

## Chapter 1: Introduction

The City of Salinas is not commonly known for their Chinatown; however, the neighborhood still exists in a fragile condition. Salinas' Chinatown is a dilapidated community that struggles with homelessness, vacancy, illicit drug activities and a lack of resources. However, California State University at Monterey Bay created the Chinatown Renewal Project, which works to better the Chinatown community through various projects such as the Chinatown Community Learning Center. The Learning Center is among a handful of nonprofit organizations in Monterey County that work tirelessly to make Chinatown a safer and more welcoming neighborhood by providing basic social services. The Chinatown Learning Center, commonly referred to as the Learning Center, serves as a career and self-development resource for the immediate Chinatown residents who are homeless and the greater, marginalized population of Salinas. Throughout the week, the Learning Center provides a variety of free computer literacy and digital media training classes to increase opportunities for the Chinatown homeless community. The purpose of this senior project, the Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program, was the development of a social media campaign for two primary purposes: 1) to solicit resources from nonprofits in Monterey County who specialize in services for the homeless, and 2) to increase enrollment rates in Learning Center computer classes by marketing the organization's services to the Chinatown homeless community. Ultimately, a social media campaign handbook was developed to assist future Learning Center staff members with maintenance and use of the campaign created for this project (please see appendix).

Social media is an increasingly popular and innovative outreach tactic that planners in public, private, and nonprofit sectors are beginning to use to communicate with the public. According to *Community Planning* by Eric Damian Kelly:

“The best plans are those that represent the collective will of the community. It is important at this stage of planning to remember that the goal of the planning process is consensus support for a plan, not unanimity on every subject addressed...Effective community plans are plans that are of the community and for the community, if not entirely by the community. It is through citizen participation that a body charged with the responsibility for developing a plan can ensure that the plan truly is for the community.” (Kelly, 2010).

Successful planning is based on citizen participation and outreach is a major aspect in gaining citizen participation in the planning process. The Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program is focused on one current planning outreach method, social media, and provides one example of how social media can be used for outreach to multiple communities—the Monterey County nonprofit community and Chinatown community of individuals who are currently homeless.

This chapter provides details about Salinas' Chinatown, the Chinatown Revitalization Neighborhood Project, this senior project, and the implications of this senior project for

the field of planning. The following bullet points will identify the sections to be discussed in this chapter:

- Section 1.1 *Overview of the Project*, will discuss two topics: CSUMB Chinatown Renewal Project and this Cal Poly senior project;
- Section 1.2 *The Evolution of Salinas' Chinatown*, will illustrate the historic bustling community of Salinas' Chinatown and its current condition;
- Section 1.3 *Approach to the Project*, will cover the approach used to research and develop the social media campaign;
- Section 1.4 *Relevance for Planning*, will discuss the relevance of this senior project for city and regional planning efforts.

## **1.1 Overview of the Project**

This senior project, The Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program, is an outreach effort serving two very different yet connected communities: members of the Chinatown community who are homeless and the nonprofits in Monterey County who specialize in service of homelessness. The client for this senior project is The Chinatown Community Learning Center which has commissioned this project to outreach to the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community to publicize the social services the organization is offering and to seek resources from other local nonprofits who also serve the homeless population. The purpose of The Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program was to promote the job training and computer classes offered at the Learning Center to members of the Chinatown Community who are homeless. The second purpose of the outreach program was to raise awareness about the Learning Center's services and collaborate resources among nonprofits in Monterey County who serve the Salinas Chinatown homeless community.

The outreach program for this senior project uses social media to promote the computer literacy classes to the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community and to teach the members how to get connected with lost friends and family. Dually, the outreach program is used to connect resources between the local nonprofits of Monterey County who serve the homeless population. Social media is the primary outreach tool used in this senior project and can be described as, according to Mark Hopkins from the Mashable.com blog:

“ ‘Social media’ is that it isn’t media in the traditional sense. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and all the others I don’t have the word count to mention aren’t media; they are platforms for interaction and networking. All the traditional media — print, broadcast, search, and so on — provide platforms for delivery of ads near and around relevant content. Social media are platforms for interaction and relationships, not content and ads.” (Hopkins, 2008).

A social media campaign comprising five major social media websites was developed: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, and Tumblr. The use of social media in this outreach campaign will be discussed in several sections of this report:

- Section 1.3 of this chapter, *Approach to Project*, explaining why social media was used in this outreach campaign and what was required to create an effective outreach program for two separate yet linked communities: The Salinas' Chinatown homeless community and nonprofits in Monterey County who specialize in service of homelessness;
- Section 2.3 of Chapter 2, *Background Research, Social Marketing*, providing the basic information about social media and case studies of nonprofits who have successfully used social media to promote their organizations;
- Chapter 3, *Social Media Campaign and Handbook, Social Media Campaign*, discussing the development and use of the social media campaign for this senior project, The Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program;
- Chapter 4, *Findings and Conclusions*, discussing the efficacy of the social media in both communities.

#### *1.1.a. CSUMB Chinatown Renewal Project*

The Chinatown community in Salinas faces many struggles today. California State University at Monterey Bay has been working to improve the community for over a decade. The Service Learning Institute which is a department of Cal State Monterey Bay is directing the entire Chinatown Renewal Project which encompasses various programs such as the Community Garden Project and the establishment of the Learning Center. Seth Pollack, Director of the Service Learning Institute, describes CSUMB's work in Chinatown as,

"The Chinatown Renewal Project has made significant progress in its first year. In fact, it is truly amazing the transformation that has occurred in one-single year. Yet, we know that "Rome was not built in a day," and nor will Salinas' "Chinatown" be transformed in one year. The difficult work of collaborative community-based planning lays ahead. However, an excellent groundwork of trust and collaboration has been laid in this first year."

The Service Learning Institute at CSUMB has established a trusting relationship with the Salinas Chinatown community that has enabled the opportunity to organize a senior project outreach program.

The Chinatown Renewal Project was launched in 2005 and has continued to make a positive change in the low-income, underserved community of Chinatown. The mission for the project is to "*create a safe, welcoming, revitalized and accessible neighborhood that embraces its cultural history, richness and diversity; offering housing, economic opportunities and community services.*" The Service Learning Institute at CSUMB has

carried out this mission in three ways: the construction and operation of a community garden, the creation of an ongoing job training program through the Learning Center in Chinatown, and the hosting of a community-wide workshop developing a collaborative vision for the future of the neighborhood. (Feske, 2006)

The Learning Center is located on Soledad Street, which is the main corridor for the Chinatown neighborhood. The Learning Center is staffed and funded by CSUMB and provides job training and basic computer skill classes to the residents of Chinatown, majority of which are homeless. This senior project was completed under the supervision of Peter Nelson, The Director of the Chinatown Community Learning Center. The senior project details will be further discussed in the following section

#### *1.1.b., Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo Senior Project.*

As previously noted, the outreach program developed for this senior project consisted of a social media campaign comprising five major social media websites: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr, and Flickr. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr and emails were used for outreach to both the Monterey County nonprofit network and Salinas' Chinatown homeless community. Flickr was used exclusively for Salinas' Chinatown homeless community.

For the outreach program to the nonprofits, the social media campaign was used as a networking tool. Nonprofits in Monterey County were "digitally joined" with the Learning Center through the five main social networking sites. The purpose of the campaign was to:

- Seek out services other nonprofits provide for the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community and connecting them with their clients;
- Promote awareness of the Learning Center services;
- Discover successful career development programs other nonprofits use that can be potentially implemented by the Learning Center.

The purpose of the social media campaign to the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community was twofold:

- To teach the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community how to use social media through the development a class;
- To use social media to promote other computer classes to students once the students had created personal accounts on networking websites, such as Facebook,

As a result of this senior project, the Learning Center now hosts a class about social media and teaches the residents of Chinatown how to create, use, and benefit from a social networking sites such as Facebook. Through the class on social media, the Learning Center makes possible a computer-based, "word-of-mouth" promotion of the Center's services among Chinatown residents, an outreach technique that is effective for working with the homeless population and ties in well with the Learning Center's

theme: Connection through Technology. The “word-of-mouth” effect is based on students’ personal satisfaction with the Learning Center’s services.

## **1.2 The Evolution of Salinas’ Chinatown**

Although currently the Chinatown community seeks out help through revitalization efforts from CSUMB and other organizations, the neighborhood was much different in the 1920s-1950s. The Chinatown neighborhood of Salinas is a dynamic community filled with a history of cultural diversity, discrimination and is now left in its current state of abandonment. Beginning with the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Section 1.2.a., *Chinatown’s Past*, will discuss the history of Chinatown, including different ethnic groups that have called Chinatown their home. Section, 1.2.b. *Chinatown Today*, describes current efforts to revive the area.

