



Preserving the culture
and national identity
of the Tibetan people

The Tibet Fund
Annual Report 2008



For 28 years, The Tibet Fund has worked closely with our Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala to understand the priorities of the Tibetan community: With the aid of The Tibet Fund, our people have built schools, homes for the elderly and other refugees in the settlements. The Tibet Fund has also enabled us to create programs essential to the preservation of our cultural heritage, the very seed of our civilization

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama



As the Tibetan people face 50 years in exile from their homeland and increasing marginalization in Tibet, The Tibet Fund is working harder than ever to meet the following priorities:

- Provide essential support for health care, education, refugee rehabilitation, religious and cultural preservation, community and economic development programs that enable Tibetans to thrive in today's world;
- Ensure that Tibetan culture and identity remain a vibrant part of our global heritage;
- Enable donors to connect with individual Tibetan children, monks, nuns and the elderly;
- Raise awareness about the successes and struggles of the Tibetan people to sustain their way of life, language and traditions.

This year's report highlights our accomplishments, financials and supporters. For an in-depth look at our programs and the impact we are having on the Tibetan community in exile and in Tibet, we invite you to visit www.tibetfund.org.

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DEAR FRIENDS

We are pleased to report on The Tibet Fund's activities and accomplishments for 2008. With the economic downturn and the tragic events in Tibet leading up to the Beijing Olympics, it was a very challenging yet productive year. As the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan diaspora fast approached, we were all reminded of the urgency of The Tibet Fund's mission. With every passing year, as the Tibetan people struggle to preserve their culture and identity in exile and in Tibet, The Tibet Fund's grants and sponsorship programs are bringing vital resources to the refugee communities scattered across India, Nepal, and Bhutan and to orphanages, health and education projects in Tibet.



In 2008 we received \$1.9 million from individual donors and foundations and more than \$3.3 million in US government grants. These gifts enabled us to provide more than \$5.4 million in grants for a wide range of programs including healthcare, education, cultural and religious preservation and community development programs in exile. While we continued to respond to the most urgent needs in the community, we also focused on issues of long-term sustainability. To this end, we fostered a partnership between the Himalayan Institute and the Central Tibetan Administration to implement an energy farming project in the settlements that will enable Tibetan farmers to become economically self-sufficient and help stem the exodus of young people from the settlements.

To expand awareness of the exile community's extraordinary achievements over the past 50 years, The Tibet Fund began planning for 50 Years in Exile, a program of events and a special website that commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan diaspora. The program mirrors the Central Tibetan Administration's commemorative activities that began in March 2009. We invite you to visit www.50yearsinexile.com to learn more about this momentous point in the history of the Tibetan people.

We are very grateful to the many individuals, foundations, corporations, and the US Department of State's Bureaus of Population, Refugees and Migration and the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, whose generosity and dedication make our work possible. We especially want to thank our colleagues at the International Campaign for Tibet and the Office of Tibet New York for their invaluable assistance.

As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said, Tibetan culture is dying in Tibet due to official policies and the population transfer that is turning Tibetans into a minority in our own country. Our hopes for a return to Tibet are diminishing, which makes our efforts to sustain Tibetan culture and identity even more urgent. Our ability to thrive as a people depends in part upon the unselfish dedication and generosity of our friends and supporters. We hope that you will help us to build a vibrant community so that Tibet's cultural legacy will continue to benefit the world.

Thank you so much for your support,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rinchen Dharlo'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Rinchen Dharlo
President

THE TIBET FUND'S STORY



The Tibet Fund was established in 1981 under the auspices of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to help Tibetan refugees rebuild their lives in exile, sustain their settlement communities in India, Nepal, and Bhutan, and preserve their distinct cultural, religious and national identity. Since then, The Tibet Fund has grown to become the primary funding vehicle for institutions and grassroots organizations that provide health care, education, refugee rehabilitation, religious and cultural preservation, elder care, and community and economic development programs in the exile community.

