The Negros Oriental High School e-Learning Club:
Organizing Students in Support of ICT-based Innovations

Negros Oriental High School is a public school situated at the center of Dumaguete City, Oriental Negros, though it's under the supervision of the Division of Oriental Negros. It has a land area of 25,000 sq. m. consisting mostly ground floor buildings. It has student population of 4090 as of School Year 2006-2007 with 128 faculties and 16 support staffs. The school has two computer laboratories donated by Coca-Cola Education Venture program having 17 units, and the Department of Trade and Industry with 30 units.

There were eight core groups of teachers who were trained in basic computer literacy skills as well as an ICT Curriculum integration through the use of web-enhanced learning activities that uses Internet-based resources in teaching subjects such as English, Science, Math, Filipino and Social Studies. Let me introduce them to you. We have with us Ms. Kathleen Lasola teaching English II, Mrs. Gemma Depositario teaching Araling Panlipunan II, III and IV in the 3rd shift,. Mr. Antonio Aranas teaching Science I and II in the 3rd shift also, Mrs. Marceliana Sanson teaching Filipino in the 3rd year, Ms. Nida Barbara Suasin teaching Math IV, Mrs. Josephine Garde teaching English IV, one other teacher promoted as teacher-in-charge of another school and yours truly teaching Science I.

. The rationale for establishing the E-Learning activities was suggested by teachers of Cansojong National High School. The teachers said they had difficulty completing their telecollaborative projects due to scheduling conflicts, lack of ICT skills and /or lack of opportunities to hone basic skills. Instead of working on new interschool

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telecollaborative projects, it may be more appropriate/feasible for students and teachers in each school to work together in designing and implementing learning activities that use the ICT facilities in the school.

The objectives of the E-Learning Club are:

- To better prepare students and teachers for ICT-based learning activities

- To design promote and implement learning activities in every year-level that use ICT's

- To enhance the ICT skills of students through peer-to-peer tutoring and teacher-assisted activities

The E – learning club activities are CURRICULAR meaning:

- They are based on units and lessons in the curriculum; and

- They will be done during class hours, or regular class sessions

Thus, the E-Learning Club is different from other clubs in the schools, such as Math Club, Glee Club, etc. whose activities are extra curricular or not related lessons taught in class and are done beyond regular class hours.

The E-Learning Club was organized in the School year 2003-2004 with 10 students per year level to serve as teacher and peer assistants in the implementation of ICT integration activities in the classroom.   The process of formation and the organizational structure of the club are the following:

- One (1) Over-All coordinator in the person of Ms. Kathleen Lasola

- Four(4) Year-Level Coordinator

    First year - Mrs. Myrna Sun (myself)

    Second Year – Ms. Kathleen Lasola

    Third Year – Marceliana Sanson

Fourth Year – Mrs. Josephine Garde

- Sections under the core group of teachers (including the 3rd shift students)

- Students as peer tutors are chosen based on their skills in handling the computer regardless of their literary or academic performance. Therefore, the less endowed students academically has the chance to lead a group since the computers available are of lesser number than that of a class

    First Year – 4 sections (2 sections in the day classes and 2 in the night classes

    Second Year – 7 sections (5 sections in the day class and 2 in the night classes)

    Third Year – 7 sections (5 sections in the day class and 2 sections in the night class)

    Fourth Year – 11 sections (9 sections in the day classes and 2 sections in the night classes)

- Center Manager   - Mrs. Myrna Sun

- Assistant Center Manager – Mr. Antonio Aranas

    The roles and responsibilities of each member are defined as follows:

Over-All Coordinator

- Keep the record of all club activities – Ideally the Over-all coordinator has to keep records of all club activities but the practice that Ms. Lasola did even at the start of her duty as such she just made consultation to every coordinators and check on how we fair in our activities.

- Monitor the implementation of year level club activities – Meetings were always conducted especially when plans and programs for the club and the center in general have to undergo. For instance slow internet connections. When every scheduled classes observed this then decision has to be made by the group on what to do either to transfer to other Local area network or just to continue with the same and do some adjustment or what not.

- Provide whatever assistance is necessary to the year level coordinators towards the successful completion of year-level activities (e.g. coordinate center use schedules with the Center Manager). It is always our practice to consult and asked assistance from each one of us if in case things are not clear to us especially with regards to computer use.

