



MEMORANDUM

TAB W

September 4, 2019

Advocacy Strategy Overview

To better advocate for the value of higher education statewide, the Commissioner's Office, in partnership with USHE institutions, has created a communications strategy that will create and distribute positive, collaborative, and engaging messages about higher education at both the public stakeholder level (joint editorial calendar) as well as the individual grassroots level (Merit Pages).

By intentionally working to reach both public stakeholders and individuals, the Commissioner's Office anticipates the organic conversations that will occur as a result will be more effective (and cost-effective) at shifting perceptions on the value of higher education than a broad-based, general marketing campaign.

Joint editorial calendar

For the first time, USHE institutions and the Commissioner's Office are collaborating on a joint editorial calendar. The purpose of this effort is three-fold:

1. To amplify key messages at specific times of the year
2. To identify opportunities for collaborative messaging across institutions
3. To better distribute and communicate meaningful data from the Commissioner's Office

USHE institutions and the Commissioner's Office have identified three focus areas for messaging efforts:

1. Fall: Access/affordability/scholarships
2. Winter: Economic impact and value of higher education
3. Spring: Graduate outcomes/importance of higher education to Utah's workforce

Many of these messages are already distributed by institutions, but there is real strength in aligning efforts. Types of message distribution could include: joint op-eds, press releases, alumni magazine articles, internal institutional communications, e-newsletters, digital/social campaign, presentations to external stakeholder groups, etc. Institutions and the Commissioner's office will identify success measurements for each message (i.e. social engagement, earned media placement, etc.)

Merit Pages

Six of the eight USHE institutions have signed on to a unique content-sharing tool called Merit Pages. This tool allows individual messages about a specific student's achievement to be sent from their institution to that student and their parents, in addition to students' hometown newspapers, legislators, and high schools. The achievement is easily shareable on social media channels, and redirects back to the institution's selected webpage.

There is also a function that operates much like a social media platform. Stories about specific students are aggregated on a student's individual profile page, and the student can fill in the rest of their profile with work history, education, and other relevant experiences.

Next steps

The USHE communication and public relations directors will meet monthly to discuss the content calendar and Merit Pages implementation.

A report with the results of this year's collaborative advocacy efforts will be presented to the USHE Board of Regents in July 2020.

Commissioner's Recommendations

This is a discussion item only; no action is required.

Attachment

MeritTM

SHARE YOUR STORY



Danielle Valenti

Vice President Client Success
danielle@meritpages.com



Jason Fox

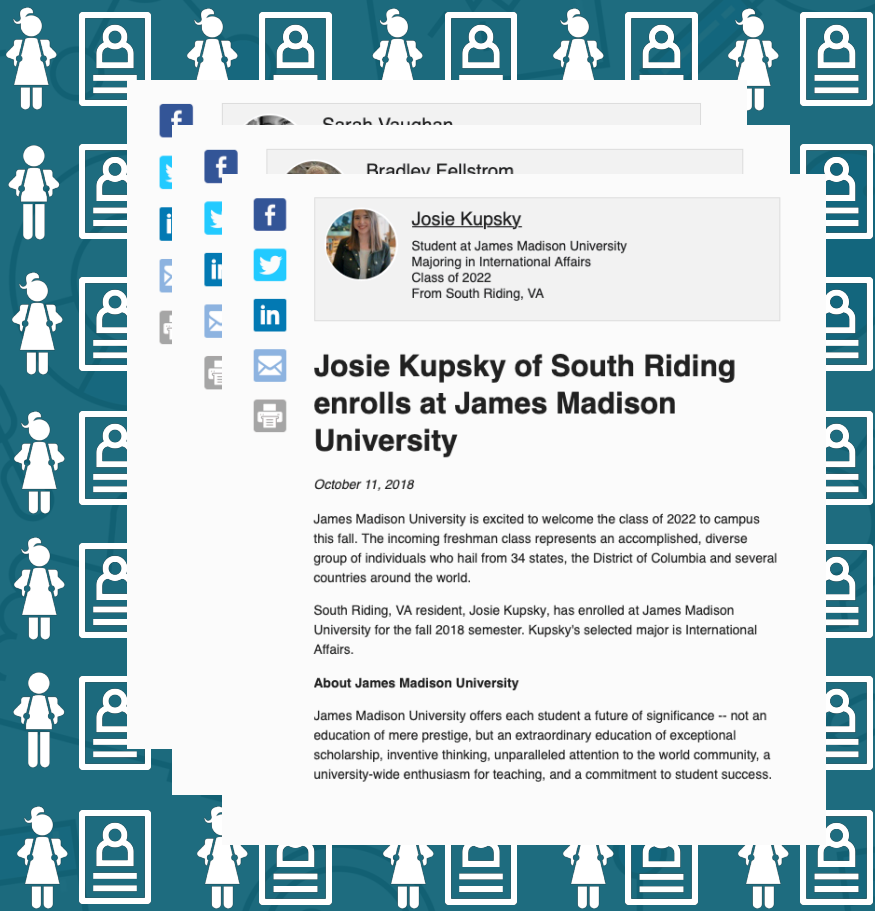
Founder
jason@meritpages.com

Merit enables you to **create, discover and share** content at scale and empower your audiences to **share your content with their networks.**






Transforming **everyday experiences** into **earned media outcomes** to drive awareness and engagement for your institution.