The Tibet Fund works closely with the departments of Finance, Health, Education, Home, Religion and Culture of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in Dharamsala, India to maximize resources and anticipate needs in the community as 2,500 to 3,000 refugees make the dangerous crossing over the Himalayas each year to freedom. With the continued influx of new arrivals, the resources of the Tibetan settlement system have been stretched to the limit and employment opportunities are scarce, forcing families to leave their homes for periods of time to seek alternative sources of income. Out of concern for the long-term sustainability of the exile community, The Tibet Fund is working to support programs that will strengthen the refugees' economic prospects and promote community cohesiveness.

In 1994, The Tibet Fund initiated the Tibet Assistance Program to address the unmet medical, educational and economic needs of Tibetans in Tibet. Our support of orphanages, eye care programs, and educational projects has greatly improved the quality of life and economic status of thousands of Tibetans. We work with Tibetan and international non-governmental organizations to fund these programs in Tibet and provide scholarship opportunities in the U.S. for Tibetan students and professionals. We recently launched a scholarship program to assist college-bound Tibetan youth who lack the resources to pursue higher education in Tibet.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The Tibet Fund has successfully administered the US Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration's Humanitarian Assistance Grant since 1981. This grant supports the care and rehabilitation of newly arriving refugees at three reception centers in Kathmandu, Delhi, and Dharamsala, and continuing assistance in the settlements, including health care and education programs at three schools that serve newly arrived children and young adults. In 2008, the grant supported the construction of a new Reception Center in Dharamsala, to replace one that is too small and located on a congested and dangerous roadway in the town.



The Tibet Fund provided emergency assistance to Tibetan families whose sweater shops were gutted by fires in markets in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, India. Seasonal sweater selling is the primary source of income for 70 percent of Tibetan refugees. The devastating loss caused by these fires severely impacted the refugees' livelihoods and jeopardized their future. A total of 29 shops were destroyed in the two fires with an estimated \$156,250 in damage.

HEALTH CARE

The US Humanitarian Assistance Grant supported vitally important health care services for tens of thousands of Tibetan refugees in 2008. These included (1) TB Control/Leprosy/Disabled Services; (2) Maternal and Child Health/Immunization/Reproductive Health; (3) Clean Water and Sanitation; (4) Hospitalizations for 350 people; (5) Health Training; (6) Essential Drugs; and (7) A Nutritional Food Project for nine settlement schools. This program is managed by the CTA Department of Health and its network of primary care clinics and hospitals located in the settlements.



In addition to the health care programs that are funded by the US Department of State, The Tibet Fund provided assistance to the Friends of Tibetan Delek Hospital for a fundraising campaign that has enabled the Hospital to purchase urgently-needed medical equipment and launch a TB prevention and treatment pilot program in partnership with Johns Hopkins University Center for Tuberculosis Research. Tuberculosis is the primary cause of death in the Tibetan refugee population, whose TB rate is more than four times the rate in India and 150 times the rate in the US. Through this partnership, and with the assistance of other international agencies and NGOs, a comprehensive strategy is being developed that will be implemented by the CTA Department of Health across the entire Tibetan health care system in the next few years.



EDUCATION

Education is a very high priority for the Tibetan community. Many refugee children (who comprise 40 percent of all new arrivals) arrive in exile without academic skills and formal training in Tibetan language and culture. The 2008-2009 Humanitarian Assistance Grant provided support for approximately 1,082 newly arrived refugee students at the Bir Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) School; 700 students at the Transit School at Sogar in Dharamsala; and 850 children at the Tibetan Homes Foundation in Mussoorie. The Grant provided stipends for 7,000 new refugee students at 62 Traditional Learning Centers (monasteries and nunneries) and supported a Special Education Program that provided training for 90 teachers and Professional and Life Skills Education for 491 students.



Tibetan Scholarship Program

The Tibet Fund has administered the U.S. Department of State-funded Tibetan Scholarship Program (TSP) for the past 21 years. Since the inception of the program, The Tibet Fund has brought a total of 343 refugee students to the US for masters' degree and one-year certificate programs in leading US colleges and universities. In 2008, 27 students participated in the program, studying in fields such as public health, environmental studies, international relations, special education, rural development, computer science, and public administration. Upon completion of their studies, the students return to India and Nepal where they bring valuable skills and knowledge to serve their communities.



