

# MYDEGREE BY JETBLUE SCHOLARS

Facilitating a Unique Learning  
Experience

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A Webanywhere White Paper  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The JetBlue Scholars program is making it possible for thousands of JetBlue crewmembers to earn a college degree easier and more affordable than ever before. Behind the curtain making this program possible is a unique technology solution that's setting the stage for how other employers can offer educational assistance.

What makes MyDegree, the JetBlue Scholars platform, truly unique is that it facilitates the entire experience from enrollment to receiving a degree, aggregates a myriad of course provider content, enables impactful relationships between learners and their corporate mentors/advisors that help them succeed, and most importantly, gives learners the freedom to learn at their own rate with complete flexibility in how they progress.

It's a true privilege to work with the great people at JetBlue to help further education in the corporate environment, and I look forward to seeing programs like this flourish in corporate learning. Thanks to the folks at JetBlue and the hard work done by the Webanywhere team for making this happen.



- Brandon Merdalo  
Vice President, the Americas at Webanywhere

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# THE CHALLENGE

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Education in the United States is a great equalizer and facilitator of the American Dream, yet the overwhelming cost of college destines learners to accumulate debts up to \$37,000 or more. Some may not even explore the option because of the cost. According to Forbes, the inflation rate for a college education has risen nearly 500% and is now the second highest consumer debt category – behind only mortgage debt. It seems like there is no end in sight, so how do we reform higher education to be more accessible and cost-effective?

JetBlue Airways has recognized this problem and wants to be part of the solution. When they set out to establish their educational assistance program, JetBlue Scholars, JetBlue wanted it to be the first of its kind. They sought for the program to be transformative on three levels: the student, the employer and institution levels. On the student level, JetBlue wanted to provide degrees that open doors to their employees at a fraction of the cost. Secondly, JetBlue recognized that employers can play a key role in reforming how we look at higher education. So, on the employer level, JetBlue wanted their program to be replicable for other companies who may not have the ability to provide robust tuition reimbursement. With more employers offering their own higher education solution, they would be able to take power

away from the institutions so students aren't stuck following the system. Lastly, JetBlue wanted to break the stigma that a quality education must be from a costly, traditional institution. To overcome this, JetBlue knew they had to accomplish two things: Aggregate quality educational content from online providers and back them as a reputable resource to receive college credit; and remove enrollment deadlines, terms and other traditional limitations to provide complete flexibility in how students progress.

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*The inflation rate for a college education has risen nearly 500%*

For the JetBlue Scholars program to be possible, JetBlue identified the need for a single, multi-use platform to aggregate rich educational content from several different providers. After doing research and seeking a single platform to meet their needs, JetBlue realized it didn't exist and needed it built from scratch. MyDegree, the JetBlue Scholars platform, was then created in partnership with Webanywhere. MyDegree aggregates JetBlue-approved self-study courses, quizzes, assessments and exams for JetBlue's employees, who are referred to as Scholars, so they can earn college credit towards the expanding list of degrees offered. The courses, quizzes and assessments are aggregated from a variety of providers with different learning styles, such as Study.com, Sophia, Saylor, Straighterline and more, so that Scholars can choose their preference. Scholars can also earn college credit for knowledge they already have by passing exams

through the Thomas Edison Credit by Examination Program (TECEP). The capstone and final degree is also awarded by Thomas Edison State University. Additionally, MyDegree is the same platform where other JetBlue employees, referred to as Success Coaches, can easily guide Scholars through every step of their educational journey – all in one place. MyDegree also aggregates a variety of student records such as college transcripts and Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs), which allow Scholars to receive credit based on their life experiences by creating a portfolio.

The mission of JetBlue Scholars is to empower JetBlue employees to earn a college degree. This mission is being achieved through a customized, highly flexible learning experience that is tailored to the learning style, schedule and preferences of each Scholar. At the heart of the Scholar experience in MyDegree, is the technology that makes it all possible.



*We set out to empower JetBlue crewmembers to earn a college degree on their own terms. After enrolling, Scholars needed to be self-directed in their educational pursuit, and Success Coaches and Administrators needed the resources necessary to ensure their success. JetBlue Scholars is the first educational assistance program of its kind, and we needed a 'first of its kind' technology solution. MyDegree brings all of the necessary components together, enabling scholars to focus on their academic goals.*

**- Cody Cleverly  
Manager of Academic Programs at JetBlue**

# THE SOLUTION

MyDegree is setting the stage for how employers, regardless of size or industry, can offer educational assistance for their employees. The breakthrough innovation of MyDegree is that it's an all-in-one system for both learners and administrators that can aggregate a variety of quality educational content and assessments that provide learners a cost-effective, easy and efficient solution for their higher education. This is also a first-of-its-kind solution, made possible by custom degree management and a wide variety of features that contribute to the platform's flexibility, simplicity, efficiency, effectiveness and the overall success of the JetBlue Scholars program.

