

Dear Friend,

It's December and you may be thinking about where to invest your charitable contributions, so I'd like to tell you what we accomplished this last year, as well as tell you where we're headed next year. I've quoted my friend Scott Klusendorf before who once described a fundraiser event as being like a job interview. I want to tell you why my team has done a great job this year and why you ought to hire us for more work next year!

My favorite story from this year was my impromptu visit with a pro-life club at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. I had some extra time before a seminar so we reached out to the club and asked if they'd like me to do outreach and a Q&A with them. They quickly agreed and we made arrangements. As we began the outreach I had a very surreal experience of listening to three simultaneous dialogues around me between the club members and pro-choice students, feeling like I was standing in a hall of mirrors. It felt like I was surrounded by ERI staff because they were using different ERI arguments and talking points, down to the exact vocabulary we use in the *Equipped for Life Course*!



During lunch that day, Emily, one of the co-presidents, told me how ERI has transformed her club and the campus. It started when a local pregnancy center gifted them the *Equipped for Life Course*. After completing the training, the club decided to host frequent dialogue-oriented outreaches. Since then their club has grown exponentially and the campus culture has changed. Many pro-choice people have become pro-life, many students who are still pro-choice have begun to defend the pro-life club, and the administration is far more responsive to the club when vandalism happens against their displays.

One pro-choice student "Anna" asked to interview Emily six-weeks after they had a conversation about abortion, saying, *"I haven't been able to stop thinking about the argument you made."* After more discussion during the interview Anna sat back in her chair and said, ***"I can't believe I'm going to say this, but I think I have to become pro-life! I can't think of a single response to anything you've said today."***

The students told me that none of this would have been possible without the ERI's training. They've even created a new role for their co-president Joshua who calls other pro-life college clubs to testify to the power of the *Equipped for Life* course and tries to convince them to get our training! When asked why, Emily explained, *"We want as many people as possible to know about this course and the impact it has had on us because this is a bigger issue than just our campus and we want to make an impact all around the country and all around the world and we really believe that the Equal Rights Institute has the tools to help people do that."*

My favorite email we received this year is from a professor who teaches ethics at a small, liberal arts college who asked that we keep her identity anonymous. Here is a part of what she told us:

*"I specifically wanted to thank you for a side-effect of your work that you may not have intended or foreseen. Following your work has made me a better professor. I took a break from teaching at the university level between 2015 and 2017. When I came back to campus after the 2016 election, I had been warned that the campus environment was more hostile than when I had left, and that students generally were having a very difficult time discussing controversial topics in class civilly. Given that I teach ethics, I knew this was going to be a real challenge. So, I restructured my first week of class and devoted it to modeling, understanding, and discussing civil discourse. I shamelessly ripped material from your "Snidely Whiplash is not on Facebook" article for one of my lectures. From talking to my colleagues, I really get the sense that **I'm the only professor in the department who hasn't experienced any of the post 2016 election chilling effect in her classes** for non-majors. My discussions are just as, if not more, lively, engaging, and civil as they were pre-2015. **There is no doubt in my mind that this is due to the practical tips that I've learned from you.**"*



It's been another busy season of speaking at ERI! **Last year we gave 46 speeches and seminars all over the country, speaking to 3,785 people. That's a 28% increase in the number of speeches**, but to roughly the same number of people we spoke to last year, meaning we spoke at more small events than we did last year, like college clubs and church groups. All in all we spoke in Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Washington, Texas, South Carolina, Oregon, Minnesota, Missouri, Michigan, and Pennsylvania!

There's a thing that we have been doing behind the scenes without talking about it very much, although we only began carefully tracking it these last few years: **consulting with pro-life leaders**. I knew when we started ERI that I wanted us to be consultants for the pro-life movement. I'm happy to say that we have been doing that, and this year we doubled our consulting hours (49), including with some of the most influential leaders in Ireland!

This year we scripted, filmed and edited a one-hour extension of the *Equipped for Life Course*, with our most advanced philosophical material yet. This was a four-year project that our philosophy team worked on behind the scenes, and after solving some tough philosophical problems we were unlocked to finally write the scripts and quickly film the videos in our new studio. We think this module answers certain top pro-choice arguments better than anybody else does at a layperson level.

