

THE TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT PROJECT-CHICAGO



Enriching the Chicago Community Through a Unique Privately Funded Immigration Project

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TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT PROJECT-CHICAGO

Project Summary: The Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago is a non-profit humanitarian organization which is coordinating and implementing the resettlement of 100 Tibetans from their over overcrowded and inadequate refugee camps in India and Nepal to Chicago. These Tibetans will be arriving monthly beginning in August, 1992 in groups of 10 and will continue coming through the summer of 1993. Without a Tibetan community currently in Chicago, the Project will be responsible for all aspects of resettlement including housing, employment, health care, food, clothing, household furnishings, English language classes, and a full array of social services.

The Resettlement Organization: The resettlement of Tibetans in Chicago is part of a coordinated effort by organizations at the local, national and international levels to resettle 1000 Tibetans in 19 different cluster sites throughout the United States. The Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago is a non-profit humanitarian organization formed at the local level to coordinate the Chicago resettlement effort. The Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago has an Executive Director, a 14 member Advisory Council and a 13 member Board of Directors. The Project is working together with other local resettlement agencies, community groups and educational institutions to coordinate services for these Tibetans. The Project is affiliated with the National Tibetan U.S. Resettlement Project, a coalition of private organizations based in New York City which is coordinating the Tibetan immigration on a national and international level with the U.S. State Department and the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala, India.

The Need for Resettlement: In the 1950's, Communist China invaded Tibet, an independent country the size of Western Europe. Since that time, China has maintained a forceful presence in an effort to wipe out Tibetan culture. Over 1 million Tibetans, nearly 1/5th of the total population, have been killed and over 100,000 have been forced to flee their homeland. In 1959, the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and political leader of Tibet, along with over 100,000 Tibetans fled Tibet seeking refuge in the neighboring nations of India, Nepal and Bhutan. Those who remained have been victims of repressive Chinese rule. Over 6000 Tibetan buddhist monasteries, the backbone of Tibetan culture, have been destroyed and Tibetans remain oppressed, denied the freedom of cultural, political and religious expression. Amnesty International's May 1992 report on Tibet cited continued "horrific violations of human rights" which include brutal torture, and forced labor. Over 30 years of oppressive Chinese occupation have left such a legacy that thousands of Tibetans continue to escape Chinese rule in their homeland. Because of the continuing repression, it is now a matter of urgent humanitarian concern that special provisions be made outside of Tibet for the survival of the Tibetan people and their cultural heritage. In India, the Dalai Lama has established the Tibetan government-in-exile to represent the voice of Tibetans. For his continued commitment to a non-violent solution for the situation facing Tibet, the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.

Nearly 120,000 Tibetan refugees are now living in woefully inadequate settlement camps in India and Nepal and their numbers continue to grow. More than 14,000 Tibetans have never received relocation assistance. Despite the generosity extended to these Tibetans by India and Nepal, these are developing countries struggling desperately to meet the needs of their own people. Isolated in remote parts of these countries, it is extremely difficult for Tibetans to develop the educational, economic, and technical resources necessary to sustain their unique cultural heritage.

Over the past three years, a coalition of Tibetans-in-exile and its American supporters have been working to develop the current resettlement project. Under a special provision of the 1990 U.S. Immigration Act, 1000 visas were secured for Tibetan refugees living in these camps in India and Nepal. This provision allows these Tibetans to come to the U.S. as immigrants and not as refugees and are therefore not eligible for any of the government support to which other refugees are entitled. Each Tibetan immigrant must also have a sponsor and a commitment of full-time employment before she/he can immigrate to the U.S. For these reasons, the Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago was established to privately fund the variety of assistance these new Chicagoans will need. These include locating housing, arranging employment, recruiting and training sponsors, providing food, clothing and household goods and furnishings, supplying health care services, establishing a place of worship, providing English language classes and tutors, and supplying acculturation services. Unlike other immigrants who come to Chicago with family, friends or a community already in place to assist in this process, there is currently no Tibetan community in Chicago. The Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago is truly their only initial lifeline of support.

The Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago is designed to help these Tibetans by resettling them in a community large enough to maintain social cohesiveness, Tibetan cultural identity, and easy access to centrally located resettlement services. Other ethnic groups have successfully developed such cluster communities as a means of adapting culturally and economically to life in the United States. Tibetans in Switzerland and Canada, who have been resettled have not only become self-reliant members of their communities, but have also given substantial support to the Tibetan refugees in India and Nepal. There is every reason to expect that Tibetan immigrants in Chicago will follow the same pattern and will make their own special contribution to the Chicago community.

The Tibetans who will be coming to Chicago will be a diverse group. They will be between the ages of 18 and 45 and will have varying degrees of education, English language skills, and employment experience. Some will have a history of service to the Tibetan community with experience as educators, administrators or cooperative business managers while others will be farmers, carpet weavers and recent arrivals from Tibet who have had minimal education and speak no English at all. To take full advantage of the 1000 visas, the Project is bringing over individuals, not families. Spouses and children will be left behind. As immigrants, however, these Tibetans are eligible to apply for family reunification, a legal process which is also being provided by the Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago. In two to three years, the Tibetan community in Chicago will grow from 100 people to 400 or 500.

Chicago Community Involvement and Support: To date, the Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago has cultivated tremendous support and awareness from a Chicago community that knew little about Tibet and the need for resettlement before our existence. The Project has been building a strong coalition of Chicago businesses, individuals, foundations, and community organizations interested in the resettlement. The Mayor's Office and the Governor's Office have recognized and welcomed our addition to the cultural diversity of Chicago. The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago has been a strong supporter of the Project since our inception and serves as our fiscal agent until our own 501(c)(3) status is approved. The Jewish Federation has provided office space, telephone and office services, office supplies and invaluable technical support. Chicago corporations such as Hyatt Hotels, Levy Restaurants, Hilton Hotels and other smaller businesses have extended job opportunities to the soon to be arriving Tibetans. To date, the Project has already secured nearly 80 commitments of full-time employment for these Tibetan immigrants. Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center has generously offered to take care of the medical needs of the newcomers including a mandatory health screening, follow-up care, dental care and prescription medications. RTC Industries has contributed a computer and laser printer to the Project. Illinois Bell, MediaTech and local film makers have contributed their services in the making and duplication of our promotional videotape. Combined Property Management has worked with the Project to provide affordable rental apartments for the new immigrants in the Sheridan Park District of Uptown. Quaker Oats and Keebler have donated food products to the Tibetans. Acorn Self-Storage has provided the Project with storage space for furniture and other household goods that have been donated to furnish the Tibetans' apartments. The law firms of Neal Gerber & Eisenberg and Fragomen Del Rey and Bernsen and the Law Offices of Douglas Bristol are providing pro bono legal services to the Project. Cooper Miller & Co. is providing free accounting services.

The Project has received extensive coverage in both the print and electronic media including stories in the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Reader, New City, News India, the Lerner Newspapers, ABC News and Public Radio. Project supported visits to Chicago by Tibetan government officials, religious groups and representatives from cultural institutions have also added to the growth in awareness in Chicago to the Project. The Project's Advisory Council, Chaired by Congressman John Porter, with members such as CBS News Anchorman Bill Kurtis, has been an active body in the development of the Project.

At the heart of the Project is a dedicated core of volunteers whose enthusiasm and commitment to the Project continues to ensure our success. At this time there are over 120 volunteers directly involved in the resettlement effort with over 50 people recruited and trained as sponsors for the immigrants and another 25 English language tutors already identified. With only one paid staff member, this contribution of time and energy has been the backbone of the Project.

While government assistance is available for refugees, there is no government funding available for these Tibetan immigrants. For that reason, the Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago must be privately funded. The Project has been able to significantly reduce our financial needs by securing the generous in-kind support of the already mentioned organizations. By creatively using a large number of volunteers and keeping operating expenses to a minimum, most of our financial support will go for direct assistance to the Tibetans. The Project recently received a \$7500 technical assistance grant from the Chicago Community Trust and \$7500 grant from the Driehaus Foundation. Contributions are also being sought from individuals and corporations. Direct mail campaigns and special fundraising events and benefits have been successful as well.

