

Long Island Head Start Streamlines Finance with JMT Consulting & MIP® Cloud

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 The organization's previous fund accounting solution was outdated, causing Cruciani and her staff to spend hours on manual processes such as reconciliation.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 MIP® Cloud, a cloud-based fund accounting software solution from Community Brands. Long Island Head Start began using MIP in December 2017. JMT Consulting Group, a firm specializing in nonprofits, provided implementation, training, and support services.

SAFER IN THE CLOUD

MIP Cloud 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 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.

FLEXIBLE, TIME-SAVING BUDGETING

With the old system, budgeting was a painful, manual process. MIP 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.

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ELSA CRUCINI
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
LONG ISLAND HEAD START

"MIP'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. MIP® 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 MIP, 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, MIP makes it simple to compare the figures in our financial statements to those in our general ledger."

MANAGING MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES

With MIP, 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 MIP helps us keep these funds separate," Cruciani says. "For example, our board has its own fund, which we can run a report on. MIP also tracks things like restricted and unrestricted donations."

GETTING MAXIMUM VALUE WITH JMT CONSULTING

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CHALLENGE

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- Outdated, inflexible reporting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

SOLUTION

MIP® Cloud 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

Ready to optimize your back office processes?

Nonprofits count on us to deliver the finance, development, and productivity solutions that these unique organizations require to meet their goals of sustainability and mission effectiveness.

Let us show you how we can help your organization, too.