- Regularly update FIT-ED about the progress of club activities, accomplishments and plans. Ms. Lasola being our over-all coordinator is the contact person of the fit-ed personnel in as far as activities and notices of seminars are to be disseminated.

- Regularly update their own skills in the use of ICTs for education share knowledge and skills with other Club members. In as far as updating our skills in the use of the computer, our students are more exposed and a step greater than us teachers when it comes to computer usage.

Year-Level Coordinators

- Plan the ICT based learning activities for the year level club members. At the start of the club teacher coordinators has to prepare learning

activities for the club members even to the extent of coming to school during Saturdays and Sundays just so we can provide better e-lessons such as Subject Samplers, Webquest and Treasure Hunts.

- Ensure that there is a fit between curricular goals and the learning activities are completed. In the planning and preparing of the lessons we equipped ourselves with the Learning Competencies in each of our Subject area.

- Inform the Over-All Coordinator of the progress of year-level activities on a regular basis. During the time that we were under the management of Fit-Ed we were always monitored as to the level of our accomplishments. But later on as we graduated from the program we still continue what we had practice in a relax manner and in our own pace and this time we try to innovate some degree of planning our class through getting prepared lessons from the web but of course we didn't forget the lessons we had already prepared for our respective areas which we store in our computers.

<u>Student Members</u>

- Help teachers in planning and implementing ICT-based learning activities in their class and within their year level. Some students were lucky in the sense that from 1st year to 3rd year they were placed in sections handled by ELC coordinators and therefore went through the computer training and project making. These students, in their 4th year, were given the task of peer coaching. They became the teacher assistants in the computer classes. They were called upon to help out

their classmates who encountered problems in encoding their class assignments, creating e-mail ads for their groups, creating and designing their slides, etc. These students created a collaborative and pleasant atmosphere during the class and in the process the teacher becomes a facilitator and an observer.

- Help classmates and schoolmates master the skills needed to complete assigned activities (e.g. surfing the Web, creating an e-mail account, working with e-mail account, creating an e-group, etc.) With the Fit-Ed program and the availability of the computer laboratory, research writing became an adventure making the task easier and enjoyable. The end results were gratifying not only to the teacher but also to the students as well. Eventually students ventured into more complex projects such as webpage designs and colorful presentations.

- Participate in all club activities. Students in the 4th year last school year were able to join other contest related to computer used such as Web page making, the use of excel program, the front page program for newsletter activities as well as the power point presentation. We always win this particular competitions in the division level it might be because of the exposure students have during the different activities we did in our e-learning classes.

Center Manager and Assistant Center Manager

- Closely coordinate with the Over-All Coordinator and year-Level coordinators in scheduling center use for E-learning Club activities- An example would be when computers encounter minor repairs like

monitor does not display, mouse could not be detected and many others. These problems would then be reported to us for immediate action since the schedule of classes in the lab will happen once in a week.

To date, the core group of teachers continues the activities they were doing and strengthening more realizing the importance of mobilizing student support for teachers who are innovating with technology in school. The technology has been so popular now a day that students learned them at home or in internet cafes without the teacher support. These are the group of students that were tapped to lead the class during ICT-based learning of the lessons for they know how to handle the computers and that those who don't will learn from them through peer tutoring. An example of this would be when grouping the students by PC's, one skilled student will be assigned to do mentoring his or her group mates as to the use of the computers and how to handle it. Therefore the teacher's role would then be to instruct the class on what file to open or what website to go to instead of discussing the use of the computer which entails a lot of time in the process. It would be the student assigned to the group now to act as the manipulator of the computer.

At this point let me call on Ms. Kathleen Lasola together with her student to share with us their experiences in having ELC activities using the technology in her field of specialization.

ELC II Activities

By

Kathleen S. Lasola

School Year 2005-2006 was a full and busy year for the e-Learning Club/English classes under me. It all started when Mrs. Myrna Sun and I were invited by FitEd to join the 1st Eu-Asia Learning Bridges Workshop towards the end of May in Quezon City. We joined twenty three other secondary school teachers handling varied subject areas from all over the country.

The focus of the workshop was to design projects for telecollaboration. The initial stage was to share and exchange project outputs among our students first here in the Philippines and later to work with our European counterparts. I worked with five other teachers from other regions.

