



- ✔ Client Type—Community Foundation
- ✔ Primary Values—Easy to Use, Improved Application Process
- ✔ Use Case—Applications and Selection

East Texas Communities Foundation **gets more applicants and achieves a dramatically better application process** with SmarterSelect.



### Situation

East Texas Communities Foundation (ETCF) is an organization with 70 scholarship funds covering 32 counties of East Texas. The scholarship offering varies widely: Some scholarships are for a single school while others are open to the entire region.

ETCF had an entirely manual paper application process. They received roughly 700 submissions by mail per year, and applicants sent their applications, transcripts, and reference letters separately. ETCF would then photocopy these documents, package them together, and send them to the appropriate committee for review.

Each of the scholarship funds had a different application, which only added to the pile of paperwork. "Some students were eligible for five, six, seven different scholarships, and they would have to do a separate application for each scholarship they applied for," said Mary Lynn Smith, ETCF's Program Officer.

ETCF needed a solution that would bring their application process online. Doing so would save them time, reduce paperwork, and result in a more efficient organization overall.



### Solution

ETCF partnered with SmarterSelect, bringing their 70 different scholarship fund applications online using the Common App.

The experience of using the Common App versus paper is a big improvement for the applicants. In fact, the program has seen a 550% increase in applications since switching to SmarterSelect.

"Our number of applications has increased from 658 in 2012 to over 3,700 this year," said Mary Lynn.

Evaluators have an improved experience using SmarterSelect as well. The evaluation functionality was a big reason ETCF decided to adopt SmarterSelect.

"The evaluation part is much easier, and it's easy to quantify the evaluations and make them more objective," said Mary Lynn. "I like that I can include some information for evaluators there that relates directly to the question they're about to read and answer."



*"SmarterSelect is intuitive and user-friendly... It's easier for the applicant to submit multiple applications and upload their transcripts themselves."*

**Mary Lynn Smith**

Program Officer, East Texas Communities Foundation



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## Results



### Increased applications received by 550%

SmarterSelect's online application system makes it easy for more students to submit their scholarship materials.



### Improved application process

SmarterSelect's in-app broadcast messages make it easy to remind in-process applicants and evaluators to finish their work and stay on track.



### Easy-to-use evaluation tools

Scoring applicants has never been simpler or quicker.



*“The evaluation part is much easier, and it’s easy to quantify the evaluations and make them more objective.”*