

Latino Issues Forum

Tobacco Divestment and Smokefree Campus Policies

Case Study



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Introduction and Background

Latino Issues Forum (LIF) is a statewide, non-profit public policy and advocacy institute established in 1987 to advance new and innovative public policy in California. LIF's primary focus is on the broader issues of access to technology, telecommunications, health care, sustainable development, energy, environment, and civic participation. LIF serves as a clearinghouse to assist and provide news media with accurate information and sources in the Latino community for fair and effective coverage of the issues. The organization also conducts policy and research analysis and is involved in coalition building, community education, media resources, and advocacy to encourage wider participation by Latinos in public policy issues.

In January, 2002, LIF received two-year funding from the San Francisco Tobacco Free Project's Community Capacity Building Process to develop and implement the Tobacco-Free College Campus Projects at San Francisco State University (SFSU) and City College of San Francisco (CCSF). LIF was funded to implement the Community Action Model at each of the college campuses. The model is based on a community organizing strategy that involves a five-step process: 1) skill based trainings where advocates choose an area of focus; 2) action research where advocates define, design and do a Community Diagnosis (action research); 3) analysis where advocates analyze the results of the diagnosis and prepare findings; 4) organizing where advocates select, plan and implement an "Action" for environmental change and educational "Activities" to support it; and 5) implementation where advocates ensure that the policy outcome is enforced and maintained.

Student advocates researched tobacco-related issues and policies on each campus, educated the campus community, developed concrete, permanent tobacco control policies at each campus, and worked for their passage, implementation, and enforcement.

The Student Advocates

The Tobacco-Free College Campus Project recruited, trained, and supervised six student advocates, three on each campus, to carry out and lead the tobacco-free education and policy advocacy campaign.

Recruitment

At the beginning of the project, LIF met with representatives in the health education and journalism departments, chancellor's office, and student services to inform them about the project and seek their assistance in recruiting students. The project director made a number of presentations on each campus to health and ethnic studies classes and student groups during the 2002 spring semester, summer school session, and at the beginning of the fall semester. Advocates were also recruited from within the Latino Services Network and the Council for Responsible Public Investment (CRPI).

Three CCSF student advocates, Rachel Perez, Dennes Hernandez, and Giselle Gibbons were hired and trained in March and April of 2002. Karen Chen was hired in January 2003 replacing Hernandez who left the project. The three SFSU advocates – Nazneen Abdullah, Celana Ahtye,

and Erin Yoshioka – joined the project in September 2002. While each group was ethnically and culturally diverse, one key informant observed that the advocates seemed to have “more of a social justice identity than a racial/ethnic identity.”

The students were attracted to the project for a number of reasons. One advocate said she wanted more experience in advocacy, activism, and policy change. Others had firsthand experience with tobacco-related health problems in family members who are addicted to cigarettes and are concerned about secondhand smoke at home.

When asked what personal characteristics make a good advocate, the students who already had some experience working with the project, responded:

- Having passion
- Being organized
- Having dedication
- Meeting deadlines
- Being aggressive
- Being outgoing and able to connect easily with people/having people skills
- Being unafraid to speak
- Having basic reading, writing, and research skills

Training

The advocates were expected to accomplish a variety of complex and demanding tasks:

- Research global issues of tobacco control;
- Conduct a diagnosis of campus and community tobacco policies and identify campus and community policy-making agencies;
- Research opinions and awareness of tobacco control issues and policies;
- Organize support for an educational campaign around tobacco control and passage of tobacco-free policies on both campuses;
- Implement a tobacco-free educational and media campaign to raise awareness of tobacco control issues;
- Advocate for the adoption of the chosen tobacco-free policy or policies by policymaking bodies; and
- Design a plan to enforce the policy after its passage.

To ensure that student advocates were prepared to meet the demands of the project, LIF provided extensive training during the first year of the project. The advocates learned about tobacco control issues and policy. They were given articles to read and were assigned additional research. The areas covered included: tobacco advertising; tobacco stock divestment; tobacco economics and profits; marketing to people of color, youth, and in foreign countries; environmental tobacco smoke; tobacco litigation; subsidiary products; tobacco and campaign finance; tobacco and individual health; tobacco and international trade/global economy; tobacco and agriculture/pesticides; and tobacco smuggling.

Specific training during the first year of the project included:

- The San Francisco Tobacco-Free Project and the Department of Public Health provided training on its Community Action Model, a five-step guide used by all funded projects to carry out a community-based policy advocacy campaign.
- LIF conducted training on the basics of policy and advocacy.
- The advocates attended training on tobacco divestment conducted by the Council for Responsible Public Investment and its Campaign Against Transnational Tobacco. This training included a detailed process about engaging a campus community on tobacco control issues, making the link between the campus foundation investments and the tobacco industry, and effectively arguing about why schools should divest from tobacco stocks.
- Advocates were also trained in Media Advocacy from Take Action Online provided by the California Department of Health Services specifically for students and youth working in tobacco control. This training included writing letters to the editor, preparing press releases, and the logistics of putting on a press conference.

