

American University

On The Forefront of Education and Security

Named one of the most “wired” campuses in the nation, American University has a history of ground breaking campus wide technology. So when they decided to upgrade their analog security system to IP, they had to look no further than Pelco and Endura.

Cutting-Edge Technology

American University was the first campus to implement an advanced wireless broadband network in 2004. Later, in 2005 the Kogod School of Business became the first business school to integrate RSS data services with smart phones given to all graduate business students. Combined with RSS services, the university provides optional audio and video podcasts of on-demand educational experiences, such as lectures, to all students.

Like their ground breaking student oriented technology, the American University Department of Public Safety seeks to bring security to their campus faster through wireless Pelco technology.

Starting in the 1980s the American University Department of Public Safety began installing security measures from analog cameras to access control systems on campus. But when Chief of Police Michael McNair joined the department in 2003, he sought to update and upgrade the current system with help from Integrated Security Technologies (IST), a Virginia-based system integrator, with Pelco IP products.

American University had difficulties before with project continuity, as the university procurement process brought on many different integrators. “You have to have a good installer and integrator, and you have to do your homework,” says McNair.

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- Chief of Police Michael McNair

When it came time to do their homework, IST and American University studied the available technology and agreed upon using the Pelco Endura system for the upgrade.

“They are excited about transitioning their analog technology completely to the Pelco Endura IP Platform,” says Michael S. Ruddo, IST Vice President of Business Development. “Currently they are running a hybrid system and I have worked with the Chief to lay out a four-to-five- year plan to migrate everything





to Endura. All new video requirements are specified as Endura. They see great benefit in the new technology.”

The installation upgrade increases video coverage of the 76-acre campus. The system covers a variety of areas, including parking lots, the main quad area, entry points to the campus pedestrian and vehicle entry to non-dorm buildings and some interior locations where sensitive experimentation takes place or high-value items are utilized and stored. Cameras have also been added to their existing Emergency Phone Towers to provide better coverage of the campus.

Combining The Old With The New

Most of the hybrid security system is centrally monitored in the campus Public Safety Facility. Endura MDD units are utilized to integrate the existing keyboard to both the Matrix Switch and the Endura hardware so

that all cameras can be displayed and controlled from the existing controller.

“This is going to be huge,” McNair says of the video analytics system. “With the dedicated Endura security network, when a theft is reported, all of the supervisors can go in and look at all of the footage that is available.”

American University’s analog technology consists of a Pelco 9760 Matrix Switch with some fixed cameras and a mix of Spectra II, III and IV PTZ Cameras. Most of the analog cameras transmit to the command center via PelcoNet IP encoders to decoders.

The IP side of the current system includes Spectra IV cameras tied to Endura NET5300 Encoders and Endura RAID 6TB NVR units. The Endura System head end consists of two System Managers and a WS5050 Workstation.

Besides campus surveillance, the security system has had other benefits as well. Recorded video has been used to both apprehend thieves and to disprove falsely accused crimes. One such incident included quickly apprehending a vandal who was seen drawing lewd graffiti in a campus elevator. “I think that the Pelco Endura system really makes policing on a college campus considerably easier,” says Chief McNair.

About American University

Nestled in the upper Northwest of Washington, D.C., American University has been educating the nation’s young people on its cosmopolitan, multicultural campus since 1893. Recognized by the Princeton Review as one of “America’s Best Value College;” American University is considered a top university, actively promoting international understanding, reflected in its curricula offerings, faculty research, and the regular presence of world leaders on campus. Eleven U.S. presidents, including President Barack Obama and former Presidents Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, have visited American University.