

# The Social Impact of Alumni of a Central Visayan University

Ramil R. Marcos<sup>1</sup>

College of Arts and Sciences, Lyceum of the Philippines University Cavite

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**Abstract:** This study purports to discover the impact on society brought about by the many graduates who look back to the university as their Alma Mater. Stories of success, testimonies of accomplishments, and common knowledge of the greatness of not a few alumni point to the positive effect of Silliman education on the graduates who have become trailblazers in various areas of engagement in the world today. This study will pursue the answer to such questions as: Do the graduates of this University leave a mark in society through their professional presence? Does the education of this Central Visayan University motivated the alumni to engage the world in a positive and constructive spirit? In what areas of life in society do former students of this University excel in performance and service?

**Keywords:** social impact, alumni, Sillimanian education.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Silliman University (SU) is the Philippines' premiere Christian institution of higher learning, originating and firmly rooted in the Presbyterian tradition. Nestled in one of the most picturesque locales, in the tranquil yet lively environment of Dumaguete City in the central part of the country, it has drawn the interest of multitudes of students from the northernmost to the southernmost islands of the Philippines. Foreign students have discovered the benefit of Silliman's excellent brand of education, training and formation, giving the university its multi-racial and multi-cultural enrichment and mutual exchange, a definite sign of openness and welcome.

What was conceived as the first industrial school in the Philippines, modelled after the American system of industrial education in 1901, matured into a thriving university in 1938, when it received the status worthy of conducting higher learning. In 2002, the university earned the distinction as a National Landmark confirmed by the National Historical Commission (Silliman University website, <http://su.edu.ph/>, 2015).

However the true source of pride of Silliman University rests neither on the long and steady history of its existence, nor on the distinctions of excellence through which it has proved its capacity to promote and instill knowledge in the minds of young seekers. The jewel in the crown of Silliman University remain the graduates who have once passed through its portals, populated its campuses, absorbed its store of wisdom and values, and are now scattered all over the nation and other parts of the world contributing to the spread of a Gospel-inspired mission, the creation of a more humane and egalitarian society, and the experience of holistic personal life shared with others.

More than a hundred years since the first 15 boys attended the first class in Silliman University, thousands of young men and women have benefitted from the educational system the university continues to provide. Entering the world of various social, cultural and economic enterprises, these alumni bring the spirit of their university with them, ingrained as it is in their conscious or unconscious efforts to excel, prosper, and serve.

This study purports to discover the impact on society brought about by the many graduates who look back to the university as their Alma Mater. Stories of success, testimonies of accomplishments, and common knowledge of the greatness of not a few alumni point to the positive effect of Silliman education on the graduates who have become trailblazers in various areas of engagement in the world today.

The brainchild of the current university president, Dr. Benjamin, Malayang II, this project brings together the SU Office of Alumni and External Affairs under the able leadership of Director Mr. Ruben N. Bokingo and the SU Research and

Development Center expertly headed by Director Dr. Enrique Oracion. Both work collaboratively in a salutary mission to detect the reverberations of the influences and contributions of former students of the university as they ventured out into the world equipped with both personal motivation and professional capability.

This study will pursue the answer to such questions as: Do Silliman graduates leave a mark in society through their professional presence? Does Sillimanian education motivate the alumni to engage the world in a positive and constructive spirit? In what areas of life in society do former students of Silliman University excel in performance and service?

## II. PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY

The study while it is vital and relevant, is not bereft of difficulties. The first difficulty is how to follow through the career paths of all the alumni of the university. The Office of Alumni and External Affairs personnel attest to the fact that not all alumni are registered with the alumni association either in the university or in its various chapters nation-wide and internationally. Of those who are active in the alumni associations, not all are willing to part with sensitive information like personal contact numbers or addresses, understandably connected to the issue of privacy. Those whose email addresses are available do not necessarily reply to messages or may have changed email address without notifying the office or the alumni association chapter they belong to.

In view of the aforementioned obstacles, this study focuses on the Outstanding Alumni of the university. Annually ever since the year 1962, Silliman University during its Founders Week festivities, recognizes the achievements of a representative body of alumni whose performances in various areas of endeavor have brought great personal satisfaction but also great benefit not only on their fields of specialization but on the wider society as well.

The Outstanding Alumni Awards have conferred formal cognizance and appreciation on men and women who have come from the formative educational background provided by Silliman University. Diverse areas of specialization have been recognized as fields for the furtherance of Sillimanians' talents and greatness. Awardees have been cited in the areas of church ministry, the arts, commerce, education, science, and others. A special committee on selection of the awardees meticulously follows a procedure upon receiving nominations. Thus it can be confidently stated that those who emerge as recipients of the prestigious award are indeed the best representation of the university in the world today. Indirectly, every awardee represents the silent, unknown labors of many others who have similarly gained from the guiding spirit imbedded by the university as they soared to limitless heights. Indeed, numerous are the Silliman alumni who quietly transform the world they inhabit and yet are not publicly known for their achievements.

