



USER STORY

Greater Harrisburg Foundation Solves its Accounting Nightmare with FIMS

FOUNDATION PROFILE

Foundation Type: Community Foundation

Number of Users: 8

Assets: Over \$30 million with over \$2 million in grants given each year

Modules: All

Background

The Greater Harrisburg Foundation (GHF) was started in 1920 as a means for people in the South Central Pennsylvania counties to give back to their communities. They fund a wide range of program areas including arts and humanities, the environment, scholarship programs, and programs to combat homelessness and AIDS.

While this wide range of programs may enable GHF to have a broad impact on its community, managing the books for the over 500 (and growing) donor funds was one of the more difficult projects GHF had to take on. They needed to simplify their current accounting processes and integrate the various systems they were using. They found that NPO Solutions' integrated information management system FIMS fit the bill.

Waking Up From an Accounting Nightmare

When people donate to GHF, their donation becomes part of an investment pool of assets. Before 2000, every realized or unrealized gain, interest, dividend, or fee that was allocated to each of the 500+

funds had to be entered into a Quickbooks database manually.

"Fund accounting was a nightmare," says Kirk Demyan, GHF's CFO. Over 1,800 manual entries—two and a half weeks—per month were required to close the books. With the foundation getting new funds all the time, not only was this incredibly time consuming, but also with only one full-time person and a part-time accountant responsible for all that data entry, the possibility for error was enormous.

"We knew we needed to enhance our system," says Demyan, "we were using Quickbooks with Excel, but they didn't talk to each other." The foundation even conducted a study that concluded they would need three additional staff people for their existing system to work effectively.

A Timely, Reliable Solution

When GHC switched over to FIMS, the nightmare was over. The FACTS module allocates earnings and fees from the pool among all participant funds, eliminating mountains of work. Now, instead of taking two and a half weeks

each month to manually enter piles of data, FIMS accounting capabilities makes it easy to do in two hours. And because most of the entries are created automatically, GHC knows the data is accurate and reliable.

Now GHC's existing staff could handle the workload efficiently, eliminating the need and costs involved with hiring and training new staff. Plus now, instead of using several systems, like QuickBooks and Excel, that don't talk to each other, everything is centralized into FIMS. Now even formerly challenging processes, like generating an IRS 990, are easy.

Auditing Made Easy

Other taxing issues become less stressful as well. When an auditor comes in, especially to examine stock donations, they have very specific questions. Because these questions are built into FIMS through the Gifts module, even getting audited is no longer a nightmare.

(Over)



"It's very user-friendly," says Demyan of the Gifts module, "it asks you questions, and you just answer."

GHF was also secure in knowing if the IRS rules change – FIMS upgrades to change with them. User support groups, created by NPO, ensure that FIMS always stays on top of the changing needs of its clients. With FIMS it's

nothing but sweet dreams for GHF from now on.

Some of the benefits of working with FIMS:

- Time saved on manual entries
- Need for additional staff eliminated
- Workflow process made simpler
- Information made more reliable and easier to access

- Reporting and integration into legacy systems made easy
- Plenty of support and customer service



"NPO really listens to its customers. They provide technology solutions, it's been a positive experience. It's hard to ask for more than that."