

Chaminade College Preparatory School

“Esto Vir,” which literally means, “Be a man” is the motto of Chaminade College Preparatory School, a Catholic Day and Resident school in St. Louis, Missouri. The motto helps to make it clear that an education at Chaminade is much more than an academic undertaking; it is an endeavor that encompasses all aspects of a young man’s being.

Students at Chaminade experience a wide range of athletic, cultural, social and religious activities as an integral part of a “total education program.” This program includes an international resident program, which brings geographic and cultural diversity to Chaminade, enriching the school community. At Chaminade, a wide network of faculty, support staff, and parents work to offer a variety of experiential opportunities which guide each young man to discover the unique contribution he can make to the human endeavor.

Highlights

- Chaminade realized a 45% increase in revenue between 2006- 2007 after implementation of the Greater Giving system.
- After switching to Greater Giving Online Payments, Chaminade could take full advantage of online donations, event registrations and sponsorship sales.
- Over 90% of the school’s auction attendees agreed to pre-register a credit card at check-in, making check-out a smooth process.

Challenge

Chaminade has been holding benefit auctions since 1974, so hosting an event was not a challenge. Managing all the details and reconciling payments post-event, however, was a different story.

Through the years Chaminade’s auction committee had progressed to using event software for their benefit

auction, which improved their paper-based processes. Yet, when their five year software agreement was up for renewal in 2006, they realized that their needs had outgrown the program. What they needed in addition to event software was the ability to take donations online and to streamline the reconciliation of payments post-event. Michelle Renner, Chaminade’s Director of Advancement Services, explained that she had to run her own merchant account to process payments. “It was crazy the way I was doing it,” said Renner.

Solution

When Greater Giving was selected as their new fundraising solution provider in 2007, Renner saw an immediate benefit in the Greater Giving Online Payments solution. This product alone paid for their entire investment, because Renner leveraged the technology to sell event tickets online, plus take regular donations for on-going support year-round. Renner was already familiar with the technology—she’s been working on adapting a storefront tool’s online functionality to sell campus wear and bookstore items on the school Website. Chaminade recently used Online Payments to sell the logo wear for their recent Basketball state championship—and the shirts sold out in 2 days!

Tips from Chaminade

- Consider what other fundraising campaigns you have in addition to live events and how you can tie Online Payments into those campaigns to make it easy for your supporters to donate funds.
- Don’t depend on just one activity to fund your organization—have a plan to communicate multiple times through the year.
- At your event, on your Website and in your newsletters, have a beneficiary of your services share a testimony on what the organization’s help means to them.

Results

Chaminade volunteers and staff find the software easy to use. The Greater Giving solution helps them to easily pull an event catalog together and print related documents like bid sheets with no fuss—tasks that were an enormous challenge prior to Greater Giving.

The Auctionpay Product has also streamlined the process for taking and settling credit card payments. Renner said, “Adding the banking and Express Pay capability has been huge for us—being able to pre-swipe those cards at the event and run the deposit through on Monday is a big benefit.” In the past they had a person who entered the credit cards manually into a terminal after the event, with the process taking a week. “Sometimes, in years past—there was a credit card number that was not readable; this took a large amount of staff time to follow up and get a valid card number. Now that isn’t a problem, because the system does all the ‘reading,’” said Renner. Auctionpay has cut the reconciliation and settlement time down significantly—from over a week to a day.

Renner noted that their auction attendees like the new system as well—over 90% of the attendees pre-registered their cards upon arrival at Chaminade’s first event using Auctionpay terminals, which made check-out a lot smoother. Renner said “ I think they like it because it’s easy—we don’t have people call us after the event to get their statement corrected , and people enjoy not having to cash out at end of evening”.

Greater Giving solutions are a part of their overall fundraising efforts tied in with direct mail solicitations for support and other on-going activities throughout the year, such as their annual golf tournament. Online Payments enables them to take applications for their international resident applications, accept registrations for summer camp and alumni reunions. And an online store front is currently in development.

Most importantly, Chaminade realized a 45% increase in revenue between 2006- 2007 after implementation of the Greater Giving system, and continues to hold steady each year. Ultimately, raising more funds for their organization means more opportunities for Chaminade to prepare their students for success in college and life.