

Community Outreach by Keegan Crasto

“Smiles & Skills” & “Tech Future Bloom”

In a world where innovation and empathy often move on separate paths, I’ve always believed that real change begins when they meet.

That belief became the foundation for two initiatives I created *Smiles & Skills* and *Tech Future Bloom*, both driven by a desire to bring hope, learning, and dignity to children who are often unseen.

Smiles & Skills – Empowering through Belonging and Creativity

Smiles & Skills began as a simple idea within my parish, **Holy Cross Church, Kurla**, to give children and youth with special needs a platform to showcase their creativity and talent.

With the support of our Parish Priest and the **National Society for Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped (NASEOH)**, I **conceptualized and led** a stall within the church premises where these children could display and sell their handmade creations, from paintings and pottery to chocolates and baked goods.

The event, held after Sunday Mass, quickly turned into something extraordinary. Parishioners lined up to interact with the children and appreciate their work. By the end of the morning, the once full table stood completely empty, every single creation had been purchased. But the true success wasn’t in the sales; it was in the smiles.

For the children, this moment wasn’t charity, it was recognition. It was the joy of being seen, valued, and celebrated for their abilities, not their limitations.

This experience reminded me how community and compassion can create belonging. It was deeply moving to witness how something as simple as a small church stall could bring so much dignity and happiness.

Tech Future Bloom – Hope through Robotics and Learning

Following the success of *Smiles & Skills*, I wanted to extend the same sense of empowerment through learning. In collaboration with **Prison Ministry Mumbai**, I conceptualized and led *Tech Future Bloom*, a robotics outreach for **children in a remand home**.

Using my own equipment- laptop, projector, and DIY robot kits, I conducted a two-hour interactive session that combined creativity, teamwork, and technology.

Five teams of two children each built their own small robots under my guidance. Together, we explored how sensors, circuits, and simple programming could bring their ideas to life.

The transformation I witnessed that day was unforgettable. These were children who had lost confidence and direction, yet as their robots moved and responded, their faces lit up with pure wonder. For a few hours, the walls around them didn’t define them, curiosity did.

I went there to teach, but I came back learning far more, about resilience, humility, and hope. It opened my eyes to what education can truly mean: not just sharing knowledge, but restoring belief in oneself.

Impact and Reflection

Both *Smiles & Skills* and *Tech Future Bloom* taught me that compassion can take many forms-a helping hand, a kind word, or a lesson in robotics.

Through these projects, I learned that technology and creativity can be tools not just for progress, but for healing and human connection.

For me, service isn’t about scale; it’s about sincerity. Whether it’s an empty table filled once with creations or a classroom filled with quiet determination, I’ve seen how even small efforts can build confidence, dignity, and hope.

These experiences have shaped the way I see the world, not through the lens of competition, but of contribution. I hope to carry that spirit forward wherever I go.