This study starts from the alumni awards granted since the year 2000 to highlight the contemporary quality of alumni in the study. Most of the alumni are living while a few have already passed away at the time of this study. Of deceased alumni, their professional patrimony continues to be felt by their confreres and by the society where they lived, worked and served.

Those chosen as awardees need not have finished their college education in Silliman University. Some are recipients only of basic education, having attended elementary or high school in the university. A good number though have finished a college or bachelor's degree from Silliman. Quite a number took up further studies in its graduate school.

A particular difficulty in conducting this research is finding recent news or developments about the university's notable alumni. Due to their age (fresh graduates are normally not selected for awards), the alumni's social contributions are not considered recent news but concrete, established reality or if they land in the papers or on the internet, they are cited for reasons other than their explicit social impact.

All but 1 (1.3%) of the 79 awardees between 2000-2015 are Filipinos, though some have worked and resided abroad either temporarily or permanently. They come from both genders (52 females, 40.5% and 47 males, 59.5%), are of varying age groups, and belong to different graduation batches.

This study will focus on the recipients of the Outstanding Sillimanian Awards because of the award's symbolic value to the rest of the graduates of the university. Through the awardees, every alumnus proudly looks back to their years as students athirst for knowledge and looks forward to myriads of opportunities to apply the knowledge gained in the university for the betterment of society. It is hoped that every alumnus can identify with the awardees in their noble desire to apply their education to a world that needs their contribution.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are 79 awardees from 2000-2015. They have been recognized for their sterling achievements and contributions in the following fields of endeavor:

#### *Awardees in General (2000-2015)*

#### *According to Outstanding Sillimanian Awards Categories*

The recipients of the Outstanding Sillimanian Awards may be grouped under the following broad headings that denote the nature of their professional work, career, involvement or passion.

**Table 1**

1. Business	10	12.66%
2. Culture /Arts	8	10.13%
3. Church	8	10.13%
4. Education	7	8.86%
5. Nursing	6	7.59%
6. Social Advocacy	6	7.59%
7. Medicine and Science	6	7.59%
8. Government Service	6	7.59%
9. Research	4	5.06%
10. Community Health	4	5.06%
11. Community Service	3	3.80%
12. Political Science	2	2.53%
13. Foreign Service	2	2.53%
14. Law	2	2.53%
15. Engineering	2	2.53%
16. Organizational Development	1	1.27%
17. Counselling	1	1.27%
18. Architecture	1	1.27%
	79	100.00%

In this general list, the top three percentages of awards went to the areas of Business (12.66%), Culture and Arts, and Church (10.13%), and Education (8.86%). These are followed closely by Nursing, Social Advocacy, Medicine and Science and Government Service (7.59%). Then come Research and Community Health Service (5.06%).

The lowest three percentages of awards went to the areas of Community Service (3.80%), Political Science, Foreign Service, Law, and Political Science (2.53%), and Counselling and Architecture (1.27%).

More males (47 or 59.5%) than females (52 or 40.5%) received the award since 2000 up to the conduct of this study, as also mentioned above.

#### *According to Areas of Service*

This paper also classifies the awardees based on the locus of service in society: Government, Science and Technology, Education, Public Welfare, and Professional Skills.

**Table 2**

Government	Science and Technology	Education	Public Welfare	Professional Skills
1. Government Service	1. Nursing	1. Education	1. Church	1. Law
2. Foreign Service	2. Medicine and Science	2. Political Science	2. Social Advocacy	2. Org. Dev't.
	3. Engineering	3. Research	3. Community Health	3. Culture and Arts
			4. Community Service	4. Business
				5. Counselling
				6. Architecture

Based on the area of service, Professional Skills Service top the chart with six (6) specializations recognized for notable achievements, followed by Public Welfare (4), Science and Technology, and Education (both with 3), while Government Service has the least share of specializations, with only two (2).

#### *According to Silliman's F-I-R-E*

Silliman University proudly adheres to a unique pedagogy of education that integrates faith-strengthening in instruction, research and extension. While other educational institutions have a "tri-focal" emphasis on methodology, Silliman expands this into four, with the element of Faith effectively incorporated and highlighted in the three other areas. This method of education is known in Silliman University as F-I-R-E (Faith – Instruction – Research – Extension). Grouped under the this heading, the awarded specializations are arranged as follows:

**Table 3**

FAITH	INSTRUCTION	RESEARCH	EXTENSION
Church	1. Education	Research	1. Business
	2. Political Science		2. Culture and Arts
			3. Nursing
			4. Social Advocacy
			5. Medicine and Science
			6. Government
			7. Community Health
			8. Community Service
			9. Foreign Service
			10. Law
			11. Engineering
			12. Org. Dev't.
			13. Counselling
			14. Architecture

When viewed under the heading of FIRE (Faith-Instruction-Research-Extension), the foundational pedagogical method of SU, the bulk of awards since 2000 fall under the area of Extension, which refers to Silliman University's thrust on service to the community. Included in Extension are the following professional careers – Business, Culture and Arts, Nursing, Social Advocacy, Medicine and Science, Government, Community Health, Community Service, Foreign Service, Law, Engineering, Organizational Development, Counselling and Architecture. Two professional pursuits, Education and Political Science, fall under Instruction. Faith has one, and Research also has one.