Professional Scholarship Program in the Exile Community

In response to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's request that The Tibet Fund increase its support of educational programs in the Tibetan community, we implemented a Professional Scholarship Program in 2008 that will address the severe shortage of Tibetan professionals in the exile community, particularly in the medical and health care fields. The CTA Department of Health operates 59 medical centers, including seven hospitals and five primary health centers in 53 Tibetan settlements and nearby communities in India and Nepal. There are only nine Tibetan doctors, no physiotherapists or dentists and only 19 registered nurses working in these medical centers for a population of approximately 140,000 refugees. Many worthy young Tibetans lose out on the opportunity to pursue professional degrees because they are orphans or their families are barely subsisting in the settlement economy and cannot afford the cost of professional degrees. Initially, the program will support scholars in the healthcare field, but it will eventually expand to include other degrees such as engineering, architecture, and community development. We are grateful to Michael Becker, Lobsang Nyandak (the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in north America), and the Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center for raising the funds for this vitally important program.



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Although fewer Tibetans were able to escape from Tibet in 2008 than in previous years due to tight security at the border and strict controls on travel within the country in the run-up to the Beijing Olympics, the exile community continues to struggle with the impact of 3,000 new arrivals each year since 1990. Despite the extraordinary results that the Tibetan refugee community has achieved over its 50 year history, 25 to 30 percent of the population exists at or near the poverty threshold. A serious lack of resources, housing and employment opportunities in the settlements is forcing families to seek shelter and alternative sources of income in scattered communities and urban centers, away from the schools and religious and cultural life that sustain Tibetan identity.

To help strengthen the settlements and the cohesiveness of the exile community, The Tibet Fund has made community and economic development one of its highest priorities. We are simultaneously responding to the critical need for improvements in infrastructure and working to find solutions to broader systemic issues that will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the community.

Organic Farming

One of the most critical economic development programs in the exile community is the long-term conversion of the agricultural settlements from chemically-based to organic farming. The conversion process, which the CTA initiated in 2004, requires a tremendous investment of resources—financial and human—to gradually reverse decades of environmental and human damage caused by chemical fertilizers and to build a solid foundation for economic progress in the settlements. In 2008, The Tibet Fund received a major grant of \$50,000 from the Flora Family Foundation to support a Model Organic Farming project at Dhondenling settlement in South India. This infusion of funds has had a significant impact on the overall conversion process and will, in time, increase crop yield and the farmers' income.



Energy Farming

In 2008, The Tibet Fund continued to foster a partnership with the Himalayan Institute, an NGO that operates innovative energy farming and other economic development programs in Africa and India. In collaboration with the CTA's Department of Home, the Institute began planning for a pilot energy farming project in Hunsur, south India. The project is training farmers in the cultivation of crops that will provide biodiesel for local use and access to energy markets. The long-term goal of the project is to replicate the model in other agricultural settlements that are in the process of converting to organic farming. The project will include the development of marketing strategies that will lead to economic self-sufficiency of the farmers and help stem the exodus of Tibetan youth from the settlements. Through the generosity of its supporters, the Institute has fully funded the costs of the pilot project.



Infrastructure and Human Resources Development

As time, a lack of resources, and extreme climate conditions take their toll on settlement infrastructure, critical weaknesses continue to threaten the health and welfare of the refugees. With major support from the Tides Foundation and Tom and Barbara Sargent, The Tibet Fund was able to provide grants for infrastructure and human resource projects in several especially needy communities:

- Water pipes for irrigation and drinking water for 20 families at the remote Jigmenang settlement in Bhutan.
- Iron fencing for 17 households' agricultural land near Paro, Bhutan. The fencing has enabled the families in this community to protect their farmland from wild and domestic animals that were destroying their crops and sole source of income.
- Construction of a Local Assembly Hall at Dekyiling Settlement, Dehradun, India. The Hall was in disrepair and too small to accommodate all of its Assembly members at one time.