Advocates came to the project with different levels of skills and experience in organizing, research, and public speaking. They reported general satisfaction with the training they received, although one felt there wasn't enough training and another said that having experiential training would have been helpful, including practicing in front of a camera, to help them become more comfortable making presentations. On the other hand, another reported that the training was beyond what the project required, and that she was already using knowledge gained from the training in other projects.

Overall, the knowledge, skills, and presentation the advocates brought to their work impressed key informants on both campuses who described the advocates as being well prepared, knowledgeable, articulate, organized, mature, dedicated, hard working, and professional. One key informant stated that the advocates: “go beyond the call of duty – they really believe in social change and their passion translates into their work.”

The Project Sites:

San Francisco State University and City College of San Francisco

San Francisco State University (SFSU)

SFSU is part of the 23-campus California State University, the largest state system of higher education in the U.S. granting bachelor's and master's degrees. The CSU system collectively serves over 400,000 students statewide. Nearly 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled at the San Francisco campus as of January 2004.

City College of San Francisco (CCSF)

CCSF is the largest of the nine community college sites that make up San Francisco's community college system with a total student population of nearly 66,000.

Student demographics

Both campuses reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of San Francisco, with students of color accounting for about 70% of undergraduate populations. Female students represent over half of the student body on each campus. Young adults under the age of 25 make up 70% of undergraduates at SFSU while only about one-third of CCSF students are under 25, with the majority being 24 and older.

Tobacco environment on the campuses at the start of the project

The first task for the advocates was to conduct a community diagnosis of the tobacco environment on their respective campuses. Each group documented the following information:

- Current tobacco-related campus policies;
- The decision-making bodies and process on each campus;
- The extent of tobacco availability on each campus;
- The extent of tobacco sponsorship at college events; and
- The extent of tobacco stock in the investment portfolios of each campus.



The advocates used key informant interviews and surveys to collect information gathered from each project site as part of the community diagnosis. The following summarizes their findings.

Sale of tobacco

SFSU advocates found that tobacco products were sold in two stores on campus, the Snackademic and The Lobby, both located in the Cesar Chavez Student Center.

CCSF advocates found that while no tobacco products were sold on campus, there was no formal written policy that prohibits their sale.

Advertising and sponsorship

SFSU advocates learned that tobacco companies do not currently advertise either on campus or at any campus-related events, and no student group, sorority, or fraternity receives any type of funding or sponsorship of events or activities from tobacco companies. This is an unwritten policy however that is not explicitly stated in student or student organization handbooks or orientation materials. Upon contacting the Associated Students, student clubs and organizations, and the Fraternity and Sorority Council, the advocates found unanimous support of policies that would prohibit tobacco sponsorship.

CCSF advocates found a statewide policy (under the California Government Code 199994.35) that prohibits advertising tobacco products in any state-owned facility, including community colleges. The law was found in a booklet called “Piecing it Together: Tobacco Laws Affecting California,” published by the Technical Assistance Legal Center (TALC) in August 2000.

Tobacco investments

SFSU advocates sent an initial informational letter about the campaign and its policy objectives on the campus to all SFSU Foundation Board members in late October to determine if SFSU had tobacco investments. There was some initial confusion about whether or not SFSU had tobacco holdings. The financial manager of the Foundation was “fairly certain” the Foundation did invest in some tobacco stocks, but was uncertain about how to go about checking on it. The advocates were later informed that investments are confidential and board members, even if they know about specific investments, are not permitted to share this information with the public. One of the board members told the advocates that SFSU did not have tobacco investments and agreed to work with the advocates to get a statement in writing and begin working towards a permanent moratorium on tobacco investment.

The CCSF advocates were initially told that the school itself had no tobacco investments and that CCSF faculty and employees are part of the San Francisco retirement fund that had already divested. However, the Foundation has investments in mutual funds that might include tobacco stocks in their portfolios. No formal written policy existed that prohibited the CCSF Foundation from investing in tobacco stocks.

Subsidiary products

At SFSU, the Snackademic and the Lobby, both located in the Cesar Chavez Student Center, sell tobacco subsidiary products, such as Kraft and Nabisco. Campus kiosk vendors that sell food and beverages also carry Kraft and Nabisco products. The managers of the student union stores, the vending machines, and individual vendors stated that although they would not voluntarily stop selling those products, they would support and comply with a policy that banned them from the campus.

The CCSF advocates found no policy on the campus prohibiting the sale of tobacco subsidiary products. In an informal survey, the advocates learned that several Kraft and Nabisco products (usually cookies, snacks, and juices) are sold at the main campus cafeteria, the student store, and are also available on a purchase order form for the Restaurant and Hotel Management Program.

Policy Objectives

Once the community diagnoses were completed, the advocates on both campuses chose similar goals: permanently banning the sale of all tobacco products on campus and permanent divestment of all tobacco stocks owned by the Foundations on each campus.

