Expanded Students’ Grants-In-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA)

Bicol University as one of the leading SUCs in Bicol Region is in its fifth year of implementation of the Expanded Students’ Grants-In-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation (ESGP-PA). Each campus/units of the university conducted their activities addressing the needs of the grantees.

These activities aimed to uplift the morale of the students considering the new set-up in their environment as well as the new colleagues they meet in order for them to easily adjust in the academic community.

Guidance services, orientation to both parents and grantees, home visitations, counseling and involvement in co-curricular activities were the activities implemented by each college in response to the needs of the students under the ESGP-PA.

The Project Technical Staff assigned in each colleges assisted the grantees in their academic, career and personal-social concerns. There is also regular monitoring on the academic performance of the ESGP-PA. Letters were sent to respective registrar along with the names of the identified grantees for them to easily identify the grantees.

Several activities were participated in by the grantees, these served as their honing step in becoming leaders of our society.

The Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS) as the lead office of the university in the ESGP-PA implementation conducted several activities geared towards the development of the grantees as follows:

A. **Home Visitations and Follow-Ups**

College Technical Staffs conducted several visits to the grantees. These activities were designed to fully assess the grantees situation in which it involved how his/her family behave
towards the schooling of the child. Conducted visits also documented the different footsteps embraced by the grantees as they search for their bright future.

Graduated grantees, especially those who make the university and their community proud of them were also recognized. DSWD Regional Office conducted interviews and dialogue with them and they were invited in a radio-program to interact with the DSWD Secretary.

Fig. 1. Jay-Ar Bien from College of Business, Economics and Management (CBEM) graduated last April 1, 2016 as Cum Laude.

Though it is difficult for the grantees to cope up with the different circumstances in their studies, however, it is likely to note their urged to finish their degrees. And with the grant that they are receiving, it made them felt the worth of their hard work and also the effects of becoming a graduate from the best university in Bicol Region.

Above picture showed Jay-Ar Bien, an aspiring entrepreneur and a cum laude graduate, though he felt the hardships of studying considering the distance of San Miguel Island in Tabaco City from Legazpi City but it does not hinder him to pursue for his dreams. Just in time, as he envisions to be successful, the ESGP-PA grant provided to him helped in his daily needs.
Who will say that a simple girl from remote barangay in Camalig will make it to enter Bicol University? And yet, it is what we called once in a blue moon chance, proud parents of Ms. Grace Mantes of Binanderahan, Camalig, Albay were the alive witnessed of chances in a million.

Grace graduated also last April 2016 from the College of Business, Economics and Management, both parents of Grace were farmers and they only sourced their living from it. And they say that when Grace was granted of the ESGP-PA it delighted their heart, they knew that the program will be the one who will help them uplift their life from poverty and after four years of sacrifices, it was rewarded when Grace graduated. Truly life is an unexplainable circus, but at the process of molding it, we are its drivers for change.
Many visits were done to look into the grantees relationships with their families, and it is overwhelming to see a parent very proud of his son’s achievement. Above photo is Mr. Dioniso Paloyo, father of Jun-Jun who graduated cum laude from the College of Education. During the visit, he gracefully and cheerfully shared the sacrifices his son has to suffer just to finish schooling. Of their nine children, it’s only Jun-Jun who finished college.

Challenges always come along in every steps of lives. It’s the choice of oneself on what path he/she will walk. Despite hurdles, family served as the best people to hold on. Below is the picture of one of the grantees visited in their house in Bayasong, Pilar, Sorsogon who almost give-up on her study but with encouragement, she decided to continue her study. Her family served as her support group in achieving her dreams.
Fig. 4. Nobody’s Perfect. A grantee who failed her family’s dream, but pursue her studies to continue believing that second chances are better.

DSWD Municipal Links support in the university’s effort in monitoring the grantees greatly helped in less number of drop-outs.

Fig. 5. ML of Pilar, Tin Llaneta assisted in monitoring Of her grantee in barangay Bayasong.

Fig. 6. ML of Daraga, Ms. Rochelle Aycocho during home Visit in Anislag Relocation site.
Consultations and follow-up with program stakeholders shared a big part in the success of its implementation. Notable effort of monitoring and family support made the grantees feel the worth of their sacrifices.

Fig. 7. Conducted home visit to a grantee who just gave birth at Puro, Legazpi City. In photo is UPTS Madrinian, the grantee and her mother.

Fig 8. A mother-daughter pair. During home visit at Rizal, Jovellar, Albay.
B. **Partnerships (US Peace Corps)**

The DSWD ROV in partnership with US Peace Corps had meeting/consultations with program stakeholders in the different colleges, these were first initiatives for a one-year volunteering of a Peace Corps representative in the university. The partnership aims to strengthen ties among program stakeholders and also as a support system in activities geared towards grantees development.

