**1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project Context**

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

This quotation coined by Winston Churchill, the former prime minister of Great Britain, clearly reflects the spirit of sharing and giving back one’s blessings to the people who are in need. Thus, it can be easily said that all members of the community should take part for the betterment of the society.

Moreover, the idea of sharing and giving became the inspiration and mechanism of successful individuals, institutions and businesses to conduct activities that will help poor people. The activities were often called as an outreach.

As defined in Merriam-Webster’s dictionary, outreach is an act of reaching out, the extent or limit of reach and the extending of services or assistance beyond current or usual limits. From the meaning itself, it is clearly stated that it is needed for an activity to be able to reach out and extend help or services to its participants for it to be called as an outreach activity.

In fifty-three years of its existence, San Sebastian College Recoletos – de Cavite (SSCRdC) in Cavite City, Philippines has been promoting its philosophy, *‘Caritas et Scientia,’* which means charity and knowledge. As part of the school’s philosophy, outreach activities that will benefit its nearby communities and barangays has been made and conducted.

The growing demand and need in creating, implementing and evaluating outreach activities has been the reason why SSCRdC established a department that will focus solely on the mentioned concerns – the Recoletos de Cavite Community Outreach Program (ReCOP) Office.

However, it is undeniable that the ReCOP Office had become not only the institution’s center for outreach activities but also the school’s connecting body to various companies, communities, organizations and individuals who wished to take part or to propose activities. The parties who are lending a hand to the institution’s outreach programs are called partners and linkages.

Presently, the process for proposal of outreach activities in the ReCOP Office is done through papers. The requestor must write a letter and prepare documentary requirements which always takes days to weeks of processing. Not to mention that sometimes, the requestor’s documents get lost in the process.

Another factor to consider is that organizations or individuals who wish to conduct an outreach program activities lack the visibility on prospect beneficiaries. Oftentimes, the communities near SSCRdC are the ones who are receiving the outreach proceeds and benefits.

This capstone project proposal entitled, “Recoletos Community Outreach Program Community Extension Website” (ReCOP – ComEx) aims to address the issues on current procedures done in ReCOP Office regarding outreach activities as well as to extend the school’s connection outside.

**1.2 Research Locale**

The Recoletos de Cavite Community Outreach Program Office is the Institution’s center for all community outreach related activities. The office was established in response to the demand of the Trilogy of Functions of every academic institution (Instruction, Research and Extension) and the Recollect Philosophy, which is “*Caritas et Scientia*”.

In 2003, Recoletos de Cavite Community Outreach Program (RC-COP) being the office’s first name was established for the purpose of planning, implementing and evaluating the community outreach activities of the school within its walls and with its partner communities. The name RC-COP was replaced with Recoletos Community Outreach Program (Re-COP) Office of SSC-R de Cavite in 2012. The Re-COP office is under the Vice President for Religious Affairs and is supervised by the Re-COP Director.

The SSC-R de Cavite community likewise conducted different outreach activities in some other neighboring communities like school, foundations and orphanages to serve better those who are in need. The SSC-R de Cavite is likewise known for its Recoletos Educational Assistance for Deserving Students (READS), which helps deserving students to avail college education for free.

Since 2003, SSC-R de Cavite community has been rendering humanitarian projects and activities in terms of Christian formation, Education, socio-political concerns, medical and dental services and other activities that benefited the people in the community.

Until the present, the institution through its Outreach Office continuously strives to deliver its extension and outreach services to the neighboring communities guided by the Institution’s vision, mission, values and goals.

**1.3 Statement of the Problem**

This project proponents aim to find the answer to the following questions along the course of the project development:

1. The reoccurring instance of untracked and lost outreach proposal and records;
2. The limited number and information about partners, communities and beneficiaries for outreach activities ;
3. The low participation rate and exposure of outreach activities conducted by SSCRdC ;
4. The incompleteness of post outreach activity reports filed by partners and ReCOP Office;
5. The lack of funding mechanisms for outreach activities conducted by SSCRdC.

**1.4 Scope and Limitation**

This capstone project proposal entitled, “Recoletos Community Outreach Program Community Extension Website” (ReCOP – ComEx) focuses around the creation of a mobile-responsive web application that will centralize the transactions between SSCRdC and its partners and linkages

Specifically, this study will only revolve and center on the ReCOP Office. In addition, the proponents only investigated on the processes dealing with outreach activities and partners and linkages and disregarded any other activities occurring in the said department.

The website will also encourage outside companies and communities to participate and be part of SSCRdC’s partners and linkages. In addition, geographical distance will be disregarded in selecting them.

The deployment of this project will possibly resolve the issues that the ReCOP Office is currently facing with regards to its outreach programs and will further extend its connection outside.

Lastly, the study was estimated to be completed at around four months of continuous analysis and development.