• Computer and printer for the office of the Director of the Tsering Elders Home in Kathmandu, Nepal. Until last year, The Home's administrator functioned without a typewriter even though he was responsible for the care of 47 elders and the upkeep of the building.



• Construction of five Toilet and Bathroom Blocks at the Sambhota Tibetan School in Shilong, north-east India. This school had only two toilets and one bathroom in working condition for more than 124 people, including the staff and their family members. The toilets and bathroom blocks were constructed to remedy the situation.



• Teachers' salaries at Srongsden Bhrikuti High School, Kathmandu, Nepal. This school was established in March 1982 and serves 676 students, most of who come from very poor families. Due to political instability in Nepal, increases in

petroleum pricing and sky-rocketing inflation, the school had to give a 35 per cent salary increase to the teachers and non-teaching staff beginning in January 2008. The Tibet Fund provided a grant to help the school close the resulting budget deficit.

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMS



The Tibet Fund's Sponsorship Program enables individual donors to support needy monks, nuns, children and elders who have no family members to contribute to their upkeep. In 2008, our sponsors supported 137 monks, 81 nuns, 385 children, 17 disabled children, and 17 elders. These sponsorships are vitally important to the exile community's monastic institutions, schools, performing arts organizations, and elder homes that constantly struggle to provide nutritious meals, clothing, educational materials, training, health care, and other necessities to their residents. The Tibet Fund underwrites the administrative costs of the Sponsorship Program so that we can send 100 percent of our sponsors' funds to India and Nepal where they are most needed.



CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS PRESERVATION

The Tibet Fund has long recognized the sustaining role that Tibetan history, culture and religion play in maintaining the spirit and vitality of the Tibetan people. Since its founding, The Tibet Fund has dedicated considerable resources and expertise to strengthening cultural programs and organizations in the exile community. These include dance and theater troupes such as the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts, publishing and printing projects, films, oral history and storytelling projects, the construction of libraries, and the digitization of rare religious texts at the Tibetan Library of Works and Archives. In 2008, we focused on the following projects:



His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Ann Arbor Teachings

The Tibet Fund was honored to join Jewel Heart, a Tibetan Buddhist organization, and Garrison Institute as sponsors of a teaching by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The teaching was held on April 19 - 21, 2008 in Ann Arbor, Michigan and was attended by 15,000 people.

50 Years in Exile

In 2008, The Tibet Fund began organizing 50 Years in Exile, a special year-long project to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan diaspora, to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of the exile community, and to call attention to the impact of



Tibetan culture and religion on the world over the past 50 years. The project, scheduled to begin in March 2009, includes

Wisdom and Compassion for Challenging Times, a dialogue at Town Hall in New York City with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Mary Robinson, moderated by Pico Iyer; a Family Day Tibet! program at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City; a special website that serves as an information hub about the diaspora and special events in 2009; two Tibetan music CDs being produced by BFM Digital; and a 50 Years in Exile 2010 calendar of photos by Don Farber to be published by Brown Trout.

PROGRAMS IN TIBET

In 1994, The Tibet Fund established the Tibet Assistance Program to address the neglected medical, educational and economic needs of the Tibetan people in Tibet. Working primarily with local non-governmental organizations, the Program has launched small-scale, well-managed programs to educate and care for orphans, offer scholarship opportunities for higher education, and provide eye care and blindness prevention services. In 2008, we conducted the following program activities:

Higher Education Scholarship Program

Access to higher education in Tibet is extremely limited, especially for Tibetan youth from impoverished families. In 2008, The Tibet Fund began fundraising for a Higher Education Scholarship Program to support Tibetan students who have been accepted at Tibet University, the Teachers Training College and other universities in China but are financially unable to attend. The Program is being administered by an education professional who oversees a committee of academics and a local administrator in the recruitment of applicants and follow-up with scholarship students supported by the program.

