

Presidio's 'green' M.B.A. turned into just the ticket

BY LAZARO FRAGA

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Nils Moe wanted an M.B.A. program that would build on the knowledge and experience he gained running a nonprofit and studying geography and environmental science.

"At that point, I had started a couple of nonprofits and sort of enjoyed the process of starting up a business. But felt I needed some more business acumen to continue to drive change through business," said Moe, who applied to several M.B.A. programs before settling on the sustainable management program at the Presidio Graduate School in San Francisco in 2005. "I didn't feel like I wanted to take the traditional M.B.A. route."

Moe, who, along with work in nonprofits, taught undergraduate psychology at San Francisco State before and after enrolling at Presidio, said he was impressed by the diversity at Presidio.

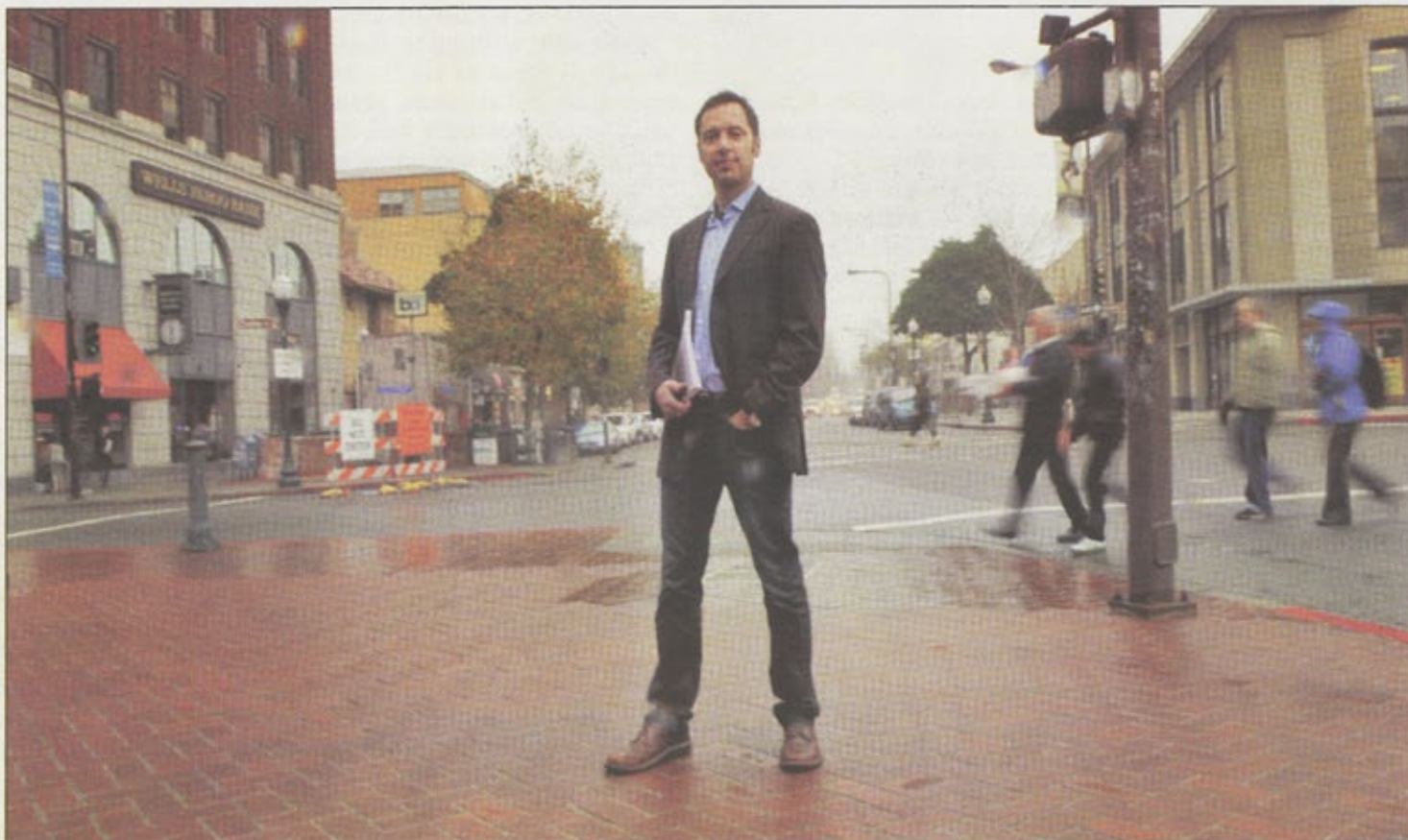
There was an even split between men and women at the school. Most of the other programs he looked into were predominantly male, Moe said.

Being an experienced applicant, he also appreciated the older, more accomplished student body.

When he attended Presidio, the average age was in the mid-30s, he said.

In his current position as a sustainability issues adviser to Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates, Moe uses what he has learned every day.

"I sit on a number of boards where we sit with financial managers," Moe said.



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"I definitely feel more grounded in sort of the world of finance," says nonprofit exec Nils Moe of expertise gained through earning an M.B.A.

"I definitely feel more grounded in sort of the world of finance. I can speak their language."

Moe said the program's virtual learning component with residencies once a month for four days offered him the flexibility to finish in three years while he worked.

This also allowed him to begin working

in the Berkeley mayor's office two months before he graduated.

"It was quite different from any academic experience that I'd had before," Moe said. "I would say it is the primary reason I am where I am today."

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NILS MOE

Bachelor's degree: Geography and environmental science at McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

Current job: Assistant to Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates.

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