

## TargetX and Delaware County Community College

TargetX's comprehensive recruitment suite supports sophisticated outreach across the entire student lifecycle at Delaware County Community College

**Challenges: Declining enrollment and persistence rates meant DCCC needed to take bold action**

Two-year community colleges have faced a steady decline in student enrollment since 2010. Eighty-eight percent of admissions directors at community colleges say enrollment numbers are down compared to two years ago, according to a survey from Inside Higher Ed.

Fran Cubberley, Vice President for Enrollment Management at Delaware County Community College, has spent 38 years in higher education and can relate. She says the "community college scene has changed considerably since the recession," and peer institutions are experiencing "double-digit enrollment declines." At DCCC, Cubberley and her staff are "struggling to get students in the door, as well as to retain them, and foster their success."

Cubberley's nine-location college has experienced a 10.5 percentage decline in student matriculation since 2011, but that's not the only shift. Now, DCCC students are more likely to be part-time—70 percent compared to just over 50 percent in 2009. Traditional and adult learners are taking longer to complete degrees because they're "dropping credit loads in order to work." It's not unusual for DCCC students to spend more than three years completing degrees, while "many don't finish at all," says Cubberley.

This is not a DCCC challenge; this is a universal community college challenge. Only 39 percent of community college attendees receive a degree within six years. Of students who matriculate at a community college in the fall, 25 percent won't be there in the spring.

This means community colleges have to work exponentially harder and smarter to market to prospective students, guide them through the enrollment process, and support them to persist to graduation.



### Delaware County Community College at a Glance

Founded in 1967

Two-year community college

Nine locations serving Delaware and Chester Counties, PA

Approximately 28,000 total students, credit and non-credit

Home of the Phantoms

### TargetX Solutions

Recruitment Suite

Online Application

Schools App

### Goals

Delaware County Community College needed a recruitment suite of solutions that met the needs of the student lifecycle more effectively in order to:

combat declining enrollment with better communications and outreach;

support enrolled students to persist to graduation; and

increase retention with better student engagement.

Cubberley agrees and says, “We’ve realized our retention and success efforts are just as important as new student enrollment. We’ve ramped up this work at DCCC with completion plans, a director of both student success and completion, and our new critical investment in TargetX’s Recruitment Suite solution and Schools App technology.”

### **Solutions: TargetX Recruitment Suite and Schools App Meet Triple Challenge of Enrollment, Retention, and Student Success**

“The philosophy of ‘open the doors and they will come’ doesn’t work anymore,” says Cubberley. “Marketing must play a much larger role at community colleges and we all have to leverage technology.”

This modernized philosophy born of market realities led Cubberley and her team to TargetX. In 2016, she launched the only higher education technology solution that comprehensively supports the trifecta of student enrollment, retention, and success: TargetX’s Recruitment Suite.

“Through the Recruitment Suite, we are revamping the way we communicate with students. We still reach out through phone calls and email, but we’re moving more towards chatting and texting because that’s where our students are. This is different for us, but TargetX’s suite of solutions makes it easy,” says Cubberley.

DCCC is also leveraging the power of the TargetX Schools App, a university-branded mobile community that connects incoming students with university staff and one another to encourage enrollment and continued engagement. The Schools App tool, which Cubberley describes as “a boon for DCCC” allows college and universities to nurture prospective

students, target those who are on the fence, and predict student likelihood to enroll. Equally exciting, it maintains ongoing college engagement, connecting students to affinity groups, study sessions, and the support networks needed to succeed. “Our students use it all the time,” exclaims Cubberley. “It keeps our students engaged with our community.”

### **Results: TargetX takes DCCC to ‘whole other level’**

Although DCCC is only in its first year of implementation, Cubberley is enthusiastic about the unlimited promise. “The TargetX Recruitment Suite is going to take DCCC admissions and outreach to a whole other level,” she says. “The ability to develop real relationships with students in a systematic fashion at the exact points where it matters most will have a major payoff. I’m confident that we will see a return on investment, not just in recruiting students, but also in terms of retention and student success.”

