



2019 IMPACT REPORT

**CREATING A BETTER WORLD
THROUGH SCIENCE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03	Letter from the President
05	EI helps youth grow
07	EI helps groups succeed
08	EI helps communities thrive
09	EI helps quantify history
10	Elevate the discourse on how science solves real-world problems
12	2019 Impact by the Numbers
14	EI board and staff spotlight

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Friends,

2019 has been another stellar year for the EI. The high point for me was my conversation with the 14th Dalai Lama at his residence in Dharamsala, India, organized by the Mind and Life Institute. During our one-hour conversation, we discussed how new evolutionary thinking supports his own call to go “beyond religion” to create an ethics for the whole world.

Using science-based approaches to create a better world, EI continues to make strides in basic scientific research, communication, and evolving the future in real-world settings. Peter Turchin’s Seshat Databank team published a major article in *Nature* titled “Complex societies precede moralizing gods throughout history.” The response was massive, generating 53 media articles in 8 languages, featuring prominent media outlets including *The Economist*, *The Telegraph*, *PBS*, *Gizmodo*, and *Science Magazine*.

Peter’s work was also featured in an article published in *The Guardian* titled “History as a Giant Data Set: How Analysing the Past Could Help Save the Future.”

On the communication front, EI’s online magazine *This View of Life* continues to publish great content and my new book with the same title has kept me busy speaking with the likes of Jonathan Haidt, Robert Sapolsky, and a large audience at the National Book Festival.

Evolving the future in real-world settings, EI’s public charter school, East Tampa Academy, continues to grow and thrive under the stewardship of Vice President Michelle Shimberg. EI co-founder Jerry Lieberman organized a symposium with the famed Mondragon Corporation, a federation of worker cooperatives in the Basque Region of Spain, starting an initiative similar to our continued Norway Project quality of life investigation.

Prosocial, a framework I developed to work with groups around the world, has had another great year, including a new book co-authored with Paul Atkins and Steve Hayes titled “Prosocial: Using Evolutionary Science to Produce Productive, Equitable, and Collaborative Groups.” Our system of offering online training to facilitators, who then work with groups on their own initiatives, is resulting in a myriad of global projects.

Our board expanded to include two new members, Lori Wiser and Guru Madhavan. Lori has a background in marketing and consulting and is already making an invaluable contribution. Guru is Director of Programs at the National Academy of Engineering and will be working with me and the rest of the board on exciting developments next year.

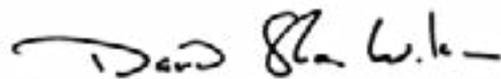
EI will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2020 and our planned programmatic activities include:

- Partnering with Feeding Tampa Bay and the Tampa Housing Authority to establish a permanent food bank at East Tampa Academy and provide books for our students and their families;
- Providing valuable training on resilience with the HA! Program;
- Expanding the Seshat databank and publishing its scientific findings; Opening a preschool and continue to improve the quality of life for residents of the East Pasco area;

- Hosting another summit with Mondragon as well as host Mondragon representatives in Oslo for a joint seminar on “The Nordic Model vs The Mondragon Model”

The Dalai Lama is acutely aware that over 7 billion culturally diverse people must somehow work together to avoid imposing suffering on each other and all of the other inhabitants of the Planet Earth. His vision of an ethics for the whole world, distilled from all the world’s religions, is part of the solution, but it needs to be supplemented by the best of our scientific knowledge to become “wise managers of evolutionary processes.” The Evolution Institute is at the vanguard of this effort. To the board, staff, advisors, partners, and supporters - we simply couldn’t do this important work without you - thank you! I look forward to making a real impact with you in 2020.

Onward!



President of Evolution Institute

EI IS CREATING A BETTER WORLD THROUGH SCIENCE

EI helps **youth grow.**



East Tampa Academy

East Tampa Academy – founded by EI in 2017, located in Tampa’s most populated, underserved and impoverished neighborhood, enrolled over 100 children, including preschool and K-2. After a highly competitive and rigorous process, Tampa Kiwanis Club awarded our school \$100,000 to partner with Feeding Tampa Bay and the Tampa Housing Authority, establishing a permanent food bank inside the school and providing books for our students and their families. The Academy’s student enrollment doubled for the 2018-2019 academic year - allowing us to reach even more of Tampa’s most vulnerable youth.