#### *Awardees by 5-Year Periods (2000-2005, 2006-2010, 2011-2015)*

In order to determine certain trends or patterns in the bestowal of the alumni awards, the recipients were analyzed by periods of five years each. The trends, if there are, may be reflective of the general social climate or the signs of times in the periods indicated.

#### **2000-2005**

#### *According to OSA Categories*

**Table 4**

1. Church	6	17.6%
2. Social Advocacy	5	14.7%
3. Education	4	11.8%
4. Nursing	3	8.8%
5. Research	3	8.8%
6. Culture and Arts	3	8.8%

7. Business	2	5.9%
8. Community Health	2	5.9%
9. Architecture	1	2.9%
10. Political Science	1	2.9%
11. Counseling	1	2.9%
12. Medicine and Science	1	2.9%
13. Govt. Service	1	2.9%
14. Comty. Service	1	2.9%
	34	100%

In this period, there were 34 awardees, of which 20 gentlemen are (58.8%) and 14 ladies (41.2%).

Church awardees top the list (17.6%) followed by those involved in Social Advocacy (14.7%) and Education (11.8%). This is the only period when Church awardees dominate. There is a noticeable decline of Church awardees in the second period and total absence in the last period included in the study.

Trailing behind Education are the areas of Nursing, Research, Culture and Arts (8.8%). The lowest percentages go to Business, Community Health (5.9%), Architecture, Political Science, Counseling, Medicine and Science, Government Service, and Community Service (2.9%).

#### *According to Areas of Service*

**Table 5**

<b>Government</b>	<b>Science and Technology</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Public Welfare</b>	<b>Professional Skills</b>
Gov't. Service	1. Nursing	1. Education	1. Church	1. Culture and Arts
	2. Medicine and Science	2. Research	2. Social Advocacy	2. Business
		3. Political Science	3. Comty. Health	3. Architecture
			4. Comty. Service	4. Counselling

There were awardees in all areas of service, with Public Welfare (Church, Social Advocacy, Community Health and Community Service) and Professional Skills having equal number of recognitions (Culture and Arts, Business, Architecture, and Counseling). Following closely are the areas of Education (Education, Research and Political Science), followed by Science and Technology (Nursing, Medicine and Science). (2). The last one is that of Government (Government Service).

#### **According to Silliman's F-I-R-E**

**Table 6**

<b>FAITH</b>	<b>INSTRUCTION</b>	<b>RESEARCH</b>	<b>EXTENSION</b>
Church	1. Education	Research	1. Social advocacy
	2. Political Science		2. Nursing
			3. Culture and Arts
			4. Business
			5. Comty. Health
			6. Architecture
			7. Counselling
			8. Medicine
			9. Govt Service
			10. Comty. Service

The bulk of awards from 2000-2005 fall under the category of Extension (Social Advocacy, Nursing, Culture and Arts, Business, Community Health, Architecture, Counseling, Medicine, Government Service, and Community Service), giving an idea of the service-oriented inclination of the alumni.

2006-2010

*According to OSA Categories***Table 7**

1. Business	5	16.7%
2. Culture and Arts	4	13.3%
3. Medicine and Science	3	10.0%
4. Comty. Service	2	6.7%
5. Government Service	2	6.7%
6. Education	2	6.7%
7. Research	2	6.7%
8. Community Health	2	6.7%
9. Church	2	6.7%
10. Social Advocacy	1	3.3%
11. Organizational Dev't.	1	3.3%
12. Engineering	1	3.3%
13. Law	1	3.3%
14. Political Science	1	3.3%
15. Foreign Service	1	3.3%
	30	

In this period, there were 30 awardees, of which

21 gentlemen are (70%) and 9 ladies (30%).

Business awardees (16.7%) top the list followed closely by those involved in Culture and Arts (13.3%) and Medicine and Science (10%). Business consistently appears in all periods.

Community Service, Government Service, Education, Research, Community Health, and Church come next (6.7%). There is an awardee each for Social Advocacy, Organizational Development, Engineering, Law, Political Science and Foreign Service (3.3%).