San Francisco State University

- Achieving divestment of all tobacco holdings of the SFSU Foundation.
- Banning the sale of tobacco products and tobacco subsidiary products (Kraft and Nabisco) on campus; and
- Getting a written policy prohibiting student groups from receiving any kind of tobacco company money or sponsorship.

City College of San Francisco

- Obtaining a written policy to ban the sale of tobacco products on campus (even though none are currently sold, a formal policy does not exist);
- Divesting all tobacco holdings by the CCSF Foundation; and
- Developing a written policy that would ban investment in tobacco companies in the future.

Key informants believed that the issues selected by the advocates were important from both public health and public policy perspectives. “They identified target issues that need to be dealt with,” said one CCSF instructor, including divestment and using subsidiary food products in the Chef Training Program. Another key informant observed that the project helped to localize tobacco issues that have been covered in the national news.

Another key informant thought it was a good step to ban the sale of cigarettes on campus: “For people trying to quit, it would be easier if cigarettes were not sold on campus. The campus should send a message that health is important. We want to encourage people to quit or not start by at least not tempting them at school! We’re supposed to promote health and well being on campus, so what are we doing selling cigarettes?”

Strategies

The advocates describe the project approach as “influencing and educating people,” “networking,” and “being persistent” to accomplish their goals of tobacco divestment and banning on-campus sale of tobacco and subsidiary products. One student thought having students involved in a high profile way on campus made it easier to attract other students.

Educating and organizing the campus community

A large part of the work of the project entailed educating students, faculty, administrators, and policy makers about tobacco control issues, and organizing the campus community to rally around policy changes championed by the project. While few had prior community organizing experience, the student advocates on both campuses did form broad-based and effective coalitions to organize for those changes.

San Francisco State University

Student advocates created a grassroots, student-led coalition of students, student organizations, faculty departments, and community advocacy groups to work for policies that would end financial ties between SFSU and the tobacco industry. They called this coalition “Together Against Campus Tobacco Investment Campaign,” or TACTIC.

TACTIC worked to get support from the campus community through petitions, official endorsements, and surveys of the types of industries in which the campus community felt the Foundation should or should not be investing. Educational outreach about the tobacco divestment campaign and the issue of socially responsible investing was done through rallies and weekly tabling events. Media advocacy occurred through two op-eds, an article, and an advertisement for the tobacco divestment rally in the campus newspaper, the Golden Gate X-press. Over 200 petition signatures were gathered in support of the proposed policies. By the end of 2002, TACTIC had received official policy endorsements from La Raza Student Association, General Union of Palestinian Students, Muslim Student Association, Health Education Student Association, Students for Justice, and the Black Student Union.

CAN SF STATE REST WHILE WE INVEST IN DEATH?

DID YOU KNOW:

- Tobacco currently kills more people than HIV/AIDS, alcohol, drug abuses, car crashes, murders, suicides, and fires combined.
- Corporate Tobacco Ad campaigns like “Project S.C.U.M. (Sub-Culture Urban Marketing)” target students, people of color, and queerfolks.
- Big Tobacco Companies like to come to school career day to entice students looking for job security to join their ranks as promoters and street marketers.
- The San Francisco State University Foundation invests in mutual funds which profit from the dividends of corporate tobacco's global expansion.

RALY & SPEAKOUT: WED/FEB. 5 @ MALCOLM X: 12-2pm.
Featuring a DJ, Dancers, and Speakers.

Brought to you by TACTIC (Together Against Campus Tobacco Investments Campaign) in solidarity with the UFW-SFSU student group and Literacy for Environmental Justice, African American Tobacco Free Project, Center for Responsible Public Investment and Students Against Nicotine Dependence (STAND - SAC State). For more info, email: tacticsfsu@yahoo.com.

City College of San Francisco

Student advocates formed a student-led grassroots advocacy coalition called “No on Big Industry Tobacco!” (NO BI). During the fall of 2002, they conducted classroom and student organization presentations on tobacco industry abuses and the proposed policies. The advocates held a successful rally on campus against corporate globalization of tobacco with international tobacco control activists visiting from Africa, Latin America, and India during the Intercambio (information exchange) event hosted by the San Francisco Tobacco Free Project’s Global Action Task Force in November 2002.

NO BI worked closely with the Associated Students, Inter-Club Council, Health Science Department, Academic and Classified Senate, and the American Federation of Teachers Local 2121 (serving CCSF) to pass resolutions of support for a policy formally banning the sale of tobacco products on campus.

Key informants interviewed on each campus described the presentations made by advocates as generally “excellent” and “handled with maturity.” One instructor said her students “frequently refer to the presentations as fantastic” and that the combination of overheads and video helped

students to “get it.” One constructive suggestion was that the advocates could benefit from a public speaking class to help them better project their voices.



NO BI rally on CCSF campus with international tobacco control activists from Ecuador, Colombia, Senegal, and Togo attending an Intercambio hosted by the San Francisco Tobacco Free Project's Global Action Task Force in November 2002.