Other Academy accomplishments included:

- We were awarded the National Charter School Award - Community Service Honor Roll – a wonderful acknowledgment of the work our team the school and the surrounding East Tampa community.
- Started a pre-Kindergarten program serving 4 year olds on the East Tampa Academy campus.
- Awarded a 2-year grant from the Florida

- Department of Education, enabling us to enhance curriculum, technology, and staff development at ETA.
- Expanded community partnerships to include Straz Center for Performing Arts, Tampa Housing Authority, Bess the Book Bus, Tampa Jewish Family Services, and Utica College of Nursing.
- Continued our efforts to provide food to our students and community families through our monthly food distribution.
- Held a school holiday drive, providing gifts for all of our school families during the holiday season.
- Enhanced the fine arts program at East Tampa Academy with art, music and dance instruction for all ETA students.



HA! Healthy & Agile

The HA! Program provides free training to educators, teaching them the skills to ensure their students develop resiliency, as well as learn about nutrition and safety. Utilizing the PAX Good Behavior Game, we train educators a classroom management tool that benefits

students and dramatically reduces stress in staff. The HA! team has been working in East Tampa for six months, and have implemented the HA! Program at over 10 sites and with almost 200 children.

87%

of Children participating in the HA! Program showed a reduced risk of unintentional injury

97%

of students experienced an increase in knowledge of health and safety practices

100%

of teachers trained had a decrease in depression and stress levels

100%

of teachers trained had an increase in knowledge of health and safety practices

El helps groups succeed.



Prosocial

Prosocial is a framework for working with single groups and multi-group “cultural ecosystems” around the world to achieve positive change. Prosocial makes use of many of the same techniques that experienced community activists, but in a way that can be rapidly transmitted to communities worldwide and can be applied to any context, such as education, urban revitalization, health, environmental sustainability, and so on. This year saw an incredible year of growth for the Prosocial project:

- In 2019, Prosocial has trained over 100 individuals, enabling them to be facilitators of Prosocial to their groups. Since its inception, Prosocial has trained over 220 facilitators.
- Prosocial has trained individuals representing prominent groups around the world, including the National Health Service, Max Planck Institute, Hivisasa Kenya, Ascension Health Care, Seton Cove Interfaith Center in Austin, Catholic Learning Community (a K-12 school in Sydney with > 140 staff), PLEA school (Stu Libman’s school), and University of Nevada Reno.
- We’ve continued to develop the Prosocial website (www.prosocial.world) that



provides a basic introduction, a directory of facilitators, and a magazine section featuring successful applications.

- We published a book on the topic, titled [Prosocial: Using Evolutionary Science to Build Productive, Equitable, and Collaborative Groups](#) and authored by Paul W.B. Atkins, Steven C. Hayes, and David Sloan Wilson.
- The development of internet tools for helping facilitators interact with each other and their groups.
- The versatility of Prosocial is demonstrated by a number of applications, from educational [non-profits](#), [community development in central Africa](#), a [government agency in Australia](#), [spiritual and healthcare settings](#), [helping corporations develop ethical cultures](#), and within [macroeconomics and sustainability](#).

El helps communities thrive.



East Pasco Initiative

Several years ago, the Evolution Institute began working with individuals from the East Pasco Coalition. The Coalition consists of residents from five of the most under-served and economically depressed communities in Florida.

- We are completing the renovation of a building owned by our partner organization, the Farmworkers of Florida, in Tommytown – located just outside Dade City. In 2020, we will open our second early childhood learning center there.
- Simultaneously, we will be deeply engaged in improving the quality of life where the school is located. This will involve creating cooperative social entrepreneurship businesses, greatly improving workforce development, and providing affordable housing opportunities with the assistance of the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing at the University of Florida.
- Additionally, we will be engaging AdventHealth in comprehensive health activities and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences.

El helps quantify history.

Seshat: Historical Databank

The Seshat Databank brings together the most current and comprehensive body of knowledge about human history in one place by systematically collecting what is currently known about the social and political organization of human societies and how civilizations have evolved over time. Over the past year, we've expanded our efforts to produce multiple databases on different topics related to human history.

