His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama: A Journey for Peace and Secular Ethics

The Tibet Fund organized a three-month long photo exhibition at The Cathedral of St John the Divine beginning on June 8, 2015. The exhibition titled “His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama: A Journey for Peace and Secular Ethics” presented the three main commitments in the life of the Dalai Lama: the promotion of human values such as compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, and self-discipline; the promotion of harmony and understanding among the world’s major religious traditions; and, finally, the preservation of Tibet’s Buddhist culture, a culture of peace and non-violence.

This exhibition was to celebrate the life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama through a diverse collection of portraits that illustrates His commitment to civil rights and interfaith understanding. Drawn from the work of many acclaimed photographers, the photographs stand as a testament to His Holiness’s role as a world spiritual leader and an advocate for peace.

TTF appreciates the Very Reverend Dr. James A. Kowalski, Lisa Schubert, and the dedicated staff of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, who have been instrumental in making this exhibition possible. This project was made possible with contributions from We Trust, the Forgotten International, Ya Ping Chang, Thomas and Margot Pritzker, and Edra Bluxseth, to name a few, for their generosity and enthusiasm for this exhibition.
Sonam Zoksang, photographer and guest curator of this exhibition donated his time and expertise to help bring this event to fruition. The talented photographers who have contributed their work include Mary Bloom, Tenzin Choejor, David Sanger, Richard Shay and Alison Wright.

Tibetan Buddhism and Global Ethics for a Troubled World
A panel of scholars, including Prof. Xia Ming, Prof. Robert Thurman, and Prof. Tashi Rabgey participated in a forum with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche on the theme “Tibetan Buddhism and Global Ethics for a Troubled World” at the Graduate Center in City University of New York (CUNY), New York. The scholars discussed about global ethics and Tibetan Buddhism.

Conversation with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche
The Tibet Fund organized a public talk entitled “Mind Training and Compassion Applied to Everyday Life” at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, which was attended by over 300 people. After the talk, a dialogue was held between Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche and Rev. Dr. James A. Kowalski, Dean of the Cathedral.

Talk on “Tibetan History of Knowledge”
In collaboration with Latse Library in New York, The Tibet Fund organized an exclusive talk on “The Tibetan History of Knowledge” by Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche on April 16, 2015. Around twenty Tibetan scholars from New York and New Jersey attended the event.
Workshop on “How the Courage to be compassionate can transform lives”

The Tibet Fund organized a rare workshop titled “How the Courage to be Compassionate Can Transform our Lives” by Dr. Thupten Jinpa Langri, the longtime English translator to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and an expert on Tibetan Buddhism. The workshop was held at the Community Church of New York on May 6, 2015 and explored how to integrate our mind and heart through aligning our aspirations and intention with our attitudes and behavior. The two-hour session combined presentations, a Q&A, and guided meditation practices, including meditation instruction for beginners.

Celebration of His Holiness’ 80th birthday
Tibetan New Year - Losar 2015

The Tibet Fund, in collaboration with Dr. Kazuko Tatsumura, hosted a dinner reception at the JW Marriot, Essex House, on July 7, 2015 in celebration of 80th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Around 120 people attended the dinner, representing different communities from around the world, including Chinese, Bhutanese, Tibetan, Mongolian, Korean, Indian, Japanese, and Americans.

Summer Tibetan Study Program in Dharamsala
The five-week Summer Tibetan Study Program for young Tibetans born or brought up in the West was organized by The Tibet Fund and The Institute of Buddhist Dialectics. The program began on July 1st, and participants gained an in-depth understanding of their cultural heritage, traditions, the community in exile, and issues associated with Tibet. During the Summer Study Program, students were offered courses in Meditation, Tibetan Language, Tibetan Culture and Civilization, and Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy and Practice. In addition, participants were given the opportunity for an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa.

Drums Along the Hudson River
The Tibet Fund was one of the supporters of the “Drums Along the Hudson,” a Native American festival and multicultural celebration, which was held on Sunday, June 14, 2015 where Lotus Music & Dance honored His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We
helped organize Tibetan traditional performances to celebrate the occasion. We also helped arrange a Tibetan food tent at the event.