### *1.2.a. Chinatown’s Past*

The Chinatown neighborhood in Salinas has a long and rich history dating back to the late 19th century when the community was primarily made up of Chinese agricultural workers and immigrants. During this time, Chinese men made up the majority of farm workers in California because they were considered cheap labor. Carlos Marentes and Cynthia P. Marentes, the creators of farmworkers.org, describe the history of Chinese agricultural workers in California:

“As U.S. business expanded West after the Civil War, new workers were needed to mine the gold and silver, lay the railroad ties, and do back breaking labor in the fields and orchards. At the same time, Western businessmen were searching all over Asia for raw materials and new markets for the U.S.’s growing industrial production. They did not just bring back tea, silk and valuable minerals but also thousands of unemployed peasants were "recruited" to come to California. In the late 1800’s, thousands of Chinese and Japanese workers were brought to work in the fruit orchards and sugar beet field. However, the farmworkers began to form associations and strike for improved wages and conditions. But their victories were short-lived. Asian workers were blamed for taking away jobs from "Americans." The result was racist laws excluding the Chinese (1882) and Japanese (1920) from the U.S.” (Marentes, & Marentes, 1999)

Due to the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Chinese immigrants were restricted to living in certain areas of the city and were not allowed to own property (Feske, 2006). The Chinatown neighborhood is strategically split by the railroad tracks from the rest of Salinas, which made it an ideal area to displace the unwanted Chinese community, thus forming Chinatown. Chinatown was a neighborhood filled with mixed-use developments, and many Chinese families lived above the retail stores and grocery markets around Soledad Street, which still remains as one of the main corridors for the neighborhood. During the 1920-1940’s, as a result of a large influx of Chinese immigrants, the Confucius Church was developed and became the center for the Chinese community in Chinatown.

The Japanese arrived in Salinas shortly after the Chinese in the 1930s. Similar to the Chinese, thousands of Japanese agricultural workers were recruited as cheap labor to farm in the fields of California. Nevertheless, like the Chinese, the Japanese were pushed by community hostility and racism into the segregated Chinatown neighborhood. (Feske, 2006). The Japanese lived on Lake Street in the neighborhood around the Salinas Buddhist Temple, which became the heart of the Japanese community in Chinatown. Both the Chinese and Japanese made the most of Chinatown and respected each other within the neighborhood. There are no records of conflict between the Chinese and Japanese in Salinas' Chinatown.

Together, the two communities turned Chinatown into a bustling neighborhood filled with restaurants, barber shops, tofu shops, churches, and active residents. However, as time went on, the original Japanese and Chinese residents began to leave Salinas. A majority of the Chinese community moved elsewhere once the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943 and the Japanese community faced considerable discrimination during World War II and were detained in internment camps (Feske, 2006). Even though some Japanese and Chinese families did stay in Salinas Chinatown, their children grew up and moved out of the neighborhood leaving vacancies for a new population of immigrants (Feske, 2006).

During the 1950's-1960's, the Filipino community began to relocate to Salinas Chinatown adding even more diversity to the neighborhood but, unfortunately, Chinatown was already well-known for its bars, bordellos, and gambling houses which attracted many of the 40,000 soldiers at the nearby Fort Ord (Feske, 2006). In the 1990's the City of Salinas began to more stringently police the neighborhood and shut down illegal activity while illicit drug activity, prostitution and gambling have been eliminated in Chinatown, it's economy has not yet revived. Vacant lots, abandoned buildings, and space for the homeless now occupy the majority of Chinatown streets.

### *1.2.b. Chinatown Today*

Although the once bustling 1950s Chinatown is gone, the community is not forgotten. Through the efforts of CSUMB and the Chinatown Renewal Project, the neighborhood is undergoing improvement, which provides an opportunity for the return of a vibrant Chinatown. Some of the improvements include the plans for a Chinese Cultural Center on Soledad Street and the re-opening of, the once popular, Republic Cafe in Chinatown (Weekly, 2010). As part of efforts to revive the neighborhood, its history is being remembered and celebrated. One way the community is remembered is through the Salinas Asian Festival hosted every year in April. The festival celebrates the history of Chinatown through cultural food and performances throughout the day (Salinas Downtown Community Board, 2007). Although this is the only community event hosted in Chinatown it is, hopefully, the start to many more cultural events celebrating the long and rich history of Chinatown.

The Chinatown neighborhood in Salinas has experienced ups and downs through its history but perhaps now, faces, its most challenging struggles. The Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program was part of an effort to improve the community through the promotion of computer classes and career development hosted in the Learning Center. The outreach program contributed to the revitalization efforts in two ways: first by connecting the Salinas Chinatown homeless community with resources from other nonprofits in Monterey County and secondly, by increasing enrollment from community members in the computer classes at the Learning Center.

### **1.3 Approaches to the Project**

Several challenging factors had to be addressed in the development of this outreach program. First, two distinct communities were targeted for outreach by the Learning Center, nonprofits, and members of the local community who are homeless. Second, the Learning Center wanted a second outreach program that used social media as its foundation because of the center's theme: Connection through Technology. The Learning Center is funded through a federal grant called Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). BTOP's mission is to expand broadband access and adoption in communities across America. An outreach program focusing on social media seemed fitting thus, for the BTOP Grant and Learning Center's mission. A social media campaign also seemed a perfect choice for a senior project, as social media is emerging as a useful outreach tool for planners. The following sections will explain the approach used to develop the social media campaign for the Salinas Chinatown's Homeless community and the nonprofit network of Monterey County who specialize in service to the homeless.

#### *1.3.a. Chinatown Homeless Community*

Designing an outreach program for the homeless population required a significant amount of research and preparedness. Research on social media was required because social media, like homelessness, is not well researched and is considered a new communication tool (Hopkins, 2008). The complexity of the homeless population makes it difficult to create an outreach program that engages the entire targeted community (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2005). While the concerns of the homeless have been covered in academic literature, outreach efforts to them have not. In addition, because social media has only recently developed as a tool for outreach, the literature on this subject has been able to keep pace with its technological advances and potential for reaching significant and varied audiences.

In order to create an effective outreach campaign for Chinatown's homeless population, extensive research was completed on general outreach techniques and, more specifically, outreach techniques using social media. One of the most important issues raised by this background research was that an effective outreach program must be tailored to meet the needs and address the characteristics of the targeting community. This finding led to research on the homeless. Literature regarding the everyday living conditions and concerns of individuals who are homeless was reviewed. In addition,

case studies of successful outreach efforts in homeless communities were researched, including case studies of other nonprofits engaging the homeless through technology.

The most important research completed for the development of this program included site visits to and interviews in Salinas' Chinatown. While academic and professional literatures provide the necessary foundation for understanding outreach techniques and the condition of homelessness, these literatures cannot tell a neighborhood's story like a resident can through her/his experiences. Thus, in depth research on the Learning Center and the community it serves was conducted through interviews with Chinatown community members, frequent site visits to the Learning Center, meetings with Learning Center staff, and observation of Learning Center computer classes. The information provided through the review of academic and professional literature and the investigation of the Learning Center and Chinatown Community is discussed in Sections 2.2. through 2.4 in Chapter 2, *Background Research*.

### *1.3.b. The Nonprofits of Monterey County*

The approach used to develop an outreach program for the nonprofits in Monterey County was similar to that used for the Chinatown homeless community. Beyond researching general outreach techniques and social media campaigns, case studies of how nonprofits use social media to benefit their organizations played a major part in designing the nonprofit aspect of the outreach program. Research on the greater network of nonprofit organizations in Monterey County was conducted through web-based research and phone call inquiries. The nonprofit community of Chinatown was investigated through interviews and site visits. Research was conducted through interviews with staff of the two main nonprofit establishments in Chinatown: The Learning Center and Dorothy's Place. Following completion of this research, the social media campaign for nonprofits was developed.

## **1.4 Relevance for Planning**

Planning is a broad and interdisciplinary profession and has historically been expert-driven. However, participatory planning has emerged in mainstream planning practices in recent decades. Daniella Fergusson, the author of *Why Mix Urban Planning and Social Media*, describes 2010 participatory planning as:

“Participation is a desired planning process, because participation is tautologically justified – perceived to be self-evidentially good. Other justifications for participatory planning include creating social change, strengthening social capital, and establishing governance required to manage the commons. Although participatory planning's impacts on these three areas remain debated” (Fergusson, Pages 3-4).

As Fergusson points out, planning includes creating social change. In *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, Sherry Arnstein argues, “True citizen power is social change, making a high degree of participation a revolutionary act.” (Arnstein, Pages 216-224).



Social media has the potential to increase citizen participation, which creates opportunities for social change.

Planners have begun to recognize and explore the potential for social media to increase citizen participation in the planning process. In 2010, Columbia University hosted a Spatial Information Design Lab about a workshop on crowd sourcing. "Crowd Sourcing is the compound of Crowd and Outsourcing for the act of taking tasks traditionally performed by an employee or contractor, and outsourcing them to a group of people or community, through an "open call" to a large group of people (a crowd) asking for contributions" (Wikipedia, 2011). According to the course syllabus by the instructor Sarah Williams:

"The lab focused on the models of crowd sourced geographical data collection, with a specific focus on how public participation in the collection process can be incentivized. The main objectives of the course will be to 1) gain a solid background in how social media and crowd sourcing are currently being used for urban planning. 2) gain hands on experience with organizations that might be able to use geo-locative data for their planning purposes. 3) critique current and develop new applications for data collection 4) help planning organizations use the information they collect to advocate for their needs." (Williams, 2010).

Social media is an upcoming outreach trend in the field of planning that is also finding a way into the curriculum of well-established planning schools around the country, as demonstrated by Columbia University. The development of a social media campaign for outreach was, thus, a timely subject for a senior project.

This senior project is also connected to the field of planning because it required the use of rational planning methods to research, develop, and evaluate the social media campaign. According to *Community Planning* by Eric Kelly the 2010 definition of planning is as follows:

"Planning is a rational way of preparing for the future. It typically involves gathering and analyzing data, examining possible future trends, considering alternative scenarios, analyzing costs and benefits of those scenarios, choosing a preferred scenario, and planning for implementation." (Kelly, 2010).

