

Customer Success Story

Out With the Old and In With the New: College of the Ozarks Adopts Jenzabar Financial Aid

About the College of the Ozarks

Founded in 1906, College of the Ozarks is a private Christian liberal arts college in Point Lookout, Missouri. The college enrolls over 1,400 undergraduate students and offers bachelor's degrees in 30 majors.

<https://www.cofo.edu/>

Financial Aid Challenges:

- ▶ Managing financial aid for every student on campus with a lean team.
- ▶ Integrating student information.
- ▶ Processing financial aid in a timely manner.
- ▶ Training new staff to use a challenging system.

Jenzabar Financial Aid Enabled College of the Ozarks to:

- ▶ Dramatically increase staff efficiency.
- ▶ Improve student advocacy and engagement.
- ▶ Significantly reduce processing times.
- ▶ Interface more with students and mentor their student workers.



Familiarly known as Hard Work U.®, College of the Ozarks is unique in that enrolled students pay no tuition and graduate debt free. In place of tuition, every full-time student is enrolled in the work-education program. The college combines earnings from the work-education program with applicable federal and local grants and the College of the Ozarks Tuition Assurance Scholarship. All this is to say, the financial aid office has a huge role to play on campus.

But like many financial aid offices in higher education, College of the Ozarks has a lean team, comprised of two full-time staff and four student workers. Their previous financial aid software was described as clunky, slow, poorly integrated, and not at all user friendly.

The college has been a member of the Jenzabar Family for over 20 years, and when the time was right, they made the switch to Jenzabar Financial Aid.

Jenzabar Financial Aid was designed specifically with students in mind. Not only does it automate the entire financial aid process, but it improves how staff, students, and families collaborate and communicate. By providing students with an intuitive, comprehensive student portal, Jenzabar Financial Aid makes it easy for them to upload documents, view requirements, and accept offers in real time. For staff,

Jenzabar Financial Aid eliminates hours of manual work, improving operational efficiency, simplifying the disbursement process, and giving staff more time to engage with students.

Improving the Student Customer Experience

College of the Ozarks aims to promote a strong work ethic in students and to give them opportunities to be self-reliant. Jenzabar Financial Aid provides transparency and allows students to be involved with the financial aid office through a secure online environment.

"The student portal is simply fantastic," said Diana Winkle, the college's Assistant Director of Financial Aid. "It allows students to have visibility into their awards, and it allows them access to their college financial plan at any time. That transparency is what a lot of students have come to expect these days."

Accelerating Financial Aid Processes Across the Board

Loading ISIR files used to take a substantial amount of time. When the college first uploaded ISIRs into Jenzabar Financial Aid the process was instantaneous. In fact, the process was so quick that it caused staff to question if the ISIR files loaded correctly.

Because Jenzabar Financial Aid was fully integrated with College of the Ozarks' other Jenzabar systems, processes that were time consuming now happen in a fraction of the time. These integrations and the system's built-in communications features also make it easier for staff to work across departments, collaborating with the business office, registrar, and admissions teams in order to ensure effective financial aid processing.

Additionally, with Jenzabar Financial Aid, the financial aid student workers have a more intuitive system to process data and daily tasks. According to the students, navigating student files and processes can now be completed with a few clicks.

Working With a Responsive and Reliable Partner

College of the Ozarks' partnership with Jenzabar has been a key factor in their success with Jenzabar Financial Aid. Because of the college's small staff, they opted for a lengthier, methodical rollout, implementing Jenzabar Financial Aid one piece at time. Halfway through the implementation, one of the two financial aid staff members left the college. While this could have derailed the



The wonderful team at Jenzabar makes solving problems so easy. They are readily available to help you, and being able to reach out and utilize their support has been great."

Diana Winkle

Assistant Director of Financial Aid
College of the Ozarks

implementation timeline, dedication from the financial aid office with continued support from Jenzabar ensured that the rollout happened on schedule.

"We had tremendous support and help from Jenzabar's team. They did a great job telling us how to navigate challenges and get things done," said Jeff Ford, Director of Financial Aid at College of the Ozarks.

Even now, when the college comes across an issue or a concern, gaining support is as easy as sending an email. Adding this level of support on top of Jenzabar Financial Aid's capabilities means staff no longer have to worry about prioritizing the technical side of their jobs.

"We have a lot of students coming in throughout the day asking for advice or scholarship assistance. And we are work supervisors on top of everything else," said Winkle. "So being able to have a system like Jenzabar Financial Aid and the support we have from Jenzabar helps us operate more effectively."

Find out more

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