Annual Gala Dinner
Organized at the Le Bernardin Privé in New York City on October 14, 2015, The Tibet Fund honored Shep E. Gordon, Gelek Rinpoche and Philip Glass. Richard Gere and Sam Nappi once again Co-chaired the Gala and the Benefit Committee comprised of 32 members. A total of 175 guests, including Michael Douglas, Michael Myers, David Crosby and the Moss family attended the Gala.

Chef Eric Ripert, Chef Michael White, Chef Devin Bozkaya, and Thomas Raquel lent their culinary talents for the evening. Auction items were placed on the online auction houses Charitybuzz and Paddle8, and also displayed during the silent auction at the venue. 80 works of art and other items were donated for the gala’s silent auction, of which 54 were sold, generating revenue of $73,374. The live auction funded four projects: the Professional Scholarship Program, a Darjeeling Trek, Language Classes for Tibetan Community of NY, and “Nothingness” goodwill donations.

Major donors included The Gere Foundation, Sam and Carol Nappi, Ha Phuong Foundation, Moss Foundation, Stephen and Agatha Luzzo, Dr. Steven Rockefeller, Eileen Fisher Foundation, Olivia Hansen, Jonathan and Diana Rose, Sarah Johnson, and Salesforce Foundation.

A total of $215,500 was raised for the four projects including $168,000 for the Professional Scholarship Program. After deducting expenses of $47,420, net proceeds from the gala amount to $406,589.

Buddhist Retreat for Tibetan Families
The Tibet Fund, in collaboration with the Dongak Kunphening Centre, hosted a three day Buddhist retreat for Tibetan families in Redding, CT from June 25th - 28th, 2015. It was the first such opportunity for Tibetan families in North America and was an enlightening experience for all the participants.

The Tibetan Innovation Challenge
Focused on improving the lives of many Tibetan refugees, Michael Wohl, with support from The University of Rochester, organized “The Tibetan Innovation Challenge.” The competition introduced college students from across the U.S. to Tibetans, their culture, and the societal issues they face as refugees, providing creative and entrepreneurial growth for the students, vital economic benefits to the Tibetan people, and a deeper understanding and connection of our shared humanity. The Tibet Fund’s Executive Director was invited as one of four judges attending the competition. The winner was awarded by His Holiness the Dalai Lama at a small function.
Tibetan New Year - Losar 2015
Our annual Losar celebration was held at Baruch College on Feb 10th, bringing together over 150 friends and supporters to celebrate the rich cultural traditions of the Tibetan people. It was the second Losar celebration organized by The Tibet Fund. Guests were offered scarves, chemar and changkhol. Professional artists from the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) performed cultural dances, and guests partook in various ceremonial activities, such as Guthug or “dough-ball revelation”, Gorshe or “Circle Dance”, Tibetan Calligraphy, etc. The event also included a silent auction. In total, we raised $25,636 at the event.

A Penal Discussion on Reincarnation and Buddhism
During the run of The Oldest Boy, a play by Sarah Ruhl that deals with Tibetan culture, Buddhism, and reincarnation, Marin Theatre Company partnered with The Tibet Fund and The American Himalayan Foundation to raise awareness of the plight of the Tibetan people and organized a panel discussion on September 13 in Mill Vally, CA. Panelists included Sarah Ruhl (playwright), Jon Landaw (author of Buddhism for Dummies), Jann Ronis (Department of Buddhist Studies at UC Berkeley) and Jessica Thebus (director, The Oldest Boy).

Annual Appeal
This year the annual appeal was sent a week before Thanksgiving Day to over 12,000 past supporters (4,000 by post and over 8,000 by email). In addition, the appeal was posted in our facebook having over 14,000 likes. Thus far, we have received over $27247.00 in donations.

