

CASE STUDY

**Merit Saves the
University of Arkansas
\$130,000 Annually**



+



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

Fulbright College
of Arts and Sciences

Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Arkansas

Institution

Fulbright College of Arts
and Sciences

Location

Fayetteville, Arkansas

Established

1912

Merit Partner Since

2022



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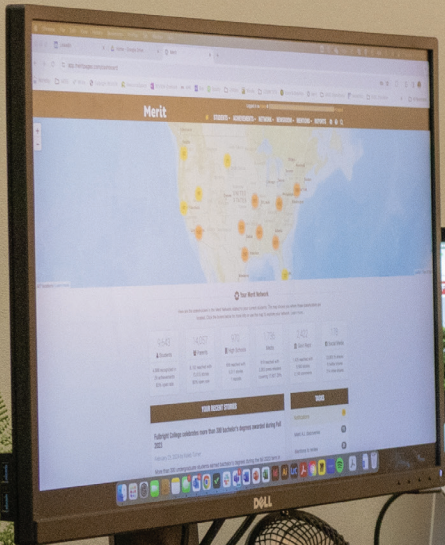


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Fulbright College's Bold Leap: Embracing Merit for Student Success

In the heart of the University of Arkansas' dynamic campus, a story of innovation and connection unfolds within its largest college, the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. Faced with the challenge of showcasing a diverse range of student achievements in an expansive university environment, the college embarked on a trans-formative journey. This case delves into how Fulbright College harnessed the power of Merit, a cutting-edge tool designed to streamline and elevate the communication of student successes.





The Challenge at Fulbright College: Bridging the Communication Gap

The issue at Fulbright College was multifaceted yet clear: How could the college effectively and efficiently publish its Dean's list story in a way that was engaging and far-reaching? Prior to Merit, the dissemination of this achievement was a cumbersome process, constrained by limited resources, manual components and the sheer scale of the task, with over 9,000 students across 19 different academic departments. The publication was made public via a single web page with an interactive table. This

format restricted seamless media pickups and hindered engagement.

Kaleb Turner, the Associate Director of Communications at Fulbright College, reflecting on the challenge, noted,

“

We recognized the need for a change, a way to bring our students' stories to the forefront more effectively.”



Innovation Unleashed: Introducing Merit to Fulbright College

The summer of 2022 marked a turning point with the introduction of Merit. This tool promised not just a solution to the logistical hurdles but also a means to create deeper connections with the college community and beyond. Merit transformed the massive project of publishing the Dean's list into a seamless, efficient and personalized process that drastically reduced the time it took to publish while granting greater visibility, engagement and connection.

Additionally, its ability to integrate with the university's news feed and identify relevant student achievements daily positioned Merit as an ideal solution. Gone were the struggles of amassing stories from various departments and tracking down data. Merit identified and pulled every student mention into one interface to be re-purposed and redistributed to nationwide networks.



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School of Art Students Receive Artists 360 Artist Awards

February 6, 2024

The Mid-America Arts Alliance announced the 2023 Artist 360 Awards last fall,

Welcome to the Fulbr
in the College fall with
Arts, Humanities, Na

Arkansas. Disciplines

Mission

The Fulbright College

page from our Dean

Kathy Sloan

Triumphs of Technology: Merit's Impactful Results

The adoption of Merit catalyzed a significant transformation. Over 7,800 personalized stories were shared in just the first year, featuring 5,394 students recognized in Fulbright College across six categories, including Scholarships, Dean's List, Research and Grants, Student Leadership, Academic Competition, and Commencement. A testament to the tool's efficiency, Kaleb remarked that "Merit enabled us to share our students' stories more broadly and effectively than ever before."

The financial impact was equally impressive. By replacing manual processes with Merit, the college estimated this efficiency saved the

equivalent cost of nearly two full-time positions or approximately \$130,000 annually. This figure was not just a number but a symbol of Merit's profound impact on operational efficiency and effectiveness in media distribution.

Merit's reach extended beyond cost savings, connecting with 9.9k parents/guardians, 886 media outlets, 616 high schools, donors, and other key stakeholders by providing them with regular, personalized updates on student achievements. This enhanced outreach resulted in an estimated 3.8 million social media impressions across Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn and is in perfect alignment with the university's strategic priorities, supporting goals like elevating student success and promoting research excellence.



The Synergy of Merit and AI: A New Era of Efficiency

In conjunction with Merit, Kaleb Turner leveraged AI technology to improve operational efficiency and extended Merit's impact for Fulbright College. This innovative approach led to a significant enhancement in the way the university managed and personalized its student success stories.

AI is charged with refining language for student achievements and efficiently organizing large

data sets for pillar stories like the Dean's list, allowing staff to efficiently manage the vast amount of student information and seamlessly tailor and disseminate a multitude of stories.

This synergistic approach led to notable improvements in both the operational efficiency of the publication process and the quality of communications. As Fulbright College continues to leverage the combined strengths of Merit and AI, it stands at the forefront of a new wave of technology-enhanced education communication.



Looking Ahead: Fulbright College's Continued Journey with Merit

Fulbright College's journey with Merit is far from over. Looking ahead, the college sees this tool as a cornerstone in its strategy to continually elevate the ways in which it celebrates and communicates student achievements. "Our journey with Merit is just beginning. We see it as a key part of our strategy to bring our students' achievements into the spotlight," Kaleb shared.

As this case study demonstrates, the experience of the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas with Merit offers a compelling example of how educational institutions can leverage technology to not only streamline operations but also forge stronger connections with their community. It's a testament to innovation, efficiency, and, above all, a celebration of student success.



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