*According to Areas of Service***Table 8**

<b>Government</b>	<b>Science and Technology</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Public Welfare</b>	<b>Professional Skills</b>
1. Govt. Service	1. Medicine and Science	1. Education	1. Comty. Service	1. Business
2. Foreign Service	2. Engineering	2. Research	2. Comty. Health	2. Culture and Arts
		3. Political Science	3. Church	3. Org. Dev't.
			4. Social Advocacy	4. Law

OSA recipients are present all areas of service, with Public Welfare (Community Service, Community Health, Church, and Social Advocacy) and Professional Skills (Business, Culture and Arts, Organizational Development, and Law) again having equal number of awards. Following closely are awardees in the areas of Education (Education, Research, and Political Science) and Science and Technology (Medicine and Science, and Engineering). The area of Government (Government Service and Foreign Service) comes last.

*According to Silliman's F-I-R-E***Table 9**

FAITH	INSTRUCTION	RESEARCH	EXTENSION
Church	1. Education	Research	1. Business
	2. Political Science		2. Culture and Arts
			3. Medicine and Science
			4. Comty. Service
			5. Govt. Service
			6. Comty. Health
			7. Social Advocacy
			8. Org. Dev't.
			9. Engineering
			10. Law
			11. Foreign Service

Based on F-I-R-E, most of the awardees from 2006-2010 are to be found under Extension (Business, Culture and Arts, Medicine and Science, Community Service, Government Service, Community Health, Social Advocacy, Organizational Development, Engineering, Law, and Foreign Service). This is similar to the above data from 200-2005. This seems to indicate that most awardees have chosen a career path that had something to do with service to the community. There are likewise awardees under the three other categories

*2011-2015**According to OSA Categories***Table 10**

1. Nursing	3	20.0%
2. Business	3	20.0%
3. Government Service	3	20.0%
4. Engineering	2	13.3%
5. Foreign Service	1	6.7%
6. Medicine and Science	1	6.7%
7. Culture and Arts	1	6.7%
8. Law	1	6.7%
	15	100.0%

There were 15 awardees, 9 ladies (60%) and 6 gentlemen (40%). This appears to be the first time that females outnumber males as recipients of the OSA.

In this period, Nursing awardees share the top ranking together with Business and Government Service (20%). Nurses also received the university distinction in the first period, but not in the second.

Engineering comes next at 13.3%. There is an awardee each for Foreign Service, Medicine and Science, Culture and Arts and Law (6.7%). For the first time, there were no awards given to alumni who took the path of ministry. This period also yielded the least number of individuals recognized (15).

*According to Areas of Service***Table 11**

Government	Science and Technology	Education	Public Welfare	Professional Skills
Foreign Service	1. Nursing		Govt. Service	1. Business
	2. Engineering			2. Culture of Arts
	3. Medicine and Science			3. Law

Looking at the above chart, it is clear that for the first time, there were no awardees in the area of Education. Science and Technology, and Professional Skills share top rank having equal number of achieved citations.

According to Silliman's F-I-R-E

Table 12

FAITH	INSTRUCTION	RESEARCH	EXTENSION
			1. Nursing
			2. Business
			3. Govt. Service
			4. Engineering
			5. Foreign Service
			6. Medicine and Arts
			7. Culture and Arts
			8. Law

All the awardees fall under the category of Extension. No recognition were given for the other categories.

#### Academic Profile of Awardees in Silliman University

Recipients of the awards have different histories of academic completion in Silliman. Some of them have started early by attending basic education in the university, either in Elementary or in High School or both. Some who have finished High School proceeded to take college courses in the university. Others who arrived as college students also took up Masteral or Doctoral programs offered by the institution.

Table 13

Department	Number of Graduates	Year
1. Basic Education		
1.1 Elementary	4	1948, 1951, 1951, 1963
1.2 High School	19	1948-1974
2. College		
2.1 Nursing	11	1955-1978
2.2 Associate in Arts	5	1946-1958
2.3 BS Education	5	1948-1967
2.4 BSEEd	4	1950-1965
2.5 Bachelor of Arts		
2.5.1 AB General	9	1950-1971
2.5.2 AB History	1	1973
2.5.3 AB Philosophy	1	1976
2.5.4 AB English	2	1961
2.5.5 AB Voice	1	1953
2.5.6 AB Speech and Theater	2	1975, 1978
2.5.7 AB Creative Writing	1	1974
2.5.8 AB Political Science	1	1978
2.6 BS Agriculture	2	1955, 1979
2.7 Sociology	2	1967, 1980
2.8 Arts and Sciences	1	1970
2.9 Engineering		
2.9.1 BS Civil Engineering	1	1958
2.9.2 BS Electrical Engineering	2	1974, 1975
2.10 BJ (Journalism)	1	1975
2.11 B. Theology	5	1950-1962
2.12 B.Divinity	1	1967
2.13 AA PreLaw	2	1953, 1954
2.14 LLB (Law)	6	1952-1986
2.15 BS Pre-Med	5	1952-1967
2.16 AA Pre-Med	1	1956
2.17 Bachelor of Science		



2.17.1 BS	1	1959
2.17.2 BS Chemistry	3	1960-1979
2.17.3 BS Math	1	1973
2.17.4 Bs Biology	1	1973
2.18 BBA	3	1950-1973

Of the awardees since 2000, four have finished only High School in Silliman, transferring to another school for college. Three Nursing alumnae were awarded not strictly for professionally practicing the trade, but for humanitarian service or social advocacy. Likewise, receivers of distinction for social advocacy are a graduate of English and Elementary Education.