One of the main activities I had with my class last school year was a webquest—"Festivals of Oriental Negros". It was part of an umbrella project— "Festivals—Cultural Heritage" conceptualized by our group during the workshop. The concept was based on one of our lessons in English II—a literature lesson entitled "The Town Fiesta" by IV Mallari (English Arts II, pp. 5-8). One of the suggested activities of the lesson was to have students research on a local festival celebrated along with its town fiesta. This was a good entry point for a webquest, which is an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all information that learners interact with comes from resources on the internet. This webquest was given to one section under me which formed my ELC core group for the second year curriculum. The other four sections did a similar webquest working on the different regional festivals. The project was completed in one grading period. The activities in the webquest included reading online resources, interviewing experts, collecting and scanning pictures, downloading maps from the internet, writing descriptive essays and finally creating a powerpoint of their outputs. For a detailed process of the webquest, I refer you to my website, www.geocities.com/kslasola/webquestfestivals . Other activities related to the task were to write a group weekly journal to record progress as well as problems encountered during the process. Since each class was divided into small groups of four, members easily interacted among themselves discussing what to include for their final outputs. A date was set for the oral reports and sharing of outputs before the class. When all outputs were evaluated and graded based on two sets

of rubrics (one for the group output and one for the individual performance), peer editing followed and a copy of the presentation had to be revised to be uploaded to the ejournal website (see http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/philippines). The purpose of the upload was for the sharing of outputs with other groups of students who were also working on a similar theme for telecollaboration.

Another worthwhile activity participated in by the same class who made "Festivals of Oriental Negros" was a telecollaboration project with a primary school in Jamsankoski, Finland as their partners. The project was called "Cultural Exchange through the Eyes of a Teenager" which was conceived by Mrs. Pirjo Selenius, the facilitator and my counterpart from Finland. The project focused on comparing everyday living of a teenager with another teenager from another side of the world. It should include family, home, hobbies, school, local way of living including trades and festivals. We were given a place in the ejournal group of websites where we can write articles related to the project and interact with each other by replying to the topics being published (see http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/lip513). The rest of my English classes did another webquest, Folktales and Superstition/Imagination. The outputs were shared with other students from around the world who also participated in the two projects run by the iEARN.org website. In late February, my ELC core group joined another telecollaboration activity called the iTHINK project participated by two other countries, Iran and Russia. We were given an exclusive thread in one of the forums of the iEARN.org websites where we exchanged ideas on specific topics created by our chief facilitator, Mostafa Nejati, iEARN Youth Representative and an Iranian engineering student.

My classes also went through a subject sampler, "Festivals and Essays" which I designed as an introduction for the lesson on IV Mallari's "Town Fiesta". Three different websites with a set of three to four questions were given to them for reading as well as interacting. (Please see www.geocities.com/kslasola/festivals). During the fourth grading, all of my classes also did one treasure hunt on the Figures of Speech. A set of questions with corresponding websites were given to them to read through. The focus of

the activity was on the Big Question, where students are asked to make a scrapbook of nursery rhymes illustrating the different figures of speech. They were given ample time to do the last activity (please see www.geocities.com/kslasola and click on treasure hunt).

Much has been achieved by the ELC activities. The projects were good tools to foster interaction as well as collaboration among group members which of course enhances cooperative learning. Students were involved in authentic writing tasks as they were writing about real life situation like their ways of living. The activities gave them opportunities to be involved in reading with a purpose. Creativity was enhanced and self-confidence of each member was boosted when they worked with experts. The varied projects also motivated students to work with computers and the internet. They have also improved their English proficiency. Most of all, they took pride of their cultural heritage and appreciated the cultures of other people which led to the building of bridges of friendship and understanding.

My ELC Experience

by

Gericah Rodriguez

I am Gericah Rodriguez, a third year student of Negros Oriental High School. I am speaking in behalf of my former classmates of II-Garcia. Last school year we were fortunate that our English subject was handled by an ELC Coordinator of the second year curriculum and also the over-all coordinator of the ELC of Negros Oriental High School, Dumaguete City, in the person of Miss Kathleen S. Lasola.

It was quite an experience for all of us because of the uniqueness of the set-up of our English class. We devoted two days of the regular five-day class of our subject in the computer laboratory and the rest of the days, in our classroom. We were privileged because not all second year students were able to make use of the facilities of the school's computer laboratory. Also, we were taught ICT

based English. Our teacher taught us the fundamentals of basic computing and she designed as well as prepared for us activities based on our regular classroom lessons making use of the computers and the resources from the internet to help us facilitate our learning of the English language. We had varied activities like going through subject samplers as introductions to new lessons, browsing prepared websites in a treasure hunt activity, doing a webquest, and finally the telecollaboration activity where we worked with other students from other countries like Finland, Iran and Russia.