Summer Retreat Program for Youth
The Tibet Fund, in collaboration with Online Tibetan Education (OTE), organized a three-day summer retreat program from August 7th to 10th at Do-Ngak Kunphen Ling (DNKL) in Redding, Connecticut for Tibetan youth residing in North America. The program offered young Tibetans ages 18 and over who were born and raised in the West the opportunity to study Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan language intensively for three days. The program gave introductory training and practical hands-on experience in the basics of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan language. 15 Tibetan participants from the U.S. were awarded formal certificates honoring their participation.

Tibetan Scholarship Program Workshops/Orientations
Three separate workshops/orientations for TSP students from India and Nepal were held in 2015 in partnership with the US Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The 2014 TSP cohort of 8 students attended a mid-session workshop during January 7 & 8 at the US Department of State’s building in Washington DC. The second “Re-Entry Workshop” was held in New York City during June 4 & 5, 2015 for 8 students.
from the 2013 TSP cohort. A final 2 day Orientation Workshop was held during August 6 & 7, 2015 for 9 students who arrived in August 2015. The workshop was held at the US Mission office in NYC. A separate welcome reception was held at The Tibet Fund’s office with Kalon Tsering Wangchuk, CTA Department of Health as chief guest.

Social Media/ New Website
We continue to focus on our social media with frequent posting of news and information on various Tibet Fund’s activities, as well as maintaining “Human of Tibet” sharing stories of Tibetans in North America. Our e-list continues to grow and we reach out to supporters periodically with important news. A friend of The Tibet Fund also sponsored a digital advertisement that was on display outside of East Rutherford and Ramsey, NJ for a few weeks.

Our new website was launched in November to provide our visitors with an easier and more interactive way to learn about The Tibet Fund. Among the new features the site contains integrated social media buttons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to foster improved communication with our patrons and well-wishers. We have updated the content with helpful information, annual reports, financial statements, projects, and events.

Nepal Earthquake Fundraising Campaign
The Tibet Fund launched an online fundraising campaign through social media to support emergency relief programs in the wake of the Nepal earthquake. Beginning April 2015, we have received donations in the amount of $282,976 from 578 people, including organizations. In addition, The Tibet Fund was able to receive a federal grant of $347,000 and has raised over $200,000 from private sources, including public donations for this program. During the visit to Nepal, Executive Director met with various Tibetan groups and institutions affected by the earthquake and with local organizations that are working to support Tibetans in Nepal, including local partners INHURED, Snow Loin Foundation and National Society of Earthquake Technology of Nepal (NSET). He was accompanied by Katrina Edwards, our senior consultant in Nepal and on few occasion, joined by Tsering Topgyal la, the ED of the Snow Loin Foundation.

While in Nepal, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) asked the Executive Director to visit Dharamsala, India to discuss earthquake relief program and in particular, having a MoU between the CTA and TTF. The meeting with the CTA officials in Dharamsala was also attended by Bob Ankerson, Vice President of TTF. While in India, ED also visited Ngoenga Special Needs School in Dheradun and had meetings with USAID in Delhi.

Nepal Visit by President
President Rinchen Dharlo had a successful visit to Nepal with 39 dentists, hygienists, and post graduate students from The New York University College of Dentistry beginning October 27 to November 17th 2015. In a span of seven days, NYUCD was able to treat close to 1,500 people. Following the dental camp, Rinchen visited several institutions, including Namgyal High School, Tsering Elders’ Home, Samtenling Monastery, Thukje Choing Monastery etc. In addition, held meetings with various benefactors and donors including Sober Rehabilitation Center, Tibetan Women Association, and Tibetan Lhamo Association etc.

A Fundraiser in Florida
At the request of The Tibet Fund’s friend Glenn Mullin, Mr. Chau Nguyen organized a fundraiser at his restaurant KOBE Japanese Steak House at Altamonte Springs, FL in May 2015. This event raised $8,000 for Nepal earthquake victims.

A Fundraiser in Kansas City
At our request, Unicorn Theatre organized a donation campaign during several performances of Sarah Ruhl’s play The Oldest Boy in Kansas City. They raised $4,132 for Nepal earthquake relief.

A Fundraiser in Seattle
Longstanding friends of The Tibet Fund Quang and Norzom, organized a fundraising event at their house to support the Nepal earthquake victims. They raised a total of $1,321.