One alumnus each for high school, Associate of Arts degree and Elementary Education degree received their medals for Community Health Service. A graduate of Silliman's elementary and high school was later decorated for achievements in Performing Arts.

Business having the most share of awards, include among the recipients graduates not from the Business School but from other disciplines. Cited for notable entrepreneurial prowess were graduates of High School, Education, Elementary Education, Nursing (2), Chemistry and Math. An Elementary Education alumna proved her excellence in the field of Organizational Development.

### ***The Social Legacy of Sillimianians***

From 2000-2015, the top three professional careers (cf. Table 1) honored for excellence in the Outstanding Sillimianian awards were Business (12.66%), Culture and Arts (10.13%), and Church (10.13%).

#### ***Church***

Church ministry directly affects society because it offers the consolation of the Gospel to individuals, communities, and special groups here and abroad. Both in pastoral care and missionary work, those who enter into ministerial work selflessly serve individuals and communities in many diverse situations of human need. It seems obvious then that a Christian institution of higher learning like Silliman University, itself cradling a school of Divinity studies, will unfailingly honor church servants who bear the name of the university.

Sillimianian Church awardees chose the path of spreading the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ to all people wherever their mission called for it. They have guided community churches here and abroad as excellent and committed pastors. Some of them have shared the gift of Theology as they embarked on teaching careers to future pastors and theologians, or the gift of sacred music that lifted tired and weary spirit into the realm of divine comfort and consolation.

Sillimianian Church alumni have also engaged in the challenging ministry to soldiers who engage in battle or peace-keeping, to prisoners shunned by society, to the infirm in mind and body languishing in hospitals, and to victims of human rights violations during the tumultuous time of martial rule in the country.

A Sillimianian pastor spent more than 50 years of life reaching out to the faithful in faraway communities of poor peasants in the Visayas and Mindanao. He also taught Sociology and Anthropology in Mindanao. He was also involved in peace efforts among conflicting parties in Mindanao.

But what about Business and Culture and Arts? How do professionals in these fields create an impact on society? Aren't businessmen and women primarily concerned with profit for personal enrichment? Aren't artists engaged in pursuits for personal fulfillment through the expression of their talents?

#### ***Business***

Not prominently known to many, there are many social values that business people can share and live out. While the primary purpose of business is to ensure the generation of profits for the entrepreneur or the company, business can also exist to benefit others.

Values can be incorporated in the vision of business establishments, and it may even be that values can inspire the beginning of a business venture (Chris Joseph, 2015).

With an expanded consciousness, today's businesses can be involved in the protection of the environment, extension of humanitarian service, assistance to community, ethical conduct of operations, and promotion of social consciousness.

Sillimanian businessmen have no doubt established business empires and secure trade institutions. But they have also been known for having their Christian faith inform the course their actions were taking. They prioritized Christian values over mere material reward in the way they treated their employees and workers with fairness and dignity. Not a few business people were involved in the evangelistic efforts of the church to which they belong or with whom they partner for mission. Some made their churches the venue for extending charitable help to the poor.

High on the agenda of the business alumni of Silliman was the idea of giving back to the community. They have established or supported scholarship programs, to support the children of their workers or to benefit the poor youth of the neighborhood. Some have regularly given part of their profit to the poor by means of feeding program, construction of homes through Gawad-Kalinga, and sponsorship of charitable institutions for underprivileged members of society.

Once, a woman who completed a non-business course from Silliman found herself thrust in a commercial venture in support of her husband's dream. The business flourished and together with the escalating efforts aimed at expansion, she focused on church and community charities. The family generously gave to scholarships funds and humanitarian aid.

In addition to these, this Sillimanian businesswoman included the environment in her priorities, specially contributing to the campaign for reforestation, the maintenance of a fish sanctuary and bamboo plantation in denuded mountainous areas of Negros.

#### *Culture and the Arts*

What about Culture and the Arts? It may be right to believe that those who capitalize on their preference for cultural and artistic pursuits do so for the purpose of finding personal satisfaction and fulfillment. This area is indeed very personal and subjective since the major investment is one's talent or aesthetic sense.