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Fig. 9. Marvin Posillo in their home in Binodegahan, Pio Duran, Albay, with TS Aljon Daet and Angie Madrinian. Distance never hinder him to finish schooling and graduate at BU College of Education.

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Fig. 10. Peace Corps Volunteer Nate Dressel conducted site visitation at BU Tabaco Campus, in photo with Technical staff Marla Buama.
Fig. 11. Courtesy Call with BUTC Dean Oronan last June 8, 2016. US Peace Corps Representative Nate Dressel with UPTS Madrinian had a courtesy call with the college dean.

To formally orient the program implementers about Peace Corps thrusts and initiatives, Mr. Dressel had meeting with the OSAS Dean Prof. Merlie Arbo and with the University Guidance Counselors. This step made the university fully oriented on the role the Peace Corps will perform along with the ESGP-PA implementation.

Fig. 12. Mr. Nate Dressel meeting with OSAS Dean Arbo and Guidance Counselors Madam Frick and Madam Gacos held at BU OSAS.
Fig. 13. Mr. Dressel also had the chance to meet the grantees from Gubat Campus. He shared with them the Peace Corps initiatives and also future plan to implement in the college (June 14, 2016).

Fig. 14. Last September 19, 2016. US Peace Corps Volunteer had courtesy call with BU President Dr. Arnulfo M. Mascariñas. One of them is Mr. Christopher Campassi (in light blue shirt) who will work with the Office of Student Affairs and Services (OSAS) and will help in the implementation of the ESGP-PA program.
C. Meeting/Consultations with the Grantees

Consultations with grantees as well as other program stakeholders were done to evaluate the effectiveness of program implementation. It also served as avenue in assessing the needs of the grantees in each colleges.

Common concerns raised by the grantees were about their stipend, pregnancy issues and concerns with faculty. On stipend concerns, these were directly addressed by explaining to the grantees the process of preparation up to the disbursement of their grants to their ATM cash cards. Common issues on stipend also came from lost cash card or ATM Pin concerns, on this concern, the grantees were instructed to personally report to the nearest LBP Office so that their concerns will be directly addressed. Pregnancy concerns and problems in the colleges were reported to the respective guidance offices for further intervention. Sessions on reproductive health and handling relationships were also facilitated by college guidance coordinators to the grantees. The technical staff assigned in each college facilitate the process.

Fig. 15. UPTS Angie Madrinian facilitated the meeting with ESGP-PA Grantees enrolled at BU Main Campus held at Arcilla Hall, BU CSSP, Daraga, Albay last July 22, 2016.
Fig. 16. University Guidance Coordinator, Prof. Rosario Frick discussed topics on Motivation, Behavior and Values during the meeting with grantees enrolled at BU Daraga, Main and East Campuses held July 22, 2016 at Arcilla Hall.

Though mostly of the grantees were graduating and in their 3rd year, the OSAS see to it that every start of the year they were re-oriented on the programs policy. This action is geared towards reminding the grantees of reminding them of their roles and responsibilities not only in their academic performances but also on how they behave inside the university.
Constantly reminding them also of proper usage of their grant and making sure that they can financially manage it. Help/support from grantees parents were also encouraged as part of their sworn commitment to the program.

Fig. 17. UPTS Angie Madrinian, together with BUTC Technical Staff Marla Buama facilitated the meeting with grantees enrolled at BU Tabaco Campus last June 8, 2016.

D. Election of University’s ESGP-PA Officers/Consultations with ESGP-PA College Officers

To properly addressed grantees concerns, specifically those who were reported by the college ESGP-PA officers, the OSAS organized the University’s ESGP-PA Officers last August 17, 2016. This action was done also to empower the grantees and encourage them to plan for activities that they feel their co-grantees needs.
Fig. 18. The newly elected University’s ESGP-PA officers for AY 2016-2017 with their Senior Adviser, BUPC Technical Staff Armando Olivas.

During the meeting with officers, discussions on concerns in each colleges were also tackled. UPTS Madrinian facilitated the meeting. Results of the discussions presented the need of students to have additional information on reproductive health to avoid unwanted teenage pregnancies, financial and time management seminars for them to properly use their grants and plans on having an out-reach program for them to give back to less-privileged communities the support they need.

