



Partner Profiles: Engaging Faculty and  
Creating Culture Change with Starfish at  
Blackhawk Technical College

CONNECTED**21**



# Blackhawk Technical College

## Background



Small community college  
in south central Wisconsin



**68%**  
of students are part-time



**2,257**  
undergraduate students



**Revised Mission in 2019**  
"We help you build your  
future with a flexible  
education in a supportive  
environment."



Adopted Starfish in  
Fall 2019



**Susan Dantuma**

Advising and  
Retention  
Coordinator



**Erica Fenton**

Department Chair,  
Learning Support  
Division

# Implementing Starfish with Intention at Blackhawk Tech



Academic  
Affairs

Faculty

Information  
Technology

Student  
Services

Advising

Enrollment

Innovation, Teaching,  
and Learning

Registration  
and Records

**In Our First  
Full Year**

**7.72k**

Kudos raised on  
2.52k students

**10.88k**

Appointments made  
by 2.71k students

**+16%**  
**higher GPA**

**+8%**  
**higher retention**

Students with a flag that was successfully addressed

# Our New Mission and Holistic Student Support

“

**“We help you build your future with a flexible education in a supportive environment.”**

”



**BLACKHAWK  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

## Culture at Blackhawk Tech



Celebrating Successes



Engaging Students



Identifying Retention Risks

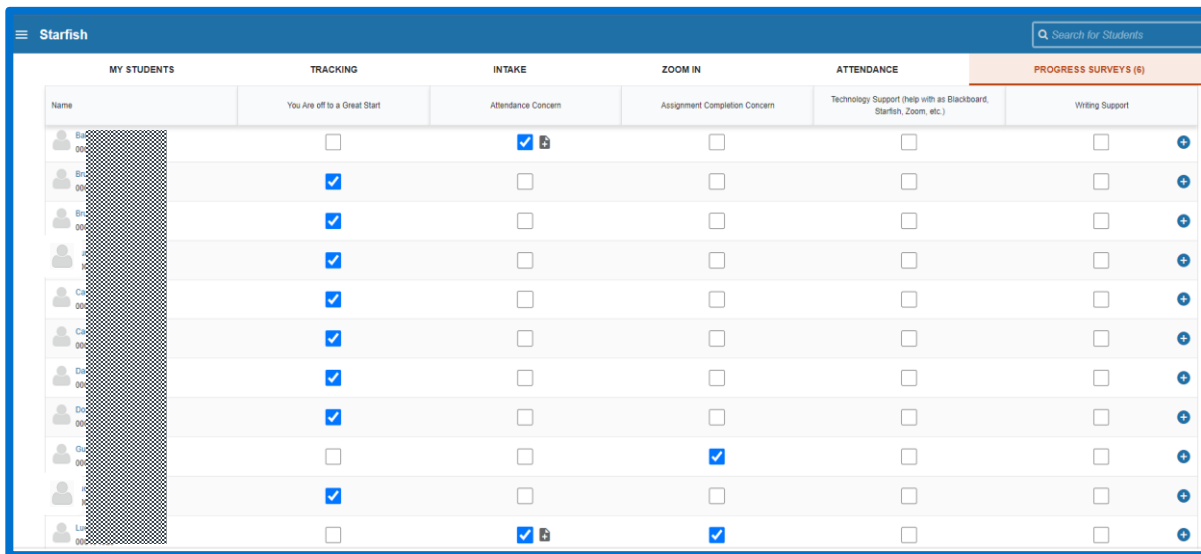


Embracing the Growth Mindset of Student Success



Activating a Network of Support That Extends Beyond the Classroom

# Faculty Engagement and Progress Surveys



The screenshot displays the Starfish software interface. At the top, there is a search bar labeled "Search for Students". Below this, a table is organized into columns: MY STUDENTS, TRACKING, INTAKE, ZOOM IN, ATTENDANCE, and PROGRESS SURVEYS (S). The TRACKING column includes a sub-column "You Are off to a Great Start". The INTAKE column includes "Attendance Concern". The ZOOM IN column includes "Assignment Completion Concern". The ATTENDANCE column includes "Technology Support (help with as Blackboard, Starfish, Zoom, etc.)". The PROGRESS SURVEYS (S) column includes "Writing Support". The table lists 10 students, with their names obscured by a grey pattern. Each row contains checkboxes for the various categories, with some checked (blue) and some unchecked (white). A plus sign icon is visible at the end of each row.