Cultural Exchange Program

In 2008, The Tibet Fund administered a Ngwang Choephel Fellows Program grant from the US State Department Office of Citizen Exchanges. This program supported two semesters of English language and computer training for 30 students in Chengdu, Tibet and enabled seven professionals and scholars to come to the US for one-year certificate programs in English-as-a-Second Language at various colleges and institutes. This training helped participants to upgrade their professional skills and bring new knowledge back to their communities, which will strengthen the communities' capacity to solve problems and gain access to outside resources.



Eye Care

Over 30,000 people in Tibet suffer from cataract blindness and approximately 3,000 become blind every year. In 1999, we provided funds to construct an eye care hospital in Lhasa and has continued to support its services every year since. In 2008, we funded mobile eye camps which



conduct cataract removal operations on hundreds of Tibetans living in remote areas where access to eye care is virtually non-existent.

Orphanages

Many children in Tibet are victims of personal tragedy or extremely difficult economic conditions that force parents to leave their sons and daughters in the care of orphanages throughout the country. We have been providing support to three orphanages in different areas of Tibet starting in



1999. These include the Chushul Orphanage Home, located near Lhasa; and the Waka Orphanage and Poor Snowland Home in eastern Tibet. Chulshul cares for 26 children who attend local primary, middle and high schools and three of the students have already graduated and are attending universities in China. Waka cares for 30 children who attend local schools and receive after-school tutoring in Tibetan and Chinese. Poor Snowland cares for 62 orphans, among them underprivileged girls whose families could not afford the most basic necessities or the parents were suffering from physical or mental illness and could not care for their children.

SPECIAL PROJECTS



Interfaith Vigil for Peace in Tibet

On April 7, 2008, following the March demonstrations in Tibet and a military crackdown by Chinese security forces, The Tibet Fund convened an Interfaith Vigil for Peace in Tibet at The Church of St. Paul & St. Andrew in New York City. Religious leaders from Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and American Indian faiths and over 1500 participants gathered to offer prayers for those who died and those who continued to suffer as tensions escalated in Tibet. A Chinese Buddhist group was among the religious representatives who offered prayers. Speakers included Richard Gere, the Very Rev. James Parks Morton, Mr. Tashi Wangdi, the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and Ms. Felice Gaer, the Chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Co-presenters of the vigil included the Congregation of B'nai Jeshurun, The Interfaith Center of New York, Jewel Heart, the Buddhist Council of New York, The Temple of Understanding, New

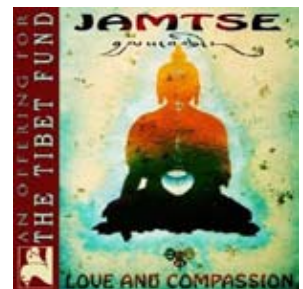


York Open Center, and The Gere Foundation. Fifteen religious leaders and 915 individuals who attended the Vigil signed a Joint Statement addressed to the UN Secretary General, UN Human Rights Commissioner, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, President Bush and Chinese Ambassador to the US.

On May 15, 2008, Imam Shamsi Ali from the Islamic Cultural Center of New York; Dr. Uma Mysorekar, Director of the Hindu Association of North America; The Rev. Chloe Breyer, Director of the Interfaith Center of New York; Mollie Rodriguez, Director of Healing the Divide; Mickey Lemle, President of Lemle Pictures; and Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, Executive Vice President of the New York Board of Rabbis met with Mr. Kuang Weilin, Deputy Consul and Wang Yongjun Consul at the PRC Consulate General in New York to register their unhappiness over the treatment of Tibetans in Tibet by the Chinese Government.

Jamtse Benefit CD

Producers Joshua Jacobs and Steven Weber of BFM Digital, a leading digital music distributor produced a music CD called Jamtse: Love and Compassion to help raise awareness about the current plight of the Tibetan people. Renowned artists Nawang Khechog, Snatum Kaur, Jai Uttal, Deva Premal, Omar Faruk Tekbilek, MC Yogi, Toshinoi Kondo, Bill Laswell and others participated. Top independent record labels Sounds True, Spirit Voyage, White Swan, New Earth Records, Wah! Music, Alif Records and others all donated tracks. The CD was released on His Holiness's birthday July 6, 2008. 90 percent of the gross proceeds go to Tibet Fund; \$5,639 was raised in the 3rd quarter of 2008 from this project.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$2,816,239
Investments	4,808,023
Government agencies receivables	43,410
Accrued interest receivables	22,720
Prepaid expenses and other assets	46,353
Fixed assets - net	551,203
Total assets	\$8,287,948