Unlike other platforms, Merit **drives interest to your own website/assets** rather than try to keep it captive.

Merit takes your existing content and turns it into
dozens, hundreds or even thousands of
personalized stories in minutes.



Merit then matches each story to **relevant audiences** using **managed databases** of media, high schools and government representative contacts.





Sarah Vaughan
Student at James Madison University
Class of 2018
From Front Royal, Virginia

Sarah Vaughan of Front Royal enrolls at James Madison University

October 11, 2018

James Madison University is excited to welcome the class of 2022 to campus this fall. The incoming freshman class represents an accomplished, diverse group of individuals who hail from 34 states, the District of Columbia and several countries around the world.

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About James Madison University

James Madison University offers each student a future of significance -- not an education of mere prestige, but an extraordinary education of exceptional scholarship, inventive thinking, unparalleled attention to the world community, a university-wide enthusiasm for teaching, and a commitment to student success.



Students

Enrollment / Retention



Parents & family

Awareness / Retention / Reputation



Local media

Awareness / Reach / Reputation



High schools






Enrollment / Awareness / Reputation




State representatives

Funding / Awareness / Reputation

Merit **distributes your personalized stories** and gives your audiences the tools to share your message in their own networks **increasing organic reach.**





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Merit drives interest from these personalized stories back to your institution's website using custom landing pages.



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Majoring in Computer Science
From Midlothian, VA

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Student at James Madison University
Class of 2022
From South Riding, VA

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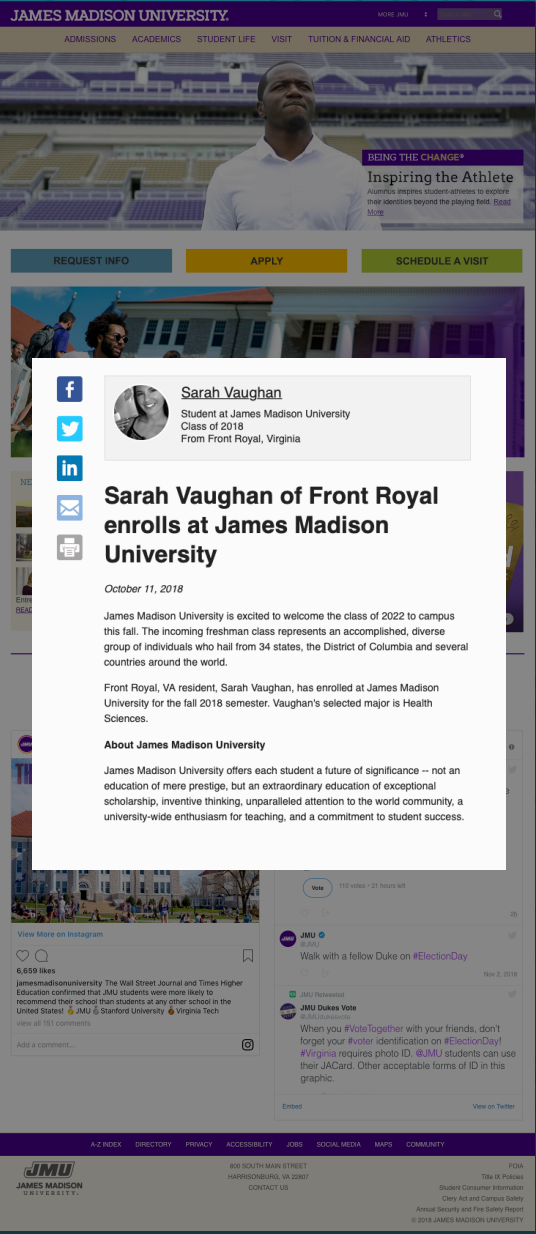
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MERIT DELIVERS **BETTER RESULTS**

-  **Better** email marketing metrics
-  **Better** awareness with influential audiences
-  **Better** social media engagement
-  **Better** organic reach through sharing
-  **Better** return on institutional websites/assets