In 2019, we published a major paper in Nature titled "Complex societies precede moralizing gods throughout history." The reaction was massive, generating over 53 media articles in several languages including English, Spanish, Russian, French, Polish, Portuguese, Croatian, and German. Prominent media outlets covering the article included The Economist, The Telegraph, PBS, Gizmodo, and Science Magazine. An article on the paper in LiveScience received more than 20,000 upvotes and 800 comments on Reddit.

Other highlights included:

- The Seshat project partnered with the Institute for Economics and Peace in 2019 to produce the Human Peace Index (HPI) database. The underlying data has been collected for analysis, and we are working to DataChemist to publish this data on our website.
- Work has almost been completed on ArchSeshat, an archaeological database funded through the University of Oxford's School of Anthropology and Museum Studies.

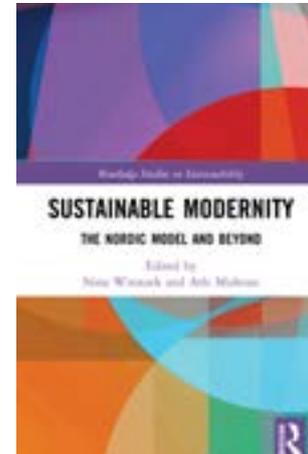


- We are in the process of writing a narrative companion to our Nature article. This will take the form of a volume covering the evolution of moralizing supernatural punishment in the regions covered by the Seshat databank. This volume will be published by Beresta Books and funds from its sales will support the Seshat project.
- We will publish our Axial Age volume in late 2019, with funds from the sales of this volume going to support the Seshat project as well.
- We have two articles in press for the Journal of Cognitive History.

Over 2019, there were three workshops held on Seshat and multiple lectures and presentations across 3 different countries.

A [Guardian article](#) published in November 2019 provides an extensive overview of the databank and its ability to "anticipate the future of human societies based on historical evidence."

El helps elevate the discourse on how science solves real-world problems.



Norway Quality of Life

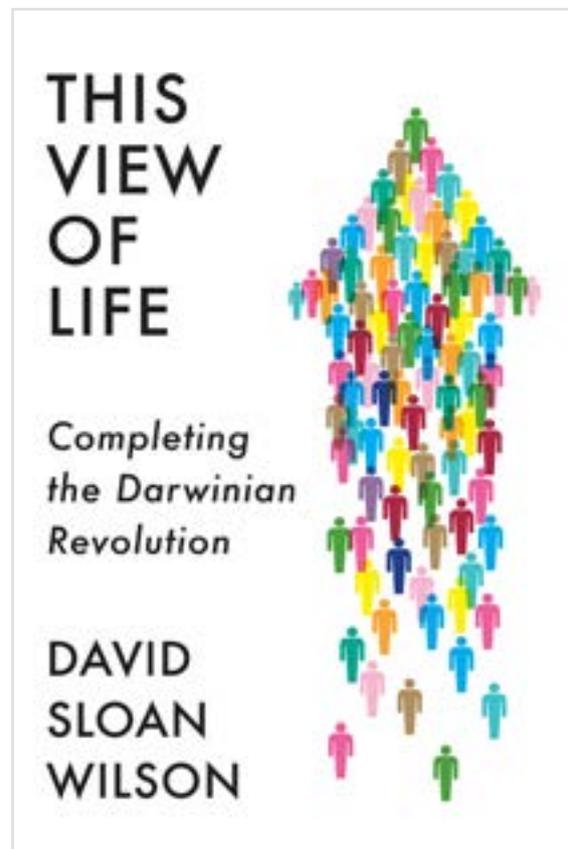
We've embarked on a multi-pronged research project to understand the key to Norway's success and to understand what elements of its success we can emulate in the U.S. During 2019 we worked closely with some of our long-term and strategic partners in Norway to plan an event in Mondragon, Spain. El played a primary role in organizing the summit and establishing a relationship between Norway and Mondragon. The summit was held in order to build a collaboration between Mondragon Corporation, our Norwegian colleagues, and El to share knowledge about high quality of life, with Norway and Mondragon Corporation providing two exemplary models. Plans are presently on-going to continue and expand the collaboration in concrete and specific ways in 2020:

