

Apollo Group and University of Phoenix Receives Dependable Local Response, National Support from AlliedBarton Security Services

Apollo Group and University of Phoenix

Situation: Apollo Group, Inc., was founded in 1973 in response to a gradual shift in higher education demographics. The trend showed a student population dominated by youth moving toward one in which approximately half of the students are adults and more than 80 percent of whom work full-time.

Today, Apollo Group has established itself as a leading provider of higher education programs for working adults by focusing on their needs through its subsidiaries: University of Phoenix (and University of Phoenix online), the Institute for Professional Development, the College for Financial Planning and Western International University.

Based in Phoenix, AZ, Apollo Group’s subsidiaries provide nontraditional, working students – or working learners – a quality alternative that is more accessible than conventional four-year colleges and universities. Apollo Group institutions offer associate, bachelor, master and doctoral degrees in a wide variety of fields, including business, criminal justice, education, health administration, and information technology.

Challenge: As Apollo Group’s University of Phoenix has added more campus locations, the needs of their security department have grown. Securing multiple sites across the United States, while keeping all security teams on the same page was quite the task.

In addition, approximately 26 security providers were servicing their many campuses. Local teams were working under several operational models, and there was not one individual to oversee the entire security effort. Nationally, the individual sites were not receiving the support they needed to function as a united security department.

Solution: AlliedBarton Security Services’ District Manager Chuck Bisch had started a successful security program at Apollo Group’s national headquarters in Phoenix, and he saw the challenges facing the security structure across the country.

“The Apollo Group and University of Phoenix campuses are growing every day,” said Bisch. “They needed security experts for additional support, and it was also important to implement a Security Director position, someone who could implement a consistent security approach across all locations.”

Bisch developed an action plan and presented it to Apollo Group, showing them the benefits of a Security Director and a security program that could be standardized nationally under the direction of a single provider. Apollo Group trusted AlliedBarton’s expertise in helping them choose an individual for this position. Mark Battilana became the Director of Corporate Security for Apollo Group in January 2008.

“I knew I needed to restructure the security process at Apollo Group,” said Battilana. “That is why I supported Apollo Group’s decision in choosing AlliedBarton to take on the security at our many campuses. They were doing a wonderful job at corporate, and I really wanted the best service at all of our locations. Streamlining our security services under one provider would allow for better service. AlliedBarton has the higher education experience we needed.

Location:

Apollo Group,
Phoenix, AZ

Statistics:

- > Higher education institution focused on the working adult
- > Nationally, 133 sites under AlliedBarton and growing
- > Local Response | National Support



Their training programs are second to none. They are flexible, the company has a great history behind them and their local and national teams are wonderful to work with.”

Battilana began to tailor the security program to the needs of the large, national organization that Apollo Group had become. The availability of additional security support at any location, at any time, and to organize and mobilize their security teams if needed was also a critical advantage to working with AlliedBarton. As the number of sites grew, so did the need for more national support. As a result, Ken Huggins joined the team as AlliedBarton’s portfolio manager for Apollo Group.

“The support I have received nationally from Chuck and Ken has been outstanding,” said Battilana. “I have direct daily contact with these individuals, and our relationship has evolved over time and is highly productive. Security has really become a seamless process for us. And, having the national portfolio manager on site is quite the added bonus.”

Results: Communication is very important to a security department. It is vital that each local team is on the same page and operating consistently. There are 133 sites under AlliedBarton’s operation and the number is growing weekly as security personnel are added to previously unmanned sites. AlliedBarton provides patrol, access control, alarm response, personal escorts, theft prevention, police assistance, event security and after hours response.

In the fall of 2009, the security department will be implementing a Security Operations Center, a security hub for Apollo Group. AlliedBarton officers and managers will operate the center, 24 hours a day, seven days a week from the Phoenix location, responding to alarms and answering the 24 hour security hotline.

Requirements for the SOC security officer position will include a higher skill set, as these individuals will have to be familiar with the technology and be efficient in multi-tasking.

“Taking on the responsibility of the SOC is important,” said Bisch. “Communicating to all sites, locally and nationally is vital to the success of Apollo Group’s security program.”

Battilana wanted to standardize the reporting and operations at each site. No matter what location a security officer is working at, procedures should be consistent. AlliedBarton’s National Accounts expertise was instrumental in this effort because of their experience with security programs involving multiple client sites across the country.

Battilana has also developed an online communications system where campus directors and security officers alike can log in and share ideas and information.

Keeping the teams integrated has proven to be successful. “More than 80 percent of my staff has an email address on this system,” said Huggins. “This internal network allows our officers and managers to share training modules and real-time security information from all over the country.”

“I give plenty of credit to the local recruiting teams,” said Battilana. “They find us exceptional individuals who are skilled and enjoy their job.” Those exceptional individuals are considered a valuable part of the Apollo Group and receive a discount on their higher education. Additionally, security officers receive college credit for their AlliedBarton advanced training courses, such as Master Security Officer.

A focus on Local Response and National Support makes AlliedBarton ideally suited for the structure and challenges of geographically diverse organizations such as Apollo Group. Local security officers and managers service the locations in their area and are supported by and connected through the extensive resources of a national company.

“Our site managers have been very helpful in the success and growth of this program,” added Huggins. “When security is needed for special events, such as graduation, I know that our officers are trained consistently, and they live up to our expectations.”

AlliedBarton’s hard work has not gone unnoticed. AlliedBarton received the inaugural Value Champion Award for the Best Value Nationwide from Apollo Group’s Strategic Sourcing Department.

“I really can’t say enough about AlliedBarton. Locally and nationally they have shown us that they can support our needs,” Battilana said.