

Center for Earth and Space Science Education



About Tyler Junior College

One of the largest community colleges in Texas, Tyler Junior College offers more than 120 degree and certificate programs as well as extensive training and technical programs. It was recently named one of the nation's top 150 community colleges by the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program.

Enrollment

- 11,800 total
- 6,200 full-time
- 5,108 part-time

Objective

- Implement a single integrated system to find, engage, and enroll best-fit students

Solution

- Ellucian CRM Recruit™

Business benefits

- Streamlined recruitment and enrollment processes
- Improved communication with students at every stage of the recruiting lifecycle
- Enhanced branding



Targeted recruitment. Better communication. Modernized enrollment processes.

Tyler Junior College overhauled its recruitment system with Ellucian CRM Recruit™

As one of the largest community colleges in Texas, Tyler Junior College welcomes hundreds of prospective students to its campus annually. Yet for years, its enrollment and recruitment processes lagged behind the growing needs of its recruitment team. Prospective students fell through the cracks, and the college's admission and enrollment portals remained out-of-date.

Enrollment officers needed an integrated recruitment system to help them attract prospective students,

measure return rates, and fine-tune the college's communication plans. Students and their parents needed a simpler way to register for events and apply and enroll online. And the college needed to present a more modern face to the world.

In the spring of 2016, Tyler Junior College began to update their recruitment and enrollment processes from the inside out with Ellucian CRM Recruit™. Built on best practices in higher education, Ellucian CRM Recruit offered Tyler configurability, modern functionality, and tight integration with Banner® by Ellucian, the college's

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existing ERP system. The solution's robust workflows, automated recruitment tools, and prospect- and funnel-management capabilities provided the college with a complete admissions-management solution.

Achieving a timely rollout under pressure

Ellucian CRM Recruit 4.2, rolled out in May 2016, had immediate impact on staff and students alike. The solution, which replaced cumbersome legacy systems, streamlined data collection for staff, connected prospective students to campus events, automated manual tasks, and enabled more timely and targeted communication with prospects.

To build on those early successes and gain even greater administrative capabilities, the college decided to upgrade to version 4.5 a few months later—just in time for its fall 2016 recruiting season. The tight timeframe meant that the college faced several hard deadlines.

The first of those deadlines: ensuring functionality of Ellucian CRM Recruit's event-tracking component by September 1. That capability would enable recruiters to measure return rates of prospective students after fall events like campus tours, Preview Day, and Transfer Day. Previously, "those events got lost in the shuffle, and we didn't really know how many people were attending and then returning for other events, or returning as applicants," says Rick Besch, chief technology officer at Tyler Junior College.

The college's second fixed deadline was implementing the state's Texas Common Application by November 1—just in time for use by students applying for the spring term. A key part of Tyler's application strategy, the common app component adds to Ellucian CRM Recruit's crucial role as a streamlined "one-stop shop for the entire application process," Besch says.

Adding to the pressure was the fact that Tyler was in the midst of overhauling multiple systems at once as part of its campus-wide initiative to modernize its processes and look. With a core group of five staff members, Tyler sometimes had to put certain

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RICK BESCH, Chief Technology Officer

projects—including Ellucian CRM Recruit—on temporary hold to manage priorities.

In the end, the team navigated their workload and resource restraints, and met or beat their deadlines. The Ellucian team was a valuable partner in the effort, says Besch: "They worked around our schedule because we have so many things that we're trying to implement all at the same time. They were very accommodating when we had to step back and shuffle the cards."

Building relationships and personalizing communications

With the key components of Ellucian CRM Recruit 4.5 in place, on schedule, campus recruiters had access to one of the solution's most powerful features: the ability to create and deliver tailored communication plans based on each prospect's needs, interests, and recruitment stage. Armed with Ellucian CRM Recruit's automated marketing and communication tools, Tyler Junior College could

easily design, create, and test marketing campaigns. And their ability to measure ROI was enhanced by the solution's tools for tracking response rates, applications, and campus visits.

The college's efforts have already begun to bear fruit. In the first three months of implementation, Tyler's application pool for all open terms increased from five percent to 19 percent over the previous year. Applications for the coming spring semester have already increased by five percent, summer by 14 percent, and fall by 9 percent over the previous year. Campus visits have increased from an average of 11 participants a day to 44—enough to warrant two additional tours per day. And spring enrollment is up by almost four percent in a year over year comparison.

Making a good impression

A key goal for Tyler Junior College was ensuring that its recent investments in campus technology were reflected in its student-oriented portals and online appearance.

Before Tyler Junior College implemented CRM Recruit, "there was no single mechanism through

which the recruiters could funnel prospective students and enact a targeted communication plan, much less give students the ability to set up tours or attend special events," Besch explains.

Just as important, at least from the standpoint of applicants: the system looked outdated, too. And as every college knows, branding matters, and looking current matters.

Students' feedback on the new system has been consistently positive. After applying and registering for events through Ellucian CRM Recruit, students have remarked to staff members that they enjoy the speed and convenience of the new interface. "Instead of having to call and wait on the phone, they can just do it online and know that they're registered. They really like that—and their parents like it too," Besch says.

With Ellucian CRM Recruit, Besch continues, "people are beginning to understand that we're using technology to enhance the experience and increase productivity. Students talk about the fact that it's easy to use, that they like what they see. It makes them want to be here. All these new things that people are seeing give Tyler a better name."



Reaching target demographics and filling key programs

Tyler Junior College had additional, more specific objectives in mind when it deployed Ellucian CRM Recruit 4.5 for the fall season. The college hoped to increase the number of area Hispanic students to bring its enrollment ratio into alignment with local demographics. (In the fall of 2015, the state of Texas, the Tyler metropolitan area, and Tyler Junior College had Hispanic populations of 21, 37, and 13 percent respectively.) And it sought to increase enrollment in its brand-new, four-year degree program in dental hygiene.

Toward that end, Ellucian CRM Recruit 4.5 enables Tyler's recruiters to tailor their messaging to best-fit prospects and stay in contact throughout the recruitment lifecycle. "When prospects indicate that they're Hispanic, they get a specific communication plan," Besch says, "and when they come in and talk about dental hygiene and express interest in that program, they receive a specific communication plan."

Using Ellucian CRM Recruit, the college has been able to track the real-time performance of both campaigns, deliver accurate C-level reporting, and enable timely, data-driven decision making. After the first several months of implementation, Tyler saw a seven percent increase in Hispanic applications for all open terms, as well as increases of nine percent for the spring 2017 semester, 13 percent for the summer of 2017, and seven percent for fall of 2017. Meanwhile, the dental hygiene program saw a nine percent increase in applications for the fall of 2017 over the previous fall, and fielded 122 additional requests for information.

Reviewing your process and checking it twice

To fine-tune its processes and maximize the potential of Ellucian CRM Recruit, Tyler Junior College executed a second, post-implementation business process analysis focused on the user experience. After identifying its users' pain points and offering training, the college continued to emphasize the need for users to streamline their own processes to fully utilize the solution. That meant, for example, eliminating the manual entry of new prospects, since Recruit automated that task any time a new prospect requested information from the college. And it meant a simpler process for the Texas Common Application, which now uploads to Banner automatically.

Changing old habits is, Besch says, the key to getting the most of the solution: "You have to sit down and look at what you were using before, and then understand what Ellucian CRM Recruit can do. Make sure you're not trying to force your current method of operation into a product that is designed to do something different. And Ellucian CRM Recruit is different."

"I'm really impressed that my group has adapted to it so quickly," he concludes. "That tells me that it's easy to use and it's been easy to implement."

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