MY STUDENTS	TRACKING	INTAKE	ZOOM IN	ATTENDANCE	PROGRESS SURVEYS (S)
Name	You Are off to a Great Start	Attendance Concern	Assignment Completion Concern	Technology Support (help with as Blackboard, Starfish, Zoom, etc.)	Writing Support
[Redacted]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
[Redacted]	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- ✓ Efficient way to reach out to multiple students
- ✓ Could be customized and scaled
- ✓ Provide positive feedback
- ✓ Find supports for students where they may not have skills or knowledge
- ✓ Allow for a common language for cross-college conversations

# Student Engagement: Flags and Alerts



**Blackhawk Tech:**  
**65%**  
**of students** received a **flag**  
during the 2020–2021  
academic year

**Benchmark:**  
**39%**  
**of students** at Starfish peers  
that are small, two-year  
institutions

# Student Engagement: Kudos



**Blackhawk Tech:**

**57%**

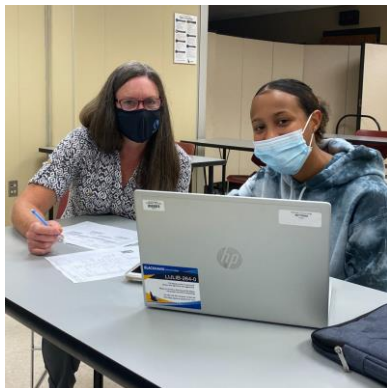
**of students** received a **kudo**  
during the 2020–2021  
academic year

**Benchmark:**

**39%**

**of students** at Starfish peers  
that are small, two-year  
institutions

# Faculty Feedback on Kudos and Alerts



## Supporting the mission with Starfish!

"To the recently submitted Starfish updates, my students have been sending me a barrage of emails, thanking me for the kudos, and engaging with me on missing work. Their joy at the supportive emails has been palpable, and the students who were challenged seem to have had renewed vigor to do what is needed in the classes. THANK YOU to you and your team for giving to us all this new tool to help our students succeed."

**-Faculty Survey Respondent**

## Early outreach helps students to engage!

"Many students who just received an early Starfish notification have reached back with questions or hopes to strategize for how they can be more successful or [with] effusive thanks for the support and kudos that were shared."

**-Faculty Survey Respondent**





# Positive Reinforcement and Growth Mindset

Faculty Groups Have Continued to Iterate and Update



**Flags:** Is struggling with their class



**Kudos:** Deserves positive recognition



**Referrals:** Needs assistance outside of the classroom



“It *is* another thing you have to do—but it’s what you *have* to do—to keep students here.”



# Getting Clearer About Who Sees and Who Responds

## Flag Review and Closure Workflows of Faculty-Raised Flags



### Level 1 Alerts

- ✓ **Email Only**
- ✓ **Faculty Encouraged To Clear**

- Low Quiz/Test Scores
- Missing or Late Assignments
- Need a Nudge
- Kudos



### Level 2 Alerts

- ✓ **Email and Outreach**
- ✓ **Only Advisors Can Clear**

- Attendance Concern Flag
- In Danger of Failing Flag
- Missing on Blackboard
- Assignment Completion Concern
- 5 or more raised flags

**Many of these alerts come from Faculty Progress Surveys**



### Referrals

- ✓ **Outreach to Cross-Campus resources**
- ✓ **Closing the Loop**
  - Academic Advising
  - Academic Coaching
  - Career Services
  - Computer Assistance
  - Emergency Assistance
  - Financial Aid Referral
  - Library Services
  - Peer Tutoring
  - Personal Counseling
  - Research Assistance
  - Student Cupboard

# Effectiveness of Outreach

## Analysis of Starfish Data using Macros—Fall 20 and Spring 21

	Fall 20 Cum GPA	Spring 21 Cum GPA	Fall 20 to Spring 21 Retention
➤ <b>All flags</b> 5,290 flags studied	2.94	3.00	72.2%
➤ <b>Outreach successful and documented</b> 2,011 items	2.73	2.82	61.3%
➤ <b>Outreach attempted but no response</b> 750 items	2.45	2.49	50.4%



**Next Steps at Blackhawk Tech to expand our student success culture include:**

- Leveraging flags for early alert in precollege and survey courses
- Using Progress Surveys for all midterm grades
- Tightening our integrations with Blackboard (e.g., specific referrals instead of an advisor meeting)
- Looking at the data to see what alerts are linked to success
- Balancing growth with capacity

