



Engaging women in significant philanthropy



## The San Diego Women's Foundation

### “You have to listen.”

That simple message repeated a few times made all the difference in the new, sharper focus that the Discovery Team brought to this year's granting process.

The San Diego Women's Foundation's Discovery Team was created last year as the research arm of this dynamic organization, with this year's focus being improved access to nutritious foods in vulnerable populations.



Discovery Team Chair Bink Cook

a Discovery Team. “This year, with more time as well as the benefit of the Discovery Team, we've added the critical step of hosting community meetings. The message that came up each time was, ‘You need to listen to what the community needs and wants,’” says Discovery Team Chair Bink Cook.

The 2008 granting cycle presents an equally daunting topic: Civil Society. This is the first time that The San Diego Women's Foundation has approached this topic with the benefit of

The Discovery Team started with planning and research and solicited Patricia Sinay, a university professor and consultant who had previously worked with The San Diego Foundation in the area of community problem solving. The group submersed themselves in reading and research, and interviewed leaders from organizations such as the Jacobs Center, San Diego Youth and Community Services and UCSD.

And they listened. After meeting with community residents and grassroots leaders in vulnerable San Diego area communities, the direction of the Civil Society changed in a subtle but profound way. “Before our meetings, we defined Civil Society as ‘individuals and organizations coming together to develop the community they envision,’” said Bink. “Now we realized the core piece is that it's their community. Our direction shifted to, ‘Civil Society involves **community action** in which individuals and organizations come together to develop the community they envision.’”

Bink states, “The common denominator is youth. Many of the programs that we heard about shared an element around ‘developing resilience.’ We're refining a process that we believe will be useful to other organizations, and one that could be a model for other charitable grantmaking organizations.”

The energetic group who made up the **2008 Discovery Team** includes Lenore Ringler, Marlowe Berg, Elaine Kalin, Lynn Owens, Julie Ruedi, Leslie Monteath, Gayle Slate, Mary-Rose Mueller and Co-chair, Christa Burke. The **2009 team**, led by Chair Leigh Hartman and Co-Chair Bink Cook, will focus on Economic Development and Employment.

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