Starfish

**SUNY Brockport: Establishing a
"One-stop Support Shop" With Starfish Solutions**

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- Thomas Chew, Director of Academic Success Center

The College of Brockport, State University of New York, Monroe County, New York

The College at Brockport, State University of New York (SUNY Brockport) is a nationally recognized four-year comprehensive public college focused on student success, academic quality, and exceptional value. With more than 8,000 students, Brockport describes itself as one of the most engaged campuses in the country, due in large part to their focus on student success.

To address student success challenges faced by the university, the Academic Success Center (ASC) was established in 2016. "ASC was formed as a collaborative unit to augment and support student success-based initiatives," said Thomas Chew, Director of Academic Success Center. "From the beginning, that included the goal of using retention software to better assist students."

Creating a One-stop Support Shop

Before selecting Starfish, Brockport evaluated multiple software solutions. "We knew Starfish would provide a 'one-stop shop' for student support," said Chew. The SUNY system's designation of Starfish as a preferred retention software product was an added inducement. Chew and the ASC team were also impressed by Starfish's demonstrated results at other SUNY institutions, including Monroe Community College and Finger Lakes Community College.

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Over **9%** increase in Faculty Engagement in just one year

83.8% survey response rate in just the first semester of use

141 students identified as not attending classes - **7X** more than those identified prior to using Starfish

27X more concerns shared with advisors than prior to using Starfish

Nearly **4:1** ratio of kudos to flags

Nearly **6,000** flags in the first semester of use

Over **19,000** kudos raised in that same first semester

Building Campus Buy-in

In order to provide maximum support throughout implementation and gain buy-in from students, faculty and staff, the ASC team solicited and answered questions from users via email, phone, and one-on-one meetings. The university also branded their renewed culture of student success with ads in the student newspaper, fliers and custom bookmarks.

Soon after implementing Starfish, a new Progress Survey was sent to all undergraduate faculty to collect federally mandated "Never Attended" information. In any given semester, Brockport's former Banner-based system reported only 20 or so instances of students not attending classes. "In our first semester using Starfish for the survey, we identified 141 instances of students not attending classes," said Chew. "Our 83.8% response rate was the highest in SUNY and more than doubled the Starfish average."

One of Brockport's most successful on-campus partnerships throughout implementation has been with the Residential Life and Living Learning Communities team. They had already been manually reaching out to students with a midterm GPA lower than 2.25. Through Starfish, the team customized a midterm grade flag that reflected the standards their staff already had in place. Resident directors utilized these flags to identify students of concern and to share their outreach notes with faculty advisors and ASC. "With Starfish, 3,036 midterm

GPA flags were automatically raised and followed-up on, compared with an average of less than half that number in previous years," said Chew.

Racking up Early Successes

Since implementing Starfish, Brockport has seen a positive shift towards departmental and administrative collaboration to increase student success. "Starfish has been a collective and unifying piece of this puzzle for the College at Brockport," said Chew.

Brockport previously had minimal means to allow faculty and staff to share insights and concerns with academic advisors. As a result, there were only 213 concerns shared with advisors in Fall 2013. By Fall 2017, with Starfish, the number of concerns shared had jumped to 5,864.

The entire initiative has spurred unexpected partnerships and the development of new campus initiatives and leaders. Academic departments that embraced the system have enhanced their ability to gather actionable data on faculty advising loads, courses with high failure and withdrawal (DEW) rates, and retention numbers. "These departments see the true value of investing time and resources," said Chew. "We are working together to learn how we can maximize Starfish's utility."