

# Achieva

## Executive Summary

### Community Partner

Ryan Jackson

### Student Consulting Team

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## Background

Achieva is a Pittsburgh-based nonprofit that provides lifelong support for individuals with disabilities and their families. With over 650 employees across multiple counties, Achieva delivers services ranging from early intervention to housing and vocational support. Our primary point of contact, Ryan Jackson, leads Achieva's internal IT team.

## Project Description

### Project Opportunity

Achieva's Achieva Bucks program is a staff recognition system that previously relied on paper checks for issuing and redeeming rewards. This manual process created significant inefficiencies, including lost checks, lack of tracking, long processing times, and high administrative burden, which is especially challenging across Achieva's geographically distributed workforce. Digitizing the system presented an opportunity to improve scalability, oversight, employee morale, and operational efficiency.

### Project Vision

The project aimed to build a custom web platform that replicates and enhances Achieva's existing paper-based workflow. The solution enables employees to log in via SSO, view balances, and redeem rewards instantly. Managers and administrators can issue Bucks, track transactions, and manage staff information, all within a secure, role-based interface aligned with Achieva's infrastructure and long-term needs.

## Project Outcomes

The Achieva Bucks system was successfully digitized and deployed on Achieva's internal infrastructure, replacing the paper-based rewards process with a fully functional, role-based web platform.

### *People Outcomes:*

Achieva staff across all roles (employees, managers, administrators) were trained and successfully used the system. An administrator was formally designated and onboarded, and Achieva's IT team gained the skills to maintain the system through live walkthroughs and comprehensive technical documentation.

### *Process Outcomes:*

The project replaced manual redemption and tracking with a real-time digital process, improving oversight, eliminating paper dependencies, and enabling faster recognition. Managers and admins can now issue, track, and manage rewards centrally, enhancing transparency and accountability.

### *Technology Outcomes:*

The system integrates with Achieva's SAML-based SSO, runs in Docker on Achieva's virtual machines, and includes live gift card API integration and email automation for PTO. Key features include personalized dashboards, live balance and history tracking, manager designations, and CSV-based staff updates.

## **Project Deliverables**

The project deliverables include a fully developed and deployed web-based Achieva Bucks system tailored to Achieva's infrastructure and staff needs. The deliverables also include comprehensive technical documentation - covering deployment, system architecture, and future development guidelines - as well as user guides for administrators, managers, and employees. In addition, a final demo video, development documentation, and handoff materials were created to ensure successful knowledge transfer and long-term sustainability.

## **Recommendations**

We recommend Achieva implement monthly system usage reviews to monitor engagement and identify potential misuse early. We also suggest future development of administrative features such as issuance revocation, monthly issuance caps, and an analytics dashboard to improve oversight and program effectiveness. Additionally, we advise automating the Paycom data upload if budget permits, and streamlining admin tasks like designation through UI-based tools. These enhancements will further strengthen the system's scalability, transparency, and alignment with Achieva's long-term goals.

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## **Student Consulting Team**

**Sophie Feng** served as frontend developer. She is a junior majoring in Information Systems and Decision Science with a minor in Human Computer Interactions. She will be interning at TikTok this summer and is looking toward a career in product management.

**Sofian Syed** was the backend developer. He is a junior majoring in Information Systems and Computer Science. He is looking toward a career in software engineering.

**Cathy Xu** lead the business analysis and planning and app deployment. She is a senior majoring in Information systems and Business Administration. She will be working full time as a Business Analyst at McKinsey starting this fall.