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$28,987
Accrued payroll and payroll taxes	21,662
Refundable advance	151,378
Total liabilities	201,987

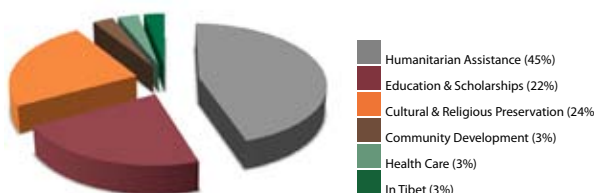
Net assets

Unrestricted	2,610,613
Temporarily restricted	5,475,348
Total net assets	8,085,961

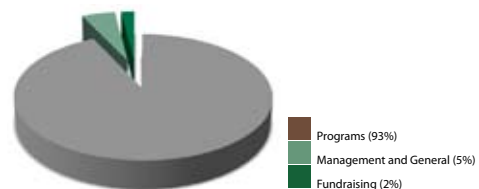
Total liabilities and net assets \$8,287,948

These statements of financial position and activities were derived from the 2008 financial statements of The Tibet Fund's independent auditors, Loeb & Troper. A copy of the audited financial statements and Form 990 FY 2008 are available upon request from The Tibet Fund.

2009 PROGRAMS



2009 EXPENSES



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total 2008
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT			
Public support and revenues			
Federal grants	3,188,718	151,378	\$3,340,096
Contributions	273,790	1,648,612	1,922,402
Contribution of Royalties		216,602	216,602
Total public support	3,462,508	2,016,592	5,479,100
OTHER REVENUES			
Interest and dividends	194,075	52,557	246,632
Realized and unrealized gain on investments	1,136,794)		(1,136,794)
Rental income	48,021		48,021
Miscellaneous income	27,310		27,310
Total other revenues	(867,338)		(867,338)
Net assets released from restrictions	2,083,934	(2,083,934)	
Total revenues and other support	4,679,054	(14,785)	4,664,269
EXPENSES			
Program services			
Humanitarian assistance	2,472,636		2,472,636
Education and scholarship	1,208,871		1,208,871
Cultural and religious preservation	1,290,637		1,290,637
Community development	137,651		137,651
KAP (In Tibet)	187,066		187,066
Health care	162,917		162,917
Total program services	5,459,778		5,459,778
Supporting services			
Management and general	319,786		319,786
Fund raising	87,149		87,149
Total supporting services	406,935		406,935
Total expenses	5,866,713		5,866,713
Change in net assets	,187,659)	(14,785)	(1,202,444)
Net assets - beginning of year	3,798,272	5,490,133	9,288,405
Net assets - end of year	\$2,610,613	\$5,475,348	\$8,085,961



2008 DONORS

\$50,000 +

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James and Lydia Chao
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Tashi Pendey Foundation
The Chodron Foundation
The Flora Family Foundation
The Tides Foundation

\$25,000 - \$49,999

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\$10,000 - \$24,000

Aria Foundation
Robert J. Barnhart
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The Isdell Foundation
The Warrington Foundation
Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center Inc.

\$5,000 - \$9,999

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The Tibet Club of Milton Academy

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U.S. Department of State/Bureau of
Educational and Cultural Affairs

And the following colleges and
universities for providing financial and
other forms of assistance to our Tibetan
Scholarship students in 2008:
American University
Boston University
Brandeis University
Emerson College
Findlay University
Harvard University
Monterey Institute of International Studies
New York University
Purdue University
Rochester Institute of Technology
RUTGERS: New Jersey State University
Salve Regina University
SUNY: Stony Brook University
SUNY: University at Buffalo
Syracuse University
Teacher's College
Tufts University
University of Massachusetts
University of Northern Iowa
University of San Francisco
University of Wyoming



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