Merit

MERIT DELIVERS BETTER RESULTS

400_x

**Higher email open rates
75% vs. 25%**

— Mailchimp 2018 Email Marketing
Benchmarks



MERIT DELIVERS **BETTER RESULTS**

10_x

Average increase
in organic reach

— Rival IQ 2018 Social Media
Engagement Report

Merit

MERIT DELIVERS **BETTER RESULTS**

CLEMSON
UNIVERSITY

- 🏆 Ranked #7 in engagement
- 🏆 720 institution posts in 2018
- 🏆 1,032 engagements/post
- 🏆 12 stories published w/Merit
- 🏆 9,709 engagements/story

38%

**Lift in social
media engagement**

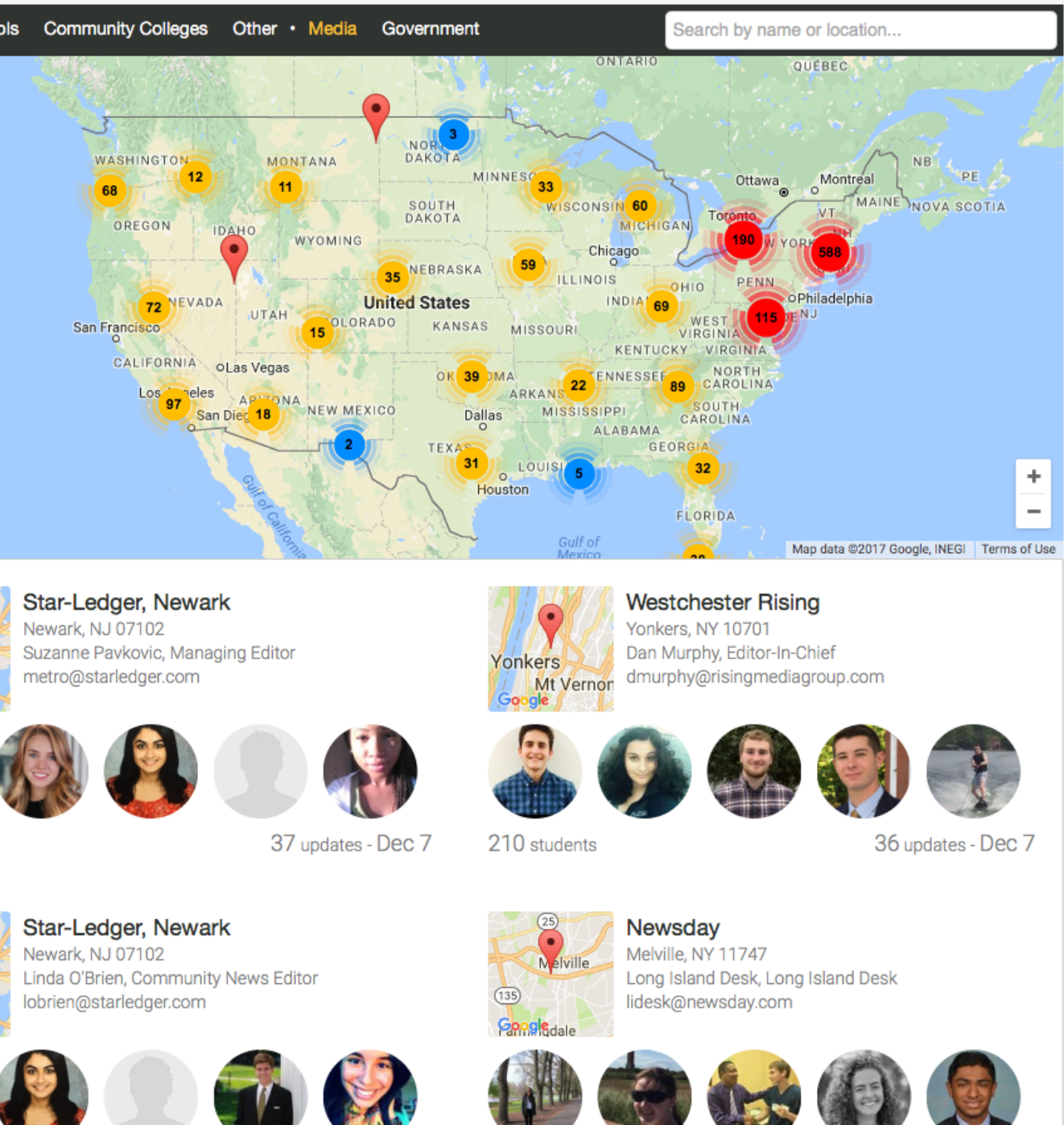
— Rival IQ 2018 Social Media
Engagement Report

MERIT DELIVERS BETTER RESULTS

35%

Average increase in media placement

“Our president has already noticed a difference in media placement since we started using Merit. In less than four months Merit has already been worth the investment.”



