

Lorma brings Digital Libraries to Region 1 High Schools



Jumpstarting a new dimension of 21st century learning, Lorma Colleges goes beyond the boundaries of textbooks and conventional book shelves by introducing the first ever all-access, technologically assisted and globally connected mobile library to 10 selected secondary institutions across the Ilocos Region.

Assisted by Lorma Colleges Executive Director Dr. Jose Mainggang and Information Technology Services and Development Director Mr. Rufino "JJ" Macagba III, Lorma Inc. President and Chairman Dr. Rufino Macagba Jr. highlights the awarding ceremony by presenting the Certificates of Donation and partnership to principals and student representatives of the following schools: Bacnotan National High School, Luna National High School, San Gabriel Academy, St. Christopher Academy, St. Joseph Institute – Ilocos Sur, Candon National High School, San Juan National High School, La Union National High School, Naguilian National High School and Sacred Heart School.

Dubbed as the 21st Lorma Colleges Digital Library, this system expands the capability of a high schooler in looking for topics relevant to their assignments and homework via the all popular online information gateway WIKIPEDIA.COM and the video classroom instruction

website KHANACADEMY.COM

Compared to a normal high school library which only houses a few hundred books to accommodate a population of more than a thousand students, the LC Digital Library tips back the scale of equal information dissemination to all library users in the campus.

LC Digital Library practically breaks the constraints of paperback research and thrusts the student researcher at the core of learning by providing a limitless source of data banks found in those two websites. What is unique to the system is that, both LC and the public/private high schools do not need to pay for a costly subscription to internet in order to access the two websites.

A student, a faculty member or an administrator can have a 24/7 access to the mobile library without logging online. And anyone can connect to the digital library using their android phones and tablets anywhere in the school. It is primarily making information available to the public, hence emulating the principles of what a public library is. Again, this is information at the tip of our fingertips sans the need for an internet connection.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Accordingly, the institution's move to pioneer the partnership with the 10 schools is Lorma's commitment to social responsibility, that is, to share the things, resources and learnings it has to its community.

Heading this new milestone is LC IT Services and Development Director Mr. Rufino "JJ" Macagba III who envisioned an idea of a globally connected public library which can be offered to public and private high schools students in Region 1 for free.

"It takes a village to raise a child and Lormanians come from these public schools. With this (system), it raises standards of education for students. It doesn't matter where they come from. When they enrol (in college), we can expect students who are more capable and competent. It also challenges educators in all of these institutions to raise their standards as well," he disclosed.

Lorma Inc. President and Chairman Dr. Rufino Macagba Jr. also shares his view with the avant-garde information and learning program.

"There is a need to level off the playing field," he announced to the recipients during the awarding ceremony last October 25, 2015 at the LMC Heliport conference room. "This is a time for collaboration, a time for partnership. We want to share some of the things we have in Lorma with you," he added.

INFORMATION PORTAL

So how does the system work?

With the use of a QR code, an image which is technically a series of blocks and patterns, the user is linked to the home page of the LC Digital Library. These QR codes are posted liberally in conspicuous places in the campus where they can be easily seen. Hence, it's also a must that each device be equipped with a QR code scanner to access the Digital Library portal.

Once connected to the portal, he can browse through the repository made by the LC IT Services support team customized for each high school. This information bank contains thousands of references, links, journals, magazines, softwares, applications and video clips of about all subjects covered high school. These are readily available through the off-line connection of WIKIPEDIA.COM and KHANACADEMY.COM and a few customized files saved in the system.

Lorma IT Services Director Mr. JJ Macagba calls it the Lorma Digital Library Learning Station.

"All these things are made possible by this small box," he discussed as he pointed to the slim CPU unit during the demonstration of how the mobile library works.

Each learning station has a total investment cost of around P20,000. They are provided through the assistance of PC4Me's owner Mr. Edgee Zarsadias whereas Lorma Colleges IT Services team provides the technical assistance to make the digital library station operational and working in full swing.

DIGITAL NATIVES

With the advent of the K-12 transition for senior high schools in 2016 as well as the changes expected of the 2015 Association of South East Asian Nations Integration, the Philippine educational system is at the helm of experiencing a dynamic and aggressive transformation in its curriculum, teaching methodology and instructional framework. Filipino students would have to be at the same level and proficiency with other students of foreign schools in South East Asia such as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

"Our job is to stay ahead of that game," Sir JJ explained. "Our job is to make sure that our students, Lormanians, and in turn everybody else's students have resources similar to what other 1st world countries have."

Sir JJ is adamant in his objective to making sure that students are provided all available facilities and prepare students for the global scenario where everyone is expected to become progressive digital natives. He mentioned that this stance allows Lormanians and our neighbours to progress with the rest of the world.

Asked whether Lorma Colleges plan to extend its help to the other schools, government offices and barangays, he was positive with the provision of the same system in the future similar to the ones given to the 10 pilot schools.

"We won't stop here. We intend to leverage our new partnerships so that each of them can possibly spread the good word. So if 1 school can donate 1 other computer then there's a

snowball effect. We can always provide the technical assistance for free and each and every year, the system will continue to improve," he said.