This senior project required employment of elements of the planning process described by Kelly, such as "gathering and analyzing data" and "examining possible future trends". The Salinas Chinatown Outreach Program gathered and analyzed data through interviews with members of the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community and staff from the Learning Center. The data gathered from interviews, site visits, and observation was analyzed and an outreach program was designed. Once the outreach program was implemented, its future use was considered and the Social Media Campaign handbook was created.

## Chapter 2: Background Research

This chapter will explain the background research needed to understand: Basic Outreach Techniques, Outreach Tailored to the Homeless Population, and Social Marketing. This chapter also includes personal interviews from Salinas Chinatown community members used to better understand the neighborhood/context for this project through their experiences.

Now, more than ever, planners are reaching out to the public and basing their programs and plans on the input and feedback from communities, which is why Basic Outreach Techniques is an important section in this chapter. Understanding the groundwork needed in community building and developing communication between organizations and residents are imperative to create successful community plans and programs. In the following section, *Basic Outreach Techniques*, common tactics according to *Designing Public Consensus* by Barbara Faga will be covered (Faga, 2006). Faga explains how to effectively use public meetings, panels, and forums and how to properly take advantage of the media.

However, not all general basic outreach methods will be effective in a community. A planner must understand the context and culture of the community to accurately communicate and source the right data. A planner must customize the plan to fit the specialized needs of each neighborhood because every community is unique and cannot be covered with a generic, blanket outreach strategy. Therefore, learning about the Salinas Chinatown community, which is largely a homeless population, is one of the first steps to creating a successful outreach program. The section titled *Outreach to the Chinatown Community Homeless Population* will include background information about homeless populations and specific outreach techniques used for communities of individuals who are homeless. Background information, such as the three dimensions of homelessness, is based on *Down on their Luck* by David Snow and Leon Anderson (Snow, & Anderson, 1993). Outreach techniques, such as ways to build a trustful relationship, are based on *A Volunteer's Guide to Working with the Homeless* by Ann A. Abbott (Abbott, 1988), and case studies from organizations who serve the homeless population, such as like Glide Memorial and National Health Care for the Homeless Council, will also be presented.

Outreach is a very diverse and multi-faceted subject whether it is designed for a specific population such as the homeless or for a broader public. Recently, social media has become a promising tool for planners to reach a wider and more diverse community base. The section titled, *Social Marketing*, will address the fundamentals of social media and According to *Social Media and Social Reality*, social media is used in all sectors of work to maximize communication and increase productivity and efficiency. Also included in the *Social Media* section is the analysis of the social media programs of two organizations: National Wildlife Federation and Asian Law Caucus.

Although social media is a useful communication tool for planners, it is questionable whether it is an effective technique for reaching out to individuals who are homeless,

primarily because of their lack of access to computers. (Access is an issue discussed later in this report, as this student project includes a component that provides individuals with experience and access to computers.) Nothing is more effective than tailoring an outreach program that is sensitive to a community's cultural and historical aspects (Tredwell, 2003). Interviews with Salinas Chinatown community members: \*Barry, \*Marissa, and \*Kyle provide a better insight to the neighborhood's living conditions, social climate, and physical environment. Homelessness has affected each individual differently and each of the community members have their own unique story to tell about Salinas Chinatown.

Chapter two provides the background research completed to properly tailor outreach programs for two communities: 1) Individuals who are homeless, and 1) Nonprofits who serve them. Information ranging from general outreach tactics to personal interviews with community members played a significant role in preparing an outreach program and a social media campaign for the Salinas Chinatown community.

*\* Symbolizes the names have been changed to protect the privacy rights and keep identities confidential.*

## **2.1 Basic Outreach Tactics**

Community outreach techniques need to stay current with society and technology to remain effective. The most recent development in outreach methods is the inclusion of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, to connect a community. Today's lifestyle is based heavily on computers that planners need to keep up with the sources of communication and technology to reach a larger and more diverse community base. Social media can be used effectively to reach different groups within communities despite age, gender, race, or economic status as demonstrated in the social media campaign designed for Salinas Chinatown.

Although staying current with the communication trends is important for outreach, it is also important to understand traditional outreach techniques. Learning the conventional methods of outreach develops a solid foundation, which leads to the creation of more current methods. This section, *Basic Outreach Tactics*, will review traditional outreach techniques such as panels, forums, and public meetings as well as the proper way to work with printed and digital media other than social media.

### **2.1.a. Public Meetings, Panels and Forums**

A public meeting, a panel, and a forum are types of traditional outreach methods that planners have been using for years. The longevity and effectiveness of these outreach methods are due to the acknowledgement of the value of public opinion and the resources it provides the community about the project. Public meetings, panels, and forums are a useful way to seek out citizen participation. Community members attend public meetings, panels, and forums to either voice their concerns or learn more about the details of a project. Understanding the fundamentals of conventional outreach

methods is a good starting base to build more technologically advanced outreach programs such as a social media campaign.

Hosting a panel or forum is an effective and commonly used outreach technique. According to Faga, an expert panel can inform the public of the proposed project and frame the discussion during the open forum afterwards. The open forum aspect of any outreach meeting is important because it gives community members an opportunity to raise their concerns with the project and allows for a deeper discussion of all the issues associated with the project. Selecting a knowledgeable panel is imperative to providing the public with the most clear, concise, and honest project information, in addition to, creating a well-educated constituency (Faga, 2006).

There are several factors that contribute to the success of a panel or forum. However, one consistent factor that plays a role for all three outreach methods: is the venue selection. The location should convey the message of the meeting and provide a comfortable setting for all attendees. The venue selection should also be located on impartial grounds and be accessible for all parties/stakeholders to attend. Some good examples of venues are a school, a hotel, or a community center.

One of the most important aspects of hosting a public meeting is preparation (Faga, 2006). Some professionals misconstrue an open forum as walking into a meeting with nothing prepared to signify an openness to the public's ideas. However, it is always better to give people something to respond to, such as a prompt or an idea rather than leaving the meeting completely open-ended. Being prepared for a public meeting also involves the study and understanding of the community and the local context of the project which can be accomplished through interviews with community members. An effective public meeting creates understanding of the community and is sensitive to the local issues; this exemplifies genuineness and sincerity to the neighborhood residents as well as the thorough preparation for the meeting.

Lastly, taking good notes and recording all meeting comments is helpful to follow-up with the community members and other stake-holders who attended the meeting. Summarizing all the results of the meeting and open discussion is a useful tool to understanding the public concerns. Also, it is important to recapitulate the information to the meeting attendees to clarify any miscommunications. In regards to social media, it may be difficult to open the forum to discussion among all members of the community rather than just strictly between the organization and individual public members. There are limited options in the capabilities of social media to gather a community-wide discussion and it does have some draw-back in comparison to a public meeting, panel, or forum.

### *2.1.b. Media*

Printed and digital media (other than social media) are expansive resources to take advantage of for outreaching to the public. The majority of the public sees and hears the media daily whether it be on the Internet, watching television, or listening to the radio.

The importance of printed and digital material will be explained in the following section, as well as how to avoid the pitfalls of media outreach by developing a press kit as described by jointogether.org.

Utilizing the media whether it is through a website or print ads is the most effective way to publicize information and outreach to a greater range of community members according to Barbara Faga in 2006. Seeking feedback and comments where the public congregates and using the same communication sources will reach more people than relying on people to arrive at a designated location such as a public workshop or hearing. Conducting polls or surveys on a website is a good way to get a quick glance of different viewpoints of a project, however, it should not be the only source of community outreach. When conducting a poll or survey, it is important to remember it is only a snapshot of the perspectives of people who chose to take the survey not of the entire community. Nevertheless, virtual participation via the Internet is a useful tool in providing to an retrieving information from individual homes and an excellent way to reach out to residents who cannot attend public meetings or have some other disabilities. The Internet is available 24 hours a day, which increases the schedule flexibility in disseminating project information and will include more perspectives from more stakeholders (Faga, 2006).

Printed materials used in outreach efforts include brochures, reports, minutes, posters, and agendas. Printed materials provided during meetings are useful in framing the discussion and managing the meeting. All printed material should be edited in a quick-read format and website addresses and other contact information should be clearly labeled on all printed media.

According to Candice Benson, who is a public relations associate for JoinTogether.org, promoting an outreach event, inviting the media and enlisting the support of relevant community organizations will be helpful in reaching the majority of the community. Reporters and community organization representatives should be provided with a press kit. According to JoinTogether.org the press kit will include: media advisory, news release, fact sheets, schedule of outreach events, copies of all reports, and any other relevant information regarding the project. Distributing press kits will be the easiest way to mass disseminate information to organizations and ensure clear communication and one, solid message. A clear, solid message is very important to decrease miscommunication however it is difficult to censor or monitor communication and messages in social media because it indiscriminately promotes everybody's opinions and comments. Anybody can post anything they want on a social media account whether is it factual or not; this can be hurtful in developing a clear solid media message to the public (Beson, 2011).

## **2.2. Outreach to the Chinatown Community Homeless Population**

In order for an outreach program to be successful it not only needs to reach a vast and diverse population via media but it also needs to be carefully prepared and properly researched. It must be tailored for the community at hand which requires background

research of the culture, history, and major population and stakeholders of the community (Tredwell, 2003). The following section, *Outreach to the Chinatown Community Homeless Population*, includes: basic information regarding the condition of homelessness, specific outreach techniques for the community, and the analysis of two well-established nonprofits who serve the homeless community, Glide Memorial and National Healthcare for the Homeless Council. The following background research will serve as a foundation for a better and more effective outreach program through social media by understanding the homeless community of Salinas' Chinatown.