Jennifer Swain
Dir. of Communications & Marketing
Elmira College

MERIT DELIVERS **BETTER RESULTS**

75% Average email open rate

400x Industry avg. email engagement

10x Increase in organic reach




38% Lift in social media engagement

35% Increase in earned media

MERIT DELIVERS BETTER RESULTS



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

-  Client since 2016
-  7,500 students
-  Uses Merit 1/month

2 MERIT ACHIEVEMENTS

2,424 PERSONALIZED STORIES

684 PRESS RELEASES

529 LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

76% STUDENT EMAIL OPEN RATE




78% STUDENT CLICK RATE

34,000 ONLINE STORY VIEWS

1,500,000 SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS





MERIT DELIVERS BETTER RESULTS

**Hudson
Valley**
Community
College

-  Client since 2014
-  13,500 students
-  Uses Merit 1/month

1	MERIT UPDATE
1,881	STUDENT STORIES
230	PRESS RELEASES
250	LOCAL NEWSPAPERS
147	ELECTED OFFICIALS
78%	STUDENT EMAIL OPEN RATE
65%	STUDENT CLICK RATE
21,821	ONLINE STORY VIEWS
586,656	SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

2018






-  **Over 1 million** stories told using Merit
-  **84% average** email open rate
-  **10 million** page views generated
-  **1 billion** total impressions

HOW IT WORKS

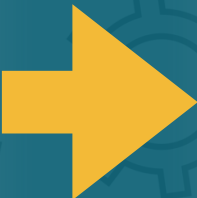
- 1. Add your students**
- 2. Add your content**
- 3. Merit does the rest!**

1. ADD YOUR STUDENTS

	First	Last	Addr1	Addr2	City	State	Zip	Email	Degree	Major
1	Furdos	Al-Ali	7680 Olive Hill Dr		Mabelvale	AR	72103	faalali@ualr.edu	Associate of Applied Science	Nursing
2	John	Alexander	2560 Camp Tahkodah		Floral	AR	72534	jalexander1@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Criminal Justice
3	Kabriya	Baldwin	1310 Hickory Circle		West Memphis	AR	72301	kjbaldwin@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Business Admin	Management
4	Anderson	Banihirwe	11 Cassily Ln		Dover	NH	3820	axbanihirwe@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Science	Systems Engineering
5	Emily	Bass	305 South Richards		Benton	AR	72015	ebass@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	English
6	Jackson	Bittner	1443 Phelps Street		Ottawa	IL	61350	jdbittner@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Political Science
7	Zachary	Blair	1504 Hillsborough La		Little Rock	AR	72212	zrbair@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Fine Arts	Art
8	Tarrie	Boggs	124 V Alley Ranch W		Little Rock	AR	72223	tlboggs@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	History
9	Sabrina	Bonanno	4832 N Knight Ave		Norridge	IL	60706	xbonanno@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Business Admin	Marketing
10	Savannah	Bowers	7900 Buckskin Drive		Sherwood	AR	72120	snfinch@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Business Admin	Marketing
11	John	Boyles	582 Joseph Drive		Alexander	AR	72002	jboyles@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	History
12	Rosa	Brazeal	3101 S. Taylor St. Apt		Little Rock	AR	72204	rbrazeal@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Mass Communication
13	Marilyn	Brown	13824 Bunting Rd		Little Rock	AR	72206-8951	mdbrown1@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Science	Health, Human Performance, and Sport
14	Charles	Burchfield	6 River Rd Dr W		Mayflower	AR	72106	ciburchfield@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Science in Nursing	Nursing
15	Anna	Burton	74 Jeffery Park		Cabot	AR	72023	akburton@ualr.edu	Associate of Applied Science	Nursing
16	Joel	Butler	72 Sugar Ridge Ln		Texarkana	AR	71854-9285	jbutler1@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Social Work	Social Work
17	Matthew	Callahan	2550 Smith Ford Roar		Benton	AR	72019	macallahan@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Business Admin	Marketing
18	Ashton	Cason	111 Cabanel Drive		Maumelle	AR	72113	aadenton@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Psychology
19	Kelli	Chappell	9761 Springhill Farms		Alexander	AR	72002-8998	knchappell@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Science	Environmental Health
20	Si	Chen	701 Wellington Hills F		Little Rock	AR	72211	sxchen@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Mass Communication
21	Hunter	Clay	41 Horton Hills Dr		Sheridan	AR	72150	hwclay@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	History
22	Taryon	Coffey	None Four None Four		None Found	Non	None Found	tdcoffey@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Psychology
23	Clarissa	Coleman	2124 S Valentine St		Little Rock	AR	72204	cacoleman2@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Speech Communication
24	Kyla	Cotton	8906 Pea Ridge Circle		Mabelvale	AR	72103	kacotton1@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Science	Health Education and Promotion
25	Travis	Cummings	306 Kassman Rd		Hot Springs	AR	71913	tcummings@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Criminal Justice
26	Travis	Cummings	306 Kassman Rd		Hot Springs	AR	71913	tcummings@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Psychology
27	Travis	Cummings	306 Kassman Rd		Hot Springs	AR	71913	tcummings@ualr.edu	Associate of Science	Law Enforcement
28	Dinesha	Darrough	9816 LANEHART RD.		Little Rock	AR	72204	dadarrough@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Social Work	Social Work
29	Heidi	Davis	5944 Foxboro Drive		North Little Rock	AR	72118	hadavis@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Political Science
30	Heidi	Davis	5944 Foxboro Drive		North Little Rock	AR	72118	hadavis@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Criminal Justice
31	Amber	Dial	1600 N University Av		Little Rock	AR	72207	amdial@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Arts	Psychology
32	Adrianna	Dodson	1700 South Main St.		Jonesboro	AR	72401	asdodson@ualr.edu	Bachelor of Business Admin	Finance