**1.5 Objectives**

**General Objective**

This study aims to create a mobile-responsive web application that will centralize the transactions between SSCRdC and its partners and linkages

**Specific Objectives**

The following are the specific objectives of the study:

1. To automate list of bonafide and available partner communities and companies, beneficiaries and outreach events as well as participants affiliated to SSCRdC;
2. To provide a medium for beneficiaries to submit help requests and to have the visibility for partners and linkages to conduct outreach activities that will extend help to the beneficiaries;
3. To have a website from where the users can create profile that will give updates on the donations, requisitions and participations to all the outreach programs in SSCRdC;
4. To advertise in-house outreach activities of school through its visibility on the website and;
5. To extend the connection of the institution by giving a recruit or referral function for all users.

**1.6 Importance of the Study**

The completion of the project will impact and benefit the ReCOP Office in a way that it will help in increasing the success rates of its outreach activities as well as in extending its conglomerates outside.

Moreover, the study will also make the SSCRdC community more approachable and reachable to members and non-members who wished to help and participate in its endeavors.

Furthermore, the project will also take consideration of the following institutions and people inside and outside SSCRdC:

1. Institutional and Student Organizations – organizations whose members are students and employees based inside the SSCRdC.
2. Adopted Barangays – poor communities that SSCRdC statically provides outreach activities to.
3. Non-Profit Organization and Corporate Partners – group of individuals affiliated to SSCRdC through a Memorandum of Agreement.
4. Donors – individuals who are willing to share and give money or resources through SSCRdC’s outreach program activities.

Overall, the study is expected to provide online transactions and improve the connections between SSCRdC and its partners and linkages when it comes to providing and conducting outreach program activities.

**1.7 Technical Background**

For the fulfillment of this capstone project proposal, several development tools and frameworks were utilized:

**JavaScript**

JavaScript is a programming language commonly used in web development (“JavaScript Definition”, 2014). This is client-side scripting language which the source code is processed by the client’s web browser rather than the web server. Its code can be inserted anywhere within the HTML of a webpage and can be reference in a separate .JS file.

**Bulma**

Bulma is an open source Flexbox based CSS framework. It is a simple, elegant, and modern CSS framework that a lot of developers prefer over Bootstrap (Borgen, 2018). This is used as designing tool for the entire user interface of the website and it is linked in an HTML document file.

**Flask**

Flask is a small and powerful web framework for Python. Easy to learn and simple to use, enabling you to build your web app in a short amount of time according to [Polepeddi](https://tutsplus.com/authors/lalith-polepeddi) (2013). Flask allows you to build web application by providing tools, libraries and technologies (“Introduction to Flask,” n.d.).

**Jinja 2**

Jinja2 is a modern-day templating language for Python developers. Used to create an HTML, XML or other markup format and return to the user via an HTPP request (“Jinja2 Explained in 5 Minutes! – codeburst,” 2018). Jinja templates are files with .html which is placed in the /templates directory in flask. This was used by the team in frontend which embedded in a HTML file to call a python function.

**Python**

According to Python.org (n.d), python is an object-oriented and high-level programming language that is easy to learn syntax and reduces the cost of program maintenance. It supports modules and packages which encourages program modularity and code reuse. The team used this as their programming language for their web based and mobile responsive application.

**SQLAlchemy**

As stated by Krebs (2017), SQLAlchemy is a library that facilitates the communication between Python programs and databases. He says that it translates Python classes to tables on relational databases and automatically converts function calls to SQL statements by using an [Object Relational Mapper (ORM)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Object-relational_mapping) tool.

**Unified Modelling Language**

Unified Modeling Language (UML) is a modern approach to modeling and documenting software which based on diagrammatic representations of software components. It is used as a general-purpose modeling language in the field of software engineering which provide features to improve readability and efficacy (“Tallyfy”, 2018).

**1.8 Review of Related Literature and Studies**

This review will focus on the management of event activities particularly in the Community Extension Program Services including the requesting and approval of forms in particular programs and activities, through the use of software technologies available.

Furthermore, the researchers think that these studies and literature can help in further understanding of the demands and needs of the proposed project.

**Literature**

**Assessing University-Community Outreach** (Davidson et al., 1999). The article stated that the process of evaluation on outreach activities enhanced mutual understanding and working relationship between the university and the community.Moreover, authors also determined the factors affecting the commitment of community to the outreach made by the university which are tenure and promotion guidelines, senior administrative support, and resource allocation.

**Neoserra CRM Software** (OutreachSystems – California, 2014). The website shows the idea, design and the information must have in an outreach system. This design of the system was appropriate for a non-profit economic development program. It also tracks detailed demographic, economic information and assistance needed of the clients.

**ProcessDonation (2018)**. The mobile-friendly website features most of the donation procedures in terms of events and registration process, branding, managing members and donors, peer-to-peer and mobile fundraising. Users can also organize fundraising events and create a custom or ticket-selling process.

