of multicultural artists, academicians, and community activists, trustees could build teams that reflected the heterogeneity of the area and the populations the foundation served. Finally, Mike proposed that trustees would be welcome to participate in one another's projects, but their involvement would be strictly voluntary. The board unanimously endorsed his proposal.

The new system proved well suited to the trustees' temperaments and schedules. Because the programs require so much staff and trustee time, the funding cycles are staggered throughout the year. That way trustees have periods of intense participation lasting several months, followed by stretches of rest and recuperation when they are largely free of board responsibilities. "If the foundation makes too many demands on trustees, they will resign," says Carrie. "This optional approach has worked out well. Now the workload is manageable and we can drop in and out of others' programs depending on our time and interest."

New Executive Director

During the 17 years Robbie served as executive director of the Durfee Foundation, he worked three-quarters time, an arrangement that suited him and the foundation. With the rapidly expanding roster of programs, however, it was clear that the trustees needed more office support and help in program management. Robbie, who was approaching retirement age, was not interested in a full-time position and decided to pursue his outside consulting work instead.

Carrie began her search for a new executive director by placing ads in two professional publications. The office was quickly swamped with responses. From the more than 100 resumes she received, Carrie selected a dozen candidates to interview. The board found that the strongest candidates for the position were those suggested by people who knew the foundation, its trustees, and its work. In the end, the perfect candidate was referred to them by a former grantee, Bill Rauch at Cornerstone Theater Company.

The trustees sought an executive director who could help take the foundation to the next stage of development. Claire Peeps possessed all the qualities and qualifications for the job. She had a strong background in the visual and performing arts and shared the trustees' interest in bringing art to nontraditional settings. She also knew nonprofit organizations from the inside out. Having worked for several, she knew what it was like to be a grant seeker, a sensibility that was important to the family. And as a consultant to arts organizations around the country, she had a good grasp of the needs of the arts community and the elements that make for a strong program. In the spring of 1996, Claire became executive director of the Durfee Foundation.

In addition to excellent credentials, Claire's personality and work-style blended in smoothly with those of the family members. Says Carrie, "Claire strikes just the right balance between working with trustees around their established interests and pushing the foundation into new territory that it should be occupying. Her great sense of humor works well with our family, too, because we can be very silly at times."

Claire views her role as a facilitator of the trustees' interests and concerns as one of her most important responsibilities. "I make sure that each trustee is connected to a program activity at all times," says Claire. "I want there always to be something in motion for each of them at their desired level of involvement."

During her first weeks on the job, she met individually with the trustees to learn about the history of their participation in the foundation, the grantmaking that brought them the most satisfaction, and how their personal and professional passions might be realized in new Durfee Foundation programs. "The fun part of my job is to partner with each trustee and to try to bring added dimension to their concepts," says Claire. "The fact that the trustees have widely different interests and expertise makes my job fascinating because I'm constantly having to educate myself in arenas outside my own ken just to keep up with them. That's a huge privilege and a delight."

Review of a Decade of Grantmaking: 1986 – 1996

When Claire had finished her first year as executive director, she and the board organized a two-day meeting to evaluate the foundation's past ten years of grantmaking. On the agenda were core questions they felt grantmakers should periodically ask themselves: 1) Do our grantmaking practices conform to our grantmaking mission and guidelines? 2) What grants have or have not been satisfying? 3) What would we like to see Durfee accomplish in the future?

The answer to the first question emerged from their discussion of individual grants: the more active trustees were in developing and implementing a grant, the more likely the grant was to conform to the foundation's mission and guidelines. Carrie assigned categories to the grants. Category 1 included projects generated by trustees that met the board's criteria of rewarding creativity, individuality, and risk-taking, such as the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program, the Student Challenge Awards, and the Durfee Community Fund. The second category of grants, like the KCET History Project and the Pasadena Community

College Sculpture Garden, were one-time grants for which designated individuals received funding to complete a specific project. Although initiated by trustees, they demanded less of their time. Category 3 grants bore the least conformity to the foundation's goals. In these cases, the grantor did not create the project but was approached by grantseekers. Examples included a project in sustainable agriculture at Conservation International and a grant to fund a project at the University of Glasgow. Instead of having a working partnership with a grantee, a relationship the trustees favored, the board did not do much more than hand out checks. And, as one of several funders, the Durfee trustees had limited influence over the projects.

The board agreed that Category 1 grants best matched the Durfee Foundation's mission. They were also the most time-consuming, creating a burden on trustees and staff. As the board was trying to lighten its workload, they recognized that they could not manage those types of grants exclusively. Category 3 grants were too far removed from their guidelines, and they voted to eliminate those grants. Concentrating on a mixture of Category 1 and Category 2 type grants seemed to make the most sense.

The discussion of the second question – their satisfaction with grants – led the board to reconsider their earlier decision not to repeat grants. In fact, the board had given multiyear support to several projects: the China Program, the Student Challenge Awards, the Durfee Community Fund, and the CalArts program. These were among the foundation's most successful programs, and the ones that provided the "keen mutual interest" for trustees and recipients that Russell had initially proposed. Multi-year grants provided mutual benefits as well. For one, they allowed grantor and grantee to project their budgets over several years. For another, they gave grantees more time to stabilize and develop their programs and the grantor more information on which to evaluate the program's effectiveness. The decision not to provide repeating grants was made at a time when the foundation had limited funds to allocate. Now, with the foundation's assets growing, the board decided it was in a financial situation to be more expansive in its grantmaking.

The board had voted to concentrate its giving in the Los Angeles area where Stan started his business and where the family had its roots. After reading a survey of philanthropic support in 50 metropolitan areas that ranked Los Angeles number 48, the board added a geographical restriction to its guidelines. In a 1996 memo, Carrie wrote, "The Durfee Foundation is strongly rooted in the Los Angeles area, and our dollars are needed here....There is great value in giving to what we know because we have greater confidence in our ability to judge and oversee such grants." The one exception to the Los Angeles restriction is the Student Challenge Awards, the Durfee Foundation's only national program.

Finally, the board considered the matter of evaluating grants. Other than informal discussions with grantees and among board members, the foundation had never defined its goals for grants. At best, short-term evaluations of grants provide only a rough measurement of a grant's effectiveness, and that is particularly true for the kind of grants the Durfee Foundation awards. The benefits of travel in China or two weeks at a science research site may not be known for years to come

“ The trustees of the Durfee Foundation believe that philanthropy is most effective, satisfying, and poignant when the transaction involves the interests, skills, experience, and creativity of the donor as well as the beneficiary. ”

or, indeed, may defy standard measurements. Nonetheless, the board agreed that it would benefit both trustees and grantees to articulate goals for each grant. That way trustees would know what to look for in evaluating the grant and the grantees would know what was expected of them. In addition, by incorporating interviews with the grantees into the evaluation process, the board could hear recipients' suggestions for improving the administration of its programs.

All-family Board

The Durfee Foundation was set up to run in perpetuity and the family members are unanimous in their desire to see it continue. Given the staggered ages of the third generation, Stan's grandchildren can run the foundation for the next 50 years.

In 1998 Judy's four children ranged in age from 38 years to 24 years. Mike and Carrie have already served on the board for 12 years. Jon, 28, joined in 1995, and Diana, 24, will follow soon. Halina, age 30, the daughter of Dennis from his first marriage, joined the board this year and, repeating the early experiences of Mike and Carrie, will commute to meetings from the east coast. The young children of Dennis and Russell constitute the second batch of third-generation family members. They range in age from 2 years to 13 years. Russell has two children; Dennis and his second wife have a total of seven children. As yet, the board has no policy on whether children who are not blood descendants of the founder are eligible for board membership. In the wings is a fourth generation, Mike's three children and Carrie's two children who range in age from one to nine.

Currently, Judy is the only member of the second generation serving on the board. Although she pulled back from her duties once Carrie and Claire assumed leadership roles, she enjoys serving on the board with her children. "It's interesting to see them as grownups and watch how they are developing," says Judy. "They're all so different. Their individuality is a tribute to my father who appreciated people following their own interests."

The Durfee board is notably free of rivalries and conflicts, which may account for the absence of formal policies regarding governance. Family members genuinely enjoy working and philosophizing together, and they have an inherent confidence that whatever issues might arise can be resolved through discussion. The position of board president, for example, is an annual office. At the first meeting of each year the board casts votes for the president, an act of formality. Dennis served 10 consecutive terms and Russell, six. Carrie has already been president

for five years and is likely to continue for the next five. “The way it’s worked out,” says Carrie, “whoever wants to serve does so until he or she doesn’t want to do it anymore and then someone else steps forward. If two people wanted the position, we’d talk about it and work it out.” That is what happened with the position of secretary. Dennis held the post when Russell was president. He got tired of doing it and Judy took over. Carrie served as secretary until she became president, and Judy took over again. When she had had enough of taking minutes, her son Jon volunteered.

That spirit of cooperation permeates the board. Perhaps it was Stan’s gentle demeanor that set the tone for the meetings and encouraged the healthy balance the board has struck between hard work and fun. Russell says that his only regret about being on sabbatical from the foundation is missing the meetings. “We’re a witty bunch,” he says. “We accomplish a lot and we have a good time doing it.”

The foundation has provided a forum for three generations of the family to come together and discuss philosophy and values. For Judy’s children, serving on the board allowed them to see another side of their grandfather, whom they knew mostly from Thanksgiving dinners and gatherings at the family ranch near Paso Robles. And for Stan, it was a chance to observe his grandchildren at work, and he was generous in complimenting their efforts. Once Carrie became president, a meeting rarely passed without her receiving a note from Stan telling her how much he liked the way she conducted the meetings and what she was doing with the foundation. Mike’s actions as treasurer also won Stan’s approval and, as grandfather and grandson shared a mutual interest in science, Stan was particularly delighted by Mike’s developing the Student Challenge Awards.

Jon, who was on the board for only two years when Stan died, had vivid memories of his grandfather’s courtliness. “Here was this caring, giving old man with a ton of money,” says Jon, “who would stand up at every meeting and give a speech about how great it was to have the family there. It sounds like something out of a Hollywood movie but it was really genuine. He always said how great everyone’s project was and how happy he was that we were all involved in the foundation. I feel really lucky that I joined the board while he was still around.”

Durfee Grantmaking Programs

With assets of \$25 million, the Durfee Foundation currently allocates approximately \$1 million a year in grants. The programs it supports reflect the personality and values of its founder, Stan Avery. Ironically, the grantmaking philosophy and practices initiated by the second generation and fleshed out by the third generation capture Stan's spirit in ways that his own grantmaking never did. An innovator in business, Stan followed a traditional approach of granting foundation dollars to established cultural and educational institutions with which he had some personal connection. His children and grandchildren achieved the feat of moving the foundation into a new sphere of grantmaking while remaining entirely true to its founder. In preferring to initiate their own programs, the second and third generations pay tribute to Stan, the entrepreneur and risk-taker. By offering grants to talented individuals, they honor his belief that the greatest payoffs come from investing in the growth and development of leaders. And by rewarding individuals who are creative and imaginative, they recognize Stan's love of innovation and experimentation.

The trustees' bent for philosophizing has served them well. Over the years, they have periodically set aside time to examine their grantmaking, rethinking some aspects of their giving and refining others. The result is a board with strong sense of shared values and goals. To hear family members, and executive director Claire Peeps, too, refer to a particular grant as a "very Durfee program," or an event as a "very un-Durfee thing to do" is to know that the board has arrived at a clear definition of who they are and what the foundation is about.

This section presents a detailed look at the origins, administration, evolution, and impact of six major Durfee Foundation programs: the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program, the California Institute of the Arts/ Durfee Residencies, the Durfee Sabbatical Program, Durfee Music Fellowships, Student Challenge Awards, and the Durfee Community Fund.

The American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program

In 1929, Stan Avery and nine friends from Pomona College spent one year traveling in China, a trip that transformed Stan's life. To commemorate their father's experience, his children, Judy, Russell, and Dennis, established the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program to provide funds to individuals who have a personal interest, dream, or project they want to pursue in China. The program is open to students, faculty, staff, and recent alumni of institutions in Southern California with which Stan was affiliated as an alumnus, board member, or donor: the five Claremont Colleges, the California Institute of Technology, and Occidental College. Another sponsor, the California Institute of the Arts, was added in 1997 after the foundation ended its successful partnership with the school in running a community arts grant program. Since 1985, the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program had been open to applications every two to

three years without a fixed schedule. In 1997, the board voted to make it a biennial program.

For the application process, interested individuals are invited to submit a two-page preliminary applications briefly summarizing who they are and what they want to do in China. One month later, a panel composed of Carrie, Claire, other interested trustees, and several former grant recipients review the applications, which in 1997 totaled 300. The panel selects 75 finalists and invites them to submit a detailed description of their project, how they intend to carry it out, and how much it will cost. The finalists must also submit an endorsement from a sponsor at their university indicating that the institution considers the project feasible and safe. In the spring, the panel meets again to choose the participants. Although the board allocates a maximum budget for the program, it does not stipulate that any minimum number of participants must come from each institution or how many grants must be awarded. Rather, the final selection is determined by the quality of the projects and the likelihood of the applicant to complete it.

The American/Chinese Adventure program requires careful oversight and planning. Carrie visits each of the participating institutions in the fall to meet with the administration and often make a presentation about the program along with past participants who describe their adventures and show slides. Carrie counsels applicants during the fall, sets up the selection panel for readings of applications—which number in the hundreds—in December and March, and corresponds with all applicants after the selection process. The foundation's involvement does not end with the selection of grantees. Once the recipients start planning their trips some invariably run into problems with visas and itineraries that require the foundation's attention.

Four years ago, Carrie and her husband traveled to China at the suggestion of Stan. He wanted all the trustees to go there but thought it was especially important for Carrie to make the trip because she administered the program. "It was a brief visit," she says, "but still long enough for me to understand the difficulties of traveling there and how flexible grantees have to be to carry out their projects. I think I can relate better to applicants for having been there, and I can only imagine what it was like when my grandfather traveled there in 1929."

Although the applicants must be affiliated with institutions of higher learning, the foundation is decidedly not interested in funding scholarly projects. Preference is given to projects that emphasize person-to-person contact with the people of China and that demonstrate creativity, imagination, originality, and a touch of whimsy. The applicants have not disappointed them. One person dreamed of building his own boat and traveling the length of the Yangtze River, another wanted to investigate the influence of alligators in Chinese culture and life, and a Jewish professor hoped to track down traces of Jewish history in China. The maximum grant the Durfee Foundation awards is \$25,000, and the size of grants vary according to the complexity of the projects and the recipient's age. Younger people usually receive smaller grants because they can generally travel more cheaply.

To date, 175 individuals have received grants to travel in China. Just as Stan's China adventure transformed his life, so has it changed the lives of the partici-

pants. Many make lasting friendships, a few have married Chinese citizens they met on their travels and others, like Pam Logan, an engineer, changed careers. Before going to China, she intended to be an academic. While there, she developed a burning interest in Tibetan history and culture. She went on to learn to speak Chinese and Tibetan, wrote a book about Tibetan warriors, and now runs a nonprofit organization that rebuilds and restores Tibetan monasteries. “The Durfee Foundation is willing to give grants for projects whose social purpose may not be immediately apparent,” says Pam, “and yet sometimes amazing things come out of those projects that no one could have predicted. Lots of people travel to foreign countries and they are no different when they return. What makes the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program different is that the grant inspires people to create a quest and see it through. That motivation was more important to me than the money.” Stan dreamed that the Durfee China grants would produce a future ambassador to China. If traveling to China could turn a Ph.D. in aerospace science into a crusader who brings Italian experts to Tibet to restore sacred artwork, anything is possible.

In 1996, Carrie conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the 10-year history of the American/Chinese Adventure program. She conducted in-depth interviews with current and past coordinators of the program at each of the sponsoring institutions as well as with a selection of past recipients. Based on the information gathered, she submitted a 24-page report to the board listing 28 recommendations for fine-tuning the program. Recommendations included ways to streamline the administration of the program, improve communication with the sponsoring institutions, and make the program more accessible to applicants. To that end, the foundation created a website with information about the China program, such as the application procedure, descriptions of past adventures, and a contact list of program alumni. Additionally, Carrie maintains extensive e-mail correspondence with prospective and actual applicants and with participants before and after their trips to China.

Having worked in nonprofit organizations herself, Carrie understands the importance of foundations being open and accessible to grantseekers and grantees. Including recipients on foundation panels is one way the foundation tries to break down barriers. Another is by soliciting and acting on the feedback of grantees. It is this involvement with the communities it serves that keeps programs like the American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program moving forward.

The California Institute for the Arts/Durfee Residencies

The Durfee Residencies program brought together two of Carrie’s interests: the arts and the nonprofit sector. Her idea was to give art students the opportunity to create works of art in community settings and to bring art to community nonprofit organizations. The California Institute for the Arts was Carrie’s first choice as a partner, and she approached Steven Lavine, the president of the school, to see if he would be interested in participating in this venture. “Steven loved the idea of giving students a project and letting them run with it,” says Carrie. “He had won a fellowship to travel abroad when he was a student, so this program really spoke to him.”

“Who else will fund fledgling groups if not family foundations?” asks Carrie. “Not the government, not United Way. Small grants given at the proper time can make the critical difference between programs floundering or stabilizing.”

The program was launched in 1994. Students and recent alumni were invited to submit applications with a description of their projects. Carrie and Robbie Macfarlane (later Claire Peeps), Steven Lavine and CalArts’ director of special projects, Lynn Rosenfeld, read the applications and selected finalists from dozens of short project proposals. Finalists were invited to submit more detailed proposals along with recommendations from their professors and a letter of support from the nonprofit organization sponsoring their project. The same panel of four selected participants based on their project’s creativity and feasibility, and on the participant’s ability to work independently.

Over the years, students have proposed projects ranging from practical to innovative. Some recent examples include: a video documentary on the nature of biography using the Mark Twain archives as a subject; teaching photography and bookmaking at the Santa Clarita Senior Center; creating an urban garden in partnership with the Koreatown Association in Los Angeles; and producing a calendar for Planned Parenthood combining art photos with text to educate girls about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases.

After funding the program for three years, the board asked Claire to evaluate its effectiveness. While she believed the Cal Arts program had met its goals and worked smoothly, she questioned whether the funding was hitting the right target. From her knowledge of the Los Angeles arts community, the greatest need was not among art students but among working artists. The foundation was granting \$100,000 a year in stipends to Cal Arts students whose school already provided them with multiple resources and artistic opportunities. By comparison, few philanthropic dollars were available to more established artists in the area.

