



Long Island Head Start Streamlines Finance with JMT Consulting & Abila MIP Advance™



The Head Start Program is a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income and at-risk children and their families. Long Island Head Start serves more than 2,000 children and their families in more than 25 licensed Head Start and Early Head Start centers throughout Suffolk County, New York.

Elsa Cruciani has been the director of finance at Long Island Head Start since 2004. The organization's previous fund accounting solution was outdated, causing Cruciani and her staff to spend hours on manual processes such as reconciliation. The system was inflexible and error-prone, and lacked the modern functionality Long Island Head Start needed to achieve its mission.

Cruciani chose to replace the organization's old system with Abila MIP Advance™, a cloud-based fund accounting software solution from Community Brands. Long Island Head Start began using Abila in December 2017. JMT Consulting Group, a firm specializing in nonprofits, provided implementation, training, and support services.

Safer In The Cloud

Abila MIP Advance is a fully integrated, inclusive cloud suite, which eliminates the hassles and cost of infrastructure maintenance and support for Long Island Head Start. Maintenance, backups, upgrades,

and security are all part of the solution—a big improvement for Cruciani. “The backup system is great,” she says. “Before, we had to hire a consultant to manage it.”

Anywhere, Anytime Access

The finance team can access the most current financial data away from anywhere they have an Internet connection, allowing them to perform critical tasks on the go. “I can go online from home and see who's posted bills, do troubleshooting, and balance my food funding,” Cruciani says.

“JMT is a great firm, staffed by friendly experts who go the extra mile to help us. Their implementation and support teams are wonderful. I know I can call and get help right away. I'd recommend JMT and Abila to any nonprofit organization.”

Elsa Cruciani
Director of Finance
Long Island Head Start

Flexible, Time-saving Budgeting

With the old system, budgeting was a painful, manual process. Abila automates cumbersome tasks—setting up budgets, making revisions, and running reports. For example, Cruciani can create budgets for any time period, including cross-fiscal-year and grant year.

“Abila's budgeting is extremely flexible,” she says. “We can set up budgets for different time periods, such as September to August or December to



November. I can also easily make changes to the budget and run a report with both the original and revised budgets. Abila is amazing!”

Reporting Made Easy—and Accurate

Previously, Cruciani spent hours compiling reports, only to end up with the numbers out of balance. “I had to run all the reports on a daily basis, such as reconciling expenses with the revenue. We found so many errors,” she says. “With Abila, I can run monthly reports in less than an hour. What’s more, we can easily adapt the reports to fit our needs—such as customizing the expenses for fringe benefits. And to ensure accuracy, Abila makes it simple to compare the figures in our financial statements to those in our general ledger.”

Managing Multiple Funding Sources

With Abila, Long Island Head Start can track money back to specific grants, funds, programs, and other sources. The software provides a segmented chart of accounts structure, allowing Cruciani to easily configure segments to track specific funding sources and expense assignments. Given the organization’s

diverse sources of funding, this level of granularity is essential—80 percent of the funding comes from the federal government, and Long Island Head Start is responsible for the remaining 20 percent.

“We have 13 funding sources, and Abila helps us keep these funds separate,” Cruciani says. “For example, our board has its own fund, which we can run a report on. Abila also tracks things like restricted and unrestricted donations.”

Getting maximum value with JMT Consulting

“JMT is a great firm, staffed by friendly experts who go the extra mile to help us,” Cruciani says. “Their implementation and support teams are wonderful. I know I can call and get help right away. I’d recommend JMT and Abila to any nonprofit organization.”

About Long Island Head Start

Long Island Head Start’s mission is to provide a comprehensive learning environment to children respectful of their cultures and to assist families in reaching self-sufficiency through the combined efforts of parents, community, and staff. Learn more at www.liheadstart.org.

CHALLENGE

- Manual, error-prone financial processes
- Outdated, inflexible reporting
- System maintenance hassles

SOLUTION

Abila MIP Advance™ combines robust fund accounting functionality with automation and ease of use on a modern, scalable cloud platform.

RESULTS

- Automation saves time and ensures accuracy
- User-friendly reports are easy to customize and use
- Cloud technology reduces maintenance, ensures data availability

For over 27 years and for more than 2,000 clients, JMT Consulting has been implementing best-in-class software for the back office exclusively for nonprofits.

Want to see Abila MIP in action? Book a free consultation at www.jmtconsulting.com or call us at 888.368.2463.