



CASE STUDY

The Carle Foundation

Organization Background

Headquartered in Urbana, Ill., The Carle Foundation is the nonprofit parent company of an integrated network of hospital and healthcare services, including the only Level I Trauma Center as well as Level III perinatal services in east central Illinois. Collectively known as Carle, Carle Foundation Hospital and Carle Physician Group operate on a very simple-yet-expansive mission: “We serve people.”

Background

Due to its proximity to the University of Illinois, Carle is both popular with volunteers and dependent on them. The organization brings on and screens more than 2,000 volunteers a year, which includes collegeaged students, auxiliary and teenagers. Prior to working with Sterling Volunteers, the process was entirely manual, on paper and routed through the organization’s Human Resources department, which was already stretched thin due to Carle’s rapid expansion. “We were really bogged down by the lag time in bringing people on board and the background check was a big factor in that delay,” says Holland.

However, it wasn’t just the slow onboarding that caused Carle to rethink its volunteer screening. The organization had a rude wake-up call by way of social media. “We had a student pass their background check and then, in their first semester on campus, committed sexual assault, which we found out about on Twitter!” says Holland. “They were still listed as an active volunteer, but with our old vendor, we had no way of knowing of the new offense.”

Solution

Holland connected with Sterling Volunteers following its scare. Because of the easy-to-use Sterling Volunteers platform, there was no need to involve the organization’s IT department. Additionally, implementation of the service was smooth and easy for Holland and her three-person team. Holland and Carle created two channels within their screening program: One for student volunteers, where the organization pays for the total cost of a background check. The second channel is for “shadowers”, who shadow doctors and nurses during the workday to learn more about medical careers—these individuals are required to pay for their own background checks.

Results

Now Carle Foundation is able to streamline both their application and background check processes online. In less than a year, more than 1,000 volunteer screenings have been conducted not only with increased quality, but with turnaround times of as little as 24 hours. Additionally, Carle now has around-the-year coverage with Sterling Volunteers’ monthly criminal updates. These ensure that newly reported criminal offenses are alerted to their team – even after the volunteer is brought onboard.

Key Highlight

For Carle, the majority of its hospital volunteers are comprised of pre-med and medical students at the University of Illinois. As such, it considers the online mobility of the Sterling Volunteers platform to be essential to its volunteer recruitment and onboarding efforts. “To attract the students and keep them engaged, we have to be up-to-date,” says Megan Holland, Director of Volunteer Services at Carle. “The students want to do everything on their phones. I personally don’t know of any background check system as modern as [Sterling Volunteers].”



We are so confident in our [screening] results! Sterling Volunteers tells you if you need to review background check results before deciding whether to allow someone to volunteer or not. Many of our volunteers happen to be eager pre-med students. Even so, once they are a volunteer at Carle, it is our responsibility to keep track of them, and to ensure we have updated checks for them in case new criminal history information pops up. Sterling Volunteers does that for us automatically.”

- Megan Holland, Director of Volunteer Services, Carle