Pressuring campus institutions for policy change (administrative advocacy)

The student advocates on each campus aggressively targeted campus policymaking bodies to advocate for policy changes to counter pro-tobacco influences.

San Francisco State University

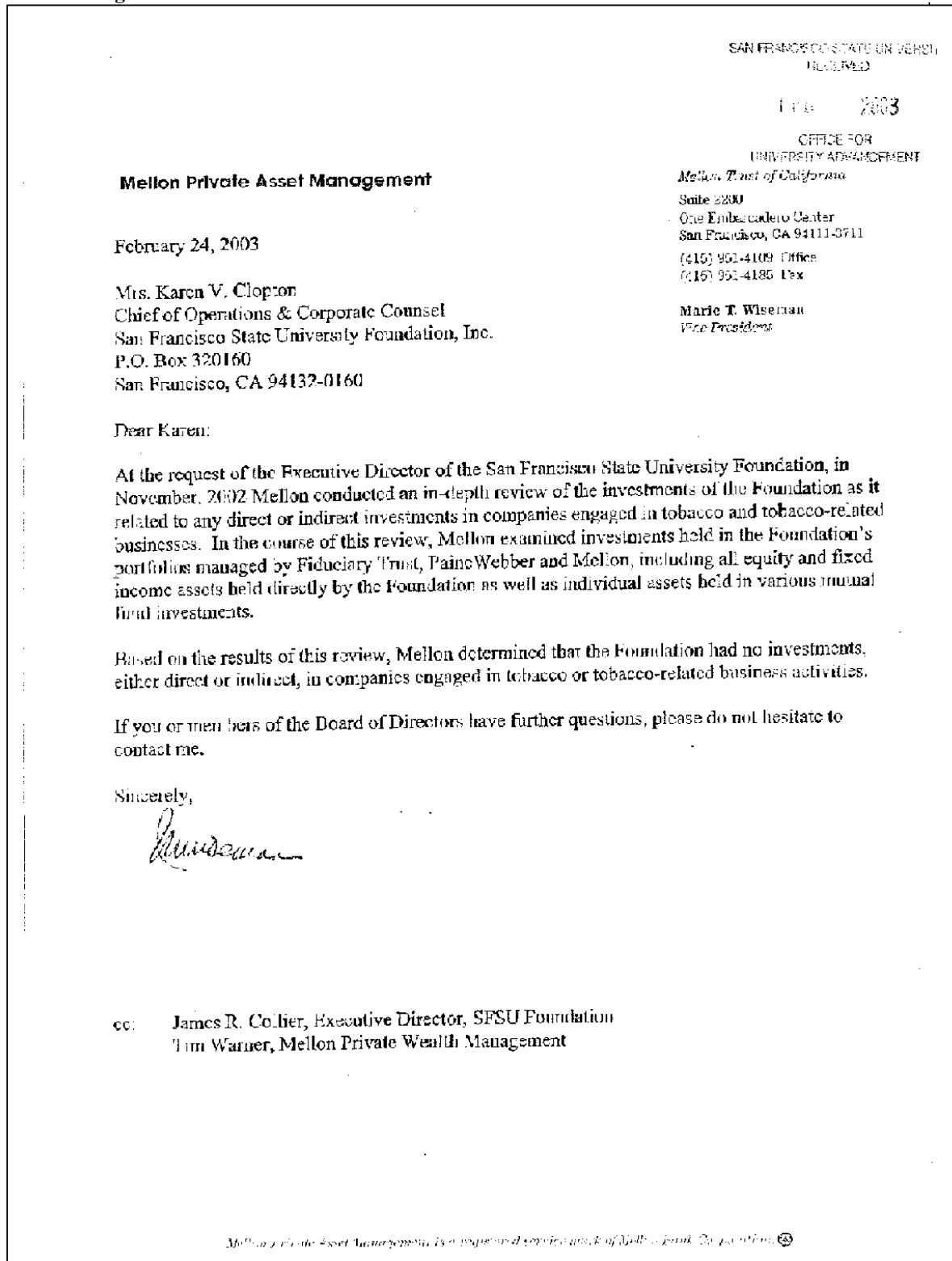
Tobacco divestment

TACTIC learned through a verbal statement from the Foundation’s CEO that the Foundation had no money invested in tobacco. TACTIC requested and received a written statement to that effect in a letter dated February 24, 2003 from the Foundation’s investment manager, Mellon Private Asset Management (Figure 1).

TACTIC then pressed for a policy placing a permanent moratorium on future tobacco investments that would be formally stated in the Foundation Investment Policy. Foundation Board members told TACTIC that this written policy would fall under the new Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) Policy the Foundation was developing. While TACTIC members were included in initial meetings to develop a SRI policy, TACTIC was unsuccessful in convincing the Foundation to invite input from the wider campus community or to include specific mention of tobacco divestment in the policy. TACTIC then sought campus input by developing and administering over 200 surveys from SFSU students and faculty about their

thoughts on SRI and the Foundation's insistence on keeping their investments confidential from the public.