We've also just finished publishing most of the *Equipped for Life Podcast* into a public feed! This is the roundtable podcast that was previously an exclusive for members of the *Equipped for Life Course*. We decided earlier this year to move most of those episodes into a public feed for two reasons: to make it more convenient for our course students to access the podcast, and to expose more pro-life advocates to our training content. Rachel and I will continue to create regular podcasts next year, covering current events, pro-life philosophy, and answers to listener questions. We will continue creating these new episodes with both video and audio options, as can be seen in the last three podcast episodes we published.

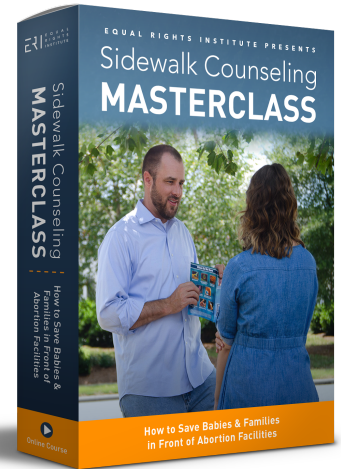
This year our philosophy team decided to make a change in the way we respond to certain pro-choice bodily autonomy arguments. It's a big shift for us, but one of the core values at Equal Rights Institute is to be flexible and innovative, and we felt like this change would be more persuasive to pro-choice students. We published this change in a video titled "Blood Donation and Bodily Rights Arguments" which you can watch at EqualRightsInstitute.com/BloodDonation. We're honored that our good friends at Justice For All have made the same change as us and are playing that video in their seminars now. It was even more encouraging when the student club at St. Olaf College informed us that they tried both methods a lot on their campus and also found our new approach to be FAR more persuasive to the pro-choice students they're talking to.

I've continued doing live webinars this year, some on our own, and some in partnership with Students for Life of America. My favorite is the one Rachel and I did titled "Reacting to Pro-Choice Memes: Responding to Snark with a Winning Argument" that resulted in a 7,000-word resource on our blog with prewritten responses to 12 common categories of pro-choice memes! You can find that resource at EqualRightsInstitute.com/Memes. If you're a member of the Equipped for Life Course, you can also watch that webinar in our new Webinar Archive which also includes several of our other previous webinars.

Our biggest accomplishment this last year was editing and publishing the Sidewalk Counseling Masterclass, an online course training pro-life advocates to effectively save lives in front of abortion facilities. The course includes 14 lessons (making up about 6 hours of content), a workbook with organized notes, easy to follow step-by-step instructions, FAQ's, and 40 practical tips. It also includes access to a private Facebook group where students can interact with our staff and each other.

The course has only been out for a few months but we already have 268 people enrolled in the course. I just met a couple at a seminar I did who told me how helpful the course has been to their sidewalk counseling. I think my favorite testimonial we've received so far is this one though:

"This course has real-life lessons from seasoned sidewalk counselors. I appreciated so much that they not only make suggestions of what to do, but also shared their own mistakes and what they have learned. It's paced such that you don't need any experience in sidewalk counseling to follow it. The training is incredibly practical --- seriously, this course will be some of the best money you ever spend!" - Laura



I'm also proud to tell you that this year ERI earned GuideStar's 2019 Platinum Seal of Transparency by adding information to our Nonprofit Profile, including some of the metrics we track to indicate the progress toward our goals. You can take a look at our GuideStar profile anytime by going to EqualRightsInstitute.com/GuideStar which will redirect you to their website.

That brings me to our financial need going into next year. We reached 124,361 people last year with our training content. We crunched the numbers and were happy to see that our cost to reach each pro-life advocate was cut in half in the last year. **It now only costs us \$2.84 to reach a pro-life advocate. I want to increase the number of advocates we reach by 35,000 next year, so I need to raise \$99,400 to get there. We're already 31% of our way to that goal, but we have another \$68,400 to raise to be in good shape for next year.**

Your gift will directly help our team to make a greater impact next year. Please take some time to prayerfully consider what you can do with what God has given you to **help us train more pro-life advocates to save more lives next year.** As always, you can give a one-time gift or make a monthly pledge with the included giving form and envelope, or you can always give at EqualRightsInstitute.com/Donate.

Thank you so much for the prayers and financial support you have already blessed us with. It's made a real difference, as our followers around the world continue to tell us with their own personal stories of how they've been changed by our work. Thank you for taking this journey with us!

Warmly,

Josh Brahm, for the ERI Team