

Springboard Fund

Grant Type: **Dollar and nondollar support**

Dollar Amount: **\$50,000**

Foundation Name: **The Durfee Foundation**

What was your objective with the grant or initiative?

The Durfee Foundation realizes that new nonprofit organizations face challenges in the Los Angeles funding scene. Durfee's Springboard program connects them with a fiscally careful, best case scenario in which talented leaders of young organizations take on social issues that the foundation hopes will catalyze positive change for the communities served.

Durfee provides awardees with modest financial support over a 2-year period in the form of two \$25,000 grants. The opportunity is leveraged by 50 hours of mentorship and the network that Durfee provides beyond the dollar support. Durfee also holds a brain trust meeting that includes an organization's leaders and individuals from the Durfee network to allow a grantee to talk with experts about its organizational challenges. In response to the success of Springboard grantees, Durfee commonly will extend the grant cycle at an annual evaluation, when the young organization clearly needs support to advance to a stage of sustainability and to attract additional funding.

What were the results of this grant or initiative?

Through the Springboard program, Food Forward, an organization that raises awareness and creates change around hunger and food issues, was connected to mentors and a network to help the organization get off the ground. Food Forward has diversified into a

wholesale food recovery, backyard, public space, and farmers market recovery vehicle that connects 100% of the food collected to the most vulnerable community members at receiving organizations. Currently, 100,000 people a month are served. Food Forward has continued to share its mission and has gathered several local and national awards for its innovative solution to a deeply entrenched problem: Food waste.

Why would you say this grant or initiative had outsized impact?

Food Forward began as a four-member team that had secured only \$7,000 in previous funding. Perhaps without the philosophical and financial support of the Springboard grant, this organization would not be where it is today. Food Forward took years to gather its first few million pounds of recovered food, and its ability to attract support and attention led Durfee to continue supporting this organization after its grant cycle ended to help it build reserves and continue operating.

Food Forward since has attracted press and media attention in the *Los Angeles Times* and *Los Angeles Magazine*, and on NBC Los Angeles, and ABC news, among others. Food Forward now is on the brink of boasting 20 million pounds of food waste turned into meals. With Durfee's support, this organization has gone on to become a high-tech, highly networked entity that builds community in countless ways with a loving ethos. It also provides educational and team-building services to help and engage society.



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