-  First Name
-  Last Name
-  Email Address
-  Hometown
-  Postal Code

2. ADD YOUR CONTENT



Write or paste your story below. If you choose not to personalize this story with placeholders, every student's story will be the same. Stories will also be added to each student's Merit page. [Learn more...](#)

Last Name **INSERT PLACEHOLDER**

Welcome First Name Last Name to Iowa State University!

body p

State **INSERT PLACEHOLDER**

B I U S Normal

First Name Last Name , a first year student from Hometown , State in the Iowa State University College of Human Sciences, participated in Orientation on the Ames campus, June 13-14, 2018. Pask, who has opted to major in Major , joined other students and their families to become more familiar with the campus, learn tips for making the most of college, and sign up for classes.

In the College of Human Sciences, we are driven by a passion to help people. We study every aspect of their daily lives, whether it's how they learn, how they eat, or how they exercise. How they spend money. How they vacation. How they stay well. Even how they dress. We help people expand their potential.

Iowa State University is a public, land-grant university, where students get a great academic start in learning communities and stay active in 800-plus student organizations, undergrad research, internships and study abroad. They learn from world-class scholars who are tackling some of the world's biggest challenges -- feeding the hungry, finding alternative fuels and advancing manufacturing.

body p

3. MERIT DOES THE REST



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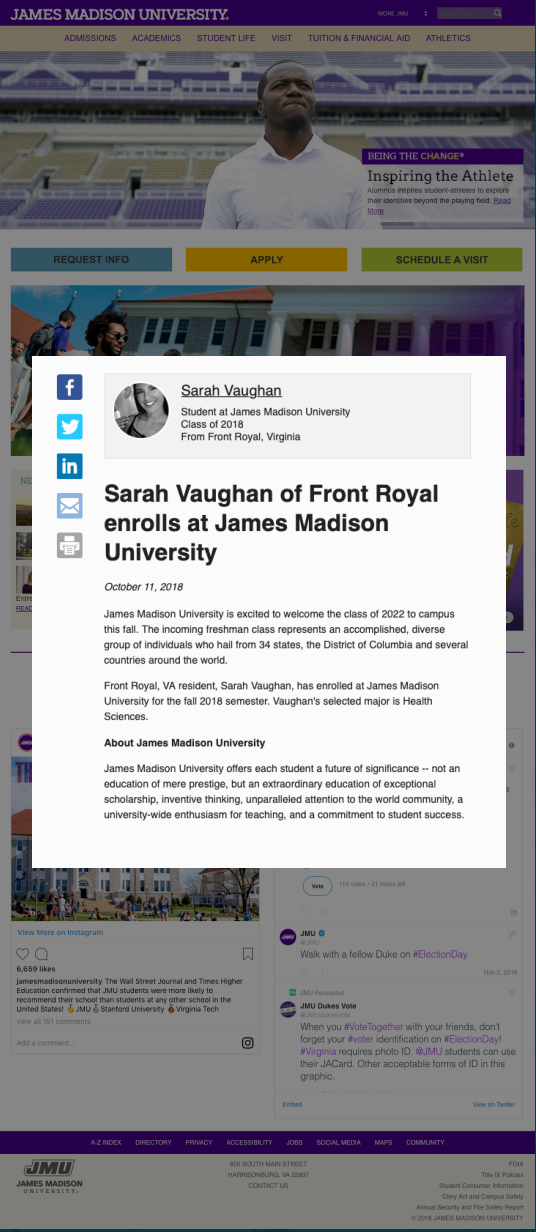
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CREATE → DISTRIBUTE → SHARE → DRIVE INTEREST

