Education For All

2018-2019 Annual Performance Report

DaGouYan Village, Tongxin, WuZhong, Ningxia, China
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General Overview of EFA

Mission

Education For All (EFA) is a student-run non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality education to underprivileged students. In July 2018, a group of high school students across North America travelled to DaGouYan Village in Tongxin, Ningxia, China, and witnessed the lack of educational opportunities there. In response, they founded EFA to counteract the poverty cycle by providing opportunities through learning English, the global language. Understanding the stark difference between rural children and themselves, they became motivated to continue expanding EFA’s benefits to everyone.

Information on the Local Village and School

In rural Ningxia, China, the EFA founders watched children hacking with hoes in the fields, tending livestock, and foraging for goji berries; they have no other options. The local school provides only five years of education, forcing the students to continue subsistence farming like their ancestors before them. Despite their most significant efforts in school, these children remain in poverty. Realizing that the local elementary school (Wangtuan Town Elementary School) lacked English instructors, the EFA founders became determined to help by providing weekly English lessons. The founders hoped learning English would motivate this younger generation to continue to higher education, envision a new life for themselves, and eventually gain a foothold in the global economy.

Current Operation

During the 2018-2019 school year, EFA taught third and fourth grade English lessons at DaGouYan Village, NingXia, with evident improvement in the students’ grammar and pronunciation. EFA followed a rigid schedule of bi-weekly classes (Mondays and Wednesdays), taught through Zoom Video Conferences, an online webinar application.
In June 2019, EFA volunteers once again traveled to DaGouYan village intending to continue operations in the elementary school and strengthen relationships with the school teachers and administrators. Though they had initially coordinated with the teachers to teach four formal lessons in the school, they encountered a logistical issue in which safety concerns restricted the tutors from the campus. Despite these obstacles, EFA completed its goal by conducting the last two lessons in the village library.

EFA’s program was met with enthusiasm not only from the students but also from new volunteers who were eager to alleviate education inequality. By the end of the trip, EFA’s volunteer pool had expanded to more than fifty members.

**Accomplishments**
With just one year of operation, EFA has attained numerous accomplishments. The organization has successfully taught over 50 English classes to the third and fourth graders of DaGouYan’s local elementary school. Throughout the year, EFA has developed a useful teaching strategy to engage with the kids actively. EFA was also recognized by Christina L. Shea, the mayor of Irvine, California, for success in the local community. EFA has also created a website (www.efaglobal.org) and numerous social media accounts to promote its mission actively. The effort put into the organization has paid off this year, with EFA being recognized by Christina L. Shea, the mayor of Irvine, California, for success in the local community.

**Future Goals**
Although EFA’s vision for future endeavors is ambitious, they believe they can achieve the following goals in the upcoming year:

1. Becoming an official 501c3 non-profit organization. Recognition by the government will allow EFA to expand operations.
(2) Expanding to two more schools. The more students EFA connects to, the higher the impact. EFA has already reached out to schools in Mongolia, Beijing, Jiangxi, and Guizhou.

(3) Starting fundraiser events to support their school branches. EFA will use the donations to purchase English books and educational equipment for the school.

(4) Training new volunteers more effectively. By organizing monthly training workshops, EFA will train their volunteers to make the most of the class time.

(5) Redesigning the teaching curriculum, effectively using class time and entertaining the class.

(6) Recruiting more passionate and capable volunteers. Along with promoting EFA on social media and during club fairs, EFA will reach out to more bilingual students by connecting with local Chinese schools.

**Current Board Members**

EFA has 7 Executive Board Members managing the 2018-2019 school year. Feel free to reach out to board members through their corresponding WeChat ID and email address.

- **Dyllan Liu**  
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- **Melissa Qian**  
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- **Victor Li**  
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**Current Volunteers**

Throughout the 2018 - 2019 school year, over 50 volunteers were actively involved in EFA activities. Most EFA volunteers are from Southern and Northern California in the United States, with other volunteers from the Chicago area, Toronto area, and various parts of China.

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**Report on Tongxin, Ningxia, China**

**Introduction on Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and the town of Tongxin**

Located in north-central China west of the Yellow River bend, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region is primarily rural and one of the most impoverished areas in China. Its people are agrarian, with most families depending on agriculture and animal husbandry for their primary, if not only, source of income. A lack of rainfall in recent years has put a further economic strain on farmers as wetlands are no longer profitable.

**Local Hui Muslim culture, customs, and tradition at the village level**

Roughly fifteen kilometers south of its nearest city, DaGouYan is a small village located in Ningxia, China. DaGouYan Village consists of mostly Hui Muslims, one of the fifty-five ethnic minorities living in China.

One of the significant contributors to DaGouYan’s impoverished state is the dry climate around the region. Since water is scarce in the village, all of the villagers in DaGouYan face difficulties using water for basic life necessities. The villagers rarely take showers to conserve their minimal collection of groundwater.
Situation Overview: Da Gou Yan Village

The people of DaGouYan Village live in extreme poverty. They are dependent on unstable sources of income from land and livestock while struggling to shoulder significant expenses from dowry, medical bills, loans, and providing for children and the elderly.