### *2.2.a. About homelessness*

Homelessness is a condition often stigmatized with stereotypes of laziness, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental illness. However, as described by David Snow and Leon Anderson homelessness is a much more complex issue than what many people believe. There are three dimensions of homelessness as described by David Snow and Leon Anderson in *Down on Their Luck* (Snow, & Anderson, 1993). Recognizing the different dimensions of homelessness will allow for a deeper understanding of the homeless population and offer an opportunity to see past the publicized stereotypes.

According to David Snow and Leon Anderson there are three dimensions—three areas of loss or absence—experienced by someone who is homeless: residential, familial-support, role-based dignity and moral-worth. The residential dimension of homelessness is the absence of a physical shelter, which is often the most common idea of homelessness (Snow, & Anderson, 1993).

The second dimension of homelessness, familial-support, is the absence of family ties. A family unit links an individual to a greater human social network and is traditionally viewed as the image of a “home”. When the familial-support link is missing it often leaves an individual “homeless”. The majority of individuals who are homeless suffer from the second dimension. Most do not have contact with a stable family network or certainly not a family network reliable enough to call upon in a time of crisis.

Lastly, the third dimension of homelessness regards social roles in society. Dignity and moral worth are tied closely with the roles people play in life but not necessarily tied with an individual's character. Homeless people fall into a stigmatized role in society, and their condition is commonly misperceived as a result of alleged character faults of laziness, drug/alcohol addiction, or gambling. Society often sympathizes more with master disaster victims who are homeless or women and children. Unattached, adult, homeless men receive the least sympathy and are often viewed as homeless due to their own character flaws and life failings.

All three dimensions of homelessness and the diversity of circumstances that create homelessness were important to remember when developing an outreach program for the Chinatown Salinas community. As discussed earlier, various issues such as family problems cause homelessness. The complexity of homeless communities makes it difficult to create an outreach program that will engage the entire targeted community.

### *2.2.b. Outreach techniques*

When outreaching to a specific community there are precise techniques that have proven successful in the past. A planner must review specific outreach techniques ahead of time when working with a sensitive population such as the homeless. Accurate preparation is required to work with the homeless community as described by *A Volunteer's Guide to Working with the Homeless* by Ann A. Abbott, such as approaching a homeless person and building a trusting relationship. These specific methods were important to learn since the outreach program required close contact with the homeless community of Salinas Chinatown.

One of the most important things to keep in mind when working with individuals who are homeless is the lack of respect a homeless person experiences on a daily basis; therefore, being aware of one's own actions and body language is imperative. Accord the individual the same respect and courtesy given to anyone. It is important to introduce one's self and clearly state your purpose to the individual so communication is clear from the beginning. This approach is particularly important because communication with the homeless person early in the relationship will make future interactions easier (Abbott, 1988). During the ensuing conversation, reading the person's body language is critical to deciding whether to continue the conversation because respecting their personal boundaries are important when interacting with a homeless person. An outreach worker should avoid excessive questioning, which might make the homeless person feel anxious or uncomfortable. As in any respectful conversation, always give the individual your full attention during the entire outreach period.

Trust is the foundation of most human relationships. Homeless people are constantly being let down and experiencing disappointments, therefore trust is a sensitive and valued aspect of the relationship. It is easy to become emotionally involved and make promises to heighten a homeless person's spirit; but as an advocate/outreach worker you should never promise what you cannot deliver—that is an effective way to damage the trust in a relationship. In addition, another important aspect in building trust is to never pass judgment on a homeless person (Abbott, 1988).

Approaching a homeless person with respect and building a trusting relationship with each community member is ideal; however, sometimes it takes excessive energy and time to build a trusting relationship. The time required to build relationships can prevent outreach to greater numbers of people since concentrated efforts will be spent on limited community members.

### *2.2.c. Case Studies of Outreach*

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council and Glide Memorial are two nonprofit organizations that have made credible strides in the advocacy for the homeless population on a local and national level. The National Health Care for the Homeless Council developed a successful training curriculum to educate outreach workers about homelessness. The council also works closely with a network of other

nonprofits who serve the homeless population and can be used a model partnership example for other non-governmental organizations.

Glide Memorial is also another well-established nonprofit organization that serves the homeless population. Glide Memorial is based in San Francisco and is truly a grassroots organization that has provided shelter and food for the homeless of San Francisco for decades. A remarkable attribute about Glide Memorial is the trust and respect the organization receives from the homeless population in San Francisco and the greater Bay Area community. Glide Memorial is locally well-known for their reliable service to the community and their creative programs. Glide Memorial is a prime example of an organization that was capable of building trusting relationships with individual neighborhood members and the community at large.

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council and Glide Memorial, are model organizations in building trusting partnerships, educational training for staff and volunteers, and networking among other organizations. All factors are important to creating a successful outreach program for the Salinas Chinatown community. As discussed in the previous section, building trust is important to creating a successful outreach program for the Chinatown community. Education training for staff and volunteers, and networking among organizations, are also important, and their value to the Chinatown project will be discussed in the following sections.

#### *(1) National Health Care for the Homeless Council*

According to the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (HCH), homelessness frequently begins with a person's health and triggers a chain reaction to affect employment, financial, and housing problems. The National Health Care for the Homeless Council works to break this cycle of homelessness and bring about reform to the health care system to better serve the homeless population. HCH is an active advocate in homelessness policy and continues to provide resources to other nonprofit organizations including training and technical assistance.

An example of networking with other agencies is the relationship between HCH and other nonprofits to address poor health. The National Health Care for the Homeless Council works with numerous nonprofits, government agencies, and private businesses to break the link between poor health and homelessness. HCH teams up with different agencies such as the Homelessness Marathon, an agency which produces a radio broadcast that enables homeless people to speak to the nation regarding their life's situation through an overnight radio talk show. Another partnership with HCH is the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty which advocates to protect the rights of homeless people through litigation, policy advocacy, and public education. HCH networks and collaborates with several agencies to be a resource center for the homeless population.

An example of resources offered through The National Health Care of the Homeless Council is a training curriculum used to educate outreach workers. HCH obtained a



grant that paid for the research and time to put together the curriculum to train outreach workers dealing with the homeless and health care. The curriculum is a comprehensive program including step-by-step instructions for a facilitator to train a small group or team of outreach workers. The bulk of the curriculum is helping the outreach worker understand the concept of homelessness and be able to build a partnership with the immediate community members.

## *(2) Glide Memorial*

Glide Memorial is located in the heart of San Francisco and serves the marginalized community of the Tenderloin District and the greater population of homeless people in San Francisco. Glide memorial offers five main programs to serve the homeless: Feed the Hungry, Compassionate Healthcare, Women Overcoming Violence, Men Unlearning Violence, and Move Beyond Crisis. Their success is partially based on the trust they have developed with the community, an important relationship highlighted here in previous sections.

Feed the Hungry is a program used to serve three daily free meals to the city's poor, homeless, and hungry. Last year, Glide memorial served 934,000 meals including their exclusive senior and women's breakfast support groups. Compassionate Healthcare program is a nurse managed health care center that provides services including mental health treatment, substance abuse, non-Western medicine, treatment of diabetes and testing for HIV/AIDS. Women Overcoming Violence program is funded by Wells Fargo and assists women on the road to recovery from violence, oppression, and isolation. Glide provides drop-in support groups focusing on meditation and stress reduction, healthy relationships, and harm reduction for substance abuse and codependency. Men Unlearning Violence allows participants to take responsibility for their actions by learning to respond instead of react and replacing intimacy instead of control. This gives men the opportunity to adapt to conflict and create positive relationships through safety strategies. The Move Beyond Crisis program provides a walk-in center that allows a safe space to sleep at night. The walk-in center is on a first-come-first basis and also provides emergency clothing, food boxes, and household items to make the guest feel more at home.

## **2.3. Interviews**

Interviews were conducted with three residents of the Chinatown neighborhood of Salinas to gain a better perspective on the community and to learn how to improve outreach methods with the local homeless population. The interviewees were re-named to maintain confidentiality and privacy standards. Each interviewee provided a different interpretation of the community but all three have experienced some degree of homelessness and are stakeholders in the Salinas Chinatown community. The following sections will describe the interviewees and provide background information, list the interview questions asked, and report the answers from all three interviewees.

### *2.3.a. Interview Questions*

Pre-determined interview questions were asked to all three interviewees however some of the answers connect to different stories that may not fully answer the question asked and will be reflected in the report per interviewee. Questions about Dorothy's Place were asked because it's one of two service providers in Chinatown and it's the hub of activity for the community.

1. Do you work at Dorothy's Place? If so, please answer questions 1-4.
2. Please describe your job at Dorothy's Place.
3. What are the services Dorothy's Place provides?
4. How long have you been working at Dorothy's Place?
5. Please describe the homeless population of Salinas' Chinatown.
6. Why is the immediate Chinatown community homeless?
7. Do you think the Chinatown homeless population differs from the greater homeless population?
8. What are some important skills to have when working with the homeless community?
9. What would be the most effective way to outreach to the Chinatown homeless population?
10. Is there someone you would recommend I should talk to about outreach techniques to Salinas' Chinatown Homeless population?

### *2.3.b. Barry*

#### *Personal Description*

Barry is a middle age African American male who was born and raised in New Orleans. His home was destroyed during Hurricane Katrina and his family, including himself, were tragically displaced during the disaster. His mother experienced two devastating hurricanes in New Orleans and decided to move her family to Stockton, California to avoid anymore family loss resulting from natural disasters. After settling into Stockton, Barry became involved in illicit drug activities and soon developed an addiction to Methamphetamine.