To get a better handle on the problems facing working artists, the Durfee Foundation convened a meeting of organizations funding individual artists locally and nationally. The situation was more dire than they imagined. Only a handful of local foundations funded individual artists. Furthermore, of the \$300,000 grant dollars targeted for individual artists in the Los Angeles area in 1997, \$270,000 was designated for visual artists. The Durfee Residencies had supported artists working in different disciplines. The fact that only \$30,000 was available for artists working outside the visual arts reaffirmed the board’s belief that their funding should remain focused on multidisciplinary arts. Based on the information gathered at the meeting, Claire recommended that the Cal Arts program be phased out. She further recommended that the funds for the Cal Arts program be redirected to establish Durfee fellowships for working artists in the Los Angeles area. The board agreed with both recommendations. Now the question was how to select the recipients.

“We feared that if we solicited applications, more artists would apply than we could accommodate, and we didn’t want to waste their time,” says Claire. “We also didn’t think it was appropriate for our trustees to make the final selections without the input of experienced practitioners. We settled on a nomination process.”

Just as the family trustees are responsible for overseeing the programs they create, Claire, because of her strong background in the arts and the board’s confidence in her abilities, has responsibility for creating and implementing the Durfee arts fellowships. This fall she put together the first panel of 10 nominators. Rather than limit the nominators to the field of visual artists, she decided to draw from a range of disciplines: people working in local theater, contemporary and traditional music, dance, visual art, film/video, and literature. Beyond selecting the winners, Claire hopes that the panels will foster discussion among leaders from different disciplines in the Los Angeles art world who may not ordinarily get together. The foundation will present one-time awards of \$25,000 to three Los Angeles artists doing extraordinary work. The first winners of the Durfee Art Fellowships were announced in March 1999.

Student Challenge Awards

The Student Challenge Awards, the Durfee Foundation’s only national program, was started by Mike Newkirk to give students gifted in the arts and humanities an opportunity to spend two intensive weeks during the summer at a scientific research station. The aim is to excite the students’ imaginations, expand their potential, and stimulate their curiosity about science and technology.

When Mike conceived of the program he was a relative newcomer to the board, and he turned to Robbie Macfarlane, the executive director at the time, for help. The program’s ambitious scope—selecting students from around the country, finding willing scientists working at appropriate research sites, and assigning students to research projects—was more than the foundation could handle on its own. Robbie recommended the foundation form a partnership with Earthwatch, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Massachusetts, which organizes trips for adults interested in assisting scientists doing field research. Earthwatch had a large network of scientists and knew how to manage the complicated logistics of arranging such trips. The Durfee Foundation agreed to pay Earthwatch to administer the program for which Mike would set the guidelines and select the participants.

Mike, a physicist, says his idea was to take talented teenagers and expose them to real science and state-of-the-art technology. “I wasn’t pushing for any particular outcome,” he says. “I hoped that the experience would affect them in ways I couldn’t predict.” To that end, Mike laid the guidelines for the program: the research project is of high caliber, the scientists are good teachers interested in working with inquisitive students, and the research is conducted at a site or facility where students can mix with other scientists. As for the students, Mike was not interested in reaching straight-A science students because they have already discovered science. He wanted to expose students gifted in the arts and humanities to the excitement of scientific research.

Although Mike had a clear picture of what he wanted the program to be, he had a hard time getting his ideas across to the schools and to Earthwatch. “The

Durfee Foundation philosophy is not to do the predictable, which is what the schools were doing,” says Mike. “They kept recommending the students proficient in science, and we were looking for kids who were intelligent nonconformists.” He had a similar problem with Earthwatch. Some of the sites it chose were not up to his standards and too many were concentrated in the earth sciences. Mike understood that a new program as large and complex as the Student Challenge Award would run into a few snags, and he was willing to keep working with Earthwatch until it caught on to what he was after.

Working closely with Earthwatch, Mike repeatedly emphasized the importance of holding to the criteria he had established. After several years, however, he concluded that Earthwatch was confusing the goals of the Durfee Foundation with those of its own programs. He decided to turn the management of the project over to a university that runs summer programs on college campuses for highly gifted students. Mike thought it would be a good match for the Student Challenge Awards. Instead, he encountered a new set of problems. Although the university streamlined Earthwatch’s application process and created a safer environment for the teenagers, its strict academic perspective was at odds with the trustees’ vision of the program. More serious, the foundation and the university had very different ideas about how they would work together. Carrie explains:

“They didn’t get what this program was about. They thought a good site meant that a famous scientist was affiliated with the project, even if the kids only met with the scientist for 10 minutes. We didn’t care if the scientists were household names as long as they were tops in their field and the kids had extensive and meaningful contact with them. We wanted it to be a time of exploration and wonder for the kids, but the university was too worried about liability and chaperoned the kids to the detriment of the program. The biggest problem, though, was that they didn’t like working with us. They wanted to run the program themselves and then report back to us.”

The Durfee trustees understandably take a proprietary interest in programs they initiate. While they invite the participation of individuals in the community as panelists and institutions like CalArts to work with them as partners, the trustees expect to have input into the application process. In the case of the Student Challenge Awards, the trustees had clear goals for the program and several years experience in running it. For three years, they tried to get their points across to the university’s staff in meetings and telephone conversations, but the disagreements between the two organizations mounted and the program suffered. Applications dropped precipitously, and the university had difficulty lining up enough research sites.

“They thought we were breathing down their necks and trying to micromanage the project,” says Carrie. “Their position was that foundations are supposed to act like newspaper publishers, and the organizations they fund are supposed to be the editors. We appreciated their honesty, but our ideas about partnership were just too far apart to continue working together.”

In 1996, the Student Challenge Awards resumed its partnership with Earthwatch, this time with a clearer idea of what was needed to make the program succeed. Taking the best of what the board had learned from its experience,

“ If I were going to go to all those meetings,” he says, “I’d have to be more passionately involved. I was more interested in projects that were slightly off-center, projects that were hard sells and whose value wasn’t immediately recognizable. ”

Mike refashioned the administration of the program. This time one Earthwatch employee would be assigned to manage the program exclusively, and the Durfee Foundation would pay a portion of her salary. Dee Robbins was a perfect match for the job. With a background in biology and creative writing, she embodied the type of student the Durfee Foundation was looking for. At last, Mike had found someone on the same wavelength with him. Within a year, the Student Challenge Awards program was back on track.

“The programs in 1997 and 1998 were phenomenal,” says Carrie. “It’s says to me that you can have a good program idea but who you’re partnered with makes all the difference in the world. The same program that faltered with one organization is now flourishing with another.”

The Student Challenge Awards require impeccable planning to orchestrate all its parts. The call for students begins in the fall and Dee’s search casts a wide net. Using various databases and school networks, she mails out close to 15,000 brochures asking teachers and principals to nominate students fitting the Durfee criteria. Of the 900 students nominated each year, more than 300 apply. Dee and the Earthwatch staff rank the applicants, and send the applications of those in the top half to Mike and Claire who select the 70 to 80 finalists.

In February, Dee begins inviting proposals from scientists whose research is of high caliber and amenable to the structure of the program. From the 20 or so scientists who usually apply, Mike selects 10 projects representing different disciplines and a variety of locations. In recent years students have worked among other places at a rain forest reserve in Costa Rica, a natural wildlife refuge in Oregon, a Hopi village in Arizona, the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, and an earthquake fault system in Alaska.

The scientists hold the key to the success of the programs. It is their love and enthusiasm for their work that inspires the students. “The scientists who sign up are jewels,” says Dee. “They spend their precious research time with high school students because they enjoy teaching and want to share the wonder of science with young people.”

Dee assigns six to eight students to each research site. The foundation also pays for a graduate student to help manage each project and to bridge the age and knowledge gap between the scientist and the students. Besides learning about science, the students learn the equally important lessons of living and working together as a team. So far, says Mike, the students have adapted beautifully to all the challenges presented to them. “We regard them as special from start to finish and they

respond in kind. We've had no problems. The kids have all risen to the occasion and, as a result, the scientists treat them like adults and give them lots of freedom to explore and experiment."

Now that the Student Challenge Awards program is running smoothly Mike has cut back on his involvement, although he estimates that he still puts in about 60 hours a year on the program. The trustees try to visit at least one site and, when convenient, they hold their summer board retreat near one of the sites so that the whole board can observe the program in action. "We hear so many bad stories about teenagers," says Mike, "but these kids are amazing. Reading their applications and seeing them in action gives me hope for the future of this country."

What the Students Say

"I remained in a state of amazement for two weeks straight, amazed at the beauty around me, amazed at the diversity of nature, and amazed that I was actually helping preserve the rain forest."

* Drew Swedlund
Preserving Tropical Ecosystems

"I loved working with things that were confusing and difficult for me, especially when I figured them out. I was forced many times to reconsider my values after listening to the well-thought out ideas of the opposition. Although I stood my ground, I now have more respect for those who do not share my feelings on a topic."

* Betsy Mitchell
The Impacts of Sea Level Rise on Coastal Wetlands

"In school, if we ever get to do anything with what we learn, we are using equipment that is 30 to 60 years old, and the scientific community couldn't care less about our results. It was thrilling to use modern equipment to perform research that might be of use to someone besides my lab partner."

* Melissa Brown
The Denali Fault

"I probably learned more in those two weeks than any other two weeks of my life. I learned 15-plus plant species, how to identify them, and their Latin names. I learned about the eruptions of Mt. St. Helens, everything from mudflows to the brain-eating amoebas of Spirit Lake. I learned to use several types of high-tech equipment... to map tree positions, measure tree height, and measure soil moisture. Most important, we learned how to practically apply all this knowledge in a real-life situation."

* Joe Brown
Old Growth Forest Ecosystem Research

"I have been drilled to believe there should always be a precise response to my questions, that my teachers should always be equipped to give me the solution. Here we had to formulate our own answers, rely on our own knowledge. I had always been so afraid of not having the correct answer, but now I understand that the thought process counts, not just the right solution."

* Sheri Frasad
The Impacts of Sea Level Rise on Coastal Wetlands

"How did this research experience compare to the way you learn science in high school? Like a hot fudge sundae to boiled spinach. The first is delicious, rewarding, and sticks with you. The second is slimy, vile tasting, and not merely as good for you as everyone says it is."

* Cathy Plesko
Transient Phenomena in Astrophysics

"Studying the Paiutes destroyed my culturally superior attitude."

* Lori Rasmussen
The Buena Vista Archeological Project

should
this read —
"nearly"
rather than
merely?

Music Fellowships

The Music Fellowships, created by Jon Newkirk, the younger brother of Carrie and Mike, offer support to virtuoso performers living in Los Angeles to engage in the apprenticeship training of promising young musicians. The goal of the program is to assist master artists in sustaining their craft, transferring skills to the next generation of artists, and cultivating new audiences for their work. The design and scope of the program did not emerge full-blown from Jon's head. Rather, it evolved over a year of conversations with Claire in which he considered and later rejected possibilities ranging from a music school to a video project for children. When Jon joined the board in 1995, he was 25 years old and a newcomer to foundation grantmaking. After serving on the board for two years, the trustees felt he was ready to create a project of his own.

Claire asked Jon, a geologist turned audio-engineer, to make a list of his interests and to rank them in importance. "I work at a recording studio in Hollywood where I hear all kinds of music," says Jon. "I like working with musicians and feel motivated by their creativity. I've played in bands on and off since I was in high school, and I realized that what really drives me is my interest in music."

With that as the starting point, Jon and Claire brainstormed ideas for projects. He knew he wanted to create something active that would produce visible results, and he wanted the program to be one-of-a-kind. "The problem was I didn't know what was out there," says Jon, "and Claire came to my rescue." Claire called heads of music schools in Los Angeles and across the country to learn about programs in their regions and to solicit their thoughts on what was needed. These conversations helped to shape her thinking and eventually led to her breakthrough idea. Jon recalled how it happened:

"One day Claire called me all excited from a pay phone. She had hit on what L.A. lacked—a program that targeted the area's musical diversity. L.A. has a huge immigrant population. Master musicians from all over the world live here, but there's no funding for them. We realized that we could fill that void."

Over the next months, Jon and Claire worked out the details of how they would structure the program, borrowing some elements from other Durfee programs. They asked 17 nominators—professional musicians, music professors, and other experts—to recommend musicians working in non-written traditions who are well known in their communities and who would enjoy teaching. A panel of five that included Jon and Claire made the final selections.

What Jon and Claire hadn't anticipated was the time musicians spend on the road. Because of their hectic touring schedules and/or playdates, many could not fulfill the teaching requirement. Of the 21 musicians recommended, six were selected: an Afro-Cuban drummer, a Nigerian percussionist who plays the talking drum, a Lebanese tabla player, an African-American saxophonist, a Cambodian violinist and orchestra leader, and a North Indian singer. The Durfee Foundation awarded each a support grant of approximately \$22,500 a year over the next two to three years.

Jon and Claire left it up to the musicians to select their students but they asked that preference be given to those who exhibited exceptional talent and discipline to benefit from this opportunity and who could not afford the classes on

their own. The students, in turn, would be expected to: 1) meet with the teacher weekly for two years, with an option to continue for a third year; 2) participate in an annual Durfee Summer Music Institute that would bring together all the teachers and students in the program; and 3) perform at an annual public event arranged by the foundation. This past August, the foundation produced its first free outdoor concert in downtown Los Angeles to introduce the artists to a wider audience.

Because the program is new and there is nothing quite like it anywhere in the country, Jon and Claire decided that it would require a trial period of at least two years to streamline the program and judge its effectiveness. “We decided to let the program go on automatic pilot for the first year,” says Jon, “and see what we learn.” They have already discovered two things they overlooked in the initial planning. Some recipients mentioned that they didn’t have a quiet space in which to teach their students, and the foundation agreed to help them find a practice room. Jon and Claire also recognized that because of the way the nomination process was structured, they had missed the opportunity to talk with the nominators and the winners. Durfee trustees like to bring together outstanding people to exchange ideas and to learn from them. Next time around, they would organize a venue to bring the nominators together for discussion.

For Jon, creating his own project has been an extremely rewarding experience. Besides meeting master musicians and learning about their musical traditions, he has carved out a new niche in the family. “Being part of the foundation has made me grow up. It feels great to sit around the table with family members and talk about our projects. Coming up with a project of my own has given me validity in the family. I’m really grateful for this opportunity. Without Claire’s help, my family’s support and, of course, Grandpa’s for providing the budget, I never could fathom doing something like this on my own.”

Durfee Sabbatical Program

The Durfee Sabbatical Program awards grants of \$25,000 to exceptional leaders in the nonprofit sector who, working under prolonged stressful conditions, face burnout. The goals of the program are to support leadership preservation by giving the leaders time off to reflect on their lives and work and to promote staff development while the leaders are away. Of all the Durfee programs, this one most directly embodies Stan’s philosophy that the greatest gains for the community come from investing in creative individuals.

“We looked at leaders in the nonprofit community and saw how overworked, stressed out, and underpaid they were,” says Carrie. “We considered giving grants to the organizations but decided a better use of the money would be to offer sabbaticals to the leaders of the organizations. In some cases, the only way they can rest up is to quit their jobs. We hoped to prevent that from happening by giving them time out to focus on themselves and their families and to replenish their spirits.”

This enlightened program was conceived by the Durfee Foundation’s previous executive director, Robbie Macfarlane, although in many ways it has its roots in the Durfee Awards created by Dennis Avery that recognized the extraordinary achievements of ordinary individuals. Carrie and Claire expanded the program

“My father liked to grow things and grow them well,” says Dennis, “and the foundation was one of them. He wanted family members to be involved, so he let us run things. He was a gentle man and he had difficulty expressing his disapproval even when he disagreed with us, and certainly not at meetings.”

to its present form. They spent one year talking with grantmakers and grantseekers and thinking about how to structure the program. Particularly helpful were their conversations with the people at the Vanguard Public Foundation in San Francisco who run a similar program for community organizers.

The selection of Sabbatical Program grantees, the foundation’s most labor-intensive process, lasts for six months. It begins with an ad for applicants placed in key publications aimed at the nonprofit sector and mailings to hundred of nonprofit organizations throughout Los Angeles County. To be eligible for the program, applicants must live in Los Angeles and work full-time for social service or arts organizations, have worked a minimum of seven consecutive years in the nonprofit sector, have a demonstrated track record of contributions to the community, and show financial need. The application form consists of six questions, which applicants answer in essay form:

- * Why are you engaged in your current field of work?
- * What significant lessons have you learned along the way?
- * What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- * What is the projected length of your sabbatical and how do you plan to use your time?
- * What benefits do you expect to gain from a sabbatical and how will it affect you personally and professionally?
- * What leadership and learning opportunities will be available to staff while you are away?

At the beginning of the application period, the foundation holds an informational open house where prospective applicants can learn about the program. Next, Carrie and Claire appoint a panel of knowledgeable people in the community to help them select the winners. This year the panel consisted of two former winners and a Sabbatical finalist, an arts performer, who, interestingly, was disqualified from the competition when he won the MacArthur “Genius” award. Each panelist receives a stipend of \$1,000 for reading the applications before the first meeting and for three days of panel work—one day to rank applications and choose finalists and two days to interview finalists and select the six winners. Carrie and Claire also participate in the panels. In 1998, 45 individuals applied for the grants.

In between the first and second meetings of the panel, Carrie and Claire call the three references listed by each finalist. Then Claire makes a site visit to each of

the finalists' organizations and reports back to the panelists about what she has observed. "Doing the site visits is the joy of this job," says Claire. "It's what revitalizes me. These visits are not about examining financial statements but rather of getting a gut feeling about the organization, its stability, and the level of stress people work under."

The conditions of the grants sound like every employee's dream: grantees are free to use the money in any way they choose; sabbaticals must be no shorter than two months; and grantees cannot spend more than 25 percent of their time on professional development. "The hardest thing to get across to the finalists," says Carrie, "is that we don't want or expect them to produce a product. Some applicants are so modest that they don't even request the full amount of the grant; we have to tell them it's okay to increase their requests."

Choosing among worthy candidates is difficult and often the deciding factor is not the applicants but the level of development of the organization. In some cases, the panelists conclude that the staff is not sufficiently independent and that the organization would suffer if the director went on sabbatical. Also influencing their decision is the candidates' ages. Preference is given to older candidates who have worked more years.

