

2021 IMPACT REPORT



THE EVOLUTION INSTITUTE

Applying science-based solutions to solve today's most pressing social issues

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reflection

Dear Friends of the Evolution Institute,

2021 has been another challenging year for all of us, but once again we have been reminded what is possible when we work together. Cooperation, interdependence, care- these are vital to life and at the foundation of the Evolution Institute's mission.

This year we placed special emphasis on cultivating the communities our projects are a part of. We firmly believe that our greatest strength is in uplifting science while supporting the local communities that have demonstrated lifetimes of dedication, compassion, and resourcefulness. We organized several neighborhood events to provide services such as healthcare resources, family counseling, voter registration, and job training, and hosted an accessible vaccine clinic in a low-income area with high hesitancy rates.

Together with our partners we've achieved some exciting milestones that include:

- East Pasco Academy completed its first school year providing a quality bilingual education to primarily immigrant families and is at full enrollment
- East Tampa Academy's VPK class graduated with more than 80% of students meeting or exceeding Kindergarten expectations in a historically underserved community

- Seshat researchers delivered lectures at several global conferences and were featured in major news outlets for their work that helps decision-makers navigate the intersecting crises of climate change, socio-cultural instability and breakdown, and violent civil turmoil

Our Board of Directors expanded to include 3 incredible experts: Rafael Wittek, Professor of Theoretical Sociology at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands; Gin Lieberman, life-long educator with a doctorate in Communication, and Lisi Krall, professor of Economics at the State University of New York.

Most importantly, without you and the support of our funders none of this would be possible. Thank you for helping us make an impact in 2021, and we are excited to continue working together to uplift science and revitalize community.

With gratitude,

Michelle Shimberg, President
David F. Bjorklund, Vice President
Jerry Lieberman, Co-founder and Treasurer

MISSION

Our mission is to apply science-based solutions and use evidence-based best practices to solve today's most pressing social issues and improve quality of life.

We bring science experts and practitioners together, resulting in a new agenda for research, policy formulation, and policy implementation. Many of our projects are focused on serving underserved neighborhoods in Tampa Bay and Pasco County, Florida with the aim to develop innovative yet practical approaches that meet the specific needs and opportunities of communities.

VISION

Our vision is to apply research, knowledge and expertise in order to elevate quality of life, advance social justice and human equality, and add value to issues affecting humanity for the benefit all people.

VALUES

We are committed to being part of the solution.

- We believe in a just and fair society. Everything we do is oriented toward the welfare of others and society as a whole.
- We believe in the importance of scientific knowledge, research, evidence and facts and the importance in applying these to help others and improve the world.
- We value quality of life for humans, and the environment that sustains them, now and for future generations.
- We value diversity and have respect for all communities and cultures.
- We value democratic practices, secular education, free inquiry, and humanistic philosophy and ethics.
- We value cooperation and collaboration and believe in working together to help others and to improve the world.
- We value inclusivity and believe that first and foremost every human being deserves the same rights and respect.
- We value an understanding of cultural evolution and believe we can learn from our history, to improve our future.
- We value innovation and creativity and believe that we can all contribute to improving the world in which we live.
- We value integrity and professionalism and operate within a framework of accountability, transparency and fiscal responsibility.



PROJECT EAST TAMPA ACADEMY

We launched East Tampa Academy in 2017 to improve learning outcomes in a severely underserved, low-income community of Florida. At a nearby school, 80% of students were failing by the 3rd grade. Over the last 4 years our VPK and K-2nd grade school has used evidence-based best practices to solve this problem, engaging students so that all types of learners can achieve the skills needed to be at grade level and have the foundation for a successful future. ETA is more than a school- it provides a warm, family-oriented environment and an uplifting energy that is raising up the entire community.

HIGHLIGHTS

- At ETA's Back to School Bash, music and laughter invited families from the neighborhood to stop by and register their children for school while being offered resources such as **family counseling, job training, voter registration, and healthcare services.**
- Students focused on developing their **social and emotional skills through music and expression** with bucket drumming lessons from the Teaching Artist of StageWorks Theatre Tampa
- An **afterschool program offered free of charge** helped children to further enhance their learning, building skills specifically designed for each student's individual learning goals.
- VPK Graduation was a time to celebrate, with **over 80% of students meeting or exceeding Kindergarten expectations** under the leadership of director Ms. Frankie Jones



PROJECT EAST PASCO INITIATIVE

For the past decade, we have been working in underserved neighborhoods in Pasco County to build strong relationships with respected local leaders and community-based organizations. We have continued our support to the East Pasco Coalition to improve the quality of life for its residents. Together with our partners in Tommytown, Farmworkers Self-Help (FSH) and Resurrection House, we opened East Pasco Academy (EPA) in Fall 2020. This is the community's first early learning center that provides a quality, bilingual, culturally-sensitive education, and is providing a diverse group of low-income families with the foundation needed for their children to have a healthy, successful life.