Figure 1



TACTIC received the Foundation’s Social Responsibility statement on May 20, 2003 (Figure 2) and was disappointed that no specific mention was made about tobacco investment or any other industry, product, or company. The policy lacked any binding language holding the Foundation to its statement, using words like “should” instead of “shall” or “will.” And while the Foundation is a non-profit, private charitable trust and thus not required to make its investments public, TACTIC nevertheless felt that the “veil of secrecy” contradicts the mission of SFSU as a public university. In response, TACTIC drafted its own SRI policy and presented it to the Foundation Audit and Finance subcommittee on June 3, 2003, along with information about how well SRI funds perform financially in comparison to non-screened funds.

Figure 2

<p style="text-align: center;">SFSU Foundation Social Responsibility Statement</p> <p><i>“In its efforts to address social responsibility investing issues, the Foundation should be guided by two basic but interdependent principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>The foundation should exercise responsible financial stewardship over its financial resources (GEP/portfolios).</i>▪ <i>The foundation should exercise ethical and social stewardship in the investment policy.</i> <p><i>“The San Francisco State University Foundation is sensitive to the issues of social responsibility when making investment decisions. The Foundation Board continues to monitor and take into account a wide variety of information to help it in determining what it considers to be socially responsible investments. In carrying out its social responsible investment policy, the Board will continue to give specific instructions to its investment managers about investing or not investing in particular products, companies, and countries.”</i></p> <p>Investment Policy Sub-Committee Meeting of 5/20/03 Agenda item No. 2B</p>

On June 17, 2003, the Board of Directors unanimously updated the Foundation’s list of restricted investments officially prohibiting the Foundation to invest in tobacco companies. Since then, TACTIC has continued to work with the Foundation on maintaining the divestment policy and has asked for more information about companies and industries in which the Foundation’s managers invest.

Sale of tobacco on campus

TACTIC’s campaign towards permanent tobacco divestment was taking place at the same time the group was also advocating to end tobacco sales at the Lobby and Snackademic, two stores located in the Cesar Chavez Student Union. As the policy making body that oversees the Student Union, the Student Center Governing Board – made up of students, faculty, staff, and administrators – was targeted for this campaign. Contact was made with the Governing Board in

late January 2003. TACTIC made a presentation to the Board on March 11, 2003 and a resolution was passed supporting the policy to end cigarette sales at the next meeting in April.

TACTIC then learned that the Student Center Governing Board did not have final say on the policy; rather, the SFSU Bookstore Board is in charge of operating the budget and financing of both targeted shops and has policymaking authority. TACTIC presented to this Board in May 2003. Several allies attended the meeting, including staff from the smoking cessation clinic on campus, a member of the SFSU prevention programs, the San Francisco Tobacco Free Coalition, and the Council for Responsible Public Investment. Letters of support urging passage of a policy to end cigarette sales were also sent from State Universities in Sonoma, Humboldt, San Jose, and Sacramento, along with the Council for Responsible Public Investment (CSRI), and the California Youth Advocacy Network (CYAN). The manager of the SFSU Bookstore and a Bookstore Board member told TACTIC that the Board was impressed with the presentation and would vote on the policy in August 2003, before the start of fall semester.



The Board passed a standing rather than a written policy which it did not believe was necessary. TACTIC continued to pursue a written policy and wrote to the SFSU President urging approval of a policy to be put in writing. The President did not take action and did not reply to the communication.

Sale of tobacco subsidiary products

The SFSU Bookstore Board was unwilling to take action on tobacco subsidiary products. The Bookstore Board preferred to address the direct health impact rather than corporate practices of big tobacco. The students decided that tobacco divestment was a more attainable policy objective on which they would focus their time.

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Most SFSU key informants thought that the advocates made a very compelling case for change. They said the student advocates were well armed with data and presented it well. “They are persistent and believe in what they are doing,” said one key informant. Another commented that the advocates were “not angry with an axe to grind, but came across with compassionate commitment to what they’re working on.” One key informant praised the advocates for “looking out for public health – not trying to make money or increase sales.” Others were impressed with the level of maturity possessed by the advocates, noting that they “handled themselves superbly in meetings with the [SFSU Bookstore] Board.”

The process with the Foundation Board, however, was more adversarial. Once it was established that the Foundation had no tobacco investments, the Foundation passed a written policy permanently banning tobacco investments, and adopted a socially responsible investment policy, (albeit disappointing), the advocates turned their attention to urging the Foundation to become more transparent – and thus more accountable – about its investments. Some Board members viewed this next step as TACTIC overstepping project boundaries and moving beyond the tobacco issue. “It’s not appropriate for students to be trying to play an oversight role on campus. SFSU has an annual review of investments. It’s not up to students to determine fiduciary duty,” remarked one key informant. The advocates, for their part, learned that trying to find some common ground with the Foundation by not polarizing issues (e.g. profits vs. social responsibility) and trying to stay open were major challenges. One advocate observed that it could be really hard to “keep our spirits up and motivation alive” when they became frustrated.