In addition to the grant awarded to the recipient, the Sabbatical Program offers \$5,000 to the grantee's organization on the condition that it set up a permanent, revolving fund for staff development. The purpose of the fund is to enable staff to attend conferences or take short-term leaves that might advance their professional growth. The Durfee Foundation regards the \$5,000 as a seed grant and expects the organization to maintain the fund as a permanent line item in its budget.

In October 1998, the Durfee Foundation hosted a "very un-Durfee" kind of event, a reception at the Santa Monica Museum of Art to honor the sabbatical recipients from 1997 and 1998. What makes it "an un-Durfee thing to do," says Claire, is the family's discomfort with being thanked publicly for their contributions. "They prefer to stay in the background but, in this case, they felt the issue of burnout in nonprofits merited greater exposure, and this was a way to attract media and public attention. It's also a chance for us to toot the horn for these outstanding leaders. They are the unsung heroes of this city." More "Durfee-like" was the smaller event that followed; sabbatical recipients and their families gathered at the home of Judy Newkirk for dinner, conversation, and relaxation.

While the Durfee Sabbatical Program gives awards to individuals, the benefits are felt by many: the winners' families, the organizations and their staffs, and the communities the organizations serve. The Durfee Foundation also counts itself among the program's beneficiaries. All the trustees remarked that meeting these leaders and hearing their stories was a humbling experience. "These people are saints," says Carrie. "They give of themselves all their lives. We feel honored to know them." The thorough selection process serves another purpose: it educates the trustees about a range of nonprofit organizations and their needs. "We get a bird's eye view of what's going on in different organizations and different communities," says Claire. "From talking to the candidates, we recognized that many of these leaders did not know one another, and we arranged to bring them together so that they know what one another is doing."

What the Sabbatical Recipients Say

"I want some uninterrupted leisure time with my family — not having to respond to crises at the crisis center, not worrying about deadlines, not having to hear about the hurt and abuse people suffer on a daily basis, not watching the news, not having to worry about the enormous hotline telephone bill and how it will be paid, not having a meeting, not carrying a beeper or cell phone. I don't believe I've had such a period of time since I became executive director in 1985.

* Patricia Occhiuzzo Giggans
Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women

"I have been tired for a very, very long time.... I want to be more than a work machine. I want to make sure that my tombstone will say something other than: She was born, she cared about kids, she worked, she died. I have never had a substantial vacation. I want some time to think. I want to read books of no social consequence... Time to myself is what I want. It is the most valuable commodity I can imagine. I want the muscles in my back to unwind. I want to sleep until I'm not tired anymore.... I want to remember my life."

* Carolyn Reid-Green
President and CEO of the Drew Child Development Corporation

"I love my work. I didn't think I needed a rest until I took one. It was great fun knowing that I didn't have to go back to work in two weeks and that I was vacationing on someone else's nickel. During my two months off I went river rafting, traveled around the US, and spent a week in Europe. I remember the first time I unwound. It was the third week of my sabbatical. I was floating in the river, carried by the current, and I could actually feel my body relax. When I came back to work, I understood the value of rest. Now I impose it on my employees. No one can work more than five days a week and everyone must take a vacation every year."

* Steve Le Pore
Executive director of My Friend's Place, a program for homeless youth

"I was floored to no end that someone would tell me to go on vacation and do what I wanted to do with the money. I wondered if these people were for real. When I found out they were, I felt really honored because it meant that they recognized that the work I was doing was important. It took me a while to decide how to use it because I thought of it as a gift, something special, more than just money. My wife and son and I traveled to the east coast where we had never been to visit the important historical sites from early American history. The first three weeks I felt nervous about not working because I'm used to a 60-hour week. I didn't realize how stressed out I was until I relaxed. Then I could enjoy being with my family. When I returned to work, I saw that my staff's confidence in themselves had been strengthened. They saw that I trusted them and that they can do the work without me. The trip gave me time to reflect and when I returned I looked at things differently. I still work long hours but I've learned to schedule things more realistically.

* Luis Mata
Executive director of the Multicultural Area Health Education Center

Durfee Community Fund

The Durfee Community Fund was set up in 1992 in response to the riots that took place in South Central Los Angeles after the acquittal of the white policemen who beat Rodney King, an African American. Disturbed by the violence and the conditions that precipitated it, Russell Avery consulted with Robbie Macfarlane, the Durfee Foundation's executive director at the time, about what role the foundation might play in helping troubled communities in Los Angeles receive badly needed social services. They settled on providing small, one-time grants to start-up grassroots organizations. Through conversations with community leaders, they were referred to Mary Ochs, who then worked for the Legal Aid Society and was familiar with grassroots organizations throughout the city.

The Durfee trustees met with Mary to plan the best way to structure the program. Taking into account the foundation's commitment to fostering leadership and funding riskier programs, Mary suggested that it target dynamic community leaders and groups in transition from a volunteer effort to a more formal organization. The goal of the Durfee Community Fund is to give new groups a quick boost. To do so, the board designed a streamlined funding process free of the usual hoops that grant-seekers must jump through. For this program, the foundation eliminated application forms and proposals.

"Start-up groups have a tough time finding funding because they aren't connected to a network and don't have many financial resources," says Carrie. "Usually they have one key person who's devoted to the program and keeps it going. Few foundations are willing to fund groups that don't have a three-year track record. We want to open doors for them. Once they get a grant from us, it makes it easier for them to get funding from other sources."

The board charges Mary with identifying fledgling groups that can benefit from a small grant. She looks for groups working on compelling problems and that have outstanding leaders who demonstrate commitment, passion, entrepreneurial spirit, and common sense. Preferably, their program is already operating so that funders have something to evaluate. Mary prepares half-page reports on the most promising groups and submits them to the board. Then Claire or one of the board members accompanies Mary on site visits to get a feel for the program and to talk with the leaders about their plans for using the grant. Typically, the board awards grants between \$2500 and \$7500 to eight to ten recipients each year.

The Durfee Community Fund was originally set up to run for one year, but the trustees were so pleased by the programs it has invested in that they decided to fund it indefinitely. Since 1992, the Durfee Community Fund has awarded 42 grants to groups offering services in such areas as literacy, affordable housing, job development, workers' rights, and afterschool programs. One organization the trustees are particularly proud of is also one of their first recipients of this program: the Al Wooten Center in South Central Los Angeles. The center was started by Faye Rumph, whose son Al was killed in a drive-by shooting. Rather than retreating into

her grief, Faye turned her sorrow into social action. She rented a small storefront office space and opened an afterschool program. When she couldn't find funding, she refinanced her home to keep the program alive. The Durfee Community Fund awarded the Al Wooten Center \$5,000.

"Faye is soft-spoken and low-keyed," says Mary, "but there is no mistaking her drive and determination. Russell and Robbie were very moved by the love and affection she gives to the kids and her willingness to put up her home to start this program."

The Al Wooten Center has substantially expanded its funding base since the Durfee Community Fund grant. With an operating budget of several hundred thousand dollars a year and a larger facility, it now serves 200 children daily.

Another success story is Tomorrow's Entrepreneurs Today, started by Fannie Butler. A teacher and guidance counselor in South Central Los Angeles, Fannie started teaching young African Americans about entrepreneurship in her spare time. Having found her calling, she quit her job, trusting she would figure out a way to support herself. Like Faye Rumph, Fannie had difficulty attracting funding for her program until she received a start-up grant from the Durfee Community Fund. Under her tutelage, the young participants have started businesses making and printing flyers, designing greeting cards, and baking and selling cookies. "These are kids who have lots of problems," says Mary. "Starting their own businesses does wonders for their self-esteem, as does meeting real-life entrepreneurs."

In 1997, Stan Avery met with some of the students involved with Tomorrow's Entrepreneurs Today. He talked about his humble beginnings and the struggles of starting his own business in Los Angeles during the Depression. Later, he and Carrie showed the students around Avery House, the dormitory Stan funded at Caltech, and ate dinner with them in the dining hall. When Stan Avery died just two months later, Fannie Butler attended his memorial service.

Looking back on the Durfee Community Fund's six-year track record, the board concurred that the program is fulfilling its twin goals of investing in riskier groups and giving a leg up to neophyte grassroots organizations. In fact, what they had designated as high-risk grantmaking is looking more like good investments: at the close of 1997, 38 of the 39 programs they funded are still going, and some have grown substantially.

Having a nominator who knows the communities and its leaders is key to developing this kind of grant, and the Durfee Foundation could not have found a better match than Mary, currently the organizational development coordinator at the Center for Community Change. Her work at the Center—identifying grassroots groups, assisting nonprofit groups in getting up and running, and providing her skilled technical assistance—gives her firsthand and up-to-date knowledge of what is happening in South Central and other troubled communities. Mary participates in the Durfee Community Fund on a voluntary basis and, as a way of saying thanks, the board makes a modest grant annually which is designated for the Center's operating expenses. Recently, the trustees voted to expand the nomination process for this program; the next round of grants will be recommended by Mary and three additional nominators.

As important as Mary is to the program, the Durfee Community Fund would not have the same drive if not for the participation of the trustees. Accompanying Mary on site visits, they not only develop a better understanding of the needs of the community, they feel inspired by the work of the dedicated people they meet. Getting to know the grantees has deepened the board's commitment to supporting start-up groups.

"Who else will fund fledgling groups if not family foundations?" asks Carrie. "Not the government, not United Way. Small grants given at the proper time can make the critical difference between programs floundering or stabilizing. We try to make responsible grants but it's also not the end of the world if one goes awry. For all of the risky grantmaking we have done with this program, it is pretty phenomenal that virtually every group is still going and some have really taken off and become well-established."

Although the foundation does not require Durfee Community Fund recipients to submit reports at the end of a grant, in 1997 Claire did a follow-up telephone interview with each one to see how the groups were faring. She asked: What was the size of your budget before receiving the Durfee grant? What is it now? Has your mission changed? What obstacles have you encountered? If there were a Phase Two of this program, what would you want it to be? The recipients' answers confirmed the board's conviction that small grants can yield big returns—that is, when the grants are timely and the program is well-conceived.

While pleased that the grants have been successful in launching new programs, the trustees wanted to follow up on the information Claire gathered in her telephone interviews. The board, along with Mary Ochs, organized a get-together with the recipients to hear what was on their minds. Virtually all expressed their frustrations in trying to plan from year to year when they were uncertain of their funding. Tired of relying on grants from the government and foundations, they wanted to develop revenue-generating businesses that would allow them to move toward financial independence. Some already had projects underway; others were searching for ideas.

Impressed by the recipients' desire for independence, the board voted to launch Phase Two of the Durfee Community Fund: awarding grants to help non-profit organizations launch an entrepreneurial wing. One of the first recipients was Venice Community Housing Project. A timely grant of \$50,000 gave a jump start to Clayworks, a new business the organization was developing to train and pay young people to manufacture and install tiles. Venice Community Housing Project already had one training program in place as part of its construction business. With the addition of these programs, the organization is eligible to apply for city and county contracts that have set-asides for businesses working with at-risk youth. "The Durfee grant was essential to getting this program moving," says Steve Clare, the organization's executive director. "They believed in what we were doing and saw its potential. With their help, we were able to provide wages for the workers and set aside money to hire a project manager to market our service."

Whereas the Venice project is moving ahead, another project they funded went under. The Durfee Community Fund gave Skid Row Access a \$20,000 grant to open a storefront in a mall during the Christmas holidays to sell handcrafted

wooden toys made by people living on skid row. “We had our radar up looking for entrepreneurial projects,” says Claire. “We had become familiar with Skid Row Access when their executive director applied to our Sabbatical Program. We were very enthusiastic about what they were doing and the energy of the people involved. We also received strong recommendations from other funders who had made major grants to the organization. We decided to take a chance and fund their idea for a holiday store. In retrospect, we probably should have checked it out more thoroughly.”

What the Durfee Foundation didn’t know was that the organization had been beset by internal conflict. Moreover, it hadn’t calculated its inventory and ran out of merchandise midway through the holidays. Adding to their woes, the phone system kept breaking down. Not long afterwards, the organization completely folded. Far from being discouraged by the failure of the Skid Row Access grant, the Durfee board decided to educate itself about this type of funding. Carrie contacted colleagues who referred her to Jed Emerson, the director of the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund in San Francisco that provides funding and technical assistance to nonprofit enterprises. Carrie acknowledged that she didn’t know much about nonprofit enterprise, but she was eager to learn about this emerging field. The Skid Row project provided a good lesson on what a foundation should not do.

“Jed told us that we had given Skid Row Access just enough rope to hang itself,” says Claire. “Giving a group a one-time goodwill grant is not the way to encourage entrepreneurship. What’s needed is long-range strategic planning coupled with long-term financial support.”

As it happened, Jed Emerson was looking for a Los Angeles funder to participate in a preliminary collaborative study to see if the Roberts Foundation’s Venture Fund model would be viable in the Los Angeles area. The Durfee Foundation provided a \$10,000 grant to the Center for Nonprofit Management to match a \$30,000 grant from the Rockefeller, Surdna, and J.P. Morgan Foundations to create a prospectus for a Los Angeles Venture Fund. The prospectus has just been completed, and the Center for Nonprofit Management is currently seeking funding for a multiyear, multimillion-dollar project. It is too early to know what transpires from these efforts but what is evident is that when funders listen and respond to grantees, their grantmaking keeps evolving.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Since its founding 38 years ago, the Durfee Foundation has evolved and changed as each generation puts its stamp on the foundation's governance and grantmaking; Stan Avery's philosophy of promoting and rewarding individual endeavors influenced the course of the foundation; the second generation applied that philosophy to the foundation's grantmaking, shifting the focus from traditional to inventive programs; now the first wave of the third generation is bringing its talents, expertise, and distinctive personalities to bear, creating new programs and initiating new ways of interacting with the large and diverse communities that make up metropolitan Los Angeles.

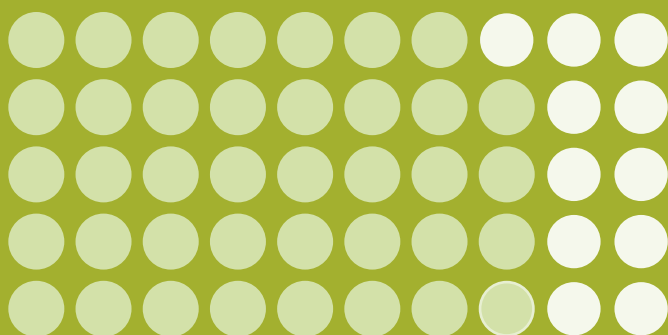
Stan Avery inherited his knack for tinkering from his New England relatives. Earlier generations tinkered with machinery; Stan's descendants have turned their tinkering talents to the foundation. Over the years, the trustees have returned again and again to hone its mission and guidelines and refine their goals. The changes grew out of the trustees' involvement in the programs they fund and their contacts with a range of individuals and nonprofit organizations in the Los Angeles area.

Working directly with grantees, advisory committees, and foundation colleagues, trustees are building the kind of partnerships with the communities that are at the heart of good grantmaking. Through follow-up meetings with recipients of the Durfee Community Awards, the board recognized the need to add an entrepreneurial wing to the program to help the organizations gain more self-reliance. Discussions with colleagues at the Vanguard Public Foundation helped them shape the Durfee Sabbatical Program, and Claire's conversations with professors of music and heads of arts programs across the country led her and Jon to establish Durfee Music Fellowships for non-traditional musicians representing Los Angeles's vital immigrant communities.

This year Halina, the eldest daughter of Dennis Avery, joined the board and Diana, the youngest daughter of Judy Newkirk, is soon to follow. Halina, an opera singer, and Diana, a dancer, will bring their interests and experiences to the foundation, opening new doors to the foundation and forging new pathways into the community.

In an active foundation like the Durfee Foundation, it is easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. Absorbed in keeping programs on track, overseeing investment of assets, and preparing for meetings, board and staff are swept up in the immediacy of day-to-day tasks. Participating in a project like this one—chronicling the story of the family foundation—trustees and staff looked anew at the foundation and their role in it. As Russell Avery put it, "All the years I served on the board, the foundation seemed like a sidelight to the family. In reading this [manuscript] I realize the foundation now has a history of its own."

Part Two 2000 - 2010



The Durfee Foundation turned 50 in 2010—

a major milestone and cause for celebration. Recognized for its thoughtful grant-making and respectful relationships with grantees, it has established a presence in Los Angeles County's nonprofit sector that belies its modest size.

Under the leadership of the third generation, the Durfee Foundation has developed grantmaking programs and practices with a distinctive Durfee imprint: rewarding individual initiative but with an eye to building community; investing in exceptional talent to tackle complicated problems while accepting that the results may not be evident when the grant ends; and soliciting advice from grantees and acting on it when programs aren't hitting the mark.

The third generation has remained faithful to the Durfee culture of learning, questioning, probing, and exploring inspired by the foundation's founders. "We're always asking ourselves: 'Is there anything we could be doing differently? Is there anything we could be doing better?'" says Halina Avery, a third-generation trustee. "Thinking about what's missing keeps us on our toes."

The Durfee Board

Over the past decade, the composition of the Durfee board has changed. Diana Newkirk McKee, who joined the board in 1998, took a leave of absence in 2007 after the birth of her third son and a cross-country move. In 2010, Judy Newkirk, Durfee's longest serving trustee, retired from the board after 50 consecutive years of service. "I enjoyed being with my family and listening to their discussions," says Judy, "but it was time for me to move on." In the spring of 2010, the Durfee board held its first meeting without Judy. "The room felt smaller," says Jon.

The current board includes Carrie Avery, Durfee's president, Michael Newkirk, Jon Newkirk, and Halina Avery. The small family board brings expertise from a surprising range of disciplines, making for lively and intelligent discussions at board meetings. Carrie is a lawyer, Mike a physicist, Jon a geologist turned sound engineer, and Halina an opera singer now working in the financial sector. From the start, the third generation developed an easy working relationship; they take pride in their grandparents' legacy and share the same goals for the foundation. And while they ask tough questions about programs and the direction of the foundation, they do so in a spirit of inquiry.

"What makes our meetings so interesting is that we all bring something different to the table," says Jon. "Mike thinks analytically and questions everything, which I love. Carrie is methodical and looks at things from a legal standpoint. Halina is our MBA and brings her business acumen, and I'm the creative type who comes up with ideas the others aren't thinking about. So, we have all of our bases covered."

Durfee Staff

The Durfee staff is surprisingly small considering all the work that goes into overseeing and running its programs. One reason is the unusually productive working partnership of Claire Peeps, Durfee's executive director since 1996, and Carrie, the board president, who also functions in a staff role. She and Claire work as a team, which is evident from the number of times their names appear together in this publication. The two talk daily, constantly bouncing ideas off of each other. As Carrie has more contact with the staff and grantees than the other trustees, she serves as a conduit between the board and staff.

