

Respect of University's Religious Culture Solidifies Security Effectiveness

Neumann University

Situation: Neumann University, located in Aston, PA, near Philadelphia, is a Catholic university in the Franciscan tradition. Neumann University, originally called Our Lady of Angels College, was founded in 1965 and later named for Saint John Neumann, who was the fourth bishop of Philadelphia and instrumental in the founding of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia. Some 3,000 students attend the university and utilize its learning, residential, athletic and spiritual facilities on its beautiful 68-acre campus. Neumann University's mission, vision and values are inseparably intertwined with all aspects of their operations.

As the university states, "...being a university and Catholic, Neumann University must be both a community of scholars representing various branches of human knowledge, and a academic institution in which Catholicism is vitally present and operative."

In 2001, Neumann University transitioned from an in-house security operation to Allied Universal which was asked to provide basic coverage and limited patrol assignments on campus. In addition Allied Universal's services, University students were assigned to oversee access to the Living and Learning Centers (residential dormitories). On reviewing this strategy, the University found that the student workers were subject to peer pressures, thus possibly risking the integrity of the security program. With this structure, University security supervisors spent almost 90 percent of their time concerned about student security personnel matters including recruiting, scheduling, training, and supervision.

All of that changed in 2003, according to Leon J. Francis, Neumann University's Director of Campus Safety. Francis worked with Allied Universal to replace the student workers with mature, experienced and well-trained safety officers. An instrumental change was to bring on a full-time Account Manager, Lee Strofe, who had been a shift supervisor for Allied Universal at the University, to manage all of the Campus Safety staff. The change afforded Francis greater flexibility to work on the broader campus safety and security issues while entrusting the day-to-day staffing and security operations to Allied Universal. Strofe, utilizing all of Allied Universal's training, recruiting and operational resources, set about building a responsive and respected professional staff of security officers on campus.

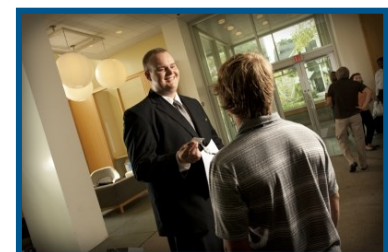
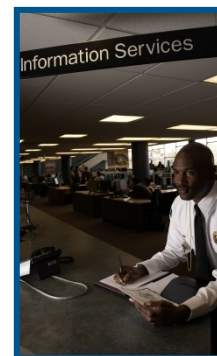
"This is an excellent business model for a university that is looking for an effective, efficient means to maximize security services," said Glenn Rosenberg, Allied Universal's Vice President for Higher Education. "A university public safety director can lay out the strategy and then oversee the security company to ensure that it delivers the resources it promises in the contract. The daily issues of ensuring a quality force are left to the contractor while the institutional director attends to policy issues, emergency preparations, technology integration and other managerial matters. It is a great partnership model."

Location:

Neumann University, Aston, PA

Statistics:

- > Transitioned from In-house to Contract Security
- > Expanded Security Program
- > Respect for the University's Culture



Challenge: Cultural sensitivity and respect by contracted organizations is critical for faith-based institutions. That need is compounded for security officers whose ability to develop a high level of trust and be seen as leaders by community members greatly influences the Campus Safety program's effectiveness and success.

With Allied Universal's expanded role, and the assumption of daily security operations on campus, came an increase in Allied Universal personnel, services and commitment. Allied Universal's Campus Safety Officers serve as first responders on campus for any type of emergency. Key to the success of the program is a security team that understands Neumann's culture and acts accordingly.

"The change was designed to improve and enhance our security on campus," said Francis. "This created an immediate challenge for Allied Universal and its additional campus safety officers. We needed the company and the officers to accept and be part of the culture and mission of the university. Once that was accomplished, we have consistently maintained and demonstrated that commitment."

"A critical element to providing a high level of service to our faith-based schools is the creation a security force that is respectful of the mission and earns the community's trust by employing best practices and promoting programs that advance the protection of the campus. There is a fine line that must be navigated where campus security officers gain respect of community members, while being diligent about enforcing the institution's safety and conduct policies," Rosenberg said. "Allied Universal recognizes that a faith-based school wants a campus security provider that shares its values, can make an impact by providing programs and services that enhance the community's safety, and can earn the trust of students, faculty, staff, and visitors through its actions."

Solution: The very first item of business that Francis addressed with Strofe when he became the Account Manager was building a program that was sensitive to the mission and values of the University. "Lee could not develop the necessary relationships and trust with anyone here unless we had a staff of campus safety officers willing to understand the mission and values of Neumann University," Francis said. "This was a challenge Lee and the Allied Universal team were prepared for."

Specialized recruiting and training and hands-on management support were implemented in an effort to meet Neumann University's needs for both an expanded security presence and a team that supports, respects and is an integral part of a very specific culture. Allied Universal recruited new campus safety officers, paying particular attention to the ability of applicants to adhere to the core values of Neumann University: reverence, integrity, service, excellence and stewardship.

Once the staff was in place, they completed Allied Universal's standard training and on-the-job curricula, and took part in a two-day session, led by Strofe, on everything they should know about Neumann University and the culture of a Catholic Franciscan University. To ensure continued success, Strofe holds this two-day class on a yearly basis for all campus safety officers.

Results: "I would say that our Campus Safety Officers are well informed about the Franciscan values and the life of St. Francis of Assisi and it exceeds University expectations," Francis said.

Because the security officers receive the extended orientation at the outset of their employment, they feel as though they are inclusive and part of the university's family. Strofe attends student government meetings, bringing suggestions on how students can assist in making the campus safe. His supervisors are excellent administrators and leaders. Neumann University President Dr. Rosalie M. Miranda is a strong supporter of the school's partnership with Allied Universal.

"Our campus safety officers feel like they are welcome here; they like the people and the campus," Strofe said. "They see that respect is a valuable tool for effective enforcement."

By establishing a partnership that respects the culture of the University provides high-quality security services, the administration realized the success of the program on its campus safety objectives. Improvements included: 24/7 security coverage, increased supervisory patrols, a designated campus safety patrol vehicle, a department communications center including enhanced radio communications, a power shift (8 p.m. to 4 a.m.) and campus safety officers assigned to 24-hour access control at the all Living and Learning Centers on and off campus.

Allied Universal and Neumann University have a seamless partnership, which has been accepted by the students as the standard for security on campus. “We want students to be able to come to the campus safety officer at the desk and talk to him/her about any problems at any hour of the day. Our officers show concern for every student. They will follow-up and make appropriate notification to our Residence Life staff. It’s part of our culture. It’s taking the extra step to trust, respect and help someone,” Francis explained. Strofe tells students to put the campus safety communication center telephone number in their cell phones in case they need assistance. “We’re here to help you,” he assures them. That relationship and trust is critical to safety and security on campus.