MEASURE THE RESULTS

Merit

23,580 students for account

1,107 photos

1,800 activities

Student Activity

The University of Alabama, May 10, 2018 - May 9, 2019

Merit

304,562 pages

Top Referring

The University of Alabama, May 10, 2018 - May 9, 2019

Merit

84 achievements recognize across 17 categories

Top Category

The University of Alabama, May 10, 2018 - May 9, 2019

Merit

304,562 pages

Top Referring

The University of Alabama, May 10, 2018 - May 9, 2019

Merit

28.1M estimated media impressions

83,741 actions

82,753 Facebook

Alicia Marie-Claire shared a link. June 26, 2018

Alicia M Gallo of Enterprise, AL, was named to The University of Alabama Dean's List for spring 2018. A total of 11 students from Enterprise were named to the list.

Merit

Map of the United States showing student locations with callouts for various cities and their counts.

Your Merit Network

Here are the stakeholders in the Merit Network related to your current students. The map shows you where these stakeholders are located. Click the boxes below for more info or use the map to explore your network. Learn more...

39,926 Students

118 Parents

5,995 High Schools

5,418 Media

4,846 Govt Reps

281,222 Social Media

YOUR RECENT STORIES

UA's Order of Omega Honors Students

May 9, 2019 by Richard Le Comte

The Order of Omega chapter at The University of Alabama presented awards at its recent annual banquet. Order of Omega is a leadership honor society for members of fraternity and sorority organizations. Order of Omega recognizes juniors and seniors who have exemplified high standards in the areas of scholarship, leadership and involvement within their respective organizations, the campus and the community.

TASKS

Notifications

Achievements to review

Merit A.I. discoveries

New Achievement

Student Import

FROM YOUR NETWORK

FROM YOUR NETWORK

Merit

94% student open rate

Engagement

Student updates

Social actions

High school comments

Gov't comments






SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

hapman shared a link on LinkedIn: hapman of Franklin Selected for Capstone Women meritpages.com/stories/Shaoey-Chapman-of-elected-for-Capstone-Men-and-3326606

igh (@JoniNeidigh) tweeted: o Seth Chun! https://t.co/N5Sqs8CHb





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-  **Annual subscription**
-  **Monday - Friday telephone support**
-  **No IT integration required**
-  **110% FERPA / GDPR compliant**
-  **Dedicated client success manager**



CLIENT SUCCESS

-  **We work with you to craft a strategy**
-  **We train your team (super-easy)**
-  **We support your team**
-  **We review your results with you**



Merit



Over **300 colleges and universities** trust Merit
to drive awareness and engagement for
their institutional brands.

“I used to manage by myself. It was so hard and time consuming but with Merit, tasks **take minutes rather than hours** or days!”

— Hannah Wallace, Mississippi College

“Merit is by far one of the **best solutions for higher ed** marketing.”

— Scott Rutledge, Community College of Beaver County

“Merit has truly **transformed our PR office** and we are so grateful.”

— Abby White, Bob Jones University

“Merit is **one of the best investments** we’ve ever made.”

— Philip Poole, Samford University

“I have to say out of all the vendors we work with, **you are the best!**”