HIGHLIGHTS

- After one year of being open, EPA has become **a source of pride for the community**. The school and its VPK program, a free educational program that gives early learners a jump start, is at **full enrollment**. The success of this project has shown what is possible when strong community engagement is combined with the right technical assistance and funding.
- EI provided technical support so that FSH could conduct their own comprehensive **Community Survey**. Census data was often not reflective of the reality of their residents and together we collected more accurate information that could be used to improve services in their area. The results of the survey were presented to key stakeholders from Dade City and Pasco County, and prompted a **joint community revitalization effort**



PROJECT **SESHAT** Global History Databank

The Seshat: Global History Databank brings together the most current and comprehensive body of knowledge about human history in one place. This unique Databank systematically collects what is currently known about the social and political organization of human societies and how civilizations have evolved over time. Our work is designed to aid decision-makers and policy leaders in navigating the current intersecting crises of climate change, sociocultural instability and breakdown, and violent civil turmoil.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The *Consequences of Crisis* project began in January 2021 in collaboration with a team of researchers from Complexity Science Hub in Vienna and the University of Oxford.
- A database of crisis cases has been developed with **over 150,000 datapoints on key variables explaining the dynamics of societal crisis**. Over 80 external databases have been explored to this date.
- Daniel Hoyer and Peter Turchin presented preliminary results and discussed project aims at a keynote lecture titled “**The History of the Near Future: What history tells us about our Age of Discord**” delivered at *Disrupting Politics* seminar in September.



PROJECT QUALITY OF LIFE

We have been engaged in learning as much as possible about Norway since our Quality of Life workshop at the University of Memphis in 2011. There we considered what nations received high ratings on the UN Human Development Index, learning that Norway was repeatedly the highest – with the least inequality according to the UN Gini coefficient. It is now a decade that we have been gathering information and insights on Norway’s world class QoL outcomes.

As a part of this initiative we have also built a partnership with Mondragon Corporation. Despite differing in their culture and history, both Norway and Mondragon have a very high quality of life. Workers have democratic control; public early education is valued; basic needs of all people are met.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In April 2021, the Evolution Institute started to assist HUHEZI, the Faculty of Humanities and Education Sciences at Mondragon University, and Lanki, Mondragon’s Institute of Cooperative Research, in the development and implementation of research designs to conduct **a rigorous evaluation of their Cooperative Leaders Development Program.**
- Like Mondragon, the Evolution Institute is working to promote **equitable and participatory community and regional development** through broadly shared ownership, progressive and inclusive education, and inter-cooperation among education and training institutions, research and development organizations, local government bodies, and community coalitions.
- We are **revitalizing our relationship with Norway** following the election of Jonas Gahr Støre, leader of the Labour Party as prime minister and increased opportunity for international travel.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

East Tampa Academy



Mr. Ronald Anderson
East Tampa Academy School Director

"I am proud of the new culture that we have created here. The parents are engaged, the students want to be here. They want to participate in every aspect of their education."

In 2021 we were thrilled to welcome community leader Mr. Ronald Anderson as the School Director for East Tampa Academy K-2 Charter School. He has 20 years of experience as an educator, program administrator, and program director for non-profits, and is affiliated with organizations such as Turn Around Tampa Bay and Head Start Policy Council. He has created a warm, welcoming space where even going to the principal's office is a treat that student's look forward to.

"It's rewarding to know that when I'm passing through the classrooms, [the students] want to say hello. Normally you wouldn't want to go to the principal's office, but they want to come and my door is open. So they come in and they cross their legs and we have our conversation."



Ms. Angela Thornton
Parent Liaison and ESE Teacher

"We empower our students so that they can own their education. Once you are educated, no one can take that away from you. That's what we are trying to instill in them."