## Custom Degree Paths

MyDegree aggregates all forms of college credit including courses from outside institutions, self-study courses, quizzes, assessments and exams for a seamless end-user experience. The overall design of MyDegree emphasizes self-service which enables Scholars to easily navigate within the system versus a traditional college catalog (e.g. see Figure 1). MyDegree allows Scholars to utilize various course provider content to fulfill their degree requirements (e.g. see Figure 1). Scholars can easily search by topic with drop-down lists and choose their course preference based on their learning style. This functionality enables JetBlue to leverage the uniformity among different degree programs to create efficiencies in their database.

Real-time tracking is reflected in the dashboard where Scholars can see a list of requirements, what they've completed and what they still need to complete in real-time (e.g. see Figure 2). This progress includes both degree and course progress in one place so that both Scholars and Success Coaches can track in real-time together. There is no limit to how much a student can progress, enabling an efficient self-paced learning experience for Scholars. Also included in the interface is easy access to forums and communication with their coach.

*There is no limit to how much a student can progress, enabling an efficient self-paced learning experience*

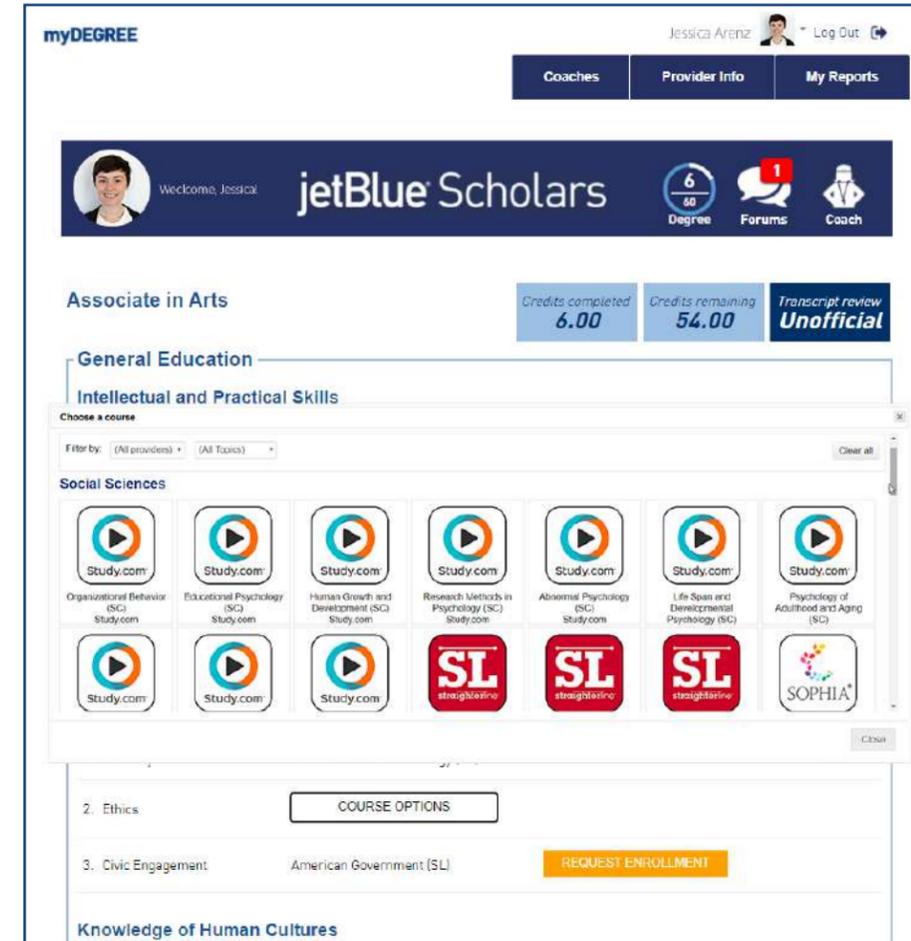
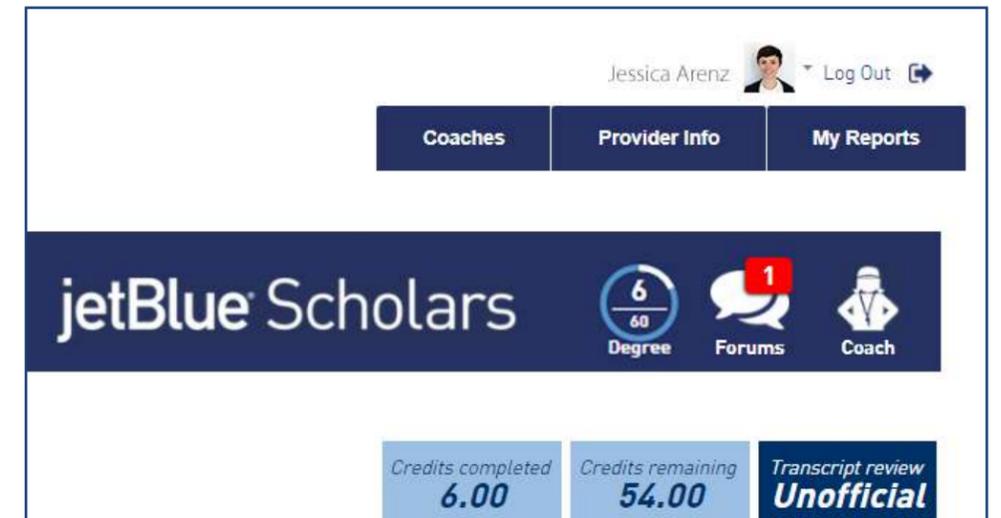