However, it appears that Culture and Arts impact society in more ways than we normally think. Culture benefits society economically by attracting visitors, developing skills and talents and revitalizing places considered of cultural importance. Culture and arts also promote good health and life satisfaction. It likewise enhances the spirit of social inclusion and volunteerism (Andrew Mowlah, Vivien Niblett, et al., 2014).

Distinguished Silliman artists seemed to be heavily immersed in the performing arts, music and literature. There were alumni who entered a career of singing, acting and dancing both in local and international productions, making a name for showcasing their extraordinary prowess. Some of them also devoted time to teach future generations of aspiring artists, imparting to them valuable lessons for their future success.

Multi-awarded Sillimanian writers traced their roots from the creative juices ingrained in them from their university days. There were leading and well-published writers among the alumni. The prestigious Palanca awards have been bestowed on Sillimanians through the years. One writer holds the Palanca record for winning not in 2 but in 3 languages, English, Filipino and Hiligaynon. Most of the Sillimanian writers also taught in various universities, thus sharing the literary passion with young people.

An alumna of the university taught and coordinated the creative writing program of her school. Having published books and won many awards, including multiple Palancas, she has been known to brave perilous locales in Mindanao in search of eager minds to teach. There, her students awaited her inspiring lectures and contagious motivation to indulge into writing and poetry.

#### *Education*

Normally associated with social and economic advancement, people pursue learning in order to find more competitive job placements, with good salaries and promising benefits. But what about educators themselves? Teachers, professors, trainers and those who launch into an education career are often seen as valuable but self-sacrificing bunch of professionals. While they assist hungry minds to discover knowledge and equip them to ascend the social and economic ladder, educators are not financially enriched by their calling. It is rather like a vocation that inspires these men and women to pour out their passion in guiding other to the fountain of truth.

Sillimanians are found among the most committed and most competent educators. Aside from contributing to the market effects of education (employment, promotion, productivity), they also contribute to the non-market and social impact of education: an increase in quality of family relationships, better health and increased life expectancy, increased knowledge and savvy, commitment to charity and volunteerism. (Barbara L. Wolfe and Robert H. Haveman, 2015).

Educators from Silliman can be found in classrooms all around the country and beyond. Engaged in both teaching assignments and administrative positions, whether in public or private academes, Sillimanians have responsibly molded the minds of young people to aspire for greatness in various fields of professional endeavor.

Sillimanians have not only become teachers to others but have also continuously sought to enhance their profession by undertaking further studies, engaging in research, writing and publishing books and articles, and accepting speaking engagements here and abroad. They have served poor students by promoting scholarships, becoming involved in charitable works, and even serving food for needy students.

A BSE graduate of Silliman was known to give back to her community by maintaining and developing her love for her native dialect. She established a project aimed at studying and promoting the dialect, even translating the Bible in this native tongue. Indeed, the Silliman educator teaches with honesty, integrity and commitment in imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Teacher.

### *Nursing*

In the field of Nursing, Sillimanians have established a good reputation worldwide. They are known for their reliable professional and competent portfolio. Enrolees show a preference for the course as time and again, the list of aspiring nurses would swell and increase.

In the Philippines, nurses were envisaged as the cheerful hospital room visitors who checked the patients' medical charts and extracted blood for testing. But while the usual image of nurses is that of assisting doctors and patients in the daily affairs of the hospital or clinic, they do in fact achieve more than that for the good of the society.

According to the US Department of Labor's revised Occupational Outlook Handbook (2000), "Registered nurses (R.N.s) work to promote health, prevent disease, and help patients cope with illness. They are advocates and health educators for patients, families, and communities. When providing direct patient care, they observe, assess, and record symptoms, responses, and progress; assist physicians during treatments and examinations; administer medications; and assist in convalescence and rehabilitation. R.N.s also develop and manage nursing care plans; instruct patients and their families in proper care; and help individuals and groups take steps to improve or maintain their health." (Josh Stone, 2015).

Beyond hospital chores, nurses from Silliman actively worked on special nursing projects and researches, joined in social advocacy for health causes, and volunteered in medical missions to the poor communities. Others have been involved in scholarships, and published works pertaining to their profession. Some nurses with teaching predilections acted as sedulous mentors of nursing students in various schools and promoted the profession to younger generations. Filipino nurses who have immigrated abroad were instrumental in assisting fellow Filipinos to enter and establish themselves in a new, foreign land.

A Sillimian nurse found herself working as an expert in international work in health care. Through her mastery of the profession, she has assisted the World Health Organization, and the Health Ministries of foreign countries in the Carribean. Her influence extended to European, Asian and African countries that sought her assistance in the effective and efficient management of projects. Because of this alumna's dedication to nursing, she inspired so many health professionals to perform optimally and to be zealous in sharing their God-given gifts and blessings.