As ETA's Parent Liaison and Exceptional Student Education Teacher, Ms. Angela Thornton has done an incredible job cultivating meaningful relationships with families, connecting parents with the resources they need, and building strong organizational partnerships that raise up the entire community. She has been a compassionate and dedicated leader who, having been raised in East Tampa, is proud to be giving back to where she came from.

"The school has had a big impact on me because I love what I do and I love giving back to this community, because I grew up in this community. For me, I always knew I would get my degree to come back and better where I came from. That's very important to me."



Officer Shonnie Wade

East Tampa Academy Officer

"Years from now, someone could say Officer Wade, thank you. You may not remember me but I'll always remember you because of what you said, your kindness, your gentleness, your words, your attitude. That's my hope for this school, that we send out an energy, a rainbow that just shines."

When you visit East Tampa Academy, it doesn't take long to realize that Officer Wade is integral to the school's uplifting spirit. She has been with ETA since its inception, and over the years has put her heart and soul into numerous roles to ensure that students and staff have a warm, safe, engaging experience. Her contagious energy and care have gone a long way in creating a conducive learning environment, and the positive impact she has on a daily basis does not go unnoticed.

"Jobs are something that we can get. This is not just a job. It's an opportunity to tap into destiny and purpose. This school, for me, is purpose-driven. So the biggest thing that we can take away from this is that everyone associated has an opportunity to make this school be way bigger than what it is."



PARTNERSHIPS

Our mission to apply science-based solutions to solve today's most pressing social issues and improve quality of life would not be possible without the expertise and dedication of our partners:

- Tampa Housing Authority
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Rainbow Heights
- Civic Association Kiwanis Club
- Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity
- Gamma Eta Chapter
- Florida Department of Education
- James & Amy Shimberg Foundation
- Bible Truth Ministries
- Early Learning Coalition
- Cornerstone Family Ministries Child Care Food Program
- W.E. Davis Enrichment Center
- Farmworkers Self-Help
- Resurrection House
- Moore Mickens School
- Tri-Lacoochee Steering Committee
- Pasco Economic Development Council
- Lanki Institute of Cooperative Research
- LKS Next of Mondragon
- Arne Naess Center University of Oslo
- Issachar Fund, Templeton Religious Trust
- Partners for a New Economy
- Complexity Science Hub, Vienna, Science Complexity and Collapse Research Group
- Institute for Economics and Peace, Historical Peace Index
- University of Oxford, Centre for the Study of Social Cohesion
- TerminusDB
- Freedom of Religion or Belief Leadership Network



East Tampa Academy, 2021

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Farmworkers Self-Help



Margarita Romo
Founder and Executive Director, FSH

Since Margarita arrived to the worker camps of North Tampa, Florida in 1971, she has dedicated her life to championing the causes of immigrant farmworkers and has played a pivotal role in improving conditions for the entire community.

Margarita is the founder and Executive Director of Farmworker’s Self-Help (FSH), a mutual aid organization that for decades has provided those most in need with essential services such as food banks and free medical clinics, while also empowering members to be agents of change through education programs, job trainings, and mental health counseling.

Margarita has successfully brought together diverse groups to target policy and fight for equitable legislation on behalf of women, children, crime survivors, and all those impacted by prejudice and poverty. Thanks to her relentless advocacy, her community is healing and creating the conditions for generations of health and prosperity.



Ana Limas
Farmworkers Self Help

Attempts to revitalize neighborhoods have proven that investing money and building infrastructure alone may not be sufficient for sustainable change. The key to success lies in the expertise and support of local leaders such as Ana. Ana has been on the ground in one of the most underserved communities of Florida doing the essential yet often undervalued work of cultivating deep-rooted relationships of trust with community members, while also collecting the specific knowledge needed to make projects successful.

Years ago, Ana was pregnant working in the fields as an undocumented immigrant. Today, she has dedicated the last 20 years to the mission of Farmworkers Self-Help and helped not only her own family but countless of others underserved families build a better life. This year her daughter Maria became employed as a teacher at East Pasco Academy, the community’s first early learning center that Ana and the FSH team helped us establish in Fall 2020.



Isabelle Gutierrez
Farmworkers Self-Help

Isabelle came to Farmworkers Self-Help as a 16 year old single mother. Today, she is the organization’s Senior Executive Secretary and fully embodies the organization's mission of agency and self-empowerment.

She is a brilliant organizer who recognizes the strength and beauty of her community and, like Margarita and Ana, is dedicated to the often unseen work of building meaningful relationships and gathering the specific knowledge needed to deliver services effectively.