Figure 1. Scholars can easily see the course requirements for the degree of their choice. When a Scholar selects "Course Options," various course provider content appears. Scholars can choose from amongst three or four different classes based on their learning style to satisfy their requirements. The course provider content continues to grow.

Figure 2. In the interface, Scholars can easily see how much they have progressed towards their degree in real-time, have instant access to forums and their Success Coach.



## Scholar & Success Coach Mentorship

With MyDegree, Scholars can easily communicate with their Success Coaches, who are fellow JetBlue employees and sometimes even Scholars themselves. The technology of myDegree isn't just for course aggregation, it also facilitates a relationship between Scholars and their Success Coaches, who take on both advising and corporate mentor roles. For a personal touch, Success Coach profiles are available for Scholars to view, helping them connect further with their coaches (e.g. see Figure 4).

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*MyDegree facilitates a relationship between Scholars and Success Coaches, who take on advising and corporate mentor roles*



### Coach Info

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**Phone:** 718.709.2155

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### About Your Coach

Michael has served as an E-learning Specialist for the past several years, and is currently a Senior Instructional Designer on the Organizational Effectiveness team. It has been with great pleasure that he's been able to support the JetBlue Scholars team with the design and implementation of the myDegree platform, as well as any ad hoc instructional media needs.

Michael holds a BA in Psychology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and two graduate degrees in Organizational Psychology and Counseling.

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<b>HOME STATE</b>	<b>#1 HOBBY</b>	<b>#1 BLUE CITY</b>
		
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>Fitness</b>	<b>Boston</b>

Figure 4. Success Coach profiles include the coach's contact information, professional biography and interests.

## Degree Enrollment

MyDegree facilitates the experience for current Scholars and Success Coaches, and is also used as an application and enrollment portal for new Scholars (e.g. see Figure 5).

## Degree Management

With the Success Coach dashboard in MyDegree, Success Coaches can communicate to Scholars instantly in the platform with chat capabilities and can log conversations and follow-ups, store personal notes and perform status tracking of courses (e.g. see Figure 6).

Success Coaches have the ability to approve or deny course requests and access Scholars' degree plans in order to manage degree progress (e.g. see Figure 7). The reporting capabilities in MyDegree, integrated from Thomas Edison State University, also enable Success Coaches to always pull current reports in aggregate.

Success Coaches can also be Scholars, managing their learners while also making progress on their own degree as a Scholar, which can be done simultaneously in the same platform.

MyDegree is so much more than the sum of its parts. Its features, when working together seamlessly in a single platform, make it possible for Scholars to be proactive about their education and receive college credit on their own terms with their self-study courses, and for Success Coaches to go above and beyond to ensure the success of their Scholars.