**Local Studies**

**Impact of Community Extension Programs on the Residents of Selected Adopted Barangays of Ifugao State University, Philippines** (Dugyon, 2016). The research study determined the impact of community extension programs of the Ifugao State University (IFSU) in the province of Ifugao, Philippines. Six adopted barangays were the respondents for the research. The results from the survey showed that there should always be a proper monitoring and evaluation after each outreach activities in order to develop and integrate extension project packages for the needs of the community partners.

**Involvement in Community Extension Program of Business Administration Students in one Higher Education Institution in the Philippines** (Rubio et al., 2016). The research determined how students of College of Businesss Administration (CBA) of Lyceum of the Philippines University-Batangas benefit of joining and participating community extension program in terms of personality, social awareness, unity and recognition and appreciation. The research also shows the possible problems that may affect joining community extension program in terms of location, logistics and funds.

**Community Extension Services of SUC’s In Region IX: Basis for a Sustainable Community Enhancement Program** (Bidad, 2010). The study focused on the effects and benefits of the Republic Act 7722, also known as Higher Education Act of 1994, which requires State Universities and Colleges (SUC’s) in the Philippines to conduct outreach activities to serve nearby communities. The researcher found out that the perception of both beneficiaries and implementers of community extension programs is that the outreach is well-implemented and well-involved to the community regardless of goal and objectives.

**Foreign Studies**

**Investigating Community Impacts of a University Outreach Program through the Lens of Service Learning and Community Engagement** (Erickson, 2010)**.** The study focused on the impact of Partnering Landscape and Community Enhancement (PLaCE) program in terms of physical improvements of the communities and impact of the university involving communities. The PLaCE Program addressed the community needs by the design students in classroom settings or in research settings. Findings about the PLaCE Program indicated that it is important to listen and build relationship to community partners.

**An Outreach Program Case Study: Assessing and Imparting Social Capital** (Thompson, 2014). The case study addressed the lack of study regarding the effectiveness of social capital in college outreach programs. In addition, the research also to found out the factors on how successful outreach programs build trust and help its participants attain educational goals. The author concluded that being motivated, feeling comfortable, and being supported academically through friendship are the factors outreach participants found important.

**Effective Outreach Strategy and Programs in Higher Education** (Byrd et al., 2012). The authors aimed to find out the effects of organized and directed outreach activities on students. The researchers conducted experiments on three groups of students based on outreach exposures – no outreach, limited outreach, weekly outreach. After the study was finished, results indicated that students are more engaged in the course if higher education institutions develop outreach initiatives.

**Synthesis**

After the related literature and studies were gathered and analyzed, the researchers extracted the vital methods and findings of the authors that the proposed system can utilize.

On the article Assessing University-Community Outreach (Davidson et al., 1999), the researchers found the importance of establishment of proper guidelines, support and resource allocation in order to encourage outreach participants. The proponent’s proposed website will be designed according to the stated factors.

Moreover, the Neoserra CRM Software (OutreachSystems – California, 2014) will be the inspiration for the report and tracking system the proposed community extension website will be using. The researchers will utilized graphs and other visual graphics, similar to what is shown in the software, in making reports for outreach program activities.

Since the proposed website will be a mobile-responsive one, the researchers will consider the form design, layout and the branding in the website ProcessDonation (2018). Automated notifications and confirmations for joining, donation transactions done will also be adapted.

The study entitled Impact of Community Extension Programs on the Residents of Selected Adopted Barangays of Ifugao State University, Philippines (Dugyon, 2016), shows that it is necessary for an outreach program to have a thorough evaluation process and that feedbacks from the outreach participants must be taken into consideration. The researchers will use the factors stated in the study for conducting the evaluation tests in the proposed website.

On the other hand, the study entitled Involvement in Community Extension Program of Business Administration Students in one Higher Education Institution in the Philippines (Rubio et al., 2016) shows that students’ participation on sponsored outreach program activities were affected by location, logistics and funds. The proponents will use the study in devising or improving processes that will resolved the mentioned factors.

Community Extension Services of SUC’s In Region IX: Basis for a Sustainable Community Enhancement Program (Bidad, 2010) justified the participation of students in institutional outreach programs and that it was mandated by the law which is RA 7722 – Higher Education Act of 1994,

The PLaCE program, which was indicated in the study entitled Investigating Community Impacts of a University Outreach Program through the Lens of Service Learning and Community Engagement (Erickson, 2010), provides a better understanding on how to build relationship with the partner communities. The researches can use the PLaCE program to further the proposed website’s capability in dealing with partner communities.

Furthermore, the case study entitled An Outreach Program Case Study: Assessing and Imparting Social Capital (Thompson, 2014) the significance of being motivated, feeling comfortable, and being supported academically in participating in community outreach activities. The findings in the case study will be used by the researchers as a basis for outreach proposal guidelines and advertisements that will be done in the proposed system.

Lastly, the study entitled Effective Outreach Strategy and Programs in Higher Education presented the role of the academic institution itself in the effectivity of an outreach program activities. The study’s findings will be used as a basis for the proposed website’s scheduling.