### *Social Advocacy*

While there is no exact course on social advocacy, Silliman has its share of people who vigorously champion the rights of society's most vulnerable, weak and oppressed. From among the ranks of alumni from various disciplines, social advocates devote considerable time, resources and energy to humanitarian concerns.

Among the areas of advocacy where Sillimanians were actively involved, some have participated in humanitarian service. This included extending help to struggling students or enlisting as volunteers in worldwide medical missions. Some alumni were known for their crusade for human rights, defense of the poor against oppression and injustice from the

powerful and rich, and succor from acts of unscrupulous politicians as in the time of the late president Marcos. As lawyers, some alumni accepted *bro bono* or free service for the indigent clients.

Pastors who hailed from the university found a niche within the halls of peace efforts in the country. Where there was conflict and discord, these clergymen or women boldly stepped forward with assistance as bearers of the Gospel and as experts in reconciliation and healing of divisive issues.

One Protestant bishop initiated understanding between Christians and Muslims by publishing articles and studies. He developed good relations with Muslim brethren by becoming a co-convenor of the Bishops-Ulama Forum, a movement of religious leaders that promote inter-faith dialogue and that push forward the peace process. The bishop also became instrumental in talks between government personnel and rebel groups in Mindanao. His contributions were widely recognized and respected in both circles.

#### *Medicine and Science*

Honorees in the field of Medicine and Science included both practicing medical doctors and active scientists who were trailblazers in their fields, be it agriculture, botany or bio systems engineering. These represent the Sillimanians who enter the field of medicine and science not to be enclosed within laboratory walls but to be of greater service to the public.

Medicine and science are not isolated fields. They have to be applied to daily life before they become truly beneficial to humanity. Medicine for example, is more than just a perfect comprehension of diverse illnesses. Once applied to people, the practitioner must address other things as well. "Medicine concerns the experiences, feelings, and interpretations of human beings in often extraordinary moments of fear, anxiety, and doubt" (Working Party of the Royal College of Physicians, 2005).

It is when people feel their doctors in this way that trust is formed in the profession and in the practitioner. The physician becomes a friend, a member of the family and a leader in the community.

Aside from strict studies, Sillimanian doctors and scientists also emerged as teachers of the next generations of medical practitioners. They went into experimentation and research and wrote about their discoveries. They were altruistic professionals who did not refuse to give service to the poor. In fact, they were instrumental in initiating medical missions to far-flung communities and distributing donations to impoverished hospitals in the country. They were active in church and civic circles as believers and conscientious participants.

An alumnus had the great opportunity to serve as a professor in a medical school in Luzon, where he eventually became dean and vice-president of his institution. Naturally kind and generous, he noticed the need of some students who were short of resources to accomplish their studies. He recalled his early beginnings as a poor lad with noble dreams. At times like a real father, the doctor welcomed students into his own home, giving them a free place to stay, food to eat and even money to spend for their basic necessities. Truly he found a way to heal people, to teach them and to make a difference in their future.

#### *Government*

An important area where traces of Silliman education brilliantly shine is in government service. Whether as elected public official or appointees to important judicial posts or executives in government bureaus, alumni have manifested commitment and sincerity to work for the common good and for a more just world.

Many awards bestowed on alumni in government service attest to their traits as hardworking, creative, honest, and transparent public servants. Some were recognized as exemplary initiators of programs for the citizens they serve as they tried to improve health care and social assistance, tourism, social collaboration, treatment for the weak of the community, and ethical standards in service.

Sillimanians in the judicial branch of government have a special heart for the indigent people who seek their help. They have been trusted with sensitive positions as judges. Many of them have received awards for their dedication in executing fair and balanced judgments on various cases they handled.

#### *Research*

Research is an area that is gaining renewed focus these days. There used to be a time when research was deliberately cast aside because it was deemed too tedious, time-consuming, and difficult. Add to that, there is the problem of logistics, particularly funds and other technical resources.

However research is vital in daily life because it deals with finding solutions to particular problems in almost any area of modern life. Whether or not a problem is actually solved is not the point of doing research. Research aims rather to accumulate all possible solutions to a problem. That in itself must be considered an achievement. Researches are commissioned for government purposes, educational and institutional motives and for other independent undertakings (Ayesha Afsar, 2012).

While not so many prefer this line of work, Sillimanian researchers produced valuable material that helped preserve and enhance an appreciation of history, elevated interest in agricultural concerns, and focused attention on the importance of urban studies. These researchers authored reports, studies and books that will be of inestimable value for posterity.

A researcher from Silliman has provided excellent leadership in a government research office for many years. He has inspired many to look into possible solutions to problems that face food production in the country. In his own indefatigable conduct of studies, he has produced numerous books and proceedings, published numerous papers, and made presentations of these in both local and international settings. When he was granted the Outstanding Sillimanian Award, this alumnus was among the most published researcher in the local scientific community.