Fig. 19. The students/grantees were given the opportunity to air their concerns and to suggest possible intervention to do to address it.
E. Coordination Meeting cum Consultation with the University Guidance Center with Technical Staffs and University ESGP-PA officers

To best plan for a university wide event, the technical staffs of the program together with some of the University’s ESGP-PA officers had a meeting cum consultation with the University Guidance last August 19, 2016. The meeting aimed to plan activities based on the common needs of the grantees as perceived by the technical staffs. Output of the meeting showed the need for PC grantees of peer-tutorial in some subjects, thus technical staff assigned was tasked to formulate the action plan for it. The UGC will also conduct responsible parenthood sessions and self-awareness activities like handling relationship and managing emotions which will be conducted in the different units of the university.
Fig 22. Prof. Rosario Frick, the University Guidance Coordinator, with guidance counselors and ESGP-PA technical staffs during the consultation meeting. Prof. Frick presided the meeting.

F. PRE-CAREER ORIENTATION TO SGP-PA AND ESGP-PA GRADUATING GRANTEEES

To help the grantees plan for their future especially in job-searching, the Office of Student Services conducted series of Pre-Career Orientations in the different colleges of the university. Invited resource persons were Prof. Frick who shared knowledge on proper grooming why applying for a job and Prof. Tabo who shared expertise in application letter writing.

The grantees were also asked to make sample letters as part of their workshops. The activity aimed to develop the students and make them responsible enough and ready as they enter the world of work after graduation.
Fig. 23. OSAS Dean, Prof. Arbo welcomes the students during the Pre-Career Orientation at BU Main Campus.

Fig. 24. Dean Oronan of BUTC warmly welcomed and congratulated the grantees during the Pre-Career Orientation held at BUTC.
Fig. 25. Prof. Indira Tabo shared her expertise to ESGP-PA graduating grantees at BU Tabaco Campus.

Fig. 26. Prof. Rosario Frick on her talk on Interview Tips as part of Pre-Career Orientation workshop.
Fig. 27. The Graduates at BUTC with TS Marla Buama and Angie Madrinian and Prof. Frick and Prof. Tabo.

Fig. 28. Dean Ocfemia of BUCAF as he warmly congratulates the graduating grantees during the Pre-Career Orientation Workshop.
Fig. 29. The SGP-PA Graduates at BUCAF with TS Madrinian and Prof. Frick.

Fig. 30. The SGP-PA graduates at BU Gubat Campus with TS Engay and Madrinian and Prof. Tabo and Prof. Frick.
Fig. 31. Scholarship Coordinator Dr. Baby Boy Nebres, III and OSAS Dean Arbo with the ESGP-PA Graduates from College of Industrial Technology, April 1, 2016.

Fig. 32. TS Aljon Daet with ESGP-PA graduate from College of Education.
OTHER ACTIVITIES...

Fig. 33. ESGP-PA Grantees attended the 4th Luzon National Philippine Association of Campus Student Advisers (PACSA) Midyear Convention in Bulacan last September 2-14, 2016.

There were 14 ESGP-PA grantees who attended the 4th Luzon National Philippine Association of Campus Student Advisers (PACSA) Midyear Convention in Bulacan last September 2-14, 2016. Together with them were four ESGP-PA technical staffs, the University Guidance Coordinator Prof. Rosario Frick and University Scholarship and Grants-In-Aid Officer Dr. Baby Boy Benjamin D. Nebres, Ill. The activity provided opportunities to the student-grantees as student-leaders and efficient and instrument of total transformation.
Fig. 34. Municipal Links of Pilar, Sorsogon organized a meeting with the ESGP-PA grantees and their parents. BU staff were invited to discuss updates re ESGP-PA implementation in the University.

Different activities conducted aimed to strengthen camaraderie amongst the ESGP-PA grantees. These were designed to make the grantees capable enough to face the challenges of their schooling as well as be able to cope with the different dares of their ages.

Fig. 35. Skills Development Seminar. These activity was conducted in BU Colleges aimed to develop and strengthen grantees personalities.
**Adopt a Community Program (ESGP-PA Outreach)**

The Bicol University Office of Student Affairs and Services conducted an outreach program in selected adopted community which served as giving-back of the ESGP-PA grantees of their knowledge and services to the needy communities. There were five communities selected that benefited the outreach activities. Selected grantees facilitated the event, BU East Campus PCO also helped in the realization of the activity.

![Image of PTS Arman Olivas of BUPC distributing gifts](image1)

Fig 36. PTS Arman Olivas of BUPC as he distributes the simple gifts for the outreach beneficiaries.

![Image of ESGP-PA Grantees and Officers facilitating a game](image2)

Fig. 37. ESGP-PA Grantees and Officers from BUCAF as they facilitates a game for the children in Guinobatan, Albay.
The joys and laughter’s from the children is a concrete evidence on how it is happy and worth living citizen of this country, simple gifts and shared experiences exclusively brings happiness to one another.

**PACSA International Convention**

ESGP-PA grantees and their technical staffs attended the 1st International Conference of PACSA last November 26-29, 2016 held at Baguio City.
Fig. 39. The 1st PACSA International Conference delegates at Baguio City.

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