Isabelle plays a key role around the delivery of essential services such as the food bank and medical clinic that can reach over 100 families each week, and her relentless care and resourcefulness have been instrumental to uplifting those that have fallen through the cracks. Her presence is a pillar of security for her community, and her story a source of inspiration for all those wanting to make an impact.

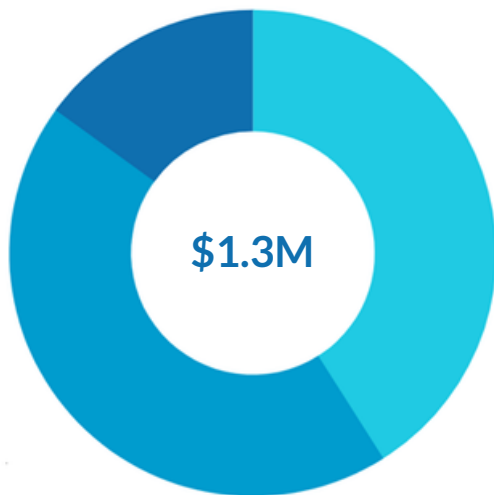


East Pasco Academy, 2021

FINANCIALS

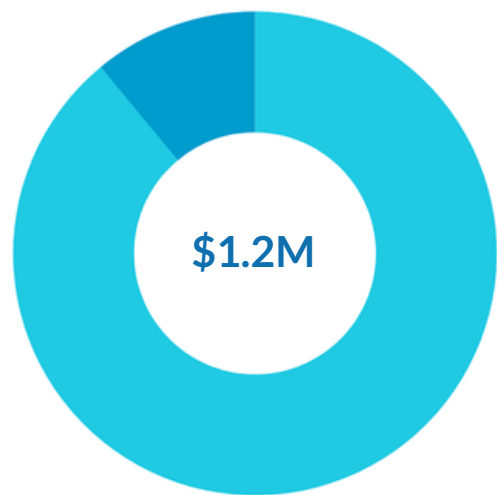
We are proud to report another year of strong support from our donors, and remain committed to the sustainability and quality of our programs.

FY2021 INCOME AND EXPENSE*



INCOME

■ Private Grants	41%
■ Public Grants	44%
■ General Contributions	15%



EXPENSE

■ Programs	89%
■ Administration	11%

89 cents of every dollar spent
went directly to supporting our programs.

*Unaudited figures for fiscal year ended December 31, 2021
Visit evolution-institute.org/about/disclosures/ for most recent audit report and other disclosures.

looking forward

We have a particularly exciting year ahead of us.

In 2022 we will launch a new publication series with Cambridge University Press: *Cambridge Elements in Applied Evolutionary Science*, that will feature a collection of authoritative literature reviews and present an advanced introduction to both the foundational and emerging topics in Applied Evolutionary Science. Contributors include Rafael Wittek from the University of Groningen on “The Evolutionary Foundations of Gossip and Reputation,” and Emily H. Emmott from University College London on “Improving Breastfeeding Rates: Insights from an Evolutionary Perspective.”

Seshat researchers will continue to gather data for the *Consequences of Crisis* project and test theories about the dynamics of state breakdown and resilience. Several articles are expected to be published as well as large collected volumes such as *Seshat History of Human Sacrifice* edited by Peter Turchin and Jenny Reddish and *Seshat History of Moralizing Religion* edited by Jennifer Larson and Jenny Reddish.

We are also organizing an international conference together with our Quality of Life partners in Oslo, Norway and Mondragon, Spain, and will further engage with their universities and institutes to focus scientific and technological development on improving quality of life as broadly as possible.

This year we hope you will also join us and support our work at the Evolution Institute, where we bring together science experts and on the ground practitioners to develop solutions that meet the specific needs and opportunities of our community partners. Through our projects and our partners, we will continue to be engaged in community outreach centered around science as a tool for the betterment of the world.

Evolutionary scientists have shown that altruism is deeply rooted in human nature, and we know that quality of life depends on people like you who care for others. When you support the Evolution Institute, you are elevating science, supporting evidence-based best practices, and helping us sustainably improve the lives of those who need it the most. Together, we can make an impact in 2022 and for years to come.



THE EVOLUTION INSTITUTE

**TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD A
BETTER WORLD**

Donate today and join us on our mission.

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