— Gina Piellusch, McDaniel College

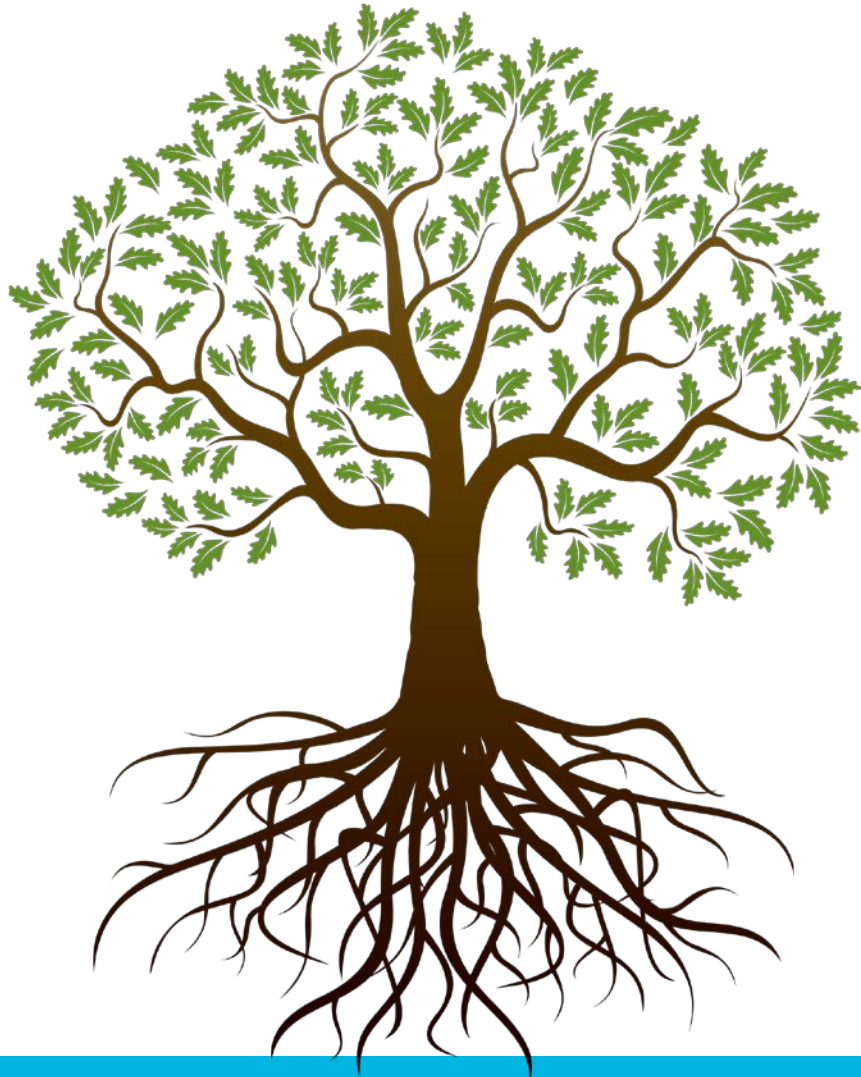


USHE ADVOCACY STRATEGY UPDATE

September 3, 2019



USHE ADVOCACY STRATEGY UPDATE



USHE joint editorial calendar

Merit Pages

JOINT USHE EDITORIAL CALENDAR

Purpose


1. To amplify key messages at specific times of the year
2. To identify opportunities to collaborate across institutions
3. To better disseminate and message impactful system data

Outcomes to be reported back to Presidents and Regents in July 2020



JOINT USHE EDITORIAL CALENDAR

USHE Editorial Calendar ☆ 📁						
File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help Last edit was 12 days ago						
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fx						
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	WINTER: December to March					
2	Each institution will distribute two messages within the December-March timeframe addressing economic value of higher ed topics , such as: economic impact of institution on service region, ROI of a degree/program from your institution, etc. The stories may overlap with the content you already have planned.					
3	USHE DATA TO SUPPORT MESSAGING	Economic impact of institution by service region (based on employees hired, % of workforce employed at the institution, etc); overall ROI data				
4						
5	MESSAGE ONE					
6		Message Info				Measurements
7		Summary	Distribution method(s) (eg: press release, social campaign, internal campaign, alumni magazine, etc.)	Release date (if applicable)	Link to message (if applicable)	Any specific items called out (eg: programs, initiatives, key messages, etc)
8	UU					Types of measurements could include: #/quality of earned/paid media placements, social engagement (likes, shares, etc); magazine subscribers, pageviews on institution website, etc.
9	USU					
10	WSU					
11	SUU					
12	Snow					
13	DSU					
14	UVU					
15	SLCC					
16	USHE	Overall value of higher education to the state and the individual	Op-ed (Regent Chair and Commissioner), issue brief, press release, social campaign, newsletter, videos	January-February		Value of higher education, Utah's Growing Opportunity Gap, college access advising initiative, impact of higher ed on Utah's economy
17						Earned media, social engagement, newsletter engagement
18	MESSAGE TWO					
19		Message Info				Measurements
20		Summary	Distribution method(s) (eg: press release, social campaign, internal campaign, alumni magazine, etc.)	Release date (if applicable)	Link to message (if applicable)	Any specific items called out (eg: programs, initiatives, key messages, etc)
						Types of measurements could include: #/quality of earned/paid media placements, social engagement (likes, shares, etc); magazine subscribers, pageviews on institution website, etc.