Like other rural areas below the poverty line, the quality of education available for the students of DaGouYan Village is especially hindered. The only school accessible within the village is a small elementary school that goes up to the fifth grade. Should students choose to attend middle school, they must leave their families and travel long distances to attend the schools in the town of Tongxin. However, even the schools in town provide an inadequate level of teacher expertise and technology.

Although most families wish to send their children to college, it is not financially feasible for them. Despite their academic qualifications, most students who attend high school decide to drop out and begin working on their farms to provide for their families. Young adults are left without the education needed to advance their careers, and their wages remain at the same level as their parents—barely enough for basic sustenance. Thus, the cycle of poverty is perpetuated.
EFA’s Current Difficulties

Scrutiny of local government at Tongxin, Ningxia

In June 2019, the EFA executive team participated in the Global Philanthropy Program, revisiting the DaGouYan village in Wangtuan Town, Tongxin County, Ningxia. The purpose of the visit was to strengthen EFA’s connection with the elementary school in DaGouYan village and meet the students who they had been educationally supporting throughout the school year.

Although EFA executives had planned to teach English lessons in a classroom in the local elementary school, Tongxin’s local government barred the group from entering the school due to security concerns. The representatives of the provincial Department of Education stated that the school was required by law to report outside activities such as EFA operating within the school and that until the school obtained written approval from the department, foreign activities were not permitted. Hence, EFA’s operation in the village is currently suspended, as no lessons can be taught there until official approval is given.

EFA’s Response to Suspension

Although EFA’s English teaching operation is currently suspended at the elementary school in DaGouYan village, there are many other ways to teach students English.

Many other barriers are preventing the students from a quality education which need to be addressed. For example, the library contains few books in English, limiting the students’ exposure to English outside the classroom setting. Another problem is that the school lacks the necessary educational resources. Most computers at the school are very outdated, and only a few of them are functional. There is more to be done, and EFA will address those issues in the next school year. EFA plans to become a legal non-profit organization by applying for 501c3 federal and tax-exempt status in the U.S. within the upcoming school year. Once EFA obtains the 501c3 status, they will be able to organize fundraising and book
donation events to further support the local school in DaGouYan village as well as future EFA locations.

Meanwhile, EFA will utilize this time of suspension to improve the quality of their lessons by organizing monthly volunteer training workshops, creating its curriculum, and formalizing its teaching style.

**How to Help EFA**

EFA wishes to restore its operation at the DaGouYan village as soon as possible. Thus, it is vital to convince the local government of Tongxin of EFA’s humanitarian service, thereby clearing all misunderstandings and safety concerns. If you have any connections with the government, please bring up this issue and help EFA clear its name. If you wish to support EFA’s goal of alleviating poverty and educational disparity around the world, the most effective method is to promote EFA. Please refer to the website, [www.efaglobal.org](http://www.efaglobal.org), which covers essential information about the organization. Additionally, the application to volunteer is accessible here ([www.efaglobal.org/apply-now](http://www.efaglobal.org/apply-now)). The board always looks for opportunities to expand EFA, and they welcome volunteers who share EFA’s vision.

Once EFA becomes a legal non-profit organization in the United States, it will also begin organizing fundraising events. In the meantime, if you have connections with schools in other underprivileged regions of the world, feel free to contact any executive.

Educational disparity has always been a critical humanitarian issue. Take a stand on this global issue by supporting EFA. Your support will help impoverished children receive a better education and introduce them to life-changing opportunities. Everyone is capable of making a difference which can balloon into something more than the simple sum of its parts.
Conclusive Note
By Shawn Chen, Director of EFA for the 2019 - 2020 school year

EFA has had an incredible first year despite the numerous challenges we have faced. We have accomplished so much in the 2018 - 2019 school year, starting everything from scratch in the summer of 2018 and eventually becoming an organization with over fifty members. It is a remarkable achievement that EFA members have taught over forty-five lessons during the 2018 - 2019 school year.

When I returned to DaGouYan village this summer in 2019, I was delighted to see the impact EFA has made on the elementary school. The teachers and principal told us of the students’ significant improvement in English, and the students themselves gave us heartwarming thank-you letters and drawings in appreciation. I was thrilled, as EFA emerged from a simple idea to provide better education to the underprivileged, and the gratitude the school has shown us signifies that we have successfully taken the first step towards our vision.

As the Executive Director of EFA for the 2019 - 2020 school year, I promise to keep that idea alive. However, I can not do it alone. I urge the Executive Team and other EFA members to work even harder next year towards our mission. I am very proud of every one of you who poured your heart and soul into this organization! Together, we will overcome the inevitable challenges and make even more progress, as there is still a lot more to be done.

As for everyone who is reading this, please support EFA through any means you can and help us address educational inequality around the world.

Thank you!
Contact Information

Email: eduforall.us@gmail.com
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Instagram: www.instagram.com/eduforall.us
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