

The School for Ethical Education Annual Report



September 1, 2019 — August 31, 2020

Ethics in Action Creates Character

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The School for Ethical Education is grateful to the organizations and individuals that have supported our mission to advance *ethics in action*.

2019-20 DONORS

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History

John Winthrop Wright founded The School for Ethical Education in 1995. As a nonprofit organization recognized as tax-exempt by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, SEE provides courses and programs for teachers, parents and students to advance ethical behavior in schools and communities. Mr. Wright's vision for school improvement focused on expanding opportunities for teachers and students to learn how ethics in action creates character. This phrase became the school's motto and recognizes the power of positive ethics in the creation of character. The core ethical concepts or virtues Mr. Wright desired to promote included respect, responsibility, caring, justice, honesty, truthfulness, courtesy, citizenship and the principles of the Golden Rule. The goal of positive character development is integrated into all programs offered by SEE. With the passing of Mr. Wright in 1996, and the monetization of his estate in 2012, SEE has functioned as a totally independent 501(c)3 since 2018 while supported by the John Wright endowment, fees for services, grants and private donations.

Vision

The School for Ethical Education teaches strategies to (K-16) educators to put ethics in action for positive character formation of students.

Mission

The School for Ethical Education recognizes the need for an increased focus on ethical behavior in all human interactions. We affirm the contribution of sound ethical reasoning in the advancement of ethical behavior and character. To promote our vision, SEE uses a variety of methods to provide educators strategies to support student ethical and character formation.

Program Year Summary

The School for Ethical Education (SEE) concluded its twenty-fifth year with the onset of the COVID pandemic that led to the canceling of our spring Character Celebration. Prior to COVID, SEE had been successful in recruiting teachers to have students participate in our two Connecticut programs that include SEE's Academic Integrity PSA contest for high school students, and *Laws of Life* essay writing contest for grades 5-12 students to complete a writing assignment that helps them reflect on positive values. The John Winthrop Wright *Ethics in Action* award was to be accepted in May by Jennifer DelMonico, a Managing Partner for Murtha Cullina in New Haven. Ms. DelMonico has graciously accepted the offer to receive this award in the spring of 2021 if the pandemic has relented. SEE also offers the Youth: Ethics in Service (*YES*) service-learning program, and teaching and consulting programs that included outreach to schools and other education agencies.



SEE continued to support Integrity Works! with the Academic Integrity PSA contest, a free subscription to the Reasoning with Ethics blog, the online sale of our Creating a Culture of Academic Integrity text, the baseline student assessment tool AMIS (Academic Motivation and Integrity Survey), and an on-line video professional development seminar for secondary teachers titled the Achieving with Integrity Seminar.

Regarding the Academic Integrity PSA contest, SEE recruited 19 schools that submitted 43 videos created by 68 students. The PSAs were evaluated by a minimum of three judges, which included many professional videographers. SEE recognized the top three PSAs created by students in support of academic integrity and placed links to their PSAs on the contest website page and have been posting them to social media. Taken together, the PSAs before social media posting had an audience estimated to be over 20,000 students. This also was the first year that the contest volunteer judges offered critique to the students. Student reflection about the contest noted, "We all learned from this experience!" "This assignment did make me reflect on the importance of integrity." "It was very helpful to have feedback."

Over 2,500 students from 21 schools participated in SEE's 20th annual Laws of Life Essay Program. In lieu of the annual Celebration, the top ten-essays were published on the contest website. Teachers commented after the contest, "This is my favorite writing assignment of the entire year." "Laws of Life is a fantastic opportunity for students to explore what shapes values and character." "For many students, the essay is positive, meaningful, and identity-forming."

SEE's ethics blog Reasoning with Ethics was continued this year with new cases published weekly. The blog includes a summary of a current events story along with supplemental online links and discussion questions posted on SEE's website. In addition, links to the blog were published on SEE's social media pages. SEE also communicated with over 13,000 schools via an electronic newsletter that marketed SEE's strategies and products.



A Scene from Wilbur Cross Student Promo for SEE's Integrity PSA Contest.

Other tasks completed during the year included volunteer service to Character.org in multiple projects that included their National Schools of Character (SOC) program, the editing of their SOC program manual, and participation in their national Forum in Washington, DC. Also, an article review was completed for the Journal of Character Education and SEE's contact data files were cleaned along with purchase of additional contacts for SEE's monthly emailing campaign.

SEE Financials

SEE completed its fifth year in office space in Milford, Connecticut and its second year with total independence from historical infrastructure support from Wright Investors' Service. SEE's overall income for the year including support from the endowment was \$182,418 and expenditures for the year were \$162,587. SEE thus had a surplus of \$19,831. Of this, \$15,000 was assigned to SEE's "rainy day" fund.

Integrity Works! was funded through SEE's endowment with \$42,215. *Laws of Life (LOL)* received donations of \$4,787 and an endowment contribution of \$8,443 to administer a statewide *LOL* writing program. Growth in donations will be sought to sustain these excellent character-education programs.

Teaching and Consulting income of \$1,609 continues to represent the challenge SEE is facing in selling contracted services or other resources. Total donations to SEE's totaled \$7,897. With the COVID canceling of the annual fundraising Celebration, SEE lost revenue and expenses for this year with a greater concern that funders and supporters were disconnected from SEE's mission.

SEE continues to work to develop its base of individual and corporate funders to help establish a broader foundation of support for its mission. SEE welcomes donations from those who believe in the critical need to build positive character in support of the family, local schools, their communities and our nation. SEE's vision is a progressive work and is moving forward with the positive expectation to advance *ethics in action to create character*.

To join us and donate to advance a vision of positive character, you may contact SEE through our website – www.ethicsed.org.

2019-20 Income/Expense Summary						
8/31/20 (unaudited)						
	Development	Integrity Works	Laws of Life	Teaching & Consulting	Gen & Admin	Total
Income						
Consult/Sales				1,609		1,609
Donations			4,787	3,110		7,897
Endowment	16,886	42,215	8,443	96,250	6,016	169,810
Grants						
Banquet	1,700					1,700
Prior Year		560		842		1,402
Interest						
Total	18,586	42,775	13,230	101,811	6,016	\$182,418
Expenses						
Employee	13,117	32,806	9,161	74,747	3,935	133,766
Office	459	1,685	124	626	354	3,248
Travel	2	373	(3)	1,266	(2)	1,636
Outside	2,785	5,548	1,080	12,610	1,679	23,702
Project	282	(47)				235
Total	16,645	40,365	10,362	89,249	5,966	\$162,587
Surplus/Deficit	1,941	2,410	2,868	12,562	50	\$19,831