To help with basic office tasks, Claire has hired a series of executive assistants who typically work for two to three years. She markets the jobs to students who recently graduated or who are between training programs and want to gain practical experience in the nonprofit sector. Claire is candid in describing much of the work as tedious, but not without its perks: executive assistants meet many talented and ambitious leaders in Los Angeles' nonprofit sector and learn about the work of hundreds of organizations.

Program Changes

The Durfee programs have also undergone changes over the past decade. The American/Chinese Adventure Capital Program was discontinued in the early 2000s. The California Institute for the Arts/ Durfee Residencies evolved into the Artists' Resource Completion Program, and the Durfee Community Fund evolved into the Springboard Fund.

In 2009, the board held a retreat to re-examine the foundation's mission statement to more accurately reflect who they are and what they do. The previous mission statement stated that trustees developed Durfee programs based on their particular interests, which was no longer entirely true. In fact, at the time, only three programs initiated by trustees were still running. The Student Challenge Program and the Gay and Lesbian Fund were going strong, but the Master Musician Fellowships was scheduled to wind down in 2010.

"Trustee-initiated programs speak to a model from the past when trustees pursued their own passions," says Carrie, "but over the past decade we've established our identity as the Durfee Foundation. Current programs like the Stanton Fellowship and Springboard Fund are the results of ideas that we developed together—ideas informed by what we had learned from the field and shaped by Durfee's mission."

Although Diana had been on leave from the board for two years, she attended the 2009 board meeting. For the first time, she admitted that when she joined the board, the expectation that she would start her own program felt more like pressure than fun. Carrie, who had looked only at the positive side of initiating a program, was surprised. "That was not the message we had meant to send," she says. "Starting a program should not be a burden hanging over younger trustees or a requirement for sitting on the board. If future trustees don't want to develop a program or aren't ready to, we'd be happy for them just to bring their ideas and perspective to the meetings."

The Durfee board takes pride in the “Durfee” character of its grantmaking. “It’s kind of quirky,” says Halina, “not the normal thing. All of the Durfee programs have a common thread of looking for something that will spark creativity, critical thinking, and discovery. We’re willing to take risks on the side of creativity.”

The Durfee Foundation does have a relatively high tolerance for risk, but the way it approaches its programs limits the chance of the risks getting out of hand. “Some foundations wait to review their programs every two or three years and then make big changes,” says Carrie, “but we’re constantly tweaking ours. It feels like a continuous feedback loop. Our grantees tell us what they want and what the region needs, and we make adjustments based on what we learn from their experiences. We’re small enough and flexible enough to make timely changes.”

The Durfee Foundation currently runs six programs: the Sabbatical Program, the Stanton Fellowships, the Springboard Fund, the Artists’ Resource for Completion, the Student Challenge Awards, and the Gay and Lesbian Fund.

Grantmaking Guidelines

Focus on Los Angeles

The Durfee Foundation focuses its funding in Los Angeles County where the family has roots and where the need is great. In 2010 the United Way of Greater Los Angeles published its report, *L.A. County 10 Years Later: A Tale of Two Cities, One Future*, a study of the area’s social and economic climate from 1999-2009. With 250,000 millionaires and 1.4 million poor people or 15 percent of the population living in poverty, Los Angeles County has the dubious distinction of being both America’s wealth capital and poverty capital. And the income gap is widening.

Given the Durfee Foundation’s relatively small grants budget in relation to the huge needs in Los Angeles County, the board looks for creative and strategic ways to contribute to the region through its programs and occasional funding of special projects. In the past few years, it has helped three San Francisco organizations open satellite offices in Los Angeles. The Gay Straight Alliance Network and Spark, an educational nonprofit, now have bases in Los Angeles to do outreach in Southern California, as does the Taproot Foundation, a nonprofit consulting firm that recruits high-level professionals to volunteer their time and expertise to nonprofit organizations.

Carrie and Claire met Taproot at a Grantmakers for Effective Organizations conference and were impressed by its leadership and track record. “Many organizations are interested in working in L. A.,” says Carrie, “but they need funding and encouragement to do so. L.A. County is large and diffuse in its geography and philanthropy, so it’s hard for outside organizations to get a foothold here. We thought Taproot would be a great fit in L.A., where there is a real need for their services.”

In 2009 Durfee gave Taproot a grant of \$50,000 to open an office in Los Angeles. Once it was settled in, Durfee invited 40 local funders to an information

session to learn about Taproot's work and to consider funding it. After raising about \$300,000 from other funders in that year, its Los Angeles office was soon up and running.

Durfee's grant to Taproot exemplifies the foundation's mission to provide leverage for other funding opportunities. Its one-time grant of \$50,000, followed by a high-profile introduction to local funders, will potentially benefit hundreds of Los Angeles nonprofit organizations that receive Taproot service grants for consulting or technology assistance. To further leverage its Taproot connection, Durfee is exploring ways to assist Durfee grantees present and past to get Taproot service grants. "This is what Durfee is all about," says Carrie. "We're always looking for those inflection points where Durfee grants will be pivotal for individuals and organizations and provide leverage for other funding opportunities."

In 2009 Durfee partnered with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs in a two-year pilot program, Cultural Exchange International (CEI). The program is intended to raise Los Angeles' profile as a national and international center for the arts and to promote cultural understanding by expanding networks of creative people. CEI gives fellowships to individuals and small groups of art professionals to travel abroad for intensive residencies and to creative professionals coming to Los Angeles for intensive residencies. All of the projects culminate in free public presentations in Los Angeles.

"We gave a \$150,000 grant to this partnership over two years," says Claire. "That was a big matching grant for us, but we thought it was a good fit with our arts program." The Durfee grant, which supports Los Angeles artists traveling abroad, was matched two-to-one by the City of Los Angeles and leveraged an additional \$450,000 in outside philanthropic support." Durfee is proud that its lead grant was instrumental in launching the new venture and in building a base of support where none had existed.

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, Durfee hosted a two-day retreat in fall 2010 called, "We [Heart Icon] LA: An Urban Retreat for L.A.'s Passionate Leaders." Executive, deputy, and aspiring leaders of Los Angeles-based nonprofit organizations joined in conversations about what makes a healthy community. Father Gregory Boyle, a 1999 Durfee Sabbatical Fellow and director of Homeboy Industries in East Los Angeles, gave the keynote address. And the Durfee Foundation commissioned Luis Alfaro, a Chicano writer and performer, to create a tribute to nonprofit workers specifically for this event. The retreat closed with a drawing—a chance for retreat participants, selected at random, to win either a \$5,000 or two \$2,500 grants for their organizations.

"It was a fantastic event, and the perfect way to mark our 50th anniversary," said Carrie. "We didn't want this to be a typical nonprofit conference, and we believe we succeeded. Our grantees suggested discussions that they wanted to have – about succession planning, leadership styles across generations and self-care – and we created peer-led sessions on these topics. But we also had classes on calligraphy, tai chi and bookmaking, and encouraged attendees to get out of their comfort zone." This interweaving of the arts and other fields provided fertile ground for connection. As Robin Kramer told the audience of over 300 at the end of the retreat: "I predict that a multitude of trees and fruits will grow from

seeds planted here today. Over time, we will hear...'It began with a conversation at the Durfee retreat. It began with an idea I got from a calligraphy session at that Durfee retreat. It began when someone at that Durfee retreat reminded me of the possibilities.'"

Building Partnerships

Building partnerships with individuals and institutions that share the family's values of creativity, risk-taking, fiscal care, integrity, entrepreneurial spirit, and continuous learning is central to the grantmaking philosophy of the third generation. The board came to this understanding with their eyes open: it was keenly aware of the barriers to developing partnerships between grantors and grantees. The power imbalance inherent in philanthropy is an obstacle to honest communication. Historically, grantees have had limited access to grantors and, when they do talk, grantees are careful not to say anything that might jeopardize their grants. The third generation had a different vision of how they wanted to practice grantmaking, and they set out to establish more open relationships with grantees.

Carrie and Claire periodically bring together grantees to help them think through how to structure new programs or improve existing programs. They believe that the experience of having a grantor solicit their views, listen respectfully to their concerns, and act on the best of their ideas changes the dynamic of grantor/grantee relationships. The grantees feel free to say what they really need and want, and Durfee uses that information to improve the foundation's programs. Durfee also invites grantees to sit on selection committees for programs that award grants to individual artists. Reviewing applications and participating in the discussions of the merits of other artists' projects gives grantees a behind-the-scenes look at how the selection process works and helps them think about how to best present themselves to funders. In addition, the Stanton and Sabbatical selection panels are made up of a majority of non-Durfee members, usually alumni from the programs.

"Most of Durfee's programs have been founded and evolved because of direct feedback from grant recipients," says Carrie. "When some recipients of the Sabbatical grant expressed interest in securing time and resources to delve deeply into complex problems in their fields, Durfee responded by creating the Stanton Fellowships. When the arts community expressed dismay at the scarcity of support for individual artists in L.A., we adapted the arts fellowships to provide smaller grants to a larger number of artists. In this way, Durfee looks to its grant recipients as working partners in determining how best to shape its future programs of support. "

Robin Kramer, a Board Fellow, got to know Carrie and Claire when she worked for the city and conferred with them about youth and arts projects. Later, they invited Robin to be an advisor to the Durfee Foundation's Sabbatical and Stanton Fellowship Programs. "The kind of knowledge, discipline, and modesty Carrie and Claire bring to their work with grantees feels gentle and nourishing, creative and, at just the right time, a little pushy," says Robin. "For grantees to work with the Durfee people who value candor and learning, it's a huge thing to

be able to talk honestly with them about things that haven't gone well without fear of losing their funding.”

Building Community

Stan Avery believed that society was the ultimate beneficiary of the private sector's investments in creative and entrepreneurial leaders. The Durfee Foundation applies the same thinking to the nonprofit sector and takes it one step further. Its goal is to build networks of talented leaders working in different areas of Los Angeles' nonprofit sector.

As in most professions, people working in the nonprofit sector tend to talk with others who share the same interests and work in the same field. Durfee wants to broaden the conversation. By bringing together experienced leaders working across sectors, it hopes to create a fertile field for germinating new ideas and developing strategic alliances that, ultimately, will benefit Los Angeles. Durfee's Sabbatical and Stanton Fellowship Programs are structured to test this hypothesis.

“Conversations across sectors don't happen by themselves,” says Claire.

“Someone has to take the initiative in bringing the leaders together and keeping them together. We've come to believe that very little will advance in the nonprofit community unless leaders working across sectors develop relationships that spark new thinking. That's why the lunches and retreats we host for the Fellows are so important.”

The Sabbatical Program gives grants to exceptional leaders to take time off to replenish themselves, and the Stanton Fellowship awards two-year grants to extraordinary individuals to contemplate and test solutions to intractable problems facing Los Angeles. Carrie and Claire carefully plan the two-day retreats for the fellowship programs so that the Fellows have plenty of time to talk shop and, just as important, to relax together.

“It takes a long time to develop trust and friendships,” says Claire. “Each time the Fellows meet over lunches, at retreats, or in the forums we host, they get to know one another a little better and talk a little deeper. When they begin to feel more relaxed with one another, that's when the creativity is likely to kick in.”

Carrie and Claire believe that good food is central to building relationships, which is why most Durfee meetings are organized around lunch. “Treating people with hospitality and warmth makes them feel respected and cared for,” says Claire, “and it lowers their blood pressure. They relax and connect differently when they're wearing jeans and walking on the beach than they do in a business meeting. Sharing meals, staying together at the hotel on retreats, laughing and joking together—it all adds up.”

The relationships Fellows have developed at retreats and over lunch are already producing the kinds of cross-sector exchanges that Durfee hoped for. One of the Sabbatical Fellows, for example, is now the deputy mayor of Los Angeles. The Fellows who have spent years walking on the beach with him at retreats now have a direct pipeline to the mayor's office, and he knows which Fellows to call when he has questions. “That's powerful,” says Claire, “and has wide ripple effects. The connections that come out of the peer networks make for stronger leadership as the Fellows tap into one another's expertise.”

“I’ve been around philanthropy for a long time and have a pretty good perspective on how different foundations work,” says Robin Kramer. “The people at Durfee have a distinct capacity to think big and, at the same time, be grounded and practical. Carrie and Claire are thought leaders and co-creators. The networks they’re building of Sabbatical and Stanton Fellows working in different sectors will create a leadership talent base with a huge potential for changing community service in the city.”

Patient Investor

The Durfee Foundation describes itself as a patient investor, meaning that it is willing to make grants in cases where the outcome may be hard to measure at the end of the grant or for years to come. One example is the long-running Student Challenge Award program that takes high school students who excel in the arts and humanities and sends them on summer scientific expeditions. The program has no set objectives other than exposing the students to first-class scientific field research projects. The same holds true for the Stanton Fellowships. It gives extraordinary leaders time to think about and test solutions to intractable problems plaguing Los Angeles County. Some Fellows make significant progress on their projects before their grant ends, while others discover midway that their assumptions were wrong and have to start over. Durfee hopes that most fellows succeed, but they also regard exploration and experimentation as critical to the discovery process, even when they don’t pay off.

“We’re building social change in ways that can’t always be measured in the short-term,” says Jon. “We may never know what some of our grantees got out of the grants, and that’s okay. Honoring the unexpected is one of our family’s values. It’s been part of Durfee’s grantmaking from the start, and it’s important to all of us.”

Relationships with Grantees

A hallmark of Durfee’s grantmaking is its close working relationship with grantees. The nature of its programs and investment in individuals and institutions may partially explain Carrie and Claire’s frequent interactions with grantees; another explanation is that’s simply who they are.

Geoff Gallegos, a musician, composer, and conductor known professionally as Double G, probably has had more contact with the Durfee Foundation than most grantees. A four-time recipient of the Artists’ Resource for Completion (ARC) awards, he has also sat on a selection committee for the program. “What I appreciate about Durfee is the time they take with artists,” he says. “If people call asking for feedback on their proposals, Claire will offer her insights on how to strengthen them or answer any other questions they have. Last summer I called her after I was turned down by nine other foundations and was feeling like a huge failure. I was able to talk to her as a friend at a time when I really needed someone who would understand to listen to me.”

Torie Osborn is a former executive director of the Liberty Hill Foundation and former advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. She knew Carrie

and Claire as colleagues before she became a Stanton Fellow. “Carrie and Claire have called me to pick my brain, and I’ve sought their counsel,” she says. “We’ve worked together and thought things through together. They’ve been my patrons, colleagues, and friends. It’s not always easy to keep those roles running smoothly, but it is with them. Most funders are either too directive and tell grantees what to do or are so hands off that they don’t own their positions. Somehow the Durfee Foundation culture is a balance of gently nudging grantees when necessary and allowing them to flower on their own time.”

“That’s what we strive for,” says Carrie. “Honoring people and giving them the respect and time they deserve.”

Grantmaking Programs

The Grants Budget

The Durfee Foundation’s allocated payout is approximately \$1.4 million a year. The grants funding comes from Durfee’s endowment of approximately \$25 million and distributions from a related family foundation that makes annual payments to Durfee’s grants program. The value of the Durfee portfolio declined substantially during the financial crisis of 2008-09, falling by 35 percent. While the board honored all of its commitments to its multi-year grants, it was forced to cut back on some grant proposals and put one of its programs on hold for a year. Durfee’s portfolio rebounded in 2010, but still fell short of its pre-recession high.

Sabbatical Program

Talented leaders of nonprofit organizations have helped to transform the lives of individuals and communities in Los Angeles County, but often at a high personal cost. Many are overworked and underpaid, and almost all are stressed out. Years of dealing with crises and scrambling for funding have left them physically and emotionally depleted. Without time to replenish themselves, they may lose their creative edge or leave the field all together. Either would be a terrible blow to the individuals and communities they serve.

With those risks in mind, the Durfee Foundation established the Sabbatical Program in 1997 to sustain exceptional leaders in the important work they do. Currently, Fellows receive an unrestricted grant of \$35,000 for a three-month leave of absence. In addition, Durfee gives a seed grant of \$5,000 to the leaders’ organizations to start a professional development fund to strengthen the skills of staff members.

As with most Durfee programs, funding individuals is part of a larger plan to build connections among grantees that benefit their organizations and, ultimately, their communities. In fact, Durfee makes participating in the peer network and its semi-annual meetings a condition of receiving the grant.

“The Sabbatical program is about leaders learning to take care of themselves,” says Carrie, “something we have to keep reminding them about at the network

meetings. But the meetings are also about building a cohort of leaders from different sectors of the nonprofit world. Their paths don't usually cross, so the meetings provide opportunities for them to form friendships and learn about one another's work that, we hope, will spark new thinking and lead to unexpected collaborations."

Eligibility

Between 1997 and 2010, Durfee awarded grants to 72 Fellows. To be eligible for the grant, applicants must have been in a leadership position in nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles County for a minimum of 10 consecutive years, have a full-time staff of two or more, and work in organizations that lack the financial resources to underwrite the executive directors' leave of absence. Candidates meeting those criteria can download the application online.

The Durfee Foundation had been giving six sabbatical awards annually. Over the past few years, however, the number of applicants has dropped off. In 2009, the board decided to put the program on a biannual schedule. "We wanted to ensure that we would continue to have a robust and high-quality applicant group," says Carrie. "After we announced that the next application date was in 2011, the number of applicants increased, so we'll revisit the biannual schedule after 2011 to see whether we want to continue it."

Choosing awardees is an intensive process. The selection committee is composed of representatives of the board and staff and three former Sabbatical recipients; Sabbatical alumni are paid for their time. The committee reads the applications in advance of their first meeting and then spends one day discussing the applications and whittling the group down to twelve finalists. Carrie and Claire visit each of the finalists at their workplaces and call references. The final selection occurs over a two-day period when the full selection committee interviews all twelve finalists and chooses the six Sabbatical Fellows.

Recipients are free to spend their grants as they wish—traveling, pursuing hobbies or, if they prefer, staying home. The grant comes with one stipulation: Fellows are not allowed to be in contact with their places of work. "Years of doing this have shown that the benefits of the sabbatical are greater when the recipient makes a clean break from work," says Carrie. "We tell recipients and their staff that the grant will be rescinded if they don't follow this rule. We're unrelenting on this point because the research and anecdotal stories from alumni both support it."