Through a series of unfortunate events, Barry was incarcerated for a short amount of time. Upon release from prison, Barry boarded the wrong bus and he ended up in Salinas Chinatown where he was able to seek housing from the local shelter. After becoming acquainted with the community, Barry discovered the community garden project hosted by CSU Monterey, Chinatown Revitalization Project. He began working for the Chinatown Revitalization Project by providing physical labor in setting up the community garden, which would be utilized by the local residents and Dorothy's Place, the Chinatown homeless shelter.

After the community garden was completed, Barry continued his participation with the Chinatown Revitalization Project and was accepted to participate in the career development program, which paid participants to attend computer and career building

workshops. Barry was able to gain computer skills and dually earn an income. Through his success in the career development program Barry is now the in-house manager of the Learning Center in Salinas Chinatown, which provides free computer skill workshops for the local homeless population.

### *Social Media*

Much like the majority of the Salinas Chinatown residents, Barry did not have any previous experience with computers. The career development program as well as the Learning Center provides basic computer skills from turning on a computer to creating a Microsoft word document. Through the career development program, Barry learned to create and manage an email address with Google, as well as a Facebook account. Miraculously, Barry was able to reconnect with his long-lost son of 18 years through the power of social media client, Facebook. Barry discovered his son lives in Compton, California and has been able to maintain communication through emails and Facebook messages. Barry has a planned visit with his son this upcoming summer season and this was all on the benefit of connection through social media.

### *2.3.c. Marissa*

#### *Personal Description*

Marissa is a middle-age transvestite who was discharged from her housing by the landlord because of her lifestyle choice. She was homeless and was unable to find alternative shelter after being evicted. Marissa lived in a tent on the streets of Chinatown in Salinas. Under such deplorable living conditions, Marissa became gravely ill and was picked up by the local hospital. She was nursed back to health and was released yet again without any contingency plan for housing. Fortunately, Dorothy's Place, the local homeless shelter in Chinatown, provided an overnight women and children's shelter. Marissa stayed at Dorothy's Place and soon began to work for the organization. Marissa is now enrolled in the computer skills class at the Learning Center, working as a paid staff member of Dorothy's Place, and living in a fair and affordable housing unit.

#### *Working with the Homeless*

As a staff member at Dorothy's Place, Marissa keeps the vicinity clean and the general maintenance and upkeep of the dining hall. She describes the work environment at Dorothy's to be exciting and very family-oriented. The food lines can get very long due to the increased homeless population in Chinatown. Work is hard to find especially for unskilled manual laborers who often have limited English capabilities, which defines a part of the homeless population in Chinatown.

Marissa claims the most important skill with working the homeless population is compassion. Showing love and sincerity to a homeless person while working at Dorothy's Place is helpful in gaining their trust and building a foundational relationship. It

is also beneficial to be able to identify a trigger topic that will allow the shelter client to begin an open conversation. The goal when working at Dorothy's Place is to uphold their family-based values and build relations with all the clients who use the services of the shelter. As a staff member working with the homeless, the most you can do is be available and offer your help, but it is up to the client to take advantage of the services; do not strain yourself to continuously prod a homeless person to come to the shelter for assistance.

### *2.3.d. Kyle*

#### *Personal Description*

Kyle is an elderly Caucasian man who served in the Vietnam War and suffered from posttraumatic stress after returning to the U.S. It was difficult to re-enter the work force after serving in the army over international territories and Kyle soon became homeless. While living on the streets, he learned an entire new lifestyle; much of it was very unstable. Kyle never knew when his next meal would be or where he would camp out for the night. He began to panhandle as a source of income and continued the practice for 20 years. Currently, Kyle lives in a trailer with his two dogs, which he claims are his family. He receives SSI retirement and VA disability and is an active member of the Chinatown community in Salinas, coming to Learning Center, taking computer classes, and volunteering at Dorothy's Place.

#### *Homeless Lifestyle*

Kyle has adapted to the homeless lifestyle for years. He claims that living as a homeless person is more complex than what the stereotypes describes. Commonly, many people question why a person becomes homeless in the first place. Typical stereotype excuses are homeless people are too lazy to get a job, or they are all drug addicts. Kyle addresses these insensitive comments:

"When we walk around with shopping carts filled with cans, people judge us for being lazy by recycling for money instead of getting a job. There is nothing lazy about being homeless. Jumping into a dumpster at 2 a.m. for an aluminum can worth 2 cents is not lazy. It is not easy to be ignored, unloved, and disrespected by everyone. You need to respect and love yourself or else no one will. A lot of homeless people stop loving themselves because they become use to it. We all make bad choices but we are still good people."

#### *Salinas Chinatown*

Kyle described Chinatown as the "bad part" of town and is the home to all the unwanted-s of Salinas. According to Kyle, many people refer to the Chinatown neighborhood as "the other side of the tracks" where you can find drugs, prostitution, and homelessness. There is a high level of drug activity that happens daily in the neighborhood, which ironically, much of the business traffic comes from "the good side of the tracks". Although much of the prostitution and drug activity has decreased since

the 1970s, empty opium viles can still be found on the empty lots where many of the homeless camp out.

Despite the poor living conditions, the vacant buildings, the plethora of homeless, drugs and prostitution, Kyle spoke very highly of the Chinatown community in Salinas. He described the local homeless community in Chinatown as a family where everything is understood between the residents. He summed up his thoughts about the community as follows:

“I am not a bad person. People in Chinatown are not bad people. Not everyone fits into a program, which is why they give up and end up this side of the tracks. We have nowhere else to go. I don’t want to leave Chinatown. Nice people live here. We all self-medicate, not because it feels good but because we don’t have a choice. The Learning Center, Community Garden Project, and other social service programs are good for Chinatown. It keeps us safe for at least half the day, not from each other but from ourselves.”

Salinas Chinatown is complex community that is filled with people from all kinds of backgrounds and experiences. Everyone has a different perspective on Chinatown -- some believe the neighborhood is a burden to Salinas and others believe it is the gem of the City.

## **2.4 Social media**

Social media is the focus of the outreach program for Salinas Chinatown. This section will introduce the background information about social media and how nonprofit organizations can use it for outreach. Additionally, the analysis of social media campaigns from two nonprofit organizations: National Wildlife Federation and Asian Law Caucus will provide examples of and insight into creative social media outreach strategies.

### *2.3.a. About Social Media*

Social media has grown in popularity in recent years and is integrating with professional fields such as planning. Social media is ultimately used as an outreach tool and can provide nonprofit organizations with positive results such as reaching a larger community base according to Mashable.com, a respected blog about social media. The advantages of social media are numerous and some of the creative outreach methods are discussed in this section.

According to *Social Media and Social Reality* (2009) by William Reynolds, Marta Weber, and Robert Farber the definition of social media is:

“Social Media are defined as online communications delivered and interacted with, via text, audio and or video (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, weblogs (popularly known as blogs) and micro-blogs. Social Media is an interdisciplinary tool used

through a variety of professions in order to maximize communication levels, productivity, and efficiency

In terms of nonprofit organizations, social media can be used to measure clientele, outreach to a greater population, and/or act as an online information or resource base. Examples for social media include: Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Flickr, YouTube, etc. All these accounts enable users to personalize with the organization in a quick and convenient manner (Hopkins, 2008).

Social media can provide a forum for information leaders because of the accessibility of a wide range of users. By definition of *Social Media and Social Reality*:

“Thought leaders are high-impact nodes that emerge in point-to-point media such as blogs, whereas information leaders represent high-impact information sources found in broadcast oriented media.” (Reynolds, Weber, & Farber, 2009).

As a forum for information leaders, social media acts as a think-tank and has the potential to influence the ideas and thoughts of people and organizations because it is so widely used by many people. It can be used to reinforce a set of ideas and either empower or weaken any set of opinions or group. Social media exemplifies information leadership through the exclusion of any deviant opinion from the majority. Social media quickly unites the majority thought or opinion and works to form a consensus. *Social Media and Social Reality*, describe social media as a thought and information leadership as, “ ‘Echo chambers’ because they cooperatively say the same things.” A common example of consensus-building as the core of social media is the use of Twitter hashtags also known as “trending topics”. Trending topics is a feature of Twitter to link all common thoughts and create a chat-room environment with users who all share the same common opinion. An example of a trending topic is: #change. The hashtag must be placed in front of the key word to signal a trending topic. Therefore, anyone who would like to join the chat would then include the trending topic: #change. This is especially important when searching for other organizations or people who share the same interests.

Additionally, some of the benefits of social media are the easy-to-use applications and networking opportunities. Most of the social media sites are user-friendly and many users teach themselves the different features of the website. In regards to a nonprofit operating social media accounts, the organization should be advised to seek funding for a staff member to maintain the social media accounts. Social media accounts require constant maintenance such as replying to other users on a Facebook wall in order to keep the accounts active and useful.

### 2.3.b. Case studies

The National Wildlife Federation and Asian Law Caucus are nonprofit organizations that both have notable social media campaigns, setting a precedent in outreach programs for other organizations. The National Wildlife Federation advocates for the natural wildlife through a variety of social media accounts and is also successful in gauging the

return on investment of social media outreach. Gauging the return on investment of social media outreach is important for nonprofits to monitor their growth and effectiveness of programs. More importantly, National Wildlife Federation clarifies the budget issues with staffing and maintaining a social media campaign, which is a common issue for nonprofit organizations.