- El and Mondragon will have a follow-up summit that will include Sustainable Cooperative (SCOOP) from Holland, a research and training center dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of sustainable cooperative as a key feature of resilient societies.
- In 2020, we plan to host Mondragon representatives in Oslo for a joint seminar on "The Nordic Model vs The Mondragon Model". El board member, Nina Witoszek will also be facilitating Mondragon's meeting with the University of Oslo's Rector and the Dean of Business School.
- A large grant has been submitted to the Nordic Council program Nordforsk (Project OIKOS), which includes participation by David Sloan Wilson, Nina Witoszek, and others. If successful, the grant will investigate "Home and Belonging in the Nordic Countries: Forging Strategies of Prosociality and Cooperation."
- The edited volume "Sustainable Modernity: The Nordic Model and Beyond", was released to the public for free, allowing anyone interested to [download or view online](#). This was co-edited by El Board member Nina Witoszek and included contributions from El co-founders Jerry Lieberman and David Sloan Wilson.

This View of Life and the Science to Narrative Chain

Through our communications outlet, This View of Life Magazine, we continue to publish forward thinking articles and special topic publications on anything and everything from an evolutionary perspective. In 2019, David Sloan Wilson's book by the same name "This View of Life: Completing the Darwinian Revolution" was also published, receiving widespread positive reviews, including an in-depth article published in [Nature](#). The book, and Evolution Institute's mission, were discussed throughout 2019 in a number of interviews, special speaking engagements, lectures, panels, and other appearances including:

- David Sloan Wilson in [conversation](#) with the Dalai Lama for the Mind & Life Conversations, India.
- David Sloan Wilson in conversation with Jonathan Haidt "Harnessing the power of evolution" at the Rubin Museum of Art, which was aired on [C-SPAN](#).
- Wonderfest hosted a [conversation](#) between David Sloan Wilson and neuroscientist Robert Sapolsky.
- David Sloan Wilson participated in [2019's World Science Festival](#).
- As well as the 2019 National Book Festival at the Library of Congress.
- And David in [conversation](#) with Nick Hanauer at Seattle's Town Hall.
- We also started This View of Life podcast in late 2019, expanding the discourse on the importance of applied science to yet another communication outlet.



2019 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

PEOPLE

100 Students	110 Trained by Prosocial as facilitators
180 Caregivers	174 Children benefited from HA Program**
30 Families impacted through food bank	10 Professionals trained by HA! Program **
50 Families impacted by holiday school drive	374,454 Unique website visitors

**The Children's Board database includes 7 professionals and 135 children. Additional training outside of this totals 10 professionals and 174 children.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Institute for Economics and Peace
- Coalition of Behavioral Science
- DataChemist
- Complexity Institute Vienna
- University of Oxford
- National Institute of Economic and Social Research
- Kauffman Foundation
- Templeton World Charity Fund
- Kiwanis Club Tampa
- Florida Department of Education
- SHIFT Foundation
- Professor Halvor Holtskog, Norwegian University of Science & Technology
- Stein Stugu, Mondragon Corporation
- Sustainable Cooperative (SCOOP)
- Hillsborough County School District
- Children's Board of Hillsborough County
- Straz Center for Performing Arts
- Tampa Housing Authority
- Bess the Book Bus
- Tampa Jewish Family Services
- Utica College of Nursing
- Feeding Tampa Bay
- Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation
- James & Amy Shimberg Foundation Rainbow Heights
- Community Center
- Bible Truth Ministries
- Potter Elementary School
- Child & Family Studies, University of South Florida
- Positive Spin, Tampa
- AdventHealth
- Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing, University of Florida
- Farmworkers of Florida
- University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences
- MB Northside Church
- Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH



85% | of all donations received go directly to supporting our applied projects.



RESEARCH



STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Rozelia Kennedy,
Ph.D., HA! Program Director

“As a recent graduate in Education, I found EI to be on the leading edge of researching and implementing projects that address not only education but social and economic conditions on the community level. I am excited about our HA! Project and how we were able to see immediate results. My interest in East Tampa stems from my childhood roots in the community and how economic change can impact the children living there now. I am also compelled by EI’s willingness to work in the communities that need the help the most.”

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Guru Madhavan
Board of Directors

“In the world of go-go specialization, very few sources and analyses take the necessarily wide-angled approach or provide sophisticated perspectives and provocations—that’s why I’ve long enjoyed being a student of the Evolution Institute.”



WE SOLVE REAL-WORLD PROBLEMS WITH **SCIENCE**

JOIN THE EFFORT!

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**ALL OF THIS IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE
OF SUPPORTERS LIKE **YOU****