Since the FitEd computer laboratory has only fifteen computers for students' use, our teacher divided the class into 15 small groups of four members each. If before, we did projects individually, this time we learned the value of team work.

We were exposed to multitasking especially when we did the webquest on the "Festivals of Oriental Negros". We did not only search the web, but we worked with experts too. We made research, conducted interviews, and visited offices of the tourism from the city as well as the province. We made notes, wrote and revised essays, recorded experiences in our group journal and finally sorting all collected data. We agreed that although the steps in the webquest are simple to follow, yet we found it difficult to carry out, but no matter, the whole class rose to the challenge. After sorting all data gathered, we practiced our computing skills and created slide presentations as our final output of the festival assigned to each group. We took turns in presenting our outputs orally before the class. Our efforts were rewarded because our teacher made it online so the rest of the world can see our work. If you have the chance, I invite you to see our outputs published in http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/philippines and click on the folder "Festivals of Oriental Negros". Also do visit the elc2 website at www.geocities.com/nohselc2 where samples of our outputs are shown for the last three school years done by the ELC II students of Negros Oriental High School.

The telecollaboration activity opened new gates for us to practice our English communication skills. We exchange culture, tradition and modern living

with students from Jamsankoski, Finland. We exchanged ideas through the website http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/lip513 . We also joined a group of students from Iran and Russia in the iTHINK project. We were given a special thread in one of the forums of the iEARN website exclusively for this project where we exchanged ideas on topics prepared by one of the facilitators. Although we did not finish the project as it was started in late February and we were overran by our summer vacation, we learned quite a lot from our counterparts in Iran. The Russians were unable to finish too since they had technical problems caused by a long winter in their country.

The ELC experiences we had helped us a lot in terms of learning the English language as a tool in communicating with other people from other countries. It is quite different from the pen and paper activities done in a regular classroom. We have acquired additional skills in working with computers and using the internet resources to our advantage. It helped us develop our skills in writing and speaking too. We just did not write because our teacher told us to but we wrote of real life experiences and exchanged it with foreign students. We always looked forward to the days scheduled for our computer use which motivated all of us never to be absent from our computer class days and not to miss our English class even if it was held in a very hot classroom. At this point, in behalf of my former classmates of II-Garcia, I would like to thank our English teacher who had been very patient and tolerant of our faults, who taught us the value of acquiring knowledge and skills and most of all for teaching us ICT based English. Thank you and good day.

I can say that with these kinds of activities integrated into our regular classroom lessons, learning is no longer boring or forced. It has opened new avenues for the students to apply their language skills in a realistic way. Learning has therefore become challenging, rewarding and most of all enjoyable!

In totality the potential benefits derived from web-enhanced learning activities to the members are;

1. Learning to learn

   - Working on problems in depth – At this point students due to wide range of information in the internet they can easily research complicated problems and can find solution to it since it's a worldwide library of data gathering in store for them.

   - Just-in-time learning – Resource materials are taken from the web to support the books provided by the government to the schools. In this manner the students would be able to get first hand information of the new development that might not be recorded in the hard copy of the reference materials.

2. Lifelong learning

   - Models the kind of learning people do throughout life. In one of the research activities of the English class in the 4th year, they were researching about people who have made a difference in their work like Mother Theresa. Her life being a nun and her duties to people. One student said that Mother Theresa's job was one of the best she has ever known, if ever I can do a little of what she does I know I can make a difference in this world.

   - Uses new tools for intellectual work research, distinguishing credible information, constructing knowledge with other learners. Making the presentation for a certain topic in class like what the 4th year students did after researching their topic for their term paper

making they were made to present it to class in a form of a presentation.

3. Active Learning

- Students learn by doing. Actual exposing the student to the use of the computers they would have the first hand experience of learning by doing., this time it would be more concrete sense they indulge themselves personally in complying the activities assigned to the group.

- Students have access to experts around the world. Through e-mails and chatting people in the web allows them to have access and direct information of people around the globe.

