PowerFAIDS®

CASE STUDY

Santa Rosa Junior College chooses PowerFAIDS to automate their financial aid process for faster, more accurate service to students and to better ensure compliance.

About the Institution

Santa Rosa, California
Enrollment: 28,000
santarosa.edu

Solutions Deployed

PowerFAIDS
Net Partner

Challenges

→ Replacing an aging manual system

→ Sending aid packages out to students sooner

→ Finding more time to counsel and help students

Results

→ As of May 2016, 3,500 full aid package letters sent to students

→ Aid processing time reduced from 6–8 weeks to 2–4 weeks

→ Complete integration with all other campus systems

> "What I like about PowerFAIDS is that it integrates so well with other systems and software. It was the best solution for us since we needed something to bring us into the 21st century that worked well with other systems, was made specifically for the financial aid office, and was affordable."
>
> JANA COX,
> DIRECTOR OF STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES,
> SANTA ROSA JUNIOR COLLEGE

A Focus on Helping Students

As Director of Student Financial Services at Santa Rosa Junior College, Jana Cox was concerned about the amount of time it took for students to receive their award letters. Dissatisfied with SRJC's manual system, she made the decision to automate and streamline the financial aid office using PowerFAIDS®. "The biggest things for us were implementing a solution that would integrate easily with our campuswide systems and getting packages out sooner so students could have all of the information they needed when they needed it."

It was essential for SRJC to automate its manual processes, expedite processing time, and simplify verification steps to allow for more time to be spent counseling students.

SRJC wanted to have a very streamlined office so that they could focus on their students. "The more time we spend counseling, the better we are able to inform students about critical things like Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Many students do not know that SAP is used to define successful completion of course work to maintain eligibility for student financial aid, and in this case not knowing can lead to heavy financial consequences and even cause a student to drop out. Through counseling, we can also help students fully understand what will happen if they withdraw so they are aware of the financial implications of their decision."

An Automated and Streamlined Solution

PowerFAIDS is instrumental in better informing SRJC students and parents about their aid awards. "In the old system, our students had no way of knowing about their aid award other than the award letter. Now I can easily send emails to students to inform them about their aid award and key actions they need to take. PowerFAIDS has cut down significantly on the amount of direct mail we send out, which is also a huge cost saving."

CollegeBoard

About Santa Rosa Junior College

SRJC is known for academic excellence, superb faculty and staff, comprehensive student services, and beautiful facilities. Nearly 100 years old, this beloved community institution enrolls approximately 28,000 students each semester. SRJC is dedicated to making higher education accessible to all and removing barriers to our students' success. Student life is vibrant, with over 40 student clubs, conference-winning athletic teams, nationally ranked speech and debate teams, and outstanding theatre arts, music, and dance programs.

About PowerFAIDS

PowerFAIDS is a comprehensive, customizable software solution that automates the financial aid process. It allows institutions to efficiently and equitably administer aid, eliminating hours of paperwork and allowing for more student interaction. It gives financial aid professionals the information and tools they need for smarter, faster service while making sure they are in compliance with the latest federal requirements. The easy-to-use software allows professionals to manage the full range of institutional aid programs.

About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college. For further information, visit **collegeboard.org**.

PowerFAIDS' customization options and its easy reporting feature have made a big difference for the college's financial aid office, and so has the ability to auto-verify student files.

With PowerFAIDS, the SRJC Financial Aid staff has:

→ **Customized a feature that auto-packaged Pell Grant awards**
→ **Built and run reports instantly that, in the old system, only the IT team could provide**
→ **Auto-verified student information to cut extra work out of the process**

Before PowerFAIDS, SRJC used paper forms to process Return to Title IV (R2T4) funds, pulling and entering Pell Grant student rosters manually, and keying in the amounts awarded to each student into the system. "There was a lot of room for human error using our homegrown system. With PowerFAIDS we are able to automatically process R2T4 funds, auto-import the Pell Grant roster, and account for disbursements automatically, which helps to ensure accuracy and compliance."

To complement PowerFAIDS, SRJC uses Net Partner, a web portal that lets students view their award information and helps them accomplish important tasks, including accepting and declining awards and downloading PDF documents. "Through the Net Partner web portal, we are able to post aid disbursement information online immediately. I especially love that we can add hyperlinks to websites to encourage critical actions such as completing the FAFSA and sending IRS transcripts. It is very user-friendly for our staff, and our students are happy to access the up-to-date information we are able to share with them."

The Results Speak Volumes

Since implementing PowerFAIDS, SRJC exceeded its expectations for preparing award letters earlier. Rather than mid-September, **SRJC sent 3,500 complete aid package letters in May. The college has cut down processing time dramatically, from 6 to 8 weeks to 2 to 4 weeks.** "This is the first year we are using PowerFAIDS and we are already processing full packages within 2 to 4 weeks. The extra time we now have by using PowerFAIDS ultimately allows us to create a better-informed student body and helps ensure that no one falls through the cracks."

Rather than a campuswide system, SRJC wanted an affordable, automated solution designed to integrate with its existing systems and replace an antiquated, manual financial aid process. PowerFAIDS met these demands. "PowerFAIDS, seamlessly integrated with our current systems and helped us avoid another year of filling in each student form by hand and writing handwritten letters."

▶ LEARN MORE AT **POWERFAIDS.ORG.**