

San Francisco Chronicle
"Swells"
By Catherine Bigelow
April 15, 2007
<http://www.sfgate.com>

Tip-top: It was, we think, a philanthropic torch pass at Bimbo's 365 Club for the Tipping Point Community's inaugural Give*Get Benefit.

The event raised \$1.2 million for this foundation, which serves as a clearinghouse for organizations (such as Rubicon, the Homeless Prenatal Program and First Place Fund for Youth) that tackle homelessness and housing, youth development and unemployment.

"That's \$1.2 million going straight back out the door," said Tipping Point founder Daniel Lurie. "We had great sponsors like Levi's, Fiji Water, Equinox, Krug Champagne and PlumpJack Wines. The party was paid for by our board." And what a swell board it is: Lurie, Chris James, Ronnie Lott, Eric Roberts and Katie Schwab, who serves as board chairwoman.

"I'll be the first one to ask, how do you say 'no' to Daniel?" joked Lott. "More important, how do you say no to the work we are trying to accomplish?"

"The universe is calling for all of us to serve those less fortunate. We see it here in the city and all the way down to Silicon Valley," said the former 49er, who also directs his All Stars Helping Kids foundation. "The energy here is great, with so many young people getting engaged and helping make the world a better place. Their involvement does make a difference in people's lives."

The sellout crowd of 450 (with a waiting list to boot) was peopled by longtime community leaders and philanthropists (Charles and Helen Schwab, Mimi Haas, Don and Doris Fisher, Dede Wilsey, Susie and Mark Buell, Tom and JaMel Perkins, Carla Emil and Rich Silverstein, and Mike and Cathy Podell) as well as a new breed of hip and happening philanthropists in their 30s and 40s (Nicola Miner and Robert Mailer Anderson; David Lamond; Trevor and Alexis Traina; Jad and Christina Dunning; Chris and Bradley James; Lurie and his wife, Becca Prowda).

\$50K tables went like that. But with \$250 and \$500 individual tickets, an even younger philanthropic subset was on the scene, too. The supper club setting perfectly suited the sumptuous Paula LeDuc supper. And Stanlee Gatti created clever teeter-totter-esque centerpieces that read "Be a Tipping Point."

Scanning the room (and perhaps calculating the accumulated net worth gathered in Bimbo's ballroom), Trevor Traina observed: "It's amazing what Daniel has accomplished. He's gone from zero to 60 in just one year."

Although Stephan Jenkins and Third Eye Blind (decked out in Levi's labels) belted out their best, the rockers were outgunned by students from the KIPP Summit Academy in San Lorenzo, one of Tipping Point's grantees.

The charter school is building a new campus for the first Bay Area KIPP high school. But success meant the KIPP Orchestra would lose its music building -- until this non-gala's live auction kicked into high gear.

In the end, dueling \$100K donations (Dede Wilsey, Charles Schwab, Mimi Haas) were added together for a whopping \$300K building fund, which received an in-kind architectural design donation from Gensler.

Another give/get for Tipping Point? A raffle for a Prius, won by Brent and Mary Johnson, who immediately returned it to the pot, whereupon it was won by Bill Edwards, who kept the luxury package at the Carneros Inn accompanying the car, but donated the car to Tipping Point, where it will be used by the foundation's grantees. Phew.

"Tonight felt like our 'coming-out' party," enthused Lurie. "We want to engage young philanthropists to step up and take a leadership role. Tipping Point shines a light on agencies that are not always high profile but at the end of the day are doing the hard work that makes a difference in people's lives."