

Saint Mary's Identifies 124 New Prospects— and Saves the College Money



Saint Mary's College had done a wealth screening, but it had been years before and no one was involved in the process, Joni Warner explained. So, Warner, Director of Research for Development at the college, had a lot of decisions to make as she began to investigate the possibilities of a screening. She knew questions like these would need to be answered: What is our plan? What will we find most helpful in the results?

Ultimately, Warner (with help from Sally Boucher from WealthEngine's client service team) put in place a three-step process.

- **Step One:** Interview WealthEngine clients who have recently completed screenings to find out what data they used and how they used the results.
- **Step Two:** Set goals. Warner's goals included:
 1. Eliminate those prospects from our pool who were not (or did not) qualify
 2. Better qualify cultivated prospects
 3. Update the database
 4. Identify new prospects for an upcoming campaign.
- **Step Three:** Determine the data and outcomes that the college wanted to see as a result of a wealth screening.

Then, time for using the results—and for success! They began with a focus on major gifts followed by the college's annual fund and, finally, planned giving.

"A big part of our need was to identify new prospects," explained Warner. "**We identified 124 new prospects through the WealthEngine screening.** Then, we ran a report to determine where these prospects lived. We distributed this data to our gift officers based on the regions to which they were traveling. This turned out to be a huge asset for our gift officers."

Next, Warner ran a report to identify ability ratings of these new prospects as well as the giving officers' existing prospects. This proved even more beneficial to the officers. With only three gift officers at Saint Mary's College, each has a portfolio of 300-400 prospects.

Saint Mary's College is a Catholic, residential, women's college in the liberal arts tradition. Founded by the Sisters of the Holy Cross in 1844, Saint Mary's promotes a life of intellectual vigor, aesthetic appreciation, religious sensibility, and social responsibility.

Joni Warner is Director of Research for Development at Saint Mary's College



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Warner continued, “We are also looking at planned giving prospects. Using the WealthEngine planned giving model, we have been able to identify more prospects in our database.” Just over a month ago, the Planned Giving Officer sent a mailing out to those prospects.

As with any new application, Warner acknowledged experiencing a learning curve. Hers was “getting it into our daily routine. **It’s really important that you touch the WealthEngine tool every day.** Also, if you take training, you need to start working with your data right away so you can immediately try out what you learned.”

Warner offers this advice to others getting ready to do a screening (whether for the first or tenth time):

- There’s never going to be a “good” time. Just do it!
- It’s in your best interest to think about the outcomes you want. How do you plan to use the data?
- Ask WealthEngine for references similar to your organization. Contact them and ask why they screened particular people and how they used their data.
- Determine your goals. Then, develop your plan. And, remember that your plan is a “living document” and can be modified as you go along.
- Determine what data will be imported into your system.
- Identify additional customized reports needed, beyond the standard ones.

When asked “Why WealthEngine?” Warner explained, “Since we were ‘first timers,’ we wanted a simple product that would offer us a basic screening. We knew we didn’t need—and wouldn’t use—all the bells and whistles of some of the other products.”

She said she would definitely use WealthEngine again. “**The beauty of WealthEngine is that it streamlines what we do in our development department and ultimately saves the college money,**” she said.



Prospect research helped support the construction and endowment of the new Spes Unica Hall, which was completely funded by gifts and pledges totaling \$19.4 million from nearly 1,000 donors.



Saint Mary’s fundraising programs touch alumnae, current and past parents, faculty, staff, students, and friends; building strong support for their mission—educating women to make a difference in the world.