The Asian Law Caucus is a civil rights nonprofit organization that advocates on behalf of the Asian American Community on a national level and has an excellent social media campaign focused on short films. The Asian Law Caucus is also a good example of how to use Twitter effectively with announcements and joining distant advocates together through an online social media community.

The National Wildlife Federation and Asian Law Caucus both use social media creatively to outreach to their constituents and promote their organization. Each nonprofit organization has aspects of their outreach programs that can be incorporated with the Salinas Chinatown social media campaign.

### *National Wildlife Federation*

National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is a nonprofit organization centered on ensuring the legacy of wildlife for future generations to come. NWF projects include research for solutions regarding climate change, reconnecting the youth with the outdoors and wildlife, and the continuing task of safeguarding America's wildlife and habitats at both the policy level and the grassroots activism level.

National Wildlife Federation is a nonprofit effectively using social media. According to Danielle Brigida, the Digital Marketing Manager at NWF, the organization utilizes several major accounts such as Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube, but also found success with less popularized accounts for social media including: StumbleUpon, LinkedIn, Plancast and other sites. NWF tracks its Return on Investment (ROI) on their social media accounts through 3 basic focal points: Overall Reach (number of friends, followers or subscribers), Traffic (how many people are coming to the website), and Interaction (people sharing the content). According to Brigida, NWF receives more than 20% traffic from social media accounts alone, which proves to be an effective, low-cost outreach technique for nonprofit organization (Musgrove, 2008). All three focal points: Overall Reach, Traffic, and Interaction are important factors in monitoring the success of a social media campaign.

Although there are numerous advantages to social media accounts such as no-cost, easy setup, and user-friendly interface; nonprofits struggle the most with the maintenance of the accounts (Hopkins, 2008). Funding is a common issue among nonprofit organizations and many workers are already spread thin among numerous job tasks. Therefore, the upkeep of a handful of social media accounts will be difficult for any organization without hiring a full-time staff member. Danielle Brigida is the only full-time paid staff member to manage the social media accounts out of 400 employees of the National Wildlife Federation. NWF is among the larger, more established nonprofits,

and if they can only afford one staff member to update the social media accounts, than it is highly unlikely a smaller organization would be able to hire a Social Media Accounts Director (Nonprofitorgs, 2011).

### *Asian Law Caucus*

Asian Law Caucus (ALC) is the first national legal and civil rights nonprofit organization to serve low-income, immigrant, and underserved Asian Pacific American (API) communities. ALC fights for civil rights cases including: education, worker's rights, housing, and citizenship. Through the years, the Asian Law Caucus has developed to form affiliates with well-established nonprofits serving the API community: Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Asian American Institute, and Asian American Justice Center.

The Asian Law Caucus has demonstrated the excellence of its social media campaign through its upkeep of five accounts including Facebook, Flickr, Vimeo, LinkedIn, and Twitter but upholds exceptional outreach through short films. The short films are linked to their website and are about the DREAM act (a legislative act currently in the U.S. Senate for **Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors**), employment and workers' rights issues, and much more. The short films work to empower communities and engage a larger demographic since almost any generation can access a video and watch it online.

Twitter is another effective social media account The Asian Law Caucus takes advantage of through the use of hashtags, or trending topics, as explained earlier in Section 2.3.a., *About Social Media*. For example, the ACL promotes the trending topic, "#TitiLiu", the name of their executive director. Under this topic, current conversations about ALC can be tracked. By creating a trending topic, the ACL efficiently unites all supporters and any conversation revolving around the organization. The Asian Law Caucus enables an environment to host "Twitter conversations" with a common hashtag label facilitating a chat-room environment as discussed earlier. All twitter users can dedicate their specific tweet to The Asian Law Caucus by including "#TitiLiu" and join in the chat-room with other users tweeting similar thoughts. This also provides the organization with feedback and quick personal interaction with its supporters (Asian Law Caucus, 2011).

The National Wildlife Federation and Asian Law Caucus provided exceptional ideas for the Salinas Chinatown social media campaign but the applicability of the programs may not be practical. The Learning Center is significantly smaller in constituent size, staffing, and budget in comparison to The National Wildlife Federation and Asian Law Caucus. Although the outreach methods are successful, because they require significant staff, they may not be practical for the Salinas Chinatown community and the Learning Center.



## Chapter 3: Social Media Campaign and Handbook

This chapter, *Social Media Campaign and Handbook*, discusses the outreach effort conducted using social media created for the Salinas' Chinatown homeless community and the nonprofit network of Monterey County. In discussing the outreach efforts, this chapter includes information on "products" from the social media campaign, such as Learning Center pages created on Facebook, a YouTube video about the Learning Center and the Social Media Handbook (please see appendix). The Social Media Handbook was developed as an introductory guide and a transition handbook for future staff who may manage the Learning Center's social media campaign for both the Salinas Chinatown homeless community and the non-profit network of Monterey County. **It is useful to read the handbook prior to reading this chapter on the products completed for the social media campaign and how these products were used for outreach.**

### 3.1. Basics of the Social Media Campaign

A social media campaign was developed for the Learning Center comprised of five popular social media sites: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Tumblr, and Flickr. A description of these sites and a best practices guide for their use is included in the attached Social Media Handbook.

One of the purposes of the social media campaign designed for the Learning Center was to establish a digital space for communication between the the Learning Center, other nonprofits, and the Chinatown community. Some of the benefits of the campaign include: 1) instant feedback, 2) cost-free promotion of events and services, and 3) increased personal communication between the Center, its clientele and the Chinatown community (Benson, 2008).

The social media campaign provided instant feedback for the Learning via Facebook. A common way to seek feedback is posting a Facebook status, and as a result, members of the nonprofit network and Salinas' Chinatown community can respond with either a comment or clicking the "like" button which shows support of the Facebook Status as illustrated below:



Figure 1. Chinatown Community Learning Center's Facebook Status on May 12, 2011.

Cost-free promotion of the Learning Center was achieved through the social media campaign via Twitter. Twitter allows users to “retweet” posts, also known as tweets, that they enjoy or support, leading to the promotion and advertisement of the Learning Center. As illustrated below, retweeting means to repost another user’s message, which allows more people to read that specific post.



Figure 2. Chinatown Community Learning Center's tweet that has been retweeted by another user on April 18, 2011.

Personal communication between the Learning Center and clients was achieved through the social media campaign via all five social media accounts: Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr. All five accounts allow users to communicate with the Learning Center. One example of the many ways to communicate with the Learning Center via social media is illustrated below with YouTube.



Figure 3. Chinatown Community Learning Center's YouTube homepage allows for comments from all YouTube users in the bottom right half corner of the illustration.

## 3.2. Outreach through Social Media

### 3.2.a. Campaign for Nonprofits

As noted previously, the purpose of the social media campaign for the nonprofits of Monterey County is three-fold: promote the Learning Center and its services, seek out more resources and connect them with the Salinas' Chinatown community, and work within the theme of connection through technology.

The social media campaign was used to promote the Learning Center and its services predominately through the status updates on each social media account. As illustrated above, Facebook statuses were used to not only seek instant feedback from clientele, but to also promote the Learning Center. One example of a common promotion method was the use of the Learning Center's Twitter account titled 'chinatownlc'.

