Stephens College

Verification Gateway Made Verification Process Simpler for Staff and Students

Stephens College is the second oldest women's college in the country and home to less than 500 students. Women are challenged by a variety of coursework, gain leadership opportunities, and receive career preparatory classes all while enjoying the competitive advantage of a 10-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio. Stephens is also known for its diverse and competitive degree programs: a successful physician assistant program, a nationally recognized fashion school, and top 10 theater program.

Financial Aid Staff Was Too Thin to Complete Verifications and Delayed Financial Aid Packages

Alex Miller, Director of Financial Aid at Stephens College, learned of the staff's difficult time keeping up with verifications after she came on board to Stephens.

"Verification was becoming stressful not only for students and families but also for staff," Miller said. "With what seems to be more selections each year," it was becoming difficult and strenuous for our office to keep up with incoming verification selections. In turn, this delayed students in getting their aid packages and finalizing their plans for paying for college."

Verification Gateway Demo Highlighted Value of Outsourced Solution and Quality of Service

Miller said the financial aid staff at that time needed to come up with a solution to solve its verification problem. Solutions included hiring another staff member to manage verifications, re-disburse duties among the current staff, or outsource.

"Once the team knew outsourcing was an option, it became the preferred alternative," Miller said.

CHALLENGE

The financial aid office was too short-staffed to keep up with verifications in a timely manner, which resulted in financial aid packages being delayed. The staff needed to hire another team member, re-disburse duties among current staff, or hire a third-party solution.

SOLUTION

Selecting Verification Gateway made verifications easier to process, provided students with a less stressful online experience, and reduced the work load for the financial aid staff.

RESULTS

- Increased efficiency of completed verifications
- Provided online user-friendly experience for students and families
- Eased staff work load
- Gave first-class customer service during and after VG implementation

The former financial aid director at Stephens learned of Verification Gateway (VG) at a conference. Verification Gateway from Inceptia is an automated online platform that streamlines federal verification processing for students and schools. Offering interview-style questions, simple and secure document collection, complete reporting and personal interaction when needed, VG enables schools to process and package aid faster.

"The previous director met with an Inceptia representative at the conference and was very excited about the quality of the service offered and how they presented their product," Miller said. VG was implemented at Stephens in 2017.

Students Enjoyed Online Ease and Communication

Rather than submitting forms and returning them to the financial aid office, students completed verifications simply through VG's online portal. In addition, students and families also received communication directly from Inceptia to ensure verifications were being processed efficiently; this allowed Stephens to be removed as the middle-man and eliminate any possible miscommunication.

"Inceptia provided branded marketing communication to our students and families that showed a partnership," Miller said. "This gained trust among our students as they understood we had a third-party solution for verifications. In this field, communicating regularly and timely can be difficult to track and hard to do sometimes. Inceptia did a great job of making sure they reached out to students regularly."

STEPHENS COLLEGE

PARTNER PROFILE

Stephens College is a private women's college in Columbia, Missouri. It is the second-oldest female college in the United States. It was founded in 1833 as the Columbia Female Academy. The college follows a liberal arts curriculum and has three schools: Design, Health Sciences, and Creative and Performing Arts. Stephens also offers graduate degrees including Master of Education in Counseling, Master of Fine Arts in Television and Screenwriting, and Master in Physician Assistant Studies.

Worth the Investment

After implementing VG, Stephens reaped many benefits. The solution made the verification process more efficient; eased the staff work load; allowed students to complete verifications utilizing a user-friendly online portal; provided communication on behalf of Stephens; and gave outstanding customer service to Stephens staff during and after implementation. All of this, Miller said, was worth the investment.

"Hiring Inceptia provided piece-of-mind," Miller said. "While there is a cost associated with it, Inceptia had our back and completed the verification process timelier."

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Talk to Us

To learn more about Verification Gateway, contact your Business Development representative or visit inceptia.org.

We uncomplicate financial aid.

Inceptia is a nonprofit organization committed to innovative, effective, and uncomplicated solutions for financial aid management, smart borrowing, financial education, and repayment wellness.

Inceptia

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