Ruth Slaughter, Sabbatical Fellow

Ruth Slaughter was in the first class of Fellows to receive the sabbatical awards. At the time, she was the director of the AIDS Prevention division of Prototypes, an organization in Culver City that provided outreach services and education to women. Her division was large—a staff of 40 running eight projects—and it took her almost a year to prepare for her leave. "I was the glue that held them together," she says, "so I had to plan carefully for how they would function without me."

Confident that she had left everything in order at work, Ruth was able to relax and enjoy her sabbatical. Regrettably, she and her husband had to forgo their dream of taking a Mediterranean cruise due to his illness, but they did manage to take a shorter cruise and visit relatives on the East Coast.

"This was a critical period in my family's life," she says, "and I was grateful to have this time with my husband. Besides my marriage and my children, the sabbatical was one of the best things that ever happened to me. After spending my whole career working in nonprofits, I felt honored and humbled to be recognized for all of my hard work. I accomplished everything I had wanted to do on my sabbatical and when it ended, I was ready to return to work."

Coming back, however, was more disorienting than Ruth had expected. "Everyone welcomed me," she says, "but it seemed as if I were moving in slow motion, and they were all twirling around me. There was too much going on, and everyone was talking too fast. I wanted to tell them to slow down."

Ruth needed a month to readjust to the intensity of her workplace, but once she was back in the swing of things she began to notice the benefits from having had time off. "I came back with more creativity," she says. "I had a clearer view of my role in the organization and how best to serve it. I was approaching retirement age, and I proposed that the agency put a deputy in place who had oversight over the whole division and who could replace me when I left."

Claire's Sabbatical

Since the onset of the Sabbatical Program, Claire had helped Fellows prepare for their leaves, yet it wasn't until the Durfee board insisted that she take a well-earned leave in 2003 that she fully understood the mixed emotions many Fellows experience at the beginning and end of the sabbatical. "I didn't know how hard it would be to get out the door," she says, "and I have a small staff and an organization with secure funding. Imagine what it's like for Fellows running bigger organizations that aren't financially stable."

Claire got the first inkling of what it meant to disconnect completely from her job on the first day of her sabbatical. At 8 pm she tried to log on to her office computer and discovered that her password had already been changed, a practice Durfee recommends to discourage recipients from checking their e-mail while on sabbatical. "That's when it hit me that my life was about to change," she says.

As a working mom, Claire's family life was tightly scheduled. "My usual conversation with my kids is, 'Hurry, hurry, hurry,' so it was wonderful to have relaxed, unbroken time with them. My daughter was 10 years old at the time, and the leave gave me the chance to cement my relationship with her when she was at a critical age. Taking family vacations to London and Wyoming was also wonderful."

Like other Fellows, Claire discovered that the hardest parts of the sabbatical were learning to slow down at the start and getting back up to speed at the end. "I thought I knew all about sabbaticals, but going on leave made me more sensitive to the nuances of the experience."

Carrie and Claire checked in with other Fellows who had completed their sabbaticals. Like Ruth Slaughter, most reported that their return to work was jarring. Carrie and Claire recognized that the Fellows needed more preparation for handling the mixed emotions many feel on their return. Now they coach them before they begin their leaves and write into the Fellows' contracts that they work half-time only on the first week they are back to work. After a three-month absence the leaders have a lot to catch up on, and they need the time and space to transition to their old routine.

Carrie and Claire learned a second important lesson about smoothing the leader's return to the office. "We had been putting all of our attention on the Fellows and were oblivious to the staff," says Claire. "Now we send a gift box of cookies to the staff to thank them for how well they handled things while the executive director was gone. I also take them out to lunch during the leader's sabbatical as a way of thanking them and checking in."

Mark Gold, Sabbatical Fellow

Mark Gold received the Sabbatical award in 2001. He is the director of Heal the Bay, a membership organization dedicated to maintaining a safe environment for humans and marine life in California. "The sabbatical was like a gift from heaven that I could share with my family," says Mark. "We all went to Italy, something we never could have afforded to do on our own." But aside from having time to relax and reflect on his life and work, he says the biggest benefits of the sabbatical occurred at work.

Before he went on leave, the organization's associate director was appointed as acting executive director. "She was able to run the organization without being in my shadow," says Mark. "That allowed her to establish herself more easily than if I were there." On his return, Mark and the executive director jointly decided that the organization's management structure should be revamped. Mark was named president, which relieved him of all the administrative work he had been doing, and the acting executive director was made permanent director. Then, they upgraded the second tier of leaders. "Heal the Bay has six departments," says Mark, "and we appointed strong, independent leaders to head each of them. Now I have an incredibly competent leadership staff and time to think about the big picture stuff. The sabbatical was the catalyst for these changes. None of this would have happened without it."

The Sabbatical Fellows Peer Network

The Fellows' contact with Durfee does not end when they return from their sabbaticals. Durfee hosts lunches twice a year and two-day retreats for the peer network, and the gatherings have become the linchpins holding the Fellows together. "There's a real kindred fellowship that develops among the Sabbatical Fellows," says Mark. "I love going to the retreats to catch up with everyone and find out what they've been doing. I've become friends with people working in other sectors whom I never would have known without the Durfee connection." Steve LePore, executive director of 1in6, a nonprofit organization that offers support and resources to men who suffered sexual abuse in childhood, was in the 1997 class of Fellows. "Being part of a cohort of people doing great work is such

an honor,” he says. “I’ve missed only two meetings in the past 12 years and that was because I was out of town. Durfee is at the top of the list in taking care of its grantees. I’ve gotten lots of grants over the years, but the contact with the foundation usually stops there. Durfee is exceptional in continuing to invest in its grantees beyond the initial grant and in creating opportunities for us to stay together as a group.”

The lunches and retreats are also a top priority for Patti Giggans, the executive director of Peace Over Violence, a social service agency that concentrates on the prevention of violence and domestic abuse. Patti, who was in the class of 1998, says, “Durfee has a real talent for bringing us together in ways that are meaningful for us. I’ve never left one of these meetings feeling that I’ve wasted my time. Durfee cares about us as full human beings and it shows. The time they take in planning the retreats tells us how much they respect us and what we do, which is what the Sabbatical Program is all about.”

In 2004 Carrie and Claire discovered a hotel on the beach in Ventura County that is the perfect setting for a relaxing get-away. To entice the Fellows out of their cars and into vacation mode, the recipients start their trip at Union Station in Los Angeles. Claire hands each person a box lunch and an assigned seat on the train next to someone they don’t know and even gives the Fellows a list of questions to jump-start the conversations. That spares the new fellows any awkward moments and gives Fellows working in different sectors a chance to learn about each other’s work.

Once at the hotel, the agenda is purposefully loose. The Fellows choose the topics they want to discuss in the group sessions, and they have plenty of free time to hang out together and take walks on the beach. “A lot of the Fellows have been coming to the retreats for many years now,” says Claire, “and each time they come together they connect at a deeper level. Some of the most serious conversations take place on the beach when they talk more about themselves than about their work.”

Fellows’ Collaboration

The connections the Fellows develop through Durfee have resulted in several collaborative projects or, in the case of Patti Giggans, an invitation to serve on the board of an organization started by Fellow Steve LePore. “I sat on the selection committee that awarded the Sabbatical grant to Patti in 1998,” says Steve, “so we forged a friendship early on. Three years ago, I started an organization that was aligned with the work Patti has been doing. Because of our Durfee connection, I felt comfortable asking her to sit on my board. There’s no one better in the field than Patti, so having her on the board would be a real asset for a young organization.”

“I was hesitant to accept his offer,” says Patti. “Not because I in6 isn’t worthy, but because I was already stretched thin serving on several other boards. But Steve wouldn’t take no for an answer and kept after me. His persistence made me realize that I did have something important to offer. I could open a lot of doors and make it easier for his organization to progress. I value the connection Steve and I made through Durfee, so I said yes.”

Sabbatical retreats

Over the past 12 years Carrie and Claire have continued to tweak the program in response to feedback from the Fellows and their own critiques of its effectiveness. An ongoing challenge is figuring out how to get tightly wound, driven personality types to relax. As Patti Giggans famously said, “The Sabbatical is about being, not doing,” something some recipients have to learn again and again.

At the 2008 retreat, Carrie and Claire noticed that some of the Fellows were leaving the group meetings to respond to messages on their Blackberries or calling their offices during breaks. “We saw this as a worrisome trend,” says Carrie. “The purpose of the retreat is to remind Fellows of the importance of disconnecting from their work and being present in the moment.”

In planning for the 2010 retreat, Claire sent out an e-mail asking that Fellows turn off their cell phones and Blackberries during and between sessions. She assured them they would have time later in the day to check their messages. Not only did everyone cooperate, they also felt relieved to have permission to escape from work-related messages for two days.

At the 2010 retreat, Carrie and Claire tried another experiment: getting the Fellows out of their comfort zones. Just as they assigned fellows to sit next to someone they didn’t know on the train, they asked them to do the same at lunch and dinner on the first day of the retreat. “Giving people a little nudge to talk to someone they didn’t know made a huge difference in breaking down barriers,” says Carrie. “People really liked it and the next day when they could sit wherever they wanted, many chose to sit next to someone new.”

Sabbatical Awards Ceremonies

Carrie calls the Sabbatical Program a quintessential Durfee program because it honors the kinds of creative leaders and risk-takers that Durfee seeks to support. In 1998, the Durfee Foundation began hosting award ceremonies to bring public recognition to the Sabbatical Program Fellows. Every other year since, the Durfee Foundation has paid tribute to the two most recent classes of Fellows. The location of the ceremony varies, depending on the pool of recipients and whether one of their workplaces has the space to accommodate the audience of families, friends, and co-workers who come to cheer the Fellows, including the Durfee board and staff.

Instead of the standard awards ceremony speech of endless thank-you’s, Durfee asks its recipients to give one-minute answers to the question, “Why do you do what you do?” “The effect of these quick speeches is powerful,” says Carrie. “Most talk about things that come straight from the heart, like inspirational family members, the need to right injustices, and the love of humanity.” The ceremony concludes with a Durfee tradition: the Durfee board and staff invite the Fellows and their families out for a celebratory dinner.

Evaluating Sabbatical Programs

Over the years the Durfee Sabbatical Program has generated inquiries from other funders interested in starting their own Sabbatical programs, some of whom started their own programs. While Durfee had collected plenty of anecdotal reports about the benefits of sabbaticals over the years, it lacked the thorough research and evaluation needed to back up what they had heard and observed.

In 2010, Durfee, joined by four other foundations, published the results of a five-year retrospective study of their collective sabbatical programs titled, *Creative Disruption: Sabbaticals for Capacity Building and Leadership Development in the Nonprofit Sector*. The term “creative disruption” refers to the disruption of work and life routines of leaders and management in the organization when the leader takes a sabbatical.

The researchers studied 61 sabbatical grantees, 30 interim leaders, and conducted interviews with program staff, consultants, and evaluators. Contrary to persistent myths that leaders who take sabbaticals won't return to their jobs or that their organizations will become chaotic in their absence, the evidence showed just the opposite. Most leaders do return and come back feeling energized and with a fresh perspective on their work. Moreover, during the leaders' absence the second tier of leadership learned new skills, making it easier for leaders to delegate responsibilities to staff better prepared to handle them. The leader's absence had a similar positive effect on the board of directors; the planning they did for the sabbatical resulted in their working more effectively together. As an added bonus, the sabbaticals strengthened the ties between funders and grantees. In sum, the researchers concluded that sabbatical programs are the most effective and cost-efficient way to revitalize leaders' passion and interest in their work.

To read this study or the previous reports Durfee commissioned on this topic, please go to: <http://durfee.org/programs/sabbatical/reports.html>

The Stanton Fellowship

The Stanton Fellowship was established in 2006 to give exceptional leaders working in public benefit organizations in Los Angeles County release time to think deeply about intractable problems in their sectors. Fellows receive a grant of \$75,000 over two years to develop projects that tease out and test solutions that would improve life for people in the greater Los Angeles area.

The seed for the Stanton Fellowship Program was planted at an annual retreat for Sabbatical Fellows in 2004. One of the Fellows made the exuberant claim that with all the brain power and talent in the room, they could create and carry out a master plan for Los Angeles. What might have sounded outlandish to others resonated with the Fellows. They were all in the same boat: they had plenty of good ideas percolating but no time and money to develop them.

“The Sabbatical Fellows are double-Type A overachievers,” says Claire. “Every time they get together we have to beat back their drive to take on something new.”

While developing ambitious new projects did not fall under the umbrella of the Sabbatical program, Carrie and Claire recognized the legitimacy of the Fellows' lament. Few, if any, foundations offer open-ended grants that allow leaders time to think without immediate pressure to produce a program or services. Carrie and Claire chewed over ways Durfee could help Sabbatical Fellows think about big issues beyond the purview of their organizations. As they routinely do when creating something new, Carrie and Claire invited a group of people who had received different fellowships – MacArthur, Ford and others — to join them in floating ideas about what a program that paid leaders to think would look like. The discussion helped shape Carrie and Claire's vision of the new program, which they named the Stanton Fellowship after Durfee's founder, R. Stanton Avery. True to his values, the program would reward original thinking, ingenuity, and open-mindedness in seeking answers to intractable problems.

"We didn't want applicants to tell us exactly what they planned to do or to guarantee the results," says Carrie. "We think that approach limits creativity and risk-taking. We want the Stanton Fellowship to be a journey of discovery; we don't want the Fellows to know at the start where their projects will end."

Eligibility

Every two years a review panel composed of Durfee trustees, staff, and recognized community leaders select six Stanton Fellows. Eligible candidates for the Stanton Fellowship Program must be in senior leadership positions, have demonstrated track records of contributions to the community, and be in positions to influence policymakers and peers. Unlike the Sabbatical Program that limits applicants to those working in nonprofit organizations, the Stanton Fellowship also welcomes candidates from government and social enterprise organizations.

Further, candidates must present a clearly articulated proposal describing a difficult problem affecting the future of Los Angeles and develop a plan for spending a minimum of three months over the two-year fellowship working on the project. To help candidates gauge their time, Durfee requires the Fellows to work in increments of no less than two weeks at a time. As with the Sabbatical Fellowship program, candidates for the Stanton Fellowship must participate in the peer network that meets for two two-day annual retreats and quarterly day-long meetings.

"We've learned to use the peer cohort as a way to expand knowledge and get people out of the silos in which most of us live," says Claire. "Stanton Fellows already have a network of peers in their fields. Through Stanton they acquire another peer cohort made up of fellows from different sectors. As they learn about one another's projects and fields, they are more likely to see direct and indirect connections to their own fields, for example, seeing transportation as an affordable housing issue or homelessness as an art and culture issue."

The candidates' organizations also have to meet the program's criteria: they must be located in Los Angeles County, be recognized by the community for their influence, and have at least three full-time paid staff. In addition, they must present a plan for organizational management throughout the fellowship, need finan-

cial assistance to underwrite the candidate's leave; and be able to sustain regular operations during the candidate's absence.

How the Fellows spend the \$75,000 grant is determined by the nature and scope of the projects they undertake. A big chunk typically goes toward supplementing the salaries of staff that take on increased workloads during their absences. Expenses for domestic or international travel to visit organizations working on similar problems plus honoraria to these organizations also add up. Fellows have used the grant to pay to apprentice themselves to experts, enroll in training programs, attend conferences, buy laptops and software, employ interns to help with research, and travel to meet with experts.

Carrie and Claire advise the Fellows to choose a project related to their work in their organizations. The project should build on their expertise and be something that they wouldn't have time to do without the Stanton grant. At the end of the first year, Fellows submit narrative reports on their projects, an accounting of their spending, and a plan for the second year. In some cases, they may have to correct initial assumptions and shift gears, which is part of the discovery process. They also write a final report and distribute their findings to the field. Even if they haven't solved the intractable problems they worked on, Durfee expects them to share the lessons they learned with colleagues so that others can benefit from their work without having to go over the same ground.

Mark Gold, Stanton Fellow

Mark Gold, a former Sabbatical Fellow, was in the first class of Stanton Fellows. Mark is president of Heal the Bay, an organization dedicated to making Southern California coastal water and watersheds safe, healthy, and clean. "The Stanton grant allowed me to look at things that we do really well that would be applicable to areas outside of our mission and beneficial to a larger community," says Mark. "I got the grant shortly after Heal the Bay had written the Education and Environmental Initiative (EEI) requiring California public schools to bring environmental education to grades K-12. That was way beyond our mission, but it was a niche that wasn't being filled and needed to be. We know how the legislature works, so we decided to go for it."

A huge victory for EEI was the approval by the State of California of an 85-unit environmental education curriculum written by one of the foremost curriculum writers in the country. Heal the Bay had forged a partnership with the National Geographic Society to work on the EEI, and to contribute photos, maps, and environmental education videos to supplement the curriculum text. "I'm not taking all the credit for it," says Mark. "We were more of a catalyst than the folks who actually did the work, although we did play a significant role in moving this along. We wrote the law and did extensive reviews of the writer's drafts to make sure the material was of high quality."

After the curriculum was approved, the next step was figuring out how to get teachers and school districts to understand it and start using it. Heal the Bay and National Geographic will team up to do the professional development program to

train teachers on using the curriculum. "That's the Stanton approach," says Mark. "We applied our skills to a problem beyond our mission and found another organization to partner with us."

Unfortunately, the professional development program still hasn't got off the ground. "We ran into a large speed bump called the great California budget crisis," says Mark. Heal The Bay's biggest challenge may be getting sustainable funding for the state to implement the EEI. One of the requirements of the law was to have the EEI reflected in new textbooks, but the budget crisis will delay publication until 2013. Undaunted, Mark says, "We're still plugging away and working with National Geographic about what we can do to get things back on track."

The Durfee board accepts that large and small setbacks may occur in every process. Even if Fellows' projects don't have immediate success, they still consider them worthwhile investments that may lead to long-term results.

The second project Mark undertook was expanding Heal the Bay's work on beaches. For years, it had been issuing a weekly report card grading the water quality of all the beaches in California. Mark developed a plan for expanding the report card to Oregon and Washington and possibly to the Great Lakes. He is waiting for the Environmental Protection Agency to approve the grant proposal he submitted. "The Stanton grant was the catalyst for thinking big," says Mark.