Request: The Tibetan Resettlement Project-Chicago respectfully requests a grant of \$50,000 to help ensure the success of this important work. Tibetans are a family oriented, peaceloving people with a deep commitment to spiritual values and a strong work ethic. They are a resourceful people who will be deeply motivated to make their immigration a success. Your financial assistance will be integral to the successful resettlement of these Tibetans in Chicago. With your support, we have the opportunity to enrich the lives of these Tibetan while also being enriched by their contributions to our community.

TIBETAN RESETTLEMENT PROJECT-CHICAGO

PROJECTED EXPENSE BUDGET

9/1/92-12/31/93

Personnel

Executive Director(Annual Rate: \$25,000)	\$ 33,333
Project Coordinator(Annual Rate: \$18,000)	\$ 24,000
Fringe Benefits @14%	\$ 8,000
Fundraising Consultant	\$ 7,500

Operating

Long Distance Telephone @\$150.00/month	\$ 2,400
Equipment and Supplies	\$ 4,000
Printing and Postage	\$ 15,000
Storage space	\$ 1,200
Liability Insurance	\$ 2,500
Occupancy Expenses(4/1/93-12/31/93)*	\$ 24,000

Subtotal

\$121,933

Direct Immigrant Assistance(See Attachment)	\$169,500
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Immigrant Emergency Fund	\$ 20,000
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TOTAL

\$311,433

* Occupancy expenses are incurred after 3/31/93 at which point donated office space, equipment and services expire.

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PROJECTED DIRECT IMMIGRANT ASSISTANCE BUDGET

(Assumes 4 months of assistance to each of 100 immigrants)

CATEGORY	COST		
	Monthly/person	O n e Expenses Arrival	T i m e Upon
Housing			
Rent	\$ 175.00		
Household Start-up		\$105.00	
Food	\$ 100.00		
Transportation			
CTA Passes	\$ 60.00		
Personal Necessities	\$ 50.00		
Acculturation and Education			
Literacy Training (ESL)		\$ 50.00	
SUBTOTAL	\$ 385.00		
4 Months Assistance Per Person	\$1,540.00	+	\$155.00 \$ 1,695
<u>TOTAL</u>			
Cost of Direct Assistance for 100 Immigrants for 4 Months:			\$169,500

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INCOME

	Received to date	Yet to be Raised
Foundations/Corporations		\$160,000
Chicago Community Trust Technical Assistance Grant	\$ 7,500	
Driehaus Foundation	\$ 7,500	
Individual Donors/Family Foundations	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
Special Events		\$ 20,000
Breakfast Benefit	\$ 18,000	
Dance Benefit	\$ 4,000	
Direct Mail	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	\$ 85,000	\$227,000

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VALUE OF IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Health Care (Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center)	\$ 50,000
Office Occupancy, Furniture, Photocopy Services, Telephone Services, Fax Services, Supplies (Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago)	\$ 10,000
Office Computer and Laser Printer (RTC Industries)	\$ 7,000
Storage Space (Acorn Self-Storage)	\$ 6,400
Legal Services (Fragomen Del Rey & Bernsen, Neal Gerber & Eisenberg and Law Offices of Douglas Bristol)	\$ 10,000
Promotional Video Production (Illinois Bell and MediaTech)	\$ 10,000
Household Goods (Individual Donors)	\$ 5,000
Reduced Rent (Combined Property Management)	\$ 20,000
Food (Quaker Oats and Keebler)	\$ 1,000
Accounting Services (Miller Cooper & Co., Ltd.)	\$ 3,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	\$122,400

Advisory Council

Honorary Chairperson
The Honorable John Porter
U.S. Congressman

Gary Fencik
Former Chicago Bear

Bill Kurtis
Anchorman, WBBM-TV Channel Two News

Donna LaPietra
Independent Television Producer

Amrish Mahajan
President, Global Consulting and Public Relations
Executive Producer, Chitrahara Broadcasting

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Tibetan Chef

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Blind Faith Cafe
The Body Shop
Branca, Inc.
Chicago Hilton and Towers
Denoyer-Geppert Science Company
East Bank Club
Foodworks
Hotel Sofitel
Hyatt Hotels
Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises
Levy Restaurants
Oak Street Market
T.G.I. Fridays Restaurants
Ticketmaster