City College of San Francisco

Tobacco divestment

In the fall of 2002, No BI Tobacco advocates met with the Executive Director of the CCSF Foundation to develop a working relationship with the Foundation on the issue of divestment. With the support of the Chancellor, who had helped the Board overcome its initial resistance to even working with the advocates, NO BI made a presentation to the CCSF Foundation Board in March 2003. The Board agreed to ask their investment



managers if the Board has funds invested in tobacco and, if it were so, to begin to divest at their meeting in September 2003. The Board also agreed to pass a policy permanently prohibiting tobacco investments if it was determined that the Board had no tobacco holdings. After a great deal of hard work, the advocates learned that CCSF has a small amount – \$22,500 – invested in tobacco out of a total of \$12 million invested in a variety of funds. While still supportive, this information created a quandary for the Board about how to accomplish tobacco divestment without losing a substantial sum of money.

Sale of tobacco on campus

NO BI advocates presented on the policy issue of formalizing a tobacco sales ban at the January 2003 Board of Trustees meeting and, following that meeting, crafted a resolution with the help of a Student Trustee. Through their communication with the Chancellor’s office and the Trustees, NO BI gained the support of Trustee Julio Ramos who agreed to be a principal author of the policy. Amendments and revisions were made in May 2003. Two additional trustees, Milton Marks and Lawrence Wong, also signed on. Upon passing the policy in June 2003, the Board commended No BI for their hard work and diligence in seeking passage of the policy and educating the campus community about the tobacco industry.

Sale of tobacco subsidiary products

NO BI youth advocates found that the use of tobacco subsidiary products by the hotel manager program was minimal or unsubstantial (i.e., using Reynold's wrap). The students also met resistance to ban tobacco subsidiaries in vending machines and decided that the divestment issue would make a greater impact and seemed to be a more attainable goal.

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Multiple attempts were made to interview members of the CCSF Foundation Board by phone and email. Unfortunately, none of the calls have been returned. NO BI student advocates, who experienced similar barriers throughout the project, said that these obstacles taught them to be more patient and to stay open with the process.

Outcomes

The Tobacco-Free College Campuses Project has been successful in meeting most of its goals. The project educated the SFSU and CCSF campuses about the tobacco industry and its harmful practices, mobilized the campus community to support tobacco-free policies on both campuses, and successfully advocated adoption of administrative policies to permanently end financial ties between both colleges and tobacco corporations.

San Francisco State University

- On June 17, 2003, after 8 months of advocacy by TACTIC, the SFSU Foundation Board of Directors unanimously passed a written policy updating its restricted investments to permanently prohibit investment in tobacco companies. The Board also passed an SRI policy that, while not specifically mentioning tobacco or other industries as prohibited investments, represents a step in the right direction.
- The SFSU Bookstore Board voted in August 2003 to take cigarettes off the shelves in the two campus convenience stores, effective Fall semester 2003, which has ended the sale of all tobacco products on campus.
- The Associated Students agreed to include tobacco as part of their agenda for the following year (2004-05) to create designated smoking areas on campus.
- At the end of the school year, TACTIC advocates were working on producing an educational documentary (and volunteered to complete the video by the end of July) about effective tobacco control advocacy on college campuses. The documentary will be released to the Council for Responsible Public Investment (CSRI) and the Socially Responsible Endowment Coalition of Colleges for distribution.

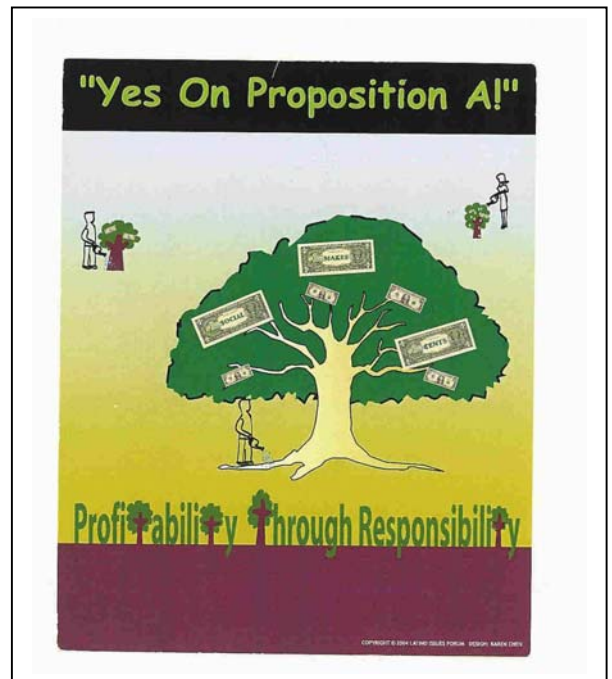


City College of San Francisco

- NO BI's advocacy resulted in the City College Board of Trustees on June 26, 2003 unanimously passing a resolution banning tobacco sales on all nine City College campuses. The resolution states:

"The Board of Trustees of the San Francisco Community College District hereby establishes a permanent policy prohibiting the sale of tobacco products on campus, including all campus stores and vending trucks located on City College of San Francisco property."

