



# Altruistic Behavior

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## Dear Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behavior Institute Board Members,

I will keep this as brief as possible so it doesn't take up too much of your time, but descriptive enough so you are aware of Institute activities. I'd like to update you on some current Institute initiatives. I intend to send out a report of Institute projects annually so you all can remain informed and, if the opportunity arises, let others know what the Institute is up to.

Ten years ago, Sam Oliner asked me to join the Institute and guide it in a direction that focuses on altruism in action. I was honored at the invitation and I committed to doing right by him and Pearl. It has taken some time to develop initiatives (some successful, some not) that fit Sam's vision while maintaining my other university commitments. It also takes consistent funding. If you want to direct people to the Altruistic Behavior Institute at Humboldt State University, you can share the website: [altruism.humboldt.edu](http://altruism.humboldt.edu). There's a link there in case you know anyone who would like to make a donation: <https://tinyurl.com/sw7bdel>. Please give me a ring or send me an email if you'd like to talk more about any of these projects.

With gratitude, care, and good thoughts for Sam as he celebrated his 90th birthday on March 10,

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## NEWS

- Humboldt State University approved the alternate name of "Altruistic Behavior Institute" for the Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behavior Institute. The shorter name appeals to a wide and caring audience, including funders, who may not be familiar with the scholarly history of this discipline.
- An updated logo has been created that preserves every aspect of the original (see top left side of page).
- Stickers for laptops, water bottles, folders, etc., are being distributed to stimulate interest in a younger audience (see end of document for circular example).
- A brochure about the Institute is being circulated in relevant contexts. We will continue to need financial resources to keep it updated.

## PROJECTS

### Against the Wind Festival

The Institute participated in planning meetings and provided student support to the Against the Wind Festival to promote attention to the nuclear threat to life on earth and to support the voyage of the Golden Rule (<https://againstthewindfestival.org/>).

### We Live Here

This project cultivates community connections by collecting, editing, and sharing excerpts from brief interviews with people who have had diverse experiences with marginalization in the Humboldt Bay area. Two paid students are currently working with the Institute to conduct the interviews and edit them into audio clips that can be posted on the Institute website and, perhaps, local radio stations. The intention is to bring forth empathic responses in listeners as they bear witness to stories about people who live in their community. This project will be ongoing as long as there is funding to continue gathering interviews and editing them.

### Consultation on Clinical and Community-Based Services

The Altruistic Behavior Institute is providing ongoing consultation to Two Feathers Native American Family Services in relation to community-based and clinical behavioral health services.

## **Naloxone Training**

The Altruistic Behavior Institute was approved by the State of California to train people on administration of the life-saving opioid overdose reversal medicine naloxone (Narcan). So far, 45 people have been trained. Each trainee receives two doses of naloxone to use if they encounter an opioid overdose in the course of their work. This project will continue as long as there is funding to sustain it.

## **Evidence-Based Panhandling**

The Institute continues to distribute pocket-sized and weather-proofed cards that aim to increase the amount of money people engaged in panhandling receive, decrease incidence of conflict between people panhandling and law enforcement, and decrease incidence of conflict between people solicited and those soliciting (thereby leaving both parties feeling safer and more respected).

## **Lived Experience in Higher Education Student Success**

Through a combination of interviews and surveys, this project looks at barriers/supports in higher education for people with lived experience as consumers of public mental health services. The goal is to identify ways to recruit, retain, and graduate people who have participated in mental health services so they can gain or advance employment in public mental health organizations. This investigation may serve as the basis for an experimental research project should an appropriate grant be identified.

## **Native Voices: Native Peoples' Conceptions of Health and Illness**

After two years of planning, the Institute co-sponsored the National Library of Medicine's "Native Voices" traveling exhibition at the Humboldt State University Library. This exhibit invites audiences to engage with concepts of health and wellness among contemporary American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians by featuring personal stories from native people across the country.

## **Northern California Integrated Behavioral Health & Substance Use Disorder Training Program**

The Altruistic Behavior Institute has a subcontract to expand access to integrated primary and behavioral health care for people diagnosed with opioid and other substance use disorders by increasing the number of workers who receive specialty training. Second year Masters of Social Work students who are completing their field internship with Open Door Community Health Centers receive a \$10,000 stipend while the Institute provides them and Open Door behavioral health staff with additional training.

## **COMING UP NEXT**

### ***What Kind of Future Will Our Children Inherit?***

**Dr. Samuel P. Oliner's latest book, *What Kind of Future Will Our Children Inherit?*, has been accepted for publication by the Humboldt State University Press. It is currently in the design and layout phase with release expected for Fall 2020. In the description, Sam says:**

***Over the years, my students, research associates, and I have reviewed the literature of psychology, ethics, ecology, climatology, and other areas of study to consider the direction in which our world is going and what kind of future our children will inherit. Our previous work focused on the nature of good and evil—with concern especially for goodness—through which we have considered good in the world and the application of good to achieve a better world. Our books concerned altruism, kindness, empathy, and moral responsibility for diverse others. In this book we will concentrate on the areas of greatest concern regarding our future as a species.***

## **“How do they do it? Rural and Indigenous Opioid Users’ Skills for Stepping Away from Problematic Use” – a project proposal for the Alkermes Inspiration Grant**

The Alkermes Inspiration Grant provides funding to innovative programs that support the comprehensive needs of those most impacted by mental health and substance use disorders. “How do they do it? Rural and Indigenous Opioid Users’ Skills for Stepping Away from Problematic Use” is a completed proposal that will develop an interview instrument, conduct interviews, analyze data, form recommendations, and disseminate findings to professionals and peers to decrease problematic use of opioids and related overdoses using current/former opioid users as experts. The RFP has yet to be submitted, however, as the funder has temporarily suspended their call for proposals.

## **Intellectual Humility and Altruism**

Intellectual humility is a concept receiving increased attention in a variety of fields and it is a specific area of funding interest for The Templeton Foundation (a former funder of the Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behavior Institute). One way to think about intellectual humility is the ability to admit that one might be wrong, or at least lacks full knowledge of a situation to be categorically right. With funding, the Institute will explore the role and effect of intellectual humility in altruistic and prosocial behavior, particularly with people who work in professional helping contexts.



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