#### *Community Health*

In the general understanding, community health workers are individuals who belong to the village or barangay who are chosen by their neighbors to be trained to respond to basic health or emergency challenges. They are also called health aides, health promoters or health advisors (Wikipedia, 2015).

Certainly many Sillimanians joined this type of advocacy as a sign of their deep concern for the welfare of the sick in their communities. However the Outstanding Sillimanian Awards chose to highlight the self-sacrificing efforts of medical doctors who chose not the glamour of modern hospitals, but the rigors of community clinics or rural health stations. They represented many alumni, formal doctors or with adequate training, who invested their energies on caring for the sick and infirm members of the community who are also economically poor.

One community health worker is a doctor who rendered free services to folks in Zamboanga del Norte. In order to heed the call of duty, he crossed seas and rivers in pump boats. He used to ride a bicycle to conduct house calls, visiting the homebound sick. Another doctor chose to concentrate on serving the needs of the communities in the mountainous area of the Cordilleras, where he tried to uplift the life of people in the Kalinga-Apayao community.

#### *Community Service*

Cited for notable service to their communities were three Silliman graduates who have long settled in foreign countries. Living abroad did not however dampen their zest in reaching out to others in need or in extending assistance to make the community alive.

They were effective in mobilizing people towards worthwhile causes. They were active in health campaigns and volunteer drives. They found their churches as natural venues for their spiritual growth and human interaction. When possible, they did their best to send donations back to the Philippines and to accommodate Filipinos who newly arrived in America but had no relatives or support system.

Their achievement shows the ability of Sillimanians to adapt to their new environment. It further exhibits their ability to integrate within that surrounding by being productive, creative and participative members of the community. Needless to say, this capacity comes from their training and formation as whole persons while they stayed in the university.

#### *Others*

Less represented in the Outstanding Sillimanian Awards (2000-2015) were the careers in Political Science, Foreign Service, Law, Engineering (each 2.53%) and Engineering, Organizational Development, Counseling, and Architecture (each 1.27%). These areas of professional engagement are also valid expressions of Silliman's spirit of excellence and service to humanity. Though minimally cited in the awards, there are certainly a good number of alumni who chose these aforementioned paths not only careers but also as opportunities to join in efforts to make society better and to help their fellow men and women.

At least within the time frame under study, there is an obvious absence of awardees from the areas of computer studies, mass communications, clinical laboratory sciences and rehabilitative sciences, and from the discipline of sports.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis of the Outstanding Sillimanian Awardees from 2000-2015, this research confirms that graduates of this university pursue their personal advancement and career development after the completion of their studies. Their excellence as professionals invites due recognition in their place of work among their colleagues and their superiors.

Sillimanians constructively affect their environment by purposely performing their tasks according to the expectations laid out before them. Imbued with a Christian spirit, proper motivation and adequate skills, they robustly exhibit the ability to handle whatever challenges they meet on the way to personal fulfillment and perfection.

The Christian orientation of the university definitely counts as a major influence in the embrace of an affirmative viewpoint towards life in the world. Filled with faith and with genuine love for neighbor, graduates bravely enter into and interact with existing social realities they meet in the various contexts of home, work, church and society.

Sillimanians have not been content in merely perfecting their professional prowess and fulfilling their inchoate dreams. They went beyond the requirements of their professions. Many of them have espoused values that promote the welfare of the least benefitted members of society. Others have veered from their professions in order to devote their energy into advocacies that demand prompt attention and passionate dedication.

Represented by the recipients of the university awards, it can be confidently said that many of the graduates of Silliman are generous to charitable causes, compassionate to the poor, involved in community building, committed to excellence in their fields, and fully conscious of the importance of self-donation to the nation.

Even a cursory glance at the charts organized around the F-I-R-E pedagogical method will show that both in general and divided into five-year periods, most of the alumni choose courses and professions that fall under Extension (E), the university ideal of coming into contact with the outside world and providing service therein.

While in college, students are currently initiated into a world of sharing their talents and capacities. Silliman integrates service-learning and volunteerism as pedagogical tools. This way of learning “challenges their elitist thinking that they are superior because of their education and teaches them the notion that as privileged Christians they have responsibilities to fulfill (Oracion, 2012). It will be good to further explore the effect of volunteerism and service-learning to the inclinations of Sillimanians to deepen their positive impact on society.

Guided by the luminous example of Outstanding Sillimanian Awardees through the years, with certainty and pride, we can safely arrive at the conclusion that graduates of the university implant an encouraging and hope-filled impact on society by the exercise of the virtues learned from their school. In over 100 years of disseminating knowledge, Silliman University has permeated society in many positive and commendable ways through the presence of these men and women whose simple joy is to claim Silliman University as their Alma Mater and to walk under her guiding light in search of the way, the truth and the life.

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