- NO BI continues to work with the City College Foundation to divest the small amount of money it has invested in tobacco companies over a period of time and/or ensuring that all new funds are invested into a socially screened portfolio.
- NO BI advocated the successful passage of "Proposition A" on the April 2004 student trustee election ballot. Proposition A asked: "Does the student body recommend that the CCSF Foundation establish a Socially Responsible Investment mutual fund to invest their capital?" The measure passed with 64% of the vote.
- NO BI contacted other community colleges in California to build a coalition for a blanket Socially Responsible Investment policy among all community college foundations.
- The work of NO BI will be carried forward through commitments from two student advocates who are returning to CCSF in the fall and will work to sustain the group's accomplishments. In addition, another advocate who is a member of the 2004-05 Academic Senate will also help to sustain and perhaps advance the group's work.



Challenges

The two student advocacy groups faced several unique challenges, primarily divestment and transparency. In addition, each group worked very hard to ensure that the issues – particularly those still in limbo – would continue to be addressed after the project was over.

Divestment dilemma

The CCSF Foundation Board supports tobacco divestment but is uncertain about how to divest its \$22,500 in tobacco holdings without losing money. The relatively small amount is passively

invested in one fund that spreads the money over a variety of investments, including stocks, bonds and real estate. To divest from tobacco, it could be necessary to pull out entirely from the fund, resulting in a penalty fee that would surpass the total value of the tobacco investments. In response, NO BI advocates explored the possibility of divesting from tobacco by moving money from the equities fund to a different fund, or having the Foundation begin to put all new incoming money into a Socially Responsible fund that screens tobacco out.

During the last six months of the project, the advocates researched counter arguments to the Chancellor's case against divestment. They met with the board chairman of the investment firm Progressive Asset Management who discussed different strategies to implement an SRI policy for unallocated funds free from tobacco ties. The student advocates proposed the plan to the Chancellor and sought assistance from him to present the plan to the Foundation. The Chancellor denied NO BI access to a meeting of the Foundation's Finance Committee, but indicated that he would arrange a meeting at a later date. The student advocates also met with a supportive member of the CCSF Board of Trustees who introduced a resolution at the May 2004 meeting of the Board recommending that the Foundation institute an SRI policy.

Accountability and transparency

Although SFSU had already divested its tobacco holdings, the Foundation continues to keep the list of companies in which it invests confidential, unintentionally creating an environment of secrecy but underscoring, in the process, the lack of transparency and thus accountability. The Tobacco-Free Project and SFSU advocates devised a strategy that could move the campus closer towards eventual transparency of investments involving, as a first step, a quarterly status report from the Foundation fund managers on their adherence to the tobacco-free, social responsibility policy.

TACTIC continued to pursue this objective using a variety of strategies, including direct contact with the new student representative on the Foundation board, and researching legal means to require the Foundation to reveal its investments. Communication with the Technical Assistance Legal Center revealed a possible form of action through the Freedom of Information Act. The advocates sent an inquiry to FOIA and are waiting for a response. In June, student advocates attended the SFSU Foundation's Investment Subcommittee and the Audit and Finance Subcommittee meetings as well as the general Board of Directors meeting, and submitted a letter to each group restating their recommendations to implement and maintain the recently adopted SRI policy.

TACTIC has also continued to build support for this issue through meetings, tabling, and a rally from students, faculty, community members, and other universities that already have policies of transparency to support a similar policy for the SFSU Foundation.



Frustrated by their lack of decision-making within the Foundation and administration, the students have begun to advocate for democratic representation on all campus committees and boards, including the Foundation. As part of that effort, TACTIC has worked to incorporate the issues of transparency and accountability in recent on-campus organizing by helping to coordinate a walkout against budget cuts. The organizers of that event advocated, among other things, adopting a process of shared government.

Institutionalizing the work on campus

Student advocates on both campuses want very much to keep the tobacco control work alive after the project is over in June 2004. It is no small task however to sustain an issue when funding has stopped and the students involved with the project have graduated unless a student club or advocacy group is willing to integrate the issue into their own agenda. Nonetheless, remarkable progress has been made to continue their efforts.



At CCSF, NO BI institutionalized its efforts through outreach to the Academic Senate. Two students who worked with NO BI and are returning to CCSF next year will work to sustain the accomplishments of the past 2 ½ years. The most recent advocate hired by NO BI is a member of the 2004-05 Academic Senate.

At SFSU, the student advocates have tried to recruit new students to continue monitoring the Foundation in the future, but no members have agreed to take over the coalition once the current advocates graduate. By the end of the school year in May 2004, the Associated Students (AS) agreed to incorporate tobacco as part of its agenda for the following year to create designated smoking areas on campus. TACTIC believed that incorporating the tobacco agenda into the larger Associated Students agenda that would provide the best chance to institutionalize ongoing tobacco prevention work at SFSU.