*All of MyDegree's features make it possible for Scholars to be proactive about their education and receive college credit*



Figure 5. In the enrollment screen, Success Coaches can easily approve or deny requests.

Success Coach Dashboard						
My Scholars - Approvals	Course	Provider	Date Requested	Approve/Deny	Start Date	Due Date
Debbie Escobar-Matias BALS 2015-2017 Danna Dal-ed	Public Speaking (SC)	Study.com	Aug 19 2017	Approve Deny	11 September 2017	16 August 2017
Paul Luciano AA 2015-2017 Danna Dal-ed	Educational Psychology (SC)	Study.com	Feb 14 2017	Approve Deny	11 September 2017	14 February 2017

All enrollments	Course	Provider	Progress	Grade	Due Date	Status	Last updated	Action
Carla Flor BSSA 2015-2017 Danna Dal-ed	Introductory Business Law (SC)	Study.com	0	F	Oct 29 2017	In progress		Action Sep 4 2017 Log / Notes
Cathy Dominguez BSAST Aviation Maintenance 2015-2017 Danna Dal-	Business Ethics (SC)	Study.com	0	F	Oct 29 2017	In progress		Action Aug 31 2017 Log / Notes

Figure 6. The top section of the dashboard allows coaches to see all pending course requests and approve/deny as needed. The second section highlights all Scholar progress that needs Success Coach attention (like course failure or unsatisfactory progress) and the bottom section lists all assigned Scholars.

General Education			
Intellectual and Practical Skills			
Required: 18.00, Completed: 6.00, Transferred: 0.00, Remaining: 9.00	Start date: Jun 13 2017	Due date: Aug 13 2017	Status: Completed
Advanced Accounting Study.com Test Course Credit Hours: 3.00	13 June 2017	Grade: 90	Progress: 100% Satisfactory
Advanced Management Manual Comp. Credit Hours: 10.00	Start date: Jun 13 2017 Due date: Aug 13 2017	Status date: Jun 13 2017	IN PROGRESS
Advanced Marketing or Finance Sophia Test Course Credit Hours: 3.00	Start date: Jun 13 2017 Due date: Aug 13 2017	Status date: Jun 13 2017	IN PROGRESS
Business Law Business Law (SL) Credit Hours: 3.00	Start date: Jun 13 2017 Due date: Aug 13 2017	Status date: Jun 13 2017	IN PROGRESS
Business Communications Business Communication (SL) Credit Hours: 3.00	Start date: Jun 13 2017 Due date: Jul 13 2017	Status date: Jun 13 2017	COMPLETED
Civic and Global Learning			
Required: 9.00, Completed: 0.00, Transferred: 0.00, Remaining: 9.00	Start date: 7 August 2017	Due date: 7 August 2017	APPROVAL PENDING REQUESTED JUN 29 2017
Diversity Intro to World Religions (SC) Credit Hours: 3.00	7 August 2017	7 August 2017	Satisfactory

Figure 7. What Scholars' degree plans look like to Success Coaches. Here they can easily manage enroll, transfer credit, set start/due dates and more.

# UNIQUE DIFFERENTIATORS

JetBlue Scholars, made possible by MyDegree, is the first educational assistance program of its kind. Traditional tuition reimbursement varies from employer to employer, and the benefits vary. Some create their own educational programs or certifications while some offer to reimburse classes at colleges and universities. Employers may pick and choose what institutions their employees can receive reimbursement at, and how much they decide to reimburse. Some employers may even require a minimum grade-point average in order to take advantage of the benefits. Further, while some employers cover tuition upfront, most reimbursement happens after the class has ended, which can pose a challenge for some employees who may not be able to pay the full amount. JetBlue Scholars removes many of the barriers present in traditional tuition reimbursement programs by enrolling Scholars in self-paced, online courses, providing customized academic guidance and paying for courses upfront so employees can get started with no money out of pocket. JetBlue has achieved all of this at 40% of the cost of the typical tuition reimbursement program. No other employer offers an educational assistance program as cost-effective and flexible as JetBlue.

