

How The University of Dayton Is Increasing Access to Private Education With RaiseMe Enrollment



Time is of the essence when it comes to student recruitment. When universities have the tools to reach students earlier, they have opportunities to encourage college readiness behaviors and share clear financial aid information that makes student financial success a reality.

Creating The Lightbulb Moment

The University of Dayton has long been committed to making a college degree accessible for any student who wants it. When the college discovery process begins, it's common for students to take an institution's listed sticker price at face value without understanding how financial aid will impact their net-price. As one of RaiseMe's earliest partners, UD has been leveraging the platform to increase and diversify its applicant pool while ensuring that students as early as 9th grade understand their opportunities for access to a University of Dayton diploma.

Cody McMillen, Director of Recruitment and Admission for Transfer and Strategic Partnership Programs at the University of Dayton, shares how important reaching students early is for the institution. "UD began working with RaiseMe because we realized the need for a tool that stretched beyond our existing enrollment strategies."

Before partnering with RaiseMe, UD purchased potential applicant names through databases such as standardized test providers, but these lists don't yield extensive data for key prospects—high school freshmen and sophomores. The lists are static, light on insights that help schools target specific populations, and don't help schools create personal pathways for each applicant.

"We know we need to reach students when they start thinking about higher ed, and for many, that's the moment they enter high school. We needed a creative way to reach these students, and also show them, through personalized communication, that Dayton wasn't out of reach financially."

For students, being awarded micro-scholarships for achievements through the RaiseMe Enrollment platform is one way the realities of affording UD are illuminated. McMillen noted, "When students see our sticker price initially, they may think 'this school isn't realistic for me from a cost standpoint.' Then, as they add their activities and grades to RaiseMe and begin seeing micro-scholarships add up, a lightbulb turns on for them. They realize UD is a school they can consider when reviewing their options." where they want it—on their mobile devices.

Meeting Today's Challenges With Personal Solutions

Due to COVID-19 precautions, the 2020 - 2021 student recruitment cycle looks vastly different than it has in previous years. McMillen and his team are constantly navigating the role that COVID-19 is playing in recruitment, enrollment, and retention. McMillen says recruitment

counselors are, “balancing the desire to connect with students within specific geographic locations and also realizing we can be anywhere, any time.” They are also backing up against a steep increase in financial hardship, which is making the mere idea of college a daunting thought for many high school students and their families.

Now, more than ever, the ability to communicate affordability and help students unlock every possible dollar is paramount.

“I think that personalization is key, especially now,” McMillen said about shifting strategies and leveraging RaiseMe. “Personalization through RaiseMe means recruitment counselors are more informed when they engage with students.” Before setting up a high school visit or a virtual event, McMillen’s team can see which students at a school are currently following UD on RaiseMe and do individualized, targeted outreach. Since students are encouraged to regularly update their profiles with information on grades, test scores, extracurriculars, and more, colleges have the most up-to-date information possible. “The more recruitment counselors know about students, the better they can connect with them and tailor communications based on their interests, achievements, and background.”

This level of knowledge about students on RaiseMe also aids in UD’s student diversity initiatives. They are able to pace their efforts alongside yearly diversity goals including socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic composition for incoming classes. This year they welcomed record numbers of Federal Pell Grant-eligible students and multicultural students. With data available on RaiseMe, UD can amplify their reach within targeted student populations.

Students Come First With RaiseMe

The college recruitment process consists of several key virtual and physical touchpoints where universities can impress and engage students. That first connection kick-starts a chain of communication with prospective students that can last weeks, months, or years—dependent on their graduation date and when they first move into the recruitment funnel. With RaiseMe, the University of Dayton has been able to build a larger pool of first source leads, resulting in more applicants, admits, and ultimately deposits from these students.

The number of years UD has been active as a partner on the RaiseMe platform plays a role here. With time, they have been able to see the impact of years of nurturing students who began following the university on RaiseMe as freshmen and sophomores. McMillen shared that on average, UD students who first connected with the school via RaiseMe are applying with higher GPAs and retaining at higher rates. With micro-scholarships offered on RaiseMe for achievements such as good performance, student leadership, and filling out the FAFSA, the university is able to not only ensure high school students are admissible, but also create habits that will lead to success.

We’re thrilled to see our partners achieving their goals, even during these unprecedented times. [Want to learn more about how RaiseMe Enrollment can support your student engagement and success goals?](#) Get in touch.



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