"Mark's Stanton Fellowship was, in many ways, a model," says Carrie. "He took on two enormously ambitious projects and made significant headway with both. Mark was in the first Stanton class. We underestimated how hard it would be for people still running organizations to set aside time to work on their projects." After getting similar feedback from other Fellows, Durfee is now more explicit at the outset in explaining the kind of commitment that's required for this fellowship. Projects must be open-ended, flexible and ambitious and, at the same time, Durfee and the Fellows want to see progress. "Time management is a big issue," says Carrie. "We stress that Fellows will need large enough blocks of time away from work to think deeply about their projects and explore new terrain. We also increased the grant from \$50,000 to \$75,000 for the second class of Fellows to help them buy more free time to immerse themselves in their projects."

"We joke that the first class of a new program is like making the first pancake," says Claire. "We have all the ingredients, but the shape's a little funky. There's a lot of trial and error in getting the program just right. Most of the projects are successful, but some need more time. What's tricky about the Stanton Program is that the two-year grant takes some Fellows to the brink of launching something and then the resources stop. We're trying to figure out how to help them leverage the next step and what our role in that might be. The Stanton Program is still in a nascent stage, and we're learning as we go."

Carrie and Claire acknowledge that getting across exactly what they are looking for in the Stanton Fellowship program has been tricky. Even after rewriting the description of the program, they receive proposals indicating that some applicants still misunderstand its purpose. "Grantseekers have been trained to write proposals that tell funders what they want to hear, like how the grant will help the organization be more sustainable," says Claire. "So when we ask them to propose

a project that looks at big issues in L.A. and that is open-ended, some don't know how to shift gears."

Torie Osborn, Stanton Fellow

Torie Osborn was also a Fellow in the first Stanton class. At the time she was transitioning from her position as executive director of the Liberty Hill Foundation, a nonprofit organization that promotes social justice, to being a senior advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. Her Stanton project to analyze the lack of coordination between local government and philanthropy and to chart a path for the two sectors to work together was part of her work in the mayor's office. It was also right on target for the kinds of bridge-building projects Stanton encourages.

With funding for research and travel in hand, Torie visited mayors' offices in New York and San Francisco and interviewed more than 100 people working in mayors' offices and state offices that had liaisons with the philanthropic community. "Having the Stanton Fellowship gave me cachet," she says. "The Durfee name is gold in philanthropic circles, so when I called someone in philanthropy and said my research was being funded by the Durfee Foundation, doors opened. That wasn't the case when I said I was from the mayor's office. Philanthropists often have a bias against government, which was what I was hoping to try to heal."

Torie's research led to the creation of the Office of Strategic Partnership, funded by a partnership between the mayor's office and three local foundations. Staffed with a director and several employees, it links work that the mayor and the philanthropists want to advance: gang reduction, education, and the mayor's international relations agenda. "Today the Office of Strategic Partnership has a permanent place in the mayor's office," says Torie. "This absolutely would not have happened without my work, and that wouldn't have happened without the Stanton grant."

One of the goals of the Stanton Fellowship is to disseminate the knowledge that Fellows acquired working on their projects. Carrie encouraged Torie to write an article for the Stanford Social Innovation Review about her fellowship project and how she laid the groundwork for the Office of Strategic Partnership. "The Review is the best journal on the West Coast," says Torie. "I couldn't imagine that it would be interested in an article about my project, but Carrie was so insistent that I finally agreed to write it."

Torie's article, "A Light in City Hall," was published in the fall 2008 issue of the Stanford Social Innovation Review. "I needed Carrie to push me into believing in myself," she says. "I was convinced it wouldn't be accepted but it was, and I'm enormously proud. The Stanton grant gave me the incentive to learn about and analyze different models of building bridges between local government and philanthropy, and the time and money to do it. Los Angeles is financially starved, so there's no way I could have gotten money from the city for travel and research on best practices."

The Stanton Fellows Peer Network

The Stanton peer network meets quarterly throughout the two-year fellowship. The Fellows take turns hosting the meetings at which they present their work and projects to their colleagues. Past fellows have arranged tours of grocery stores in South Los Angeles, discussed employment options for women on skid row, and demonstrated how to use the arts to animate the city's public spaces. The day-long meetings give Fellows time to brainstorm ideas about their work and projects with their group.

The Stanton Fellowship program also hosts the Fellows at two-day retreats in Ojai at the beginning and end of the year. The retreats, which started with the second fellowship class, offer Fellows additional opportunities to get to know one another and their projects. At the January 2010 meeting, Carrie and Claire invited Robin Kramer, former chief of staff to two Los Angeles mayors and former senior fellow at the California Community Foundation, to give her political perspective on Los Angeles and the fellows' projects. Together she and the Fellows imagined what Los Angeles might look like in the next two years and how that vision might influence the design of their projects. On the second day, Carrie and Claire invited the Fellows from the second Stanton class to share their experiences with the third class. Their advice to the new group: Don't squander your fellowship. Two years go by very fast.

One of the challenges Carrie and Claire face in building community among Stanton Fellows is figuring out how to weave together the current class with the previous classes. Each class bonds as an intimate group and knows about one another's work and projects. The dilemma facing Carrie and Claire is how to give all the Fellows knowledge of the work of the previous cohorts so that they can tap into the wisdom of the entire group, which now numbers 18. In December 2010, Carrie and Claire brought all three classes of Stanton Fellows together for the first of what will be an annual convening of Stanton alumni. "It's a big challenge," says Carrie. "It's difficult trying to find a convenient date for just one class of Fellows. They all have busy schedules and travel a lot so adding more Fellows makes it exponentially more difficult, but it's essential to community building."

"The long-term goal of Stanton is to build a cross-sector leadership platform for Los Angeles made up of emerging and established leaders," says Claire. "The Stanton Fellows are deeply knowledgeable, ambitious, and highly networked people in their particular fields. If some of the Fellows become influential in L.A. and take on public appointments, they'll have one another as a trusted peer group and a wider frame of reference for thinking about important issues."

Torie had an opportunity to tap the connections she had built with Fellows in her class when she was working in the mayor's office. "I felt that I could call on anyone in my class if I needed information or advice," she says. One month after starting as the mayor's liaison to the philanthropic community, she had an opportunity to do just that. The mayor asked her to design his policy plan on homelessness. One of the Fellows in her class was Beth Steckler, policy director of Livable Places, Inc., a nonprofit organization that builds urban housing based on green principles of efficient land use and access to public transportation. "I called Beth

and we plotted and planned together to develop a city housing ordinance. We had a collegial relationship before we took on this project. Working together cemented our connection for future work.”

“I love that Durfee brings us together regularly,” says Mark Gold. “We develop really strong relationships and share what works in our different fields. Just knowing who the other leaders are in L.A. is a real benefit. L.A. is a mess right now because of the budget crisis, so the need to get people of the stature of the Stanton Fellows to envision what L.A. could be is greater today than when the program began four years ago.”

Springboard Fund

Durfee established the Springboard Fund in 2006 to advance the development of young organizations tackling complex problems with innovative solutions. In addition to awarding \$50,000 grants that are paid over two years, the Springboard Fund underwrites experienced nonprofit leaders to mentor emerging leaders for the duration of the grant.

The Springboard Fund evolved from the Durfee Community Fund. Originally established to give a boost to grassroots organizations serving troubled communities in Los Angeles, the Community Fund gave small, one-time grants of between \$2500 and \$7500 to promising organizations, most of which had never received a foundation grant before. Over the years, Durfee increased the grants to \$10,000 and supported up to 10 young organizations a year.

Reassessing the Durfee Community Fund

The Durfee board and staff took a hard look at the Community Fund in 2005. While some of the organizations they had funded had done well, others still lacked the skills and financial stability to grow and survive. Moreover, increased Internet traffic was generating more and more applications. The board questioned whether budgeting \$100,000 a year on the Fund was the best use of the foundation’s money and time.

The lingering financial crisis that began in 2001 added a moral dilemma to the board and staff’s growing doubts about the program. “We were continuing to give seed grants to grassroots organizations at a time when funding was hard to come by,” says Carrie. “We didn’t want to give grantees false hope that after getting a Community Fund grant they would be able to find other funders to support them in a fragile economy.”

Carrie and Claire invited leaders from the Community Fund’s “success stories” to ask what the grant had meant to their organizations and how it might have been more helpful. The leaders reported that the one-year grant hadn’t given them enough time to stabilize their organizations. They recommended that Durfee give fewer but larger grants and stretch them out over two years. Just as vital as money and time, said the leaders, was having a knowledgeable person they could call on when they needed advice. Carrie and Claire had tried to fill that role

but, due to time constraints, their contacts with the leaders were more casual than systematic. As one leader said, “When we started, we didn’t know what we didn’t know. We were flying in the dark and didn’t know whom to ask for help.”

The former Community Fund grants typically ranged from \$5,000-\$10,000 and were not renewable. The board agreed that increasing the grant to \$25,000 a year and the commitment to two years made sense, as did adding a mentoring component to the program. Fortunately, Durfee would not have to screen prospective mentors; it had a built-in pool of some of the most knowledgeable people in the field in its Sabbatical network to call on.

“The Community Fund grantees provided needed services,” says Claire, “but few were doing anything truly innovative. In rethinking the program we drew inspiration from our founder, Stan Avery, an inventor and risk-taker. We wanted the new program to celebrate his spirit of curiosity and experimentation.”

The Community Fund guidelines specifically stated that the program supported young organizations doing innovative work that others in their fields weren’t doing. Claire believes the program didn’t attract more of the kinds of organizations they were looking for because Durfee wasn’t asking the critical questions: Who else is working in this arena? What have they accomplished or not done yet? And what are you doing that’s different that fills the gaps?

Springboard Fund Replaces the Community Fund

The Durfee board redesigned the program to more closely reflect Durfee’s mission and named it the Springboard Fund. Two underlying beliefs guided the board and staff’s thinking in planning the Springboard Fund: Good ideas filter up. The regeneration of the nonprofit field depends on making room for newcomers’ fresh ideas and new approaches to problem-solving; and the development of good ideas is cyclical. Those who have built robust institutions from concept to program have valuable knowledge and experience to impart to those just starting out.

To be eligible for a Springboard grant, candidates must be dynamic leaders who have designed innovative models for tackling stubborn and complex community problems. Further, the model must engage multiple stakeholders and, preferably, bring together people who typically do not come in contact with one another. The leaders must also present a feasible action plan and be ready to demonstrate their organizations’ potential for sustainability. In addition, the candidates’ organizations must have operated in Los Angeles County for fewer than five years, have a budget of \$100,000 or less, and be at a stage of development when additional money and mentoring would be critical to success. Grants are unrestricted; leaders are free to use the money as they wish to stabilize their organizations and help them move forward, such as paying salaries, hiring grantwriters or building Web sites.

Recognizing that finding organizations that meet all of these criteria would not be easy, the Springboard Fund started by awarding only two to three grants a year.

Between 2007 and 2010, seven leaders demonstrated the original thinking that unites individuals and groups that might not otherwise join forces in solving stubborn problems in new and creative ways:

The Learning Garden transformed a neglected plot of land on the grounds of Venice High School into a community resource. Taking the concept of a school-based garden to a new level, it attracts gardeners, scholars, local residents, teachers, students as well as Tai Chi enthusiasts who appreciate having a quiet place to practice their movements.

C.I.C.L.E (Cyclists Inciting Change through Live Exchange) takes a multi-faceted approach to promoting bicycling as a healthy and sustainable choice of transportation. A project of Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, it promotes its message through Web-based outreach, social and recreational bicycle rides, festivals and events, and bicycle workshops.

Circle of Friends trains a small cohort of mainstream students to engage with disabled students by joining them for lunch, calling them regularly to check in, and offering general support. Besides changing attitudes about disability, the project has integrated disabled students into the social life of the school and removed the stigma attached to mainstream students who interact with disabled students. First launched at Santa Monica High School, the program has been replicated in schools around the country.

L.A. Infrastructure Academy prepares high school students for skilled trades and engineering careers. Working with partners including the mayor's office, the school district, the Department of Water and Power, Southern California Gas Company, and L.A. Trade Tech College, it trains young people who need jobs to develop skills in demand in the city.

Machine Project defies the usual boundaries between art and science by providing educational resources to artists working with technology; educating and collaborating with artists to produce site-specific, non-commercial work; and promoting conversations among artists, scientists, poets, technicians, performers, and communities throughout Los Angeles.

Rediscover Center converts industrial and design overage and waste into art supplies for schools. Industries donate items that would otherwise end up in landfill, and local teachers instruct teachers and students on how to transform the materials into creative projects.

Food Forward engages volunteers to harvest locally grown food from private homes and public spaces, which is then distributed to food pantries and organizations serving people in need.

Mentoring Program

Circle of Friends

Once the Springboard grantees are selected, Carrie and Claire concentrate on the second component of the program: assigning mentors to meet with emerging leaders for 50 hours over two years. Agreeing to be a mentor requires a significant commitment from Sabbatical Fellows who already have demanding schedules. To compensate for their time, Durfee pays mentors a consultant's fee. Carrie and Claire take care in matching mentors and leaders. Working in the same sector is sometimes a factor, as is compatibility, but most important is the ability of the mentors to pass on their own experiences in building well-functioning and effective organizations to the leaders.

Carrie and Claire paired Ruth Slaughter, a Sabbatical alumna of the class of 1997, with Barbara Palilis, the founder of Circle of Friends. Although Ruth's work at Prototypes, an organization serving women coping with substance abuse problems, HIV/AIDS, and homelessness, was far afield from Barbara's work with special needs students, Ruth had intimate knowledge of the inner workings of nonprofit organizations.

As a speech pathologist, Barbara had worked in school settings. There she developed the Circle of Friends model to bring together mainstream students with their disabled peers. Over time, the experiment changed the climate of the school; mainstream students developed more understanding and acceptance of students with disabilities, and the disabled students no longer felt marginalized by their peers. After seeing how the program had transformed the climate at Santa Monica High School, she wanted to bring the model to other schools around the country. But running a nonprofit organization with a national reach was a far cry from running a program in a single school. Barbara was unsure of where to start, which is where Ruth came in.

"Barbara brings tremendous passion and joy to her work" says Ruth, "wonderful qualities in a leader. What she needed and what I could give her was an understanding of what it takes to be an executive director."

Barbara and Ruth meet approximately once every three weeks. Since they started working together, Circle of Friends has grown from an organization that Barbara ran part-time out of her house into a staffed organization with its own office space, 23 chapters, and plans to expand to 40-50 chapters in the coming year.

"Barbara had never run an organization," says Ruth. "When she started she thought she could hire people to do what she couldn't. I think I was most helpful in convincing her that it wasn't enough to hire someone to do the books or raise funds. She had to know how to read a financial sheet and understand what's involved in fundraising to determine whether her employees were doing a good job."

After working together for almost two years, Ruth says that she and Barbara are now joined at the hip. Ruth serves on the Circle of Friends advisory committee and continues to meet with Barbara. Now they are focusing on building Barbara's competence in hiring and managing staff.

As a measure of the women's friendship and Ruth's dedication to Circle of Friends, Ruth began volunteering her mentoring services after she retired from her longtime position at Prototypes. "Circle of Friends is well on its way, but the economic conditions are still hard," she says. "I asked Durfee to give my consultant's fee to Circle of Friends because I believe so strongly in this organization."

Machine Project

Mark Allen is the founder of Machine Project, a showcase for art in Los Angeles that doesn't fit conventional categories. Using an art space format, Machine Project features the works of scientists, musicians, visual and performance artists, and poets. Each week it presents a different event—lectures, classes, or performances—in its storefront gallery located in the Echo Park neighborhood of Los Angeles.

Carrie and Claire paired Mark with a mentor working in the same field, Tom Rhoads, an alumnus of the Sabbatical class of 1998. Tom had founded the Santa Monica Museum of Art, a multidisciplinary art center featuring the work of emerging and mid-career artists. He went on to become the associate director of administration for the J. Paul Getty Museum.

"I had never worked in a nonprofit organization or served on a board," says Mark, "so it was such a gift to have someone like Tom to bounce ideas off of and give me advice. He had so much experience in this area. I could ask him about everything from financial management and fundraising to institutional infrastructure and he could tell me how others in the field dealt with those things."

Mark and Tom met a couple of times a month on an ad hoc basis for two years. "Tom lives close by," says Mark, "so if I had a question we would meet in the neighborhood or he'd come to the gallery to talk about it."

Mark used the Springboard grant to hire an employee to write grant proposals and schedule the weekly programs. The grant paid her salary for two years. "The Springboard grant was the single most important thing that happened to us," he says, "because it allowed us to hire Michelle at a critical time. She started our development and membership programs, so the grant literally was a springboard for us. That in itself would have been a lot, but the grant also came with a mentorship with Tom. When I got the Springboard grant I was pleased to have the money; I didn't anticipate how important the mentorship would be. Tom was enormously helpful to us."

Shortly after getting the Springboard grant, Machine Project got a substantial grant from the Warhol Foundation to build the organization's infrastructure. Since then, Machine Project, originally a single storefront gallery presenting organizations, collaborates with other institutions. Currently, Machine Project is a resident artist at the Hammer Museum and is also working with artists who had presented in the storefront gallery to develop projects for other cultural frameworks.

At the Getty Museum, Tom oversees a staff of 440 and an annual operating budget of \$54 million. Working with Mark, he recalled the early days when he was starting the Santa Monica Museum of Art and how exciting it was.

After Machine Project's mentoring program ended, Mark invited Tom to sit on Machine Project's board.

"When we were creating the Springboard Fund," says Carrie, "we were so focused on what it would mean for the Springboard leaders and their new organizations that we didn't think about how it would affect the mentors. Then we started hearing that they were getting as much as they were giving. After working in the field for 25 years or more and running large organizations, it was a kick for them to feel connected again to that young startup energy and optimism."

The success of the mentoring program turned out to be a breakthrough in how Durfee thought about the Springboard Fund. "In a few cases, we felt that extending the mentorship for a third year would be beneficial," says Claire. "We explained to the board that these organizations were doing exemplary work. Stepping away after two years might impede their momentum while giving them another year of support might advance their efforts. The board agreed to make exceptions in these cases, but it was not ready to commit to making a three-year mentorship part of the program."

Board Reaffirms Commitment to Springboard

The Springboard Fund embodies the hallmark features of the Durfee Foundation's mission. It emphasizes innovation, bridges organizations and populations that hadn't worked together before, encourages cross-pollination of ideas, and builds community in unexpected ways. Because the criteria for the program are so specific, few apply and even fewer are awarded grants. Still, Durfee received some applications from grantseekers who clearly misunderstood the criteria. When an application arrives that so misses the mark, Carrie and Claire worry that they haven't done an adequate job of describing what they are looking for. "We're working on fine-tuning the wording, but we still don't have it exactly right," Claire says. "It's possible that some leaders who are eligible to apply read the descriptions and decide that they're not eligible. It's hard to know."