Lessons Learned

Recruiting student advocates

Students were recruited in large part through presentations made to classes and student groups. These presentations were possible due to the early partnership between LIF and the administrations and/or faculty on both campuses. Establishing these relationships early in the process also helped to open the door for future collaborations on campus events, classroom presentations, and administrative policy advocacy.

Retaining student advocates

Student advocates are the backbone of the project. The advocates were budgeted to work 10 hours per week and were informed from the beginning that a long-term commitment was necessary to carry out project objectives. The project retained five of the original six advocates. The advocate who replaced one that left stayed on the project for the entire second year. To achieve this outcome, the project had to provide concrete actions and attractive incentives to keep the advocates engaged, challenged, and feeling valued. The incentives include compensation, participating in making decisions, involvement in related activities, skills development, and support.

Compensation. From the perspective of the project, the best – and most practical – incentive was to pay the advocates for their work to retain them for the full two years. Since college students often work one or more jobs in addition to carrying a full-time course load, adequate compensation for their work helped to ensure that the advocates would take their positions seriously, be accountable for their work, meet deadlines, and remain committed to the project.

Student advocates became part-time employees of Latino Issues Forum and were budgeted to work an average of 10 hours per week at \$12.00 per hour. In reality, according to one advocate, because they were generally unable to do the work in the allotted 10 hours per week, the students worked many additional hours for which they were not paid. As a result, some needed to pick up an extra job and one advocate left for financial reasons.

Being a part of the decision making process. The advocates felt a strong connection to the project and their work in large part because they were given leadership roles and liked having “a lot of say in what they were doing.”

Involvement with related activities. The student advocates also had opportunities to be involved in local, statewide, national, and global tobacco control events which helped keep them focused, stimulated, and aware of the connections between global tobacco control issues and their work on campus. Over the course of the project the advocates:

- Testified before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in support of a citywide tobacco permit ordinance.
- Testified before the U.S. delegation to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in Nashville, Tennessee in September 2002 in support of stricter standards for worldwide tobacco marketing and advertising giving advocates an opportunity to practice their public speaking and presentation skills.
- Regularly attended meetings of the Global Action Task Force (GATF) and participated in GATF’s November 2002 Intercambio in San Francisco that hosted tobacco control advocates from Africa, Latin America, and India.
- Traveled to the WTO meeting in Cancun in September 2003 and the FTAA meeting in Miami in November 2003 to protest liberal trade policies that put multinational corporate profits over public health.

- Traveled to Ecuador to hold an intercambio (educational exchange) with Ecuadorian high school and college students on tobacco control issues, share tools for policy advocacy, and work together in the growing youth-led tobacco control movement.



Skills development. Most of the advocates saw the project as an opportunity to learn or improve their skills in research, communication, public speaking, writing, community organizing, and decision-making. The challenge of working on a long-term basis trying to convince high-level policymakers to change existing policies helped them to fine tune all of those skills and be constantly learning and challenged, even though some of the work involved doing things some weren't comfortable with, like public speaking. One advocate also mentioned that at times there has been a lot of pressure trying to balance demanding extracurricular activities *and* schoolwork.

Support. The project director fostered positive relationships and a family-like support system with the advocates through meetings, get-togethers, and special lunches and dinners. The project used other ways to foster positive interactions for the advocates that made the project less of a job and more of a student-run club or project where all members give equally of their time, commitment, and ideas. These included: providing lunch at events and meetings, keeping in constant email and phone contact, and setting aside time to celebrate successes and enjoy each other's company. The advocates also enjoyed the strong support they received from LIF and San Francisco Tobacco Free Project. "Without outside support it's difficult," said one advocate. "It's good to be able to lean on the wisdom of people coordinating the group."

The advocates truly valued Christina Reyes, the project director who was with the project for two years. (A previous commitment prevented her from staying when the project was extended an additional six months.) Advocates described her as a "mentor" and "friend" who "loved the work as well." Some advocates said it was difficult making the transition to a new project coordinator.

“When Christina left, a lot of motivation dwindled,” said one advocate. Besides, another observed, “no one expected the project to be extended for another 6 months.”

Passing controversial policies

The advocates learned that important keys to advocacy work are commitment, persistence, and patience – especially in the face of resistance. They also learned that change takes time, especially the policy changes they were seeking. They found that being in a leadership role means being a self-starter and being willing to take the initiative. And they discovered the benefits of building as wide a coalition as possible, including working closely with the administration, Associated Students, Health Sciences, and other student groups on campus.

Methods

This case study was prepared using a variety of data. Project progress reports, correspondence, newspaper articles, and flyers were reviewed. Key informants were interviewed on each campus, including:

San Francisco State University

2 student advocates

Professor, Health Sciences Department

SFSU Bookstore Board Member

Student Center Governing Board Member

Chief of Operations, SFSU Foundation Inc.

City College of San Francisco

2 student advocates

Instructor, Health Sciences Department

Chair, Journalism Department

Multiple attempts were made to call and email four different members of the CCSF Board of Trustees, however not one responded.