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## Project Description

In 2010 I built a volunteer management system for the Ithaca Health Alliance. The system is a php web application built upon my own framework. I chose to work from scratch, instead of using an already existing framework, because the project was simple and the process of creating a framework would allow me to learn a great deal about soft architecture and design. At this point the system for the IHA is finished. My hope is to make this software open source, and available to any organization that may be able to benefit from it. This process of generalization will be the focus of my project.

As the first step in expanding the application to be used by other organizations, I will work with Cornell Cooperative Extension, to assess how their organization could use this software to manage their 1600 volunteers.

While an excellent learning experience, that provides this system with a great deal of flexibility, building my own framework has many drawbacks. It will be unfamiliar to other developers who wish to become involved. There are many different frameworks available that would provide more support, resources, community and documentation than my own. This being said, a long term goal of mine for this software is to consider the use of a widely known php framework.

Making use of a popular framework is a *long term* goal, and I think that continuing the development of my framework would be a much more valuable learning experience this semester than learning the organization and syntax of someone else's framework. I will begin by researching existing php frameworks in hopes of finding a good match for this software. Ideally, I will find a framework with will serve my the needs of this software, and I will work with that framework this semester. If I cannot find a good match, I will continue the development of my own framework. Both options would provide excellent learning opportunities. Along either route, my focus will be on generalizing the software.

In generalizing this application, I will make the components and tools of the application as generic as possible. In my discussions with CCE and other organizations I will determine how much of the software will need to be customizable. The first step in the generalization process will be generalizing the underlying software. This step is the largest portion of this task. The second step will be creating an interface to allow users to modify their application's customizations. Because of the size of this task, my focus will be on the first step this semester. Depending upon the route I take in terms of the framework that I use, I may begin the second step of this process.