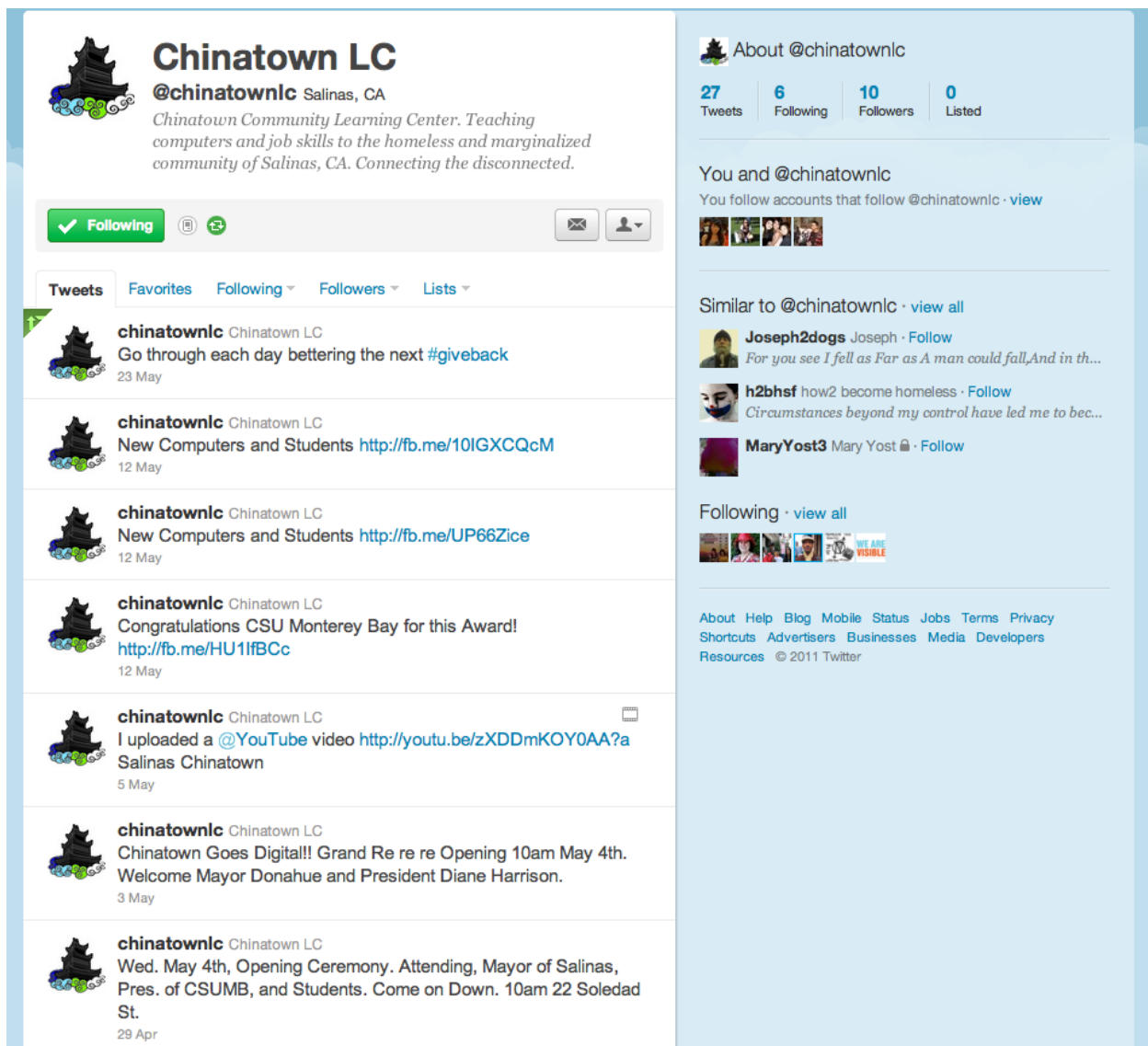


Figure 4. Chinatown Community Learning Center's Twitter homepage, Chinatownlc, that illustrates a series of tweets or status updates.

The Twitter, Chinatownlc was also linked to the Learning Center's additional social media accounts, Facebook and Tumblr, which fostered further promotion of the Learning Center.



Figure 5. Chinatown Community Learning Center's automatic tweet regarding new Facebook pictures.

A program on Twitter will automatically update Chinatownlc's status when new pictures are loaded on Facebook or if a video is loaded on YouTube or perhaps a new post on Tumblr as illustrated in figure 5, above.


### *Seek Resources*

Through an interview with Megan Heath, the BTOP Project Coordinator, who has worked in the nonprofit field for many years, she claims that social media is used widely by nonprofits to connect with not only their clients but other organizations serving similar populations. Social media creates a digital space for networking and an exchange of ideas between organizations. Although the social media campaign for the Learning Center has not yet had the opportunity to exchange ideas with other organizations, other nonprofits have been able to accomplish this goal such as AFLV, Association of Fraternal and Leadership Values. Refer to figure 6 as an example of a Twitter conversation that encourages an exchange of ideas between organizations.

[← Back to Home](#)
[+ Save this search](#)

## Results for #GreekChat

Tweets · [Top](#)



**AFLV** AFLV  
Help select the topic for [#GreekChat](#) on Tuesday, June 7th! We chat at 1:00pm ET/10:00am PT! Join the conversation!... <http://fb.me/CEaZR5YN>  
5 hours ago



**AFLV** AFLV  
@mmbechtel we chat every Tuesday at 1:00pm EST/10:00am PST! (Sorry for the delay in responding... missed this one! :) ) [#GreekChat](#)  
5 hours ago



**Koelbel** Kyle Koelbel  
Can the fraternal experience bridge the gap between education and real world application for students? How? <http://bit.ly/iHQAEs> [#greekchat](#)  
8 hours ago



**kellee\_m** Kellee Montgomery  
Looking for someone to write a guest blog post for @billhighway about tips on winning Greek elections. DM me if interested. Thx! [#greekchat](#)  
12 hours ago



**MelissaJudy** Melissa Judy  
@corinwallace Thank u! Moving to CA this month, my dream job would be to work for @NPCWomen org from home. Cross fingers for me! [#greekchat](#)  
5 Jun



**BuildingHeroes** Building Heroes  
By acts we repeatedly do, we create who we are. Create patterns of behavior that focus on our very best <http://j.mp/kOOjcV> [#greekchat](#)  
4 Jun



**Kilo1899** Scott C.  
NEW Blog Entry: Sleeping Upside Down: How It Will Make You a Better Leader <http://bit.ly/bmPFtH> [#greekchat](#)  
3 Jun

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**GreekChat** GreekChat.com · [Follow](#)  
The Fraternity & Sorority Greek Chat Network



**greekchater** Skierpetros · [Follow](#)



**AFLV** AFLV  
AFLV is a 501c3 non-profit that promotes leadership, ...



**TJatCAMPUSPEAK** T.J. Sullivan · [Follow](#)  
You are holding a pack of matches in your hand, and ...

Trends · United States · [change](#)

- [#mydreamjob](#)
- [#for65milliondollars](#)
- [#switchedatbirth](#)
- [PSVita](#)
- [Modnation Racers](#)
- [Lisa Raye](#)
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Figure 6: AFLV's weekly hosted Twitter chats to encourage an exchange of ideas between organizations and other Twitter users.

A useful feature on Twitter allows the user to browse different interests and get connected with others who are working towards the same goal or serving a similar population as illustrated in figure 7.

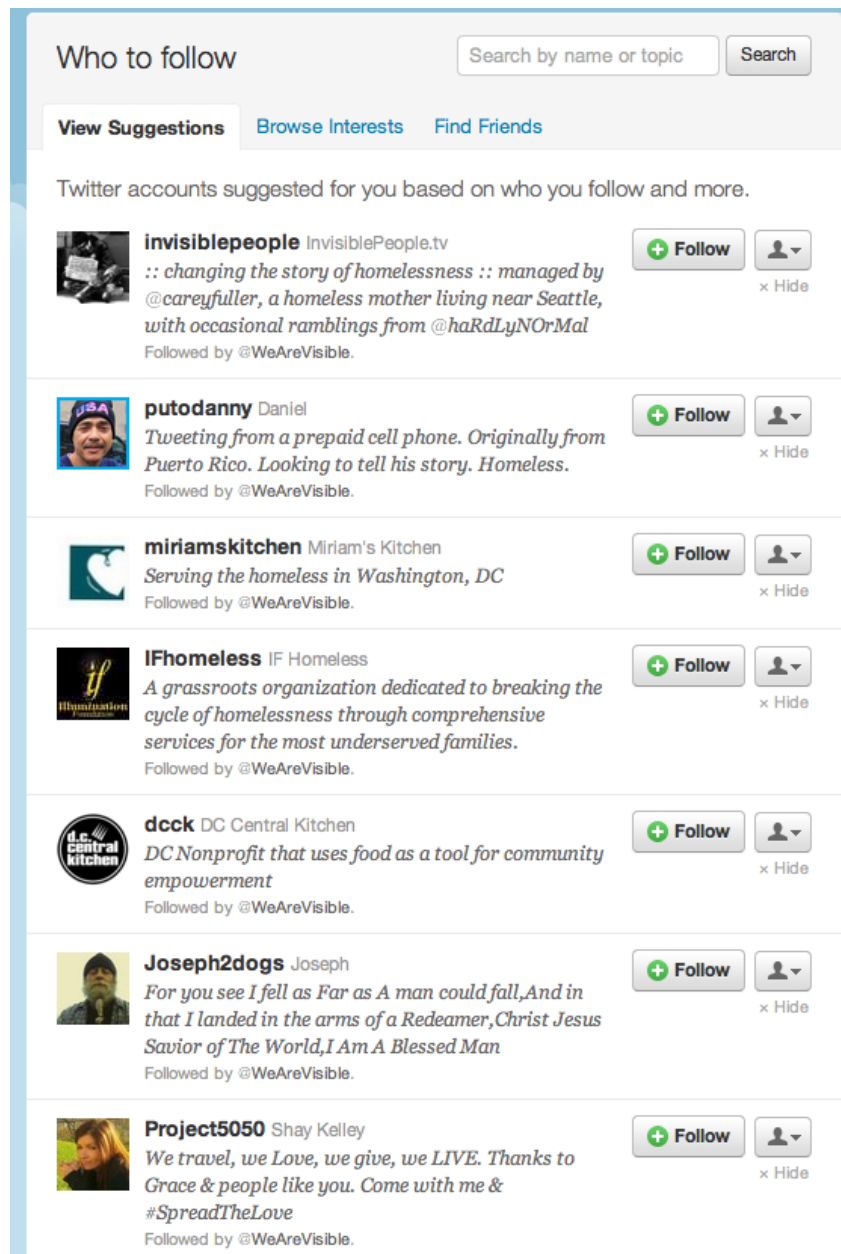


Figure 7: Chinatown Community Learning Center's Twitter homepage, ChinatownInc, which provides suggestions on who to follow based on interests.

It is easy to get connected with similar organizations through the 'browse interests' and 'suggestions' feature on Twitter (refer to figure 7). Most importantly, following similar organizations and providing a digital place for discussion can foster a creative environment for new ideas and programs to improve existing projects.

### *Theme: Connection Through Technology*

The social media campaign was especially important to the Learning Center because the federal grant funding the Learning Center is titled Broadband Technology

Opportunities Program (BTOP). The purpose of BTOP is to ultimately increase the computer literacy rate in America and expand access to broadband services around the country (NTIA, 2009). According to the national BTOP website:

“The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided the Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Utilities Service (RUS) with \$7.2 billion to expand access to broadband services in the United States. Of those funds, the Act provided \$4.7 billion to NTIA to support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service, and develop and maintain a nationwide public map of broadband service capability and availability. NTIA will make all grant awards by September 30, 2010” (NTIA, 2009).

