Case Study

Allan Hancock College

"We love the flexibility of PortalGuard MFA. Between some people moving away from SMS OTPs and the great variability in preference, it was super helpful to have options that worked for our diverse user base."

– Andy Specht

Interim Director of Information Technology Services

About Allan Hancock College

Allan Hancock College is a public community college located in Santa Maria on the coast of southern California. It is part of the California Community College System, which enrolls nearly two million students (about the population of Nebraska). Allan Hancock College has a student body of about 10,000 and employs roughly 1,000 faculty members.

The college needed an IAM solution that worked effortlessly for students and staff and was easy to manage with a small IT team. What they found with PortalGuard (first with on-premises, then IDaaS) was flexible MFA that worked for everyone, a seamless and easy-to-integrate SSO system, and SSPR that took a massive weight off the shoulders of the IT team.

Customer Profile

Industry:

- Higher Education
- 15-20K users (students + faculty)

Location:

- Santa Maria, California

Top Application Used:

- Ellucian (Ethos Identity)
- Office 365
- Canvas
- Banner 9

Key Issues and Existing Challenges Addressed by PortalGuard

Allan Hancock College's IT department was searching for a product that could streamline their SSO process, provide SSPR for students online, and secure all logins for users with access to sensitive data and information.

Like most colleges and universities, Allan Hancock utilizes various applications to support critical systems like LMS, CMS, SIS, and Email. As a result, the college's user base – students and faculty – was frequently inundated with various login prompts. In turn, the process created unnecessary user frustration and password reset requests to be fielded by the busy IT department.

Realizing that most available products and solutions that could address their unique needs were either too expensive or limited in capabilities, Allan Hancock College turned to PortalGuard to address their SSO, SSPR, and MFA challenges.

The PortalGuard Resolution

Allan Hancock College needed a robust Identity and Access Management (IAM) platform that wasn't a headache for students and faculty to use and easy to manage and maintain for the IT team. Additionally, the College was responsible for protecting large amounts of sensitive information and required a secure, flexible Multi-factor Authentication (MFA) solution to serve upwards of 10,000 users.

In 2019, PortalGuard was deployed as an on-premises Identity Provider (IdP) for Allan Hancock College to consolidate login prompts across their many applications, including Canvas, Office 365, SharePoint, and Banner 9 by Ellucian. PortalGuard's flexibility allowed the college to seamlessly merge two different directories within the platform and set up SAML-based SSO to their enterprise applications like SharePoint, Office 365, and Canvas. Furthermore, because the PortalGuard IdP supports a plethora of open authentication protocols, Allan Hancock could also connect to Banner 9 through CAS (Central Authentication Service).

The College saw that more and more of what the campus was connecting to through PortalGuard Single Sign-on – like Canvas and Office 365 – was being hosted off-site. Additionally, improving enterprise application continuity and infrastructure resilience was a vital project outcome for Allan Hancock to improve the user experience and ensure mission-critical business operations proceed during any disruption. Thus, in 2021, Allan Hancock successfully transitioned to PortalGuard IDaaS. BIO-key Technical Support facilitated the migration in just a matter of weeks over the summer – so when students arrived on campus in the fall, the cloud platform was up and running.

Top Reasons PortalGuard Was the Right Choice

- Competitive pricing
- Easy for the IT team to manage
- Most flexible MFA option available
- Easiest to use SSO solution with the most support for a variety of integrations