The Durfee board decided to put the Springboard program on hold in 2009 in response to the financial crisis. "At that time, it didn't feel responsible to promote the creation of new organizations," says Carrie. "Two years of support still leaves organizations on the edge unless they can get more funding to sustain them, and there was no other funding available. Most funders were cutting back on existing grants, and virtually none were entertaining applications from new grantees. We posted a notice on our Web site explaining why we were temporarily suspending the program, but we didn't get much response. I doubt that many people were starting up new organizations during that dire time."

Durfee re-opened Springboard in 2010. Board and staff hold firm to the underlying beliefs that inform the Springboard Fund: the future of the nonprofit field depends on newcomers' smart ideas and creative energy and on seasoned leaders to advise on building strong organizations. And it still sees the Springboard Fund as an effective model for realizing those aims. "We recently received a terrific application that seems tailor-made for Springboard, so I am hopeful that the tide has turned," says Carrie.

Artists' Resource for Completion

Artists' Resource for Completion (ARC) gives modest grants to Los Angeles artists who need short-term financial assistance for a specific imminent opportunity that may significantly benefit their careers. The program was created in 2000 to recognize the contributions of Los Angeles artists as central to a vibrant civic life and to foster a climate of optimism in the Los Angeles arts community.

Most artists have limited or unpredictable incomes, making the competition for arts grants intense. In awarding approximately 60-70 rapid-turnaround grants annually, Durfee hopes to raise local artists' expectations that they, too, have a chance of receiving funding at pivotal points in their careers. Over the past decade, Durfee has awarded more than 500 grants to artists.

Eligibility requirements

Before applying for a grant, artists must have secured an invitation from a recognized arts institution to present their work. The invitation may come from a gallery, museum, theater, concert hall or other venue and can be located anywhere in the world. To make the application process simple and easy, ARC asks artists to submit a 500-word narrative explaining how this opportunity will affect their careers, a condensed resume, and a brief budget.

The selection panel is made up of Durfee trustees and staff and three working artists who received ARC grants in the past. ARC alumni receive a stipend for serving on the panel. More than 80 ARC recipients have served as panelists over the past decade, and those who have served say it was an educational experience. In reviewing applications, the panel considers where the artists have presented in the past and whether the new opportunity will significantly advance their careers. For example, is it a first solo show, a collaboration with a fellow artist that moves the applicant in a new direction, or an artist taking a risk by working in a new medium?

Artists are eligible to receive one ARC grant of up to \$3500 each calendar year. They can reapply the following year, but their second application is held to higher standards of how the grant will boost their careers. Durfee hasn't limited the number of grants an artist can receive, although that policy is currently under review. To date, some artists have been awarded as many as four ARC grants. Durfee expects the artists to use the grant to make the upcoming event look or sound better. They may buy or rent materials or space, cover travel and shipping expenses, and give stipends to collaborating artists. Within 90 days of the end of the grant period, artists must submit a brief written report describing the work they presented.

Evolution of Durfee Arts Programs

Before developing the ARC program, Durfee had launched the Artists Awards program in 1997. At the time, few foundations were funding local artists and most of the grants were awarded to visual artists. Durfee hoped that its small pro-

gram would inspire other local foundations to support artists working in all of the arts disciplines.

Durfee gathered together a panel of nominators representing Los Angeles theater, dance, visual arts, literature, and film and video to nominate 16 applicants. The panelists discussed each application in-depth and selected three grantees a year to each receive a one-time grant of \$25,000. Durfee saw a potential secondary benefit to the panels: conversations among arts professionals from different disciplines, many of them curators and presenters, might expand their purview for future shows at their institutions or, possibly, lead to collaborations.

In 1999 the Artists Awards program had been running for three years, and Durfee had considered it a success. It was rewarding exceptional artists and bringing together panelists from different disciplines. Carrie and Claire were taken aback, then, to learn that the arts community didn't see the program as they did. At the time, Los Angeles artists had few opportunities to get grants. From the artists' perspective the Artists Awards program hadn't changed that reality; only three artists each year got grants and they had to be nominated. "What we heard from the artists," says Claire, "was that the awards were great for the artists who got them, but what about the rest of us? We had left out the larger arts community."

Halina Avery, a Durfee trustee, understands the artists' frustrations. For more than a decade, she had tried to grow a career as an opera singer. "I know how hard the artist's life is," she says. "I admire artists who stick with their art, despite the financial uncertainty. When I changed careers, it was eye-opening to me that I could be competent in another job and get paid, whereas artists have to be perfect and then maybe they'll get paid."

In response to the artists' feedback, the Durfee board voted to launch ARC (Artists Resource for Completion) in 2000 as a companion program to the Artists Awards programs. The goal was to give a greater number of artists access to grants. Both programs ran concurrently until 2003, when the board elected to scrap the Artists Awards program altogether in favor of expanding ARC's budget. Carrie and Claire wanted to support the arts community in a way that incorporated what they had learned artists wanted. Instead of nominations, they preferred to have an application process that awarded many small grants instead of a few large ones. Most troubling to the board was the negative psychological effect the Artists Awards had had on the arts community. By offering artists more chances to win grants, the board hoped its new program would foster optimism among artists.

The ARC program was modeled on the Special Opportunity Stipend program (SOS), run by the New York Foundation for the Arts. SOS gives small, fast turnaround grants on a quarterly basis to a large number of artists who had gotten invitations to present their work. "The conceptual brilliance of SOS," says Claire, "is that it doesn't require the artists to submit work samples. The host institutions that invited them have already reviewed their work. Our attitude was: if the work is good enough for the host venue, then it's good enough to be considered for a grant."

As with the Artists Awards program, Durfee invited ARC recipients to sit on the review panel along with a Durfee trustee and staff member. The first year panelists awarded \$2500 grants to 10 artists each quarter. Five years later, ARC was overwhelmed by the volume of applications and the number of highly qualified

applicants that had to be turned down for lack of funds. The board voted to increase the number of quarterly grants to 15 and to raise the grants to a maximum of \$3500.

“It was such a privilege to sit on the review panel,” says Halina. “So many artists feel that their work is ignored and that the only winners are those who get grants. I saw how much care goes into the ARC selection process. It’s especially morale building for the artists who sit on the review panels to see the work of their colleagues treated with such respect, even if they don’t get the grants.”

An ARC Grantee

Geoff Gallegos, better known as Double G, is a music producer, composer and conductor of his 70-person hip-hop orchestra, daKah. Double G, a multiple beneficiary of Durfee, received the \$25,000 Artists Award and three ARC grants. He also sat on the ARC panel review.

Double G had never heard of the Durfee Foundation until he received a call from Claire in 2002 telling him that he had been nominated for the large Durfee Artists Award. “At the time I was trying to self-produce a record with a 70-piece orchestra and paying for it out of pocket,” he says. “I had a great vision in my head, but it wasn’t going anywhere. Just when the bottom was ready to fall out, the \$25,000 came through. I spent it all in three weeks, and we finished our record.”

Although daKah’s record didn’t sell many copies, it did get a four-star review from a major music magazine lauding the orchestra’s originality. “Getting this recording done in 2002 was critically important because we were the first to combine hip-hop music with a symphony orchestra,” says Double G. “By investing in a local L.A. artist, Durfee made it possible for us to put our stamp on music history. Now we have imitators around the country.”

Double G went on to win three pivotal ARC awards. He used the first in 2002 to pay a music copyist so that he had time to produce his record. His 2007 ARC grant allowed him to have an additional rehearsal and to divide the \$3500 grant among his 70 musicians. But the 2009 award for his string quartet project, he says, had the biggest impact of all on his career. “That was the first time I was presented at an arts organization in Northern California,” says Double G. “A string quartet is like a black belt for a composer. Now I have a good recording of a world-class quartet playing my composition.”

The beauty of the ARC program is not only in providing timely grants, but also in permitting artists to apply multiple times. For artists like Double G, the series of grants gave him the momentum to keep moving forward. “No one has helped me out more than Durfee and not just financially,” he says. “Claire is incredibly compassionate toward artists; she never shuts anyone out. When I sat on the review panel, I saw how she responds to each artist’s work. She has a deep-rooted respect for artists, and that’s hard to find.”

Moving ARC to a New Home

The ARC program receives about 80-100 applications each quarter. The biggest responsibility for screening applications and following up with award winners and disappointed applicants fell on Claire. With the exception of one quarter, she read every one of the applications. In 2008, after eight years of running the program, the Durfee board and Claire, especially, were worn out. “It’s a fantastic program,” says Claire, “and we’ve learned so much from it. But after 10 years we recognized that the processing of applications had become a real drain on our small staff. We knew the community still needed and adamantly wanted the program; the challenge was finding a way to sustain it while freeing up our own time and resources to find other ways to support artists in L.A.”

Sensitive to the psychological impact that closing a popular arts program—especially one intended to promote optimism in the arts community—would have on local artists, Carrie and Claire looked for a workable alternative. They hit on the idea of partnering with another organization for the management of ARC, with the long-term goal of spinning off the program permanently. They tested the waters with a focus group of artists, which endorsed the idea. They agreed that what was most important was to keep the program going, and they recognized the potential for ARC to grow its base of support by being housed within another well-respected arts organization.

Durfee approached the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI), a Los Angeles nonprofit organization that promotes networking and financial independence for individual artists and creative entrepreneurs. Durfee knew the organization well. It had given CCI a startup grant in 2005 and its CEO, Cora Mirikitani, was a Stanton Fellow in 2008/2009. “We’ve known CCI since its inception and think highly of its leadership,” says Claire. “CCI provides tactical and supportive services to individual artists and has already secured major funding from other sources to make grants to artists, so adding another grantmaking program to their portfolio made good sense.”

Durfee agreed to fund the program in 2011 and 2012, giving CCI the full grant budget plus administrative costs to manage the program. During that time, CCI will administer the program as Durfee had, with former ARC recipients sitting on the review panel with staff. Durfee hopes to help CCI make the case to other funders to sustain the program after Durfee’s funding tapers off or ends, perhaps starting a pooled fund supported by several foundations. “Small grants to artists are a critical component of a healthy arts economy,” says Claire, “and should be part of arts funders’ potential grantmaking toolkit. Small grants like ARC can provide a critical stepping-stone for working artists at all levels, not only for emerging artists.”

Evaluation of ARC

As ARC approached its tenth anniversary, Durfee hired an outside evaluator to take a retrospective look at the program. The 70-page report, *Program Evaluation of the ARC Program, 2000-2009*, draws on information gathered

from e-surveys of applicants who won grants and those who didn't and from focus groups. The full report is posted on Durfee's Web site (www.durfee.org) along with Claire's article, "Supporting Individual Artists, 10 Years, 10 Lessons," a discussion of the highlights of the report.

The study confirmed much of the feedback Carrie and Claire had heard at gatherings of artists they had convened. Artists viewed grant applications as more democratic than nominations. That was especially important to those new to Los Angeles or just starting out who were unlikely to be on the radar of art professionals. They believed they had a better chance of getting a grant if allowed to advocate for themselves. They also preferred open applications to those categorizing artists by discipline or career level. Many artists work in several disciplines; they may be a beginner in one and established in another. Rather than having to figure out in which category they had the best chance of getting a grant, they preferred to apply simply as artists.

ARC got high marks for awarding many modest grants each year. Small, timely grants can make a big difference to artists and, sometimes, lead to bigger grants. Artists also appreciated ARC's short and simple application.

One surprising finding was that funding was needed at all levels of artistic development. ARC doesn't ask for proof of financial need, but this finding underscored the risk of making assumptions about artists' financial stability based on age or reputation. "Even highly accomplished, internationally recognized artists who seem like household names may be living financially precarious lives," says Claire.

The study also confirmed the multiplier effect of small grants. Many grantees use the grant to hire other artists as collaborators as Double G did when he used one grant to pay a music copyist and a second to pay his musicians.

Artists spend a good part of their time writing grant proposals—in some cases, even more time on proposals than on their art. Having a chance to sit on the ARC review panel and view grantmaking from the grantor's perspective was an added perk. "It was educational and inspiring to read other artists' proposals," says one artist. "I could see what worked and what didn't, and later I used that information to strengthen my own grant writing. But what's most exciting is seeing how much creativity there is in L.A. Later, I went on my own to check out some of the projects described in the proposals."

Before Durfee started the ARC program, Carrie and Claire had a hunch that making more small grants available would encourage artists' risk-taking, and the survey confirmed it: 63% of the ARC recipients said that the grant enabled them to take chances they wouldn't have otherwise. Even artists who didn't get a grant said that just the act of applying and articulating why they needed the grant, encouraged them to take creative risks, or to loosen an anxious, cautious grip on the work.

A stated goal of the ARC program, and the most elusive, was fostering optimism among artists. Claire had initiated the discussion of whether optimism matters on a blog on the Web site of the Center for Cultural Innovation. She asked: If artists feel optimistic, do they make better art and more art? And should that concern funders? "The responses on the blog were all over the map," says Claire, "but after 10 years of the ARC program we can say definitively, yes, optimism

does matter, and we have a 70-page report and countless pages of artists' narratives to back us up. Knowing other artists who got grants, knowing that grants came around frequently, and knowing they could act as their own agents in putting themselves forward all prompted artists to take more risks than they would have otherwise. So, yes, optimism should concern funders."

The two-year grant to the Center for Cultural Innovation to administer the ARC program will end in 2012, freeing up Durfee financially to start a new arts fund. Carrie and Claire are just beginning to float ideas of what the fund might look like. "We learned so much from the ARC awards that will influence our thinking about the next program," says Claire. "We're committed to staying in the arts, but we'll probably do something different."

Master Musician Fellowships

After an eventful 12-year run, the Master Musician Fellowships was retired at the end of 2010. An emblematic Durfee program started by trustee Jon Newkirk, it filled an untapped niche in the large and vibrant musical world of Los Angeles's immigrant communities. The Durfee Foundation plans to re-open the program at a later date in a revised form.

The Master Musician Fellowship was modified over the years, but it remained true to its original goals of supporting the rich musical traditions of Los Angeles' varied cultures. Master musicians passed on their knowledge and skills to talented younger students through intensive apprenticeships, and the fellowship program offered guidance to the master and apprentice musicians in developing their musical careers.

Eligibility

As in other Durfee programs, Jon and Claire invited nominators—professional musicians, music professors and other experts—to recommend musicians from different cultural traditions for the fellowships. To be eligible, candidates had to be recognized artists in their communities, experienced teachers not employed as full-time teachers in an institution, and have financial need. Any musician who met the guidelines was eligible to apply, although Durfee gave preference to musicians working in traditions not widely taught in established institutions.

Every two years the program awarded fellowships to a new class of 10 master musicians. In turn, they selected one advanced student for a two-year apprenticeship that included free weekly instruction. Artists in the 1997-1998 pilot program received grants of \$22,500 for each of two years. They were free to spend the grant as they chose, although the funds were intended primarily to pay for the time they devoted to teaching their apprentices. Some musicians used the funds to repair or purchase instruments or to rent studio space for rehearsals. In addition, Jon and Claire arranged periodic seminars offering technical assistance on developing and sustaining careers in music. To build community among musicians from different traditions, the Master Musician Fellowships program invited all of the masters and apprentices to perform together in a summer music

institute and at a free outdoor concert in downtown Los Angeles organized by the Durfee Foundation.

Learning Curve

When Jon and Claire started the Master Musician Fellowship, they regarded it as a work in progress. They expected to hit some bumps in the road and to learn as they went along. The lessons started early. Some of the musicians had booked tours that prevented their meeting with the apprentices every week, and others didn't have a quiet space for teaching. What probably should have been anticipated when giving money to musicians with unpredictable incomes was that many would use the grant to supplement their living expenses. "We quickly realized that we had given them too much money at once," says Jon. "Our intention wasn't to encourage a need but to fill a need."

In 1999 the Durfee board decided to reduce the grant to \$15,000 annually, or \$30,000 total over the two year-apprenticeship. That seemed fair considering that the musicians were asked to commit, on average, only 12-20 hours per month to the apprenticeships. Moreover, the board discovered that the larger grant had had a destabilizing effect on some of the musicians in the pilot program; the grant was more money than many of them earned in a year. This was the rare occasion when the board recognized that it could do harm by offering too much money to a grant recipient—a valuable lesson.

Los Angeles has a hugely diverse immigrant population, and the Master Musician Fellowships program hoped to give grants to master musicians representing the spectrum of ethnic communities. Jon and Claire encountered big differences in the preparedness of different communities to respond to a request for proposals. The well-organized Indian and Iranian communities soon flooded Durfee with inquiries about the Fellowships program, while others, like the Native American community, were harder to penetrate. And despite the large size of the Latino community, Durfee received fewer applications from Latino musicians than it had projected.

To pave Durfee's entry into a wider range of ethnic communities, it hired first Lisa Richardson and later Julia Carnahan, both consultants with contacts in many of the city's ethnic neighborhoods "We gave out nearly 50 fellowships over the years and touched a lot of cultures," says Jon. "If we ran the program for another 12 years we'd find 50 more, and we'd still find more communities we'd like to enter." Over the years, Durfee awarded grants to, among others, masters of the Armenian spike fiddle, the Korean zither, Nigerian talking drums, Scottish bagpipe, and Persian kamanche.

After the first few funding cycles, the musicians told Jon and Claire that the technical assistance offered in the seminars was helpful, but what they really needed to advance their careers were essentials such as professional studio recordings, professional-quality videos, Web sites, and press kits. Durfee responded to their requests by asking Julia Carnahan to work individually with the musicians on such issues as marketing and Web site development, performance bookings, and CD and DVD production.

Meanwhile, Jon, a sound engineer, had opened a recording studio in Hollywood and offered free recording time to the musicians in the program. “We squeezed them in between paid sessions,” he says. “Many of them had only recorded in garages, never in a professional studio, so the chance to record in a full-blown studio with an engineer assigned to work them was a big deal. The recordings were fantastic, and many used them to get gigs.”

Reconsidering the Master Musicians Fellowship

While previous classes of musicians had spent time in collective seminar, the last few classes had focused more time on one-on-one technical assistance. The musicians benefited greatly from the individual help Julia provided, but Jon and Claire noticed that grantees in these classes hadn’t developed into as supportive a cohort as the earlier classes had. The Durfee board was also disappointed that there wasn’t much awareness in Los Angeles of how the Master Musician Fellowships were supporting the musicians. “Building community is a key component of Durfee programs,” says Claire, “but in this case we weren’t hitting our mark.”

