It’s no secret that when students are involved and engaged in all aspects of campus life, they feel loyalty and pride in their institution. Tracking extracurricular engagement on a per student basis can be tricky, however. There are numerous systems available in the marketplace, but that often means new hardware, software, and the need for ‘clean’ WiFi and/or electrical sources at every event. It also means a higher learning curve for end-users, potential buy-in problems and launch delays. So when UAlbany’s Division of Student Success decided to start an engagement tracking initiative, aptly named MyInvolvement, they looked to the tried and tested SUNYCard to help keep most of the data tracking process ‘in house.’ University Auxiliary Services at Albany’s SUNYCard is an indispensable tool for UAlbany students, giving them access to meal plans, discretionary dollars, door access, and much more. Students trust the card and they count on it for convenience, security and access to their daily life on campus. So the SUNYCard was a natural fit to help foster student engagement. With a combination of creativity and a strong partnership, a new interface was built that allowed the software from SUNYCard, the University, and a third party vendor to work together. The Division of Student Success can use attendance records for their own data collecting purposes, but the students also benefit. Making this initiative a win-win for the entire community. “Students are able to officially log their community service hours, organizations they have joined, leadership positions they have held, and events they have attended,” states UAlbany’s Assistant Director of Student Involvement and Leadership Douglas Sweet. “Their Involvement Record can be printed at any time and can be used to enhance their graduate school applications as well as internship and professional resumes.”

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