JOINT USHE EDITORIAL CALENDAR



USHE Editorial Calendar



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100%

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Arial

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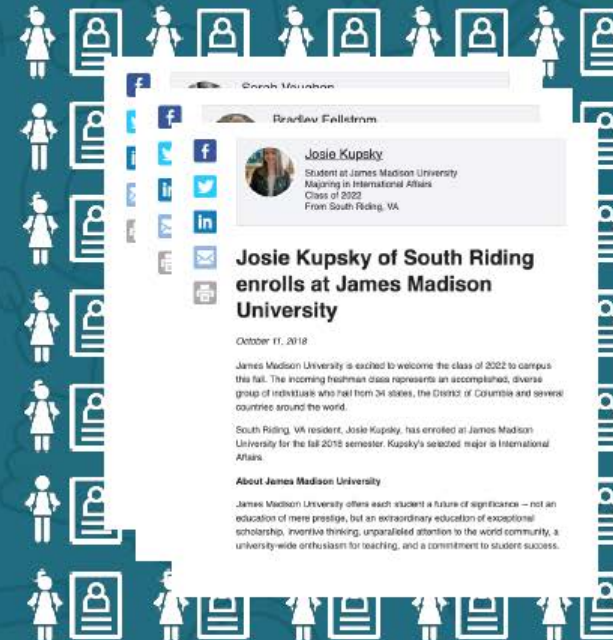
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	YEAR-ROUND: Executive Presentation Calendar to External Audiences						
2	Track presentations from executive leadership (Presidents and cabinet) to local, external stakeholders where messages can be reiterated/amplified.						
3	Presentations						
4		Presentation Date	Topic area (access/affordability, value of higher ed, student/grad outcomes)	Name and Title of Speaker	External audience (Chamber, United Way, etc)	Any specific outcomes/call to action?	Any specific items called out (eg: programs, initiatives, key messages, etc)
5	UU						
6	USU						
7	WSU						
8	SUU						
9	Snow						
10	DSU						
11	UVU						
12	SLCC						
13	USHE						

MERIT PAGES

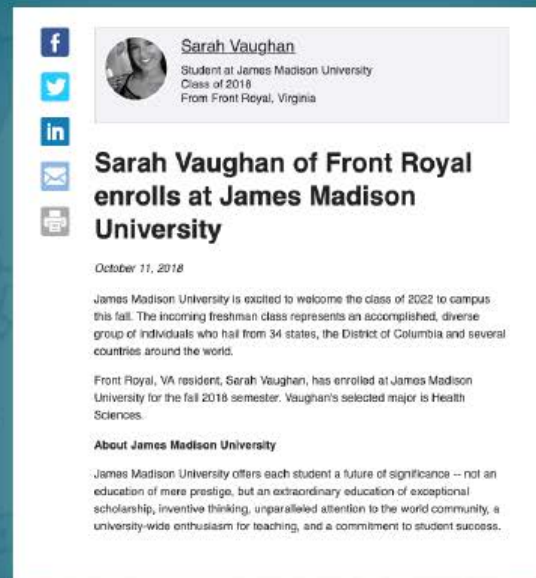
- 6 of 8 institutions have signed on/are in the process of signing on
- USHE paying one-time implementation fee

Merit

Merit takes your existing content and turns it into
dozens, hundreds or even thousands of
personalized stories in minutes.



Merit then matches each story to **relevant audiences** using **managed databases** of media, high schools and government representative contacts.



Students

Enrollment / Retention



Parents & family

Awareness / Retention / Reputation



Local media

Awareness / Reach / Reputation



High schools

Enrollment / Awareness / Reputation

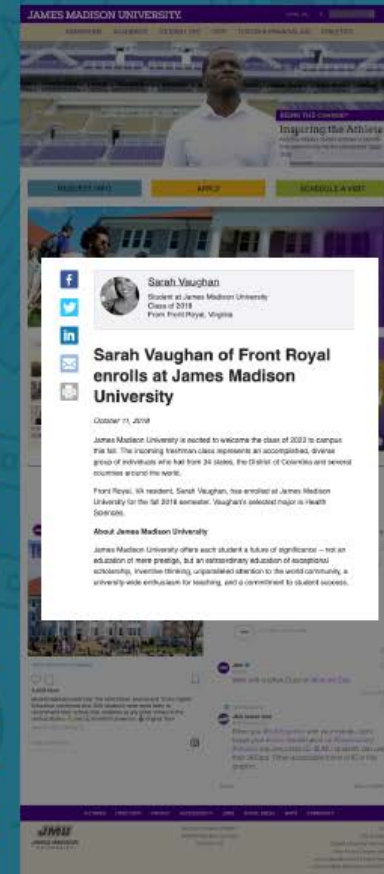


State representatives

Funding / Awareness / Reputation

Merit

Merit **drives interest** from these personalized stories back to **your institution's website** using custom landing pages.



MERIT PAGES

- Average email open rate: 75% (vs 25%)
- 10x increase in organic reach
- 38% lift in social media engagement
- 35% increase in earned media

MERIT PAGES

- <https://utah.meritpages.com>
- <https://meritpages.com/emersonford>
- <https://meritpages.com/samanthathorne>