

CASE STUDY

MEETING COVID AND INNOVATION HEAD-ON: ONE SMALL COLLEGE'S STORY

To continue its rich, nearly 200-year history of educational innovation, Centenary College of Louisiana is transforming with managed technology services to free up the IT team to deliver blended learning modalities, comply with federal regulations, and produce successful student outcomes. Centenary extended its partnership with Apogee from ResNet to build and manage its campus-wide network with Managed Campus services.

“Our long-term strategic partnership with Apogee netted us the robust and scalable network to not only meet COVID head-on but to stay innovative. We’ve been exceedingly happy with Apogee for the past thirteen years.”

-Scott Merritt, Director of Information Technology,
Centenary College

Centenary College, founded in 1825, was recently named one of the nation's top colleges for students seeking a rigorous liberal arts education that provides real-world career preparation at an affordable price. It has also been designated a Top National Liberal Arts College ten years in a row.

At Centenary, technology preparedness has been crucial to addressing COVID-19 challenges, innovating with the rise of blended learning, meeting federal compliance requirements, and ensuring successful educational and quality of life outcomes for its 600 students.



Innovation for Blended Learning

To thrive in today's blended learning environment, where traditional in-person learning modalities are combined with online modalities, reliable and high-performing connectivity is tablestakes. Students and faculty need to interact with each other live, and students want asynchronous access to lectures to watch, pause, and rewind after class. They also want group chats during and after class to collaborate. Lost connectivity during synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning is a death knell.

"To ensure quality academic experiences for student success, and knowing that blended learning relies on ubiquitous connectivity, upgrading our network to every corner of our campus became a top priority to transform the educational experience and drive student outcomes," said Dr. Christopher Holoman, Centenary president.

Building a Modern Connected Campus

Through its long-standing relationship with Apogee for Residential Networking services, Centenary had realized the operational, technical, and financial benefits of outsourcing. The school decided to expand to Apogee Managed Campus services to extend the services to the administrative network.

Apogee upgraded the network throughout the campus as students were returning in Fall 2020. To ensure no disruption to teaching, learning, and working, the installation was performed at night and completed in just ten business days. "What would have been a herculean task for a small college was executed seamlessly in days and without major upfront capital expenditures. Apogee takes on that investment and risk and gives us monthly financial predictability moving forward," said Scott Merritt, Director of Information Services.

Apogee Managed Campus delivers comprehensive 24/7/365 support via phone, email, and chat, SLA-driven performance metrics, and regular equipment refreshes to ensure the network is always modern. Unlocking the time that these day-to-day operational tasks take up allowed the Centenary IT team to focus on tackling projects like GLBA (Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act) compliance and strategic academic initiatives. "We would have needed at least one more full-time person, probably two, to accomplish all of this," says Merritt.

Prepared for the Future

Technologies such as augmented reality/virtual reality (AR/VR), 3D printing, edge computing, predictive analytics, and other trends are growing increasingly bandwidth-intensive. Centenary now has the scalable, reliable, and cost-effective network foundation to support innovation in these and more areas.

Apogee Managed Campus Services have helped Centenary get to the other side of the pandemic stronger than before. "As a small college with a small IT team, our partnership with Apogee is crucial to enable us to stay ahead of trends and serve our students, faculty, and staff with the best connectivity and technologies now and in the future," says Merritt.

To learn more about how your institution can experience these and more benefits by partnering with Apogee, please contact us at sales@apogee.us.