- Students find more relevance in their studies. During computer classes students seldom absent due to their eagerness in the use of the equipment as well as the connectivity of the topics gained from the activities planned out for them.

- There is increased interest and participation. Those students who seldom recite in class would gained confidence in participating class activities especially in the discussion of the lessons that was prepared for them.

4. Cooperative Learning

- Working directly with people from other places and cultures. During our telecollaborative learning from our end to other places within the country we have the opportunity to communicate with them

and exchange data regarding the topics assigned to us. We sent e-mails and responded e-mails from other places.

- Working not only with peers but also with mentors and experts in many fields. During our project in the club we sent students by group to different barangays in our city and interview people in the locality.

5. Contextual Learning

- Establishes a close relationship between students and the real world context of problems and projects. Students has the opportunity to be bonded together especially in the completion of their project. Because one could not finish a project without the other since each one has a role to play in accomplishing their task.

- Learning is less abstract and more interdisciplinary. It would be the extent of their accomplishments through time scheduling like passing the requirements on time.

6. High standards for all learners. Students would not be contented to submit and present projects that are not well prepared.

- Student as author and therefore accountable for accuracy and completeness. In every paper presentation they have accomplished they would indicate their names as author of the project.

- Elevates quality work

It has been observed that students who are members of the club refrain from skipping classes and are eager to be present in all scheduled days in the computer laboratory. Thus, the organization in particular has helped students

to be aware of the developments here and around the world. There is a way of check and balance from the hard copy each one of them was holding (such as books, magazine, etc.) through web-surfing and research.

At first we were apprehensive as to the sustainability of the organization with the issues of; 1.) technical support ; 2.) financial support ; 3.) teacher support; 4.) administrative support; and 5.) community support . These posed great challenge to us all, since none of us are technically equipped to handle any malfunction that requires checking computer parts. Software troubleshooting perhaps would be manageable but not all of it. We learned from seminars and conferences only but not on a technical level. Meaning we didn't indulge ourselves on troubleshooting computer malfunctioned parts which would occur every now and then when there will be many users. So we depend on technicians from the community. There was an offer from ACSAT to adopt us as far as troubleshooting is concerned but it did not materialized.

Maintaining a computer laboratory entails a lot of expense like for instance: a mouse does not work, fuse of the Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) collapses, disk drive does not read; damaged office software and most importantly monthly internet bills.

We teachers are given exact loading and the activities we do in ELC is already on top of what we are supposed to prepare for our lesson. Interest is the key to accomplish our goal in teaching through web-enhanced lessons.

Another issue point is on the part of the administrator. We are lucky that for the previous and recent principal in our school they are so supportive in

our plight. Much so with the Parents, Teachers and Community Association who help us a lot in maintaining our computer laboratories?

The reason that up to this time we are existing was due to constant contact and proper scheduling in the use of our computer laboratory. Here is the schedule we follow in the Fir-Ed Center:

Day		User	Time
Monday	-	Ms. Lasola & Mrs. Sun	7:00 am-5:00 pm.
Tuesday	-	Ms. Lasola & Mrs. Sun	7:00 am-5:00 pm.
Wednesday	-	Mrs. Marceliana Sanson	9:00 am-6:00 pm.
Thursday	-	Ms. Suasin & Mrs. Depositario	8:00 am-9:00 pm.
Friday	-	Mrs. Garde & Mr. Aranas	9:00 am-9:00 p.m

The core group of teachers agreed that for the maintenance of the computers the parents has to be informed with the permission of the principal that each user shall pay ten pesos as monthly contribution for the said purpose. Last School year 2004-2005 our internet monthly bill was 5000.00 pesos excluding summer vacation. This shall only take effect during the school year. From then on up to the present we had been exercising the same process. Out of this amount, at every end of the school year excess money from the maintenance fee were used to purchase additional equipment needed in the computer lab. Such as Scanner, inkjet and dot matrix printer, Steel cabinet and steel locker, revolving office chair and office table. All collections are properly accounted for and remitted to the school treasurer.

We could proudly say that we are successful in the implementation of our E-Learning Club with the cooperation of the teachers, administration and

community. These are the factors that contributed to the success of the ELC Club:

1. Administrative Support

2. PTA and Community Support

3. Computer Laboratory with internet access

4. Proper scheduling of computer laboratory use

5. Commitment to ELC program

6. Updated in-service training in Information Technology.

Thank you very much for listening.

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