How is this possible? JetBlue Scholars makes it simple for Scholars to get credit for courses completed at other colleges, licenses and certifications and even job experience. With

*MyDegree aggregates courses that don't follow semester, term or enrollment restraints*

MyDegree's continuous expansion of course providers, emphasis on self-paced study and ability to facilitate the entire experience from enrollment to getting a degree, students don't have to follow the system in place by institutions that get them into debt. JetBlue is breaking down several barriers that are preventing students from earning a college degree with MyDegree. Not only does it break down cost and travel barriers, but it also breaks down barriers that other tuition reimbursement programs don't recognize – the first and arguably the most critical is balancing work and personal life. MyDegree aggregates courses chosen by JetBlue that don't follow semester, term or enrollment restraints and/or limits. MyDegree also breaks down the barriers that prevent learners from accessing quality educational resources and significantly reduces administrative clutter and noise that can make students' experiences confusing and frustrating.

MyDegree even takes college counseling to the next level by enabling their Success Coaches to provide both advising and mentorship. Mass, standardized education offers general goals, but mentorship, made possible by MyDegree, allows Success Coaches to easily communicate with their Scholars about personal goals and how they can reach them at their own pace.

What makes MyDegree truly unique is that it enables self-directed, self-service learning. Full-time employees can learn at their own rate with complete flexibility in how they progress. This only works because MyDegree allows learners to be self-directed in courses, while also being proactive about their own progress and taking control of their education, on their terms. Scholars can log in at any time to verify progress, jump in on forums, request a course or have a conversation with their

Success Coach. MyDegree facilitates the learning taking place in the JetBlue Scholars program. For example, JetBlue's flight attendants can travel for up to several days straight. With MyDegree, those attendants who are Scholars can easily slow their progress during travel, send their Success Coach a quick message to request enrollment in a new course, have it approved by the time come home and then get ahead as much as they want. Behind the scenes, MyDegree is making JetBlue Scholars possible while adding even more value to the overall experience - an all-in-one platform that is setting the stage for how employers are offering educational assistance.

## AWARD WINNING

How MyDegree is reforming higher education for JetBlue Scholars has received a Gold Brandon Hall Excellence Award in Unique Learning Technology by the Brandon Hall Group in 2017.



*In a world where technology has the power to make education affordable and accessible, MyDegree has opened the door of opportunity for JetBlue crewmembers in the US and abroad. This Gold Medal underscores the employer's duty to lead advances in learning technology and educational access.*

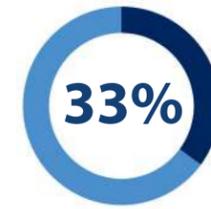
- Cody Cleverly  
Manager of Academic Programs at JetBlue

# MEASURABLE RESULTS

As of 2016 in the US, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) allows employers to offer an education benefit of up to \$5,250 per employee per year without requiring that the employee or employer pay taxes on the dollars spent on qualified education. As a result, many employers offer up to \$5,250 in tuition reimbursement each year. Using this dollar amount as a benchmark, JetBlue created JetBlue Scholars to reduce the annual cost of tuition reimbursement as much as possible. By using MyDegree to aggregate courses from a number of different course providers and academic institutions, JetBlue was able to reduce their average annual per-employee cost to less than \$2,000 per year – a cost reduction of more than 60%.

In an effort to ensure the success of employees who enroll in the program, JetBlue created a team of academic advisors, called Success Coaches, who give each scholar personalized guidance along their journey to a college degree. The Success Coaches work alongside program administrators who manage scholar records and enroll scholars in courses. MyDegree has created a 33% increase in administrative and coaching efficiency by giving coaches and administrators convenient access to scholar records and allowing scholars to self-enroll in courses and manage their own degree progress. This increase in efficiency has enabled JetBlue to

increase enrollment by 33% without increasing the size of the support staff. Of those enrolled in JetBlue Scholars, 85% report that they feel more engaged in their job, and 96% report that they are more committed to staying at JetBlue as a result of their enrollment in the program. Over 90% would recommend the program to other employees, and the program has a Net Promoter Score of 87 points. As a point of reference, as of 2013, USAA had the highest customer Net Promoter Score with a score of 80.



Increase in the administrative and coaching efficiency



Reduction in the cost of educational assistance



Report they feel more engaged in their job



Average course pass rate



Of enrollees feel more committed to their job

Over **\$1.3M** Saved in tuition

**71** Degrees conferred

**160+** Courses offered





Webanywhere welcomes any and all opportunities to continue to transform higher education at the employer level with platforms built to meet and exceed your business needs. As a certified Moodle and Platinum Totara partner, Webanywhere is authorized to provide a full range of complex development services, including custom website front-ends with Drupal CMS, H5P plugin development for rich, HTML5 content creation, Tin Can/xAPI integrations and more. As a global company, we leverage resources from all over the world to bring your vision to life.