Although the grant did not require the Learning Center to launch a social media campaign, Peter Nelson, The Director of the Learning Center, felt the campaign fit well with other requirements of the grant.

### 3.2.b. Campaign for the Salinas’ Chinatown Community

The use of the social media campaign created for this project for the Chinatown community differed from its use for nonprofits. Based on interviews with various community members, the homeless population in Salinas Chinatown often view computer classes as difficult and unattainable and which are large factors stirring hesitation with enrolling in the first few classes. The social media campaign was used to engage the homeless population through demonstrating the fun and usefulness of the internet via social media. However, because of the community’s limited access to computers, they have a limited number of friends on social media networks. Therefore a program called Facebook Pals was created to connect a Learning Center student with a more experienced computer user to foster the exchange of fun or interesting websites, videos, blogs and more. Refer to figure 8 for an example of the Facebook Pals program.





Figure 8: A brief summary of the exchange of games and comments between a Learning Center student and a more experienced computer user through the Facebook Pals program.

The Learning Center students were engaged through the social media campaign by creating social media accounts for themselves such as Learning Center Student, Sheronda Mooring, who created her own personal Facebook Page in figure 9. Through personal observations, Learning Center students also began searching movie trailers on YouTube and searching for friends on Facebook.



*Figure 9: Learning Center student, Sheronda Mooring's Facebook page.*

Overall, Learning Center students were engaged through the creation of their own personal accounts on social media websites, had fun through the search engines of each website and the ability to discover new media, and found social media skills to be useful in connecting with a greater online community and distant friends and family.

### **3.3. Social Media Handbook**

This Social Media Handbook was developed as an introductory guide and a transition handbook for future staff who may manage the Learning Center's social media campaign. The handbook is organized in three main sections: Social Media Accounts 101, Best Practices for Social Media Campaigns, and Recommendations for Troubleshooting and Resources. Each section provides detailed instructions and illustrations on how to manage the Learning Center's social media campaign.

Through background research Learning Center staff interviews and understanding the structure of the organization; a Social Media Handbook was a sensible choice. According Peter Nelson, the Executive Director of the Learning Center, funding is limited for the organization, so developing a handbook will make the transition easier for another staff member to manage the social media campaign when this senior project is over. Also, further research in reviewing other nonprofits and how they manage their social media campaign aided the development of the Social Media Handbook.

## **Chapter 4: Findings and Conclusions**

This chapter reviews the major findings and conclusions regarding the creation and use of the social media campaign. The Social Media Handbook will not be discussed in this chapter because the effect of the handbook has yet to be determined. The Learning Center has not yet hired a new staff member to manage the organization's social media accounts. However, Section 4.1., *Efficacy of the Chinatown Community Campaign*, and Section 4.2., *Efficacy of the Nonprofit Campaign*, discusses the success and shortcomings in the outreach for the Salinas Chinatown homeless community and the nonprofit network of Monterey County based upon achievement of the purposes addressed earlier in the report.

### **4.1 Efficacy of the Chinatown Community Campaign**

The purpose of the social media campaign regarding the Salinas Chinatown homeless community was two-fold:

1. To design a class to teach the Salinas Chinatown homeless community about social media.
2. To use social media to promote other computer classes to students once the students had created personal accounts on networking websites, such as Facebook.

One of the biggest obstacles facing the Learning Center prior to the social media campaign was motivating community members to keep up with the computer classes. Many members of the Chinatown community were easily discouraged and quick to frustration when they did not understand the computer classes. As a result of several interviews with staff from the Learning Center and Dorothy's Place and surveying the residents of Chinatown, it was discovered that the majority of the residents found computers to be intimidating and too challenging to learn. The bulk of the Salinas Chinatown homeless community was resistant to attend a basic computer class offered at the Learning Center, so the social media campaign was used to entice residents to try a computer class. The social media campaign marketed computers as fun and a good way to get in touch with lost friends and family, which unfortunately, most of the population in Chinatown experienced.

All the Chinatown community members who enrolled in computer classes at the Learning Center started from the very basics, such as how to turn on a computer or how to type in a website address in the URL. According to Peter Nelson, the Executive Director of the Learning Center, the students advanced quickly through the computer basic classes and were very eager to learn about social media and create personal accounts for themselves on networking websites such as Facebook and YouTube (P. Nelson, personal communication, 2011).

The social media campaign for the Salinas' Chinatown community was successful on several fronts. The introductory to social media computer class was successful

because attendance increased at the Learning Center after the social media class was launched. Attendance was taken everyday before each class began and over a period of six weeks, Chinatown community members were attending computer classes more frequently and consistently according to the attendance sheet. Another measure of success was the information gathered from new students who enrolled in the Learning Center computer classes through casual conversations. Many of the new students told staff members they were referred to the computer classes through a fellow Chinatown community member who is a “consistent” student at the Learning Center.

Once members of the Chinatown community were enrolled in the introductory social media computer classes, the Learning Center began contacting and promoting other computer classes via social media and this also proved to be a successful aspect of the social media campaign. Peter Nelson claims the social media introductory class is the most popular computer class and many students provided positive feedback about the course. The popularity/high enrollment rate in the introductory social media class provided Peter with an opportunity to promote other computer classes the Learning Center. Enrollment in all computer classes did increase over six weeks after the social media class was launched (P. Nelson, personal communication, 2011).

Despite its success with some of the Learning Center students, the campaign did not appeal to everybody. Some members of the Chinatown Community who are homeless were more interested in using the computers for GED certification or to access unemployment or veteran benefits than the idea of connecting with lost family through social media. Nevertheless, the social media campaign offered an advantageous service to a significant number of the Salinas Chinatown homeless community.

One of the most important findings about the Salinas Chinatown homeless community and the social media campaign was learning through personal interviews and casual conversations about the hesitations and preconceptions the community has about computers. It was important to know that some members of Salinas’ Chinatown homeless community felt computer classes were intimidating and many of them thought it was a hopeless cause to attempt to join the online community so late in life. By identifying this important finding, the introductory class to social media was structured in the most basic and simplest form as to not intimidate the Learning Center students. Overall, the social media campaign achieved various degrees of success with the Salinas’ Chinatown community by meeting the purpose of the outreach program.

#### **4.2. Efficacy of the Nonprofit Campaign**

The purpose of the social media campaign regarding the nonprofit network of Monterey County was three-fold:

1. Promote the Learning Center and its services;
2. Seek out more resources and connect them with the Salinas’ Chinatown community;
3. Work within the theme of connection through technology

The social media campaign was successful for what was accomplished in six months; the duration of this senior project. The rate of success is measured through the activity log of each social media website such as Facebook. Facebook sends weekly updates about how many users visit the Learning Center's Facebook page and how many users actively communicate with the organization via Facebook. Since the social media accounts have been launched, activity and fan-base has increased over the course of this senior project. Secondly, five main resources/programs from other local nonprofits who serve the homeless community were discovered via Tumblr and although no workshops have been scheduled, communication is established and began through social media. Lastly, the accommodation of the theme of connection through technology was accomplished after the decision to use social media as the main tool for outreach was agreed upon.

One of the unresolved concerns about the nonprofit campaign is that its success may not continue beyond the scope of this senior project, as there is no full-time staff member that can manage and maintain all five accounts. The priority of the Learning Center is education and teaching the students how to use computers. Promoting the Learning Center and seeking out resources from other local nonprofits through social media is not a top concern in comparison to the teaching of the computer classes, which is why the Social Media Handbook is an important resource for the Learning Center. The Social Media Handbook will assist future interns or staff members at the Learning Center how to maintain the social media accounts. As discussed earlier, the Learning Center has not yet hired a staff member to manage the social media accounts therefore the effects of the handbook cannot yet be determined.

One of the most important findings about the nonprofit network of Monterey County and the social media campaign was understanding the budget of the Learning Center. As noted earlier in this section, the Learning Center has limited funds and is unable to staff someone to manage the social media accounts. This realization led to the creation of a more self-sustaining social media campaign since the handbook contains all the information needed to manage the social media campaign. In conclusion, the social media campaign was successful in promoting the Learning Center but the future of the outreach program is uncertain due to limited funding.

#### **4.4. Personal Reflections on the Senior Project Experience**

The entire six months working with the Learning Center and building an effective outreach program was a tremendous experience. Not only did I learn about homelessness, but I also learned about the professionalism and bureaucracy within the nonprofit community. Working in a nonprofit organization is fast-paced and result-oriented, which appealed to me right from the beginning – an advantage of the Learn by Doing motto of Cal Poly. The social media campaign was especially engaging because it offered space for creative thinking and I was able to implement my ideas of outreach to both the nonprofit network and homeless community of Chinatown. One of the most important things I had to learn quickly while working in the Learning Center is how to adapt to the community and to change. The social media campaign worked to engage

two different communities and I had to adapt my language, my character, and even my attire when meeting members from each community. When communicating with members from the nonprofit field, I formatted my emails more professionally and dressed to fit the character as well. However, when I worked with the Salinas Chinatown community I dressed more casual and communicated more personally. Both communities provided a different experience for my senior project but both were equally enlightening. I also learned there is always work to be accomplished and tasks change quickly in a nonprofit organization which demands flexibility and efficiency on my half when working with the Learning Center. The overall project, from working directly with the Salinas Chinatown community, to creating a social media campaign, was incredible and made my senior project a meaningful and educational experience.