Two external factors pushed Jon and Claire to reconsider the Master Musician Fellowships program sooner than later. The financial crisis of 2007 had dragged Durfee’s portfolio down by 35 percent, making it necessary to trim expenses. Jon’s business, too, suffered from the fallout from the economic downturn, forcing him to sell his recording studio. “Suddenly, one of the cornerstones of the program fell away and we couldn’t replace it,” says Claire. “Paying for the musicians to use professional recording studios was way beyond our budget, so we were compelled to rethink the program.”

As is Durfee’s custom in these situations, Jon and Claire gathered the musicians together to ask for their advice. They explained that the Master Musicians Fellowships program couldn’t continue as it had. In what direction did the musicians want it to go? Their answer was unanimous: instead of receiving another fellowship, they wanted Durfee to arrange concerts where they could perform in front of new audiences. “It’s hard for musicians working in these different traditions to get exposure and get gigs,” says Jon, “so Claire and Julia used their contacts to develop a series of concerts that would expose the musicians to wider audiences and give them leverage with booking agents.”

From June until the end of 2010, the master musicians and their apprentices performed in a series of concerts at the the prestigious Getty Museum and the Los Angeles Museum of Modern Art. The musicians played to enthusiastic, sell-out crowds, and the concerts were well received and reviewed.

Looking back on the 12 years of the Master Musicians Fellowship, Jon feels pride in the program he and Claire created. “We got great feedback from the musicians over the years,” he says. “They really appreciated all the help we gave them with professional development. They wanted to play professionally and make a living from their music, and we gave them the tools and resources to find those paths.”

Student Challenge Awards

The Student Challenge Awards program offers students gifted in the arts and humanities opportunities to spend two intensive weeks during the summer at a scientific field research station. Working in small teams under the supervision of leading scientists, students participate in hands-on research that introduces them to innovative methods of collecting and analyzing data and the latest scientific technology. Over the past decade, 724 students and 60 scientists have participated in the program.

Trustee Michael Newkirk, a physicist, started the Student Challenge Awards program (SCAP) in 1989. His idea was to take talented students who had not excelled in science and expose them to real-life science as practiced in the field. Beyond stimulating their curiosity and exciting their imaginations, he had no expectations for the students. .

SCAP, Durfee's only national program, was started before Durfee chose to restrict future funding to Los Angeles County. It's also the most complicated to run. Selecting students from across the country, finding top scientists and appropriate research sites, matching students with projects, and arranging their travel was more than the small Durfee staff could handle. Mike partnered with the Earthwatch Institute, headquartered in Massachusetts. A leader in experiential education, it had a large network of scientists and decades of experience in managing the logistics of arranging scientific field research trips.

Eligibility

To apply to SCAP, students must first be nominated by a high school teacher or school counselor. Those eligible for consideration must be between the ages of 16 and 18 and enrolled in high school or approved home schooling. SCAP gives preference to students who have limited economic or cultural opportunities for other types of educational enrichment programs.

The ideal candidates are not necessarily those with the highest grade point averages. Rather, SCAP prefers bright students with an independent streak: creative, critical thinkers, risk-takers, and "thoughtful nonconformists." That was a hard concept for the nominators to grasp when SCAP began. They made the predictable assumption that top-performing science students eager to pursue careers in science would benefit the most from the program. In fact, the program had no set outcomes in mind; most of all, it wanted to give students a "gee-whiz experience" without knowing where it might lead. The willingness to make grants where the outcomes may be hard to measure or not measurable for many years is a hallmark of Durfee's grantmaking.

"Some kids from strong humanities backgrounds do get turned on to science through the project," says Mike. "One girl who was not a 'science-y' person before working on a project at Los Alamos went on to get a Ph.D. in astronomy and became a principal investigator for the next generation of SCAP students. It's nice when it happens, but it's not the goal of the program."

Selection Process

A tremendous amount of work goes into planning the two-month summer program and reaching a diverse group of applicants. At the beginning of the school year, Earthwatch updates its Web page and mails 15,000 SCAP brochures describing the program to previous SCAP nominators, teacher alumni, high school guidance counselors, educators, and students across the country. Typically, SCAP receives applications from about 300 nominees a year.

Each application is reviewed and scored by two external reviewers. Next, Earthwatch staff and representatives of the Durfee Foundation review the top 150-semi-finalists before selecting the finalists. In 2010, 75 students were chosen; in past years the number has varied from 60 to 90, depending on the size of the budget. Contrary to gender stereotypes, more girls than boys participate in SCAP. That may be because applicants are drawn from students who excel in the arts and humanities, but for the past decade there have been about six girls to every four boys in the program.

“I wish we could send more kids,” says Mike, “but we cover all of their expenses and that adds up.” The Durfee Foundation spends about \$5,000 to send each student to a two-week session. In addition, SCAP gives grants to support research and educational efforts of leading scientists participating in the summer program and provides opportunities for scientists to mentor talented students.

The selection of scientists and research sites begins in February. The field project must be of high caliber and the research conducted at a site or facility where students also can mix with other scientists. The scientists’ relationships with the students are key to the program’s success. They must not only be tops in their fields but also good teachers who enjoy working with high school students.

SCAP invites proposals from scientists conducting research in the physical and natural sciences. From the 20 or so scientists who apply, Mike selects 10 projects that may range from astrophysics to wetlands monitoring. In recent years students have, among other projects, studied reef fish in the Virgin Islands, glaciers in Iceland, bison and climate change in Idaho, and tectonics and volcanism in the Rio Grande Rift in New Mexico. A few new sites are added each year, and Mike and other Durfee trustees and staff visit at least one project while it is in session each summer.

The Earthwatch coordinator assigns six to ten students to each research project. Students do not choose the projects. In making assignments, the coordinator tries to match students’ interests with the project, but other factors such as availability, physical demands, team composition and compatibility, and special interests of the principal investigator are taken into consideration.

“Many of the students come from small towns,” says Mike. “Some have never been away from home before, and others have never traveled on an airplane. The time they spend in the field is not just about science; it’s also a growing up experience.” Sending young people to unfamiliar places to live in conditions far different from what they are used to is a test of their maturity and flexibility. For these reasons, Durfee asks the nominators to consider other qualities, such as how well students communicate and handle social and intellectual challenges.

Students' Experiences

After the summer session ends, SCAP asks students to write a brief essay about their experiences. Many talk as much about self-discovery as they do about the research project. Said one, "It's true that I learned a lot in the field about fish and coral, but the real learning I did was about myself. Now I feel prepared for college and the real world." Another described his experience working at a volcanic site and climbing atop a lava cone, "Getting to the top of that mountain marked a significant achievement in my self-development. I was the little engine that could, not the little engine who made it only halfway."

Other students reported that the time spent in the field had a profound effect on their lives. One boy hadn't planned on going to college right after graduating from high school. "My plan was to work and save money, but after traveling to the Mississippi River to work in the herpetology field, I realized just how bad I wanted to get a degree. I signed up for full-time courses the week I returned home." Another described the summer experience as life-altering. "It completely changed my views on life, not only educationally but also philosophically. I learned there is more to life than money and career. The most important thing to do is what you love."

Participating in a high-level scientific field research project can be a heady experience for high school students. Besides working alongside the lead scientists and research staff, they visit the research projects at nearby sites. And knowing that the data they've helped collect may contribute to solving major scientific questions gives them something to which they can point with pride.

During the two-week session, students have plenty of time to relax and get to know the scientists as real people. Said one student, "The 10 scientists I met during my two weeks were not what I expected. I thought they'd be consumed only by their work and be a little dull and unsocial. Instead, they were extremely well-rounded people who challenged our minds and engaged us in in-depth conversations, entertained us, and made us laugh."

Developing a Cohort of L.A. teachers

SCAP will continue as Durfee's only national program, but during the next year it will add a new component to SCAP to connect it more closely to Los Angeles. The plan is to identify high school science teachers from the Los Angeles Unified Schools District who have successfully nominated students to SCAP in the past and to organize an expedition designed specifically for them. SCAP hopes it will spark a circle of excitement from the field to the classroom and back to the field. As in other Durfee programs, the goal of the program is to build community. By developing relationships between teachers and field research scientists and among participating teachers in schools across the district, SCAP aims to build a network of science teachers who can turn to one another for information, ideas, and support.

Gay and Lesbian Fund

Getting Started

The Durfee Foundation had funded a few LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) organizations, but it wasn't until Halina Avery started the Gay and Lesbian Fund in 2001 that Durfee began funding in this area in a systematic way. At the time, few funders in Los Angeles were making grants to LGBT groups. Durfee was eager to find an entry point where its contributions could be useful.

In Halina's case, the foundation's focus on Los Angeles County created a challenge. Although she was an experienced grantmaker who had served on the Durfee board since 1998, Halina had never lived in Los Angeles. Now living on the East Coast and working full-time, she had to find a short-cut to learning about Los Angeles' LGBT community before she could begin designing her program. Which organizations were working in this area? What services were lacking? And where should Durfee invest its funds? To answer those questions, she had to find a knowledgeable guide to the LGBT community.

At the suggestion of Carrie and Claire, Halina contacted the Liberty Hill Foundation, a Los Angeles institution that has been investing in organizations working to advance social justice since 1976. While Liberty Hill funds activist organizations across sectors and issues, it is recognized for its comprehensive and intensive efforts on behalf of the LGBT community.

Liberty Hill raises its grants budget from individual donations and foundation grants, and each year it invites a few outsiders to participate in its review panel to select grantees for its Lesbian and Gay Fund. Sitting on Liberty Hill's review panel would give Halina a bird's eye view of the LGBT landscape and an introduction to individuals and organizations working in the field.

Liberty Hill's Lesbian and Gay Fund has an annual budget of approximately \$350,000. As Halina was just starting to learn about Los Angeles' LGBT community and Liberty Hill had been vetting LGBT organizations for many years, Durfee's Gay and Lesbian Fund awarded its first grant to Liberty Hill's Lesbian and Gay Fund.

Durfee's Gay and Lesbian Fund continued to award annual grants to Liberty Hill, and Halina kept reading the LGBT grant proposals. Feeling confident that she had gained a good grasp of what was happening in the LGBT community, in 2003 she recommended that in addition to its annual grant the Gay and Lesbian Fund give supplemental grants to outstanding LGBT organizations awarded grants by Liberty Hill. "It seemed like a good idea at the time," says Halina, "but after a while we noticed that the same groups were applying year after year. That made sense because they were working in the same geographical space, but we started doubting that this was the best use of our funds. We wanted our grantmaking to be more strategic."

Changing Direction

In 2007, Durfee called a meeting of local LGBT funders and leaders of LGBT organizations Durfee had funded through Liberty Hill. Halina and Claire explained that Durfee's funding of the LGBT community was at a turning point. After years of supporting individual organizations, it wanted its funding to have more depth. "Here's our budget for the Gay and Lesbian Fund," they told the group. "If you were in our shoes, where would you spend it?" The unanimous response: Invest in the youth movement. That's where the energy is, and that's where the tide will turn. All the polling data show that the younger generation is more open-minded on LGBT issues than their parents' generations.

As it happened, Durfee had given a Community Fund grant to the Gay-Straight Alliance Network (GSA Network), a youth-driven grassroots organization headquartered in San Francisco in 2000. At the time it was Durfee's policy to allow trustees to select grantees in the areas where they lived, and Carrie lived in the Bay Area. That policy was later changed to restrict funding to Los Angeles County.

"We hadn't been in touch with the GSA Network since we gave them a start-up grant," says Carrie, "so we checked around with people in the field who knew its work. Everyone told us that it had developed a terrific model for working with youth and that the organization had really taken off."

Carrie contacted Carolyn Laub, the executive director of the GSA Network. She confirmed that the GSA Network had wanted to re-open a satellite office in Los Angeles to expand its work in Southern California schools, but it lacked funding. Recognizing an opportunity for the Gay and Lesbian Fund to make a significant contribution to the LGBT community, Carrie, along with Claire and Halina, proposed to the Durfee board that the Gay and Lesbian Fund make a major investment in the GSA Network. "It seemed like the logical thing to do," says Claire. "Durfee had been one of the first funders of the GSA Network, we believed in Carolyn's leadership, and we wanted to support LGBT youth. It was a natural fit." The Durfee board agreed.

The Gay Straight Alliance Network

The Gay Straight Alliance Network is a youth leadership organization that assists middle and high school students in starting and sustaining GSA clubs. The clubs have ambitious agendas, and GSA Network's youth-led leadership development workshops and training programs gives club members the tools and skills they need to be successful. Besides providing support for its members, the GSA clubs confront discrimination and bullying in their schools, educate the school community about homophobia, and strive to create safe school environments for all students.

Beginning as a small startup organization rooted in San Francisco, the GSA Network began working statewide in 2001. Spurred on by its successes, it took a big leap in 2005 when it began operating nationally. As the number of clubs multiplied, the GSA Network concentrated on building a strong peer network

that connected the GSA clubs to one another and to educational materials and resources the GSA Network had developed.

In 2008, the Gay and Lesbian Fund awarded the GSA Network a grant of \$300,000 over three years to re-open an office in Los Angeles, cover operating expenses, and pay the salary of a program coordinator. “This was a big grant for us,” says Carrie, “but we wanted to give the GSA Network a firm anchor in L.A. to expand its safe schools work in Southern California.” Because of the substantial grant it awarded to the GSA Network, the Gay and Lesbian Fund stopped accepting grant applications from other organizations. Durfee encourages LGBT grantseekers to check the guidelines of the Springboard, Sabbatical, and Stanton programs to see whether they may be eligible for one of those programs.

The GSA Network is now in its final year of its three-year Gay and Lesbian Fund grant. Since receiving the Gay and Lesbian Fund grant, the number of GSA clubs in Southern California has grown to 372 from 284, a 31 percent increase. In 2010, the GSA Network supported nearly 800 GSA clubs throughout the state of California.

“The grant has had a huge impact on our organization” says Daniel Solis, the program coordinator for the GSA Network’s Los Angeles office. “It solidified and stabilized our funding in Southern California and allowed the GSA Network to hire me and a few part-time assistants. Having a permanent office in L.A. has allowed us to make connections with teachers, school counselors and other LGBT groups, expand our work to rural and suburban areas that don’t have resources for LGBT youth, and conduct day-long conferences and trainings for local youth. There’s no way we could have done all that without the Durfee grant.”

Daniel has seen firsthand the affect of the GSA Network’s model on the lives of LGBT youth, but the recent suicide of a student in rural Riverside County reinforced the critical importance of the organization’s work. Rejected by his family because of his sexual orientation and the target of relentless bullying at school, the boy was driven to take his own life. The tragedy galvanized the GSA club to push beyond the safety of the room in the school where they met and to take action. “The students recognized there was a crisis in their school and that it was up to them to prevent another student from being tormented,” says Daniel. “Using the skills they had learned in our trainings, they approached the local school board about doing something to stop the bullying and harassment of LGBT students in the school. For the GSA youth to have the confidence to go before a conservative school board was pretty remarkable.”

Each summer the GSA Network offers an intensive three-day GSA Activist Camp to teach club members the organizing tools and skills GSA Network has developed to combat homophobia. On the last day of the camp, club members participate in an action simulation; some assume roles of school authority figures and community members and others play GSA club members lobbying their school board to protect LGBT students from discrimination and harassment. It was that kind of training that prepared the students in rural Riverside County to apply to a real school situation what they had practiced in the mock confrontation at camp.

“That’s what makes my job so rewarding,” says Daniel. “I see these youth who were shy and withdrawn when I first met them, and a year later I see them eloquently lobbying school boards and state legislators without backing down. It’s amazing to be part of that journey.”

At its June 2010 meeting, the Durfee board decided to continue funding the GSA Network. “GSAN made enormous progress in L.A. during the three years it had stable funding from Durfee,” says Carrie. “We were concerned that those gains would be at risk if we were to pull out as a funder. The board committed to another two years of funding at almost the same level, but with a slight tapering off in the second year. We also committed to convening a group of L.A. funders to introduce them to the work of GSAN in the hopes that they can secure additional funding to continue GSAN’s momentum.”

Moving Forward

Since its inception in 1960, the Durfee Foundation has had an all-family board. When the third-generation trustees assumed leadership, they were happy to continue the foundation’s tradition. They worked well together and enjoyed the easy intimacy of family members who share the same values, history, and sense of humor.

Probing, questioning, and challenging assumptions and positions, however, is inherent in the Durfee culture. Just as the trustees are constantly tweaking the foundation’s grantmaking programs, so do they look critically at Durfee’s governance policies. Last year the trustees rewrote the foundation’s mission statement. This year they took up the matter of expanding the board to include non-family members.

Two factors pushed the discussion to the forefront. After Judy retired in the spring of 2010, the board was made up of four third-generation members. The fourth generation was years away from joining the board.

More important than numbers was the trustees’ desire to expand the knowledge base of the board, add new voices and perspectives to their discussions, and increase the diversity of the board regarding race, ethnicity, religion, generation, and sexual identification. In particular, they were interested in individuals with expertise in nonprofit leadership and development, the needs and strengths of communities in Los Angeles County, governance, finance and investment, collaborative partnerships, and program areas in which Durfee is involved. Moreover, the trustees wanted to make Durfee’s operations more transparent to the community while giving community members a better understanding of how a family foundation operates.

At its July 2010 meeting, the board voted to inaugurate a Board Fellows Program, which would invite two individuals to serve a one-year board term. Fellows would attend board meetings and join in discussions, receive the same materials before board meetings as trustees, participate in conference calls between meetings, and attend Durfee’s annual board retreat. They would be treated as board members in all respects but one: they would not have a vote on the Durfee

board. To compensate them for their time and commitment, Durfee will pay Fellows a stipend of \$5,000 a year.

The board chose as their inaugural Fellows Robin Kramer and Bill Watanabe. As mentioned earlier in this publication, Robin was the former chief of staff to two Los Angeles mayors and a former senior fellow at the California Community Foundation. She also served as an advisor to the Durfee Foundation's Sabbatical and Stanton Fellowship Programs. Bill Watanabe is the executive director of Little Tokyo Community Development Corporation that provides social services and community development projects for the Asian community in Los Angeles. Bill was a Durfee Sabbatical Fellow in 1999.

The addition of the Durfee Board Fellows was announced by Carrie at Durfee's 50th anniversary celebration in October 2010 "The inclusion of the Fellows' voices has already enriched the board's discussions," says Carrie. "As with the evolution of all Durfee programs, we anticipate tweaking the Fellows program as we move forward, but we're confident already that we're on the right track."

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