

THE PATHIFY MAGAZINE

# Collegium

SPRING 2026  
VOLUME #10

## STUDENTS HAVE THE FLOOR

What feedback, lived experiences  
and survey data reveal

## THE CASE FOR CXP

How platforms unify point solutions to  
create connected campuses

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

## EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Matt Hammond

## CONTRIBUTORS

Monica Arrage  
Annie Ellis  
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Shana Holman

## Dear Pathify Community,

Higher ed has never lacked passion or purpose, but it's always held tight to tradition.

And for good reason! Tradition shapes ceremonies, creates rituals, fuels rivalries and mascots (Go U Bears!), and strengthens community. It gives us something to belong to and something to pass on.

But here's the thing about tradition:

It's *persuasive*.

It convinces us habits must never change and tells us we ought to cling tightly — even reluctantly — to old ways. Today, there's no shortage of factors challenging tradition.

We've spoken before about challenging the status quo, thinking otherwise, exploring boldly, and leading with curiosity. These themes don't abandon tradition — they protect its purpose and values while leaving room for progress. And nowhere does that matter more than in how we approach campus technology.

In case you missed it, Pathify's Campus Experience Platform (CXP) category announcement urges institutions to rethink their digital campus experience strategy. It's a call to replace isolated apps and unite disconnected systems into an integrated ecosystem, strengthening the connection and engagement that honors and enhances tradition.

You now lead the next campus chapter — one shaped by what you choose to preserve, what you choose to evolve, and ultimately, what you choose to pass on. The question is no longer whether higher ed will change... but what today's leaders will leave behind for the generations and communities who follow.

To progress and partnership,

**Hannah Fitzsimons**  
Editor-in-Chief

# FACES & PLACES



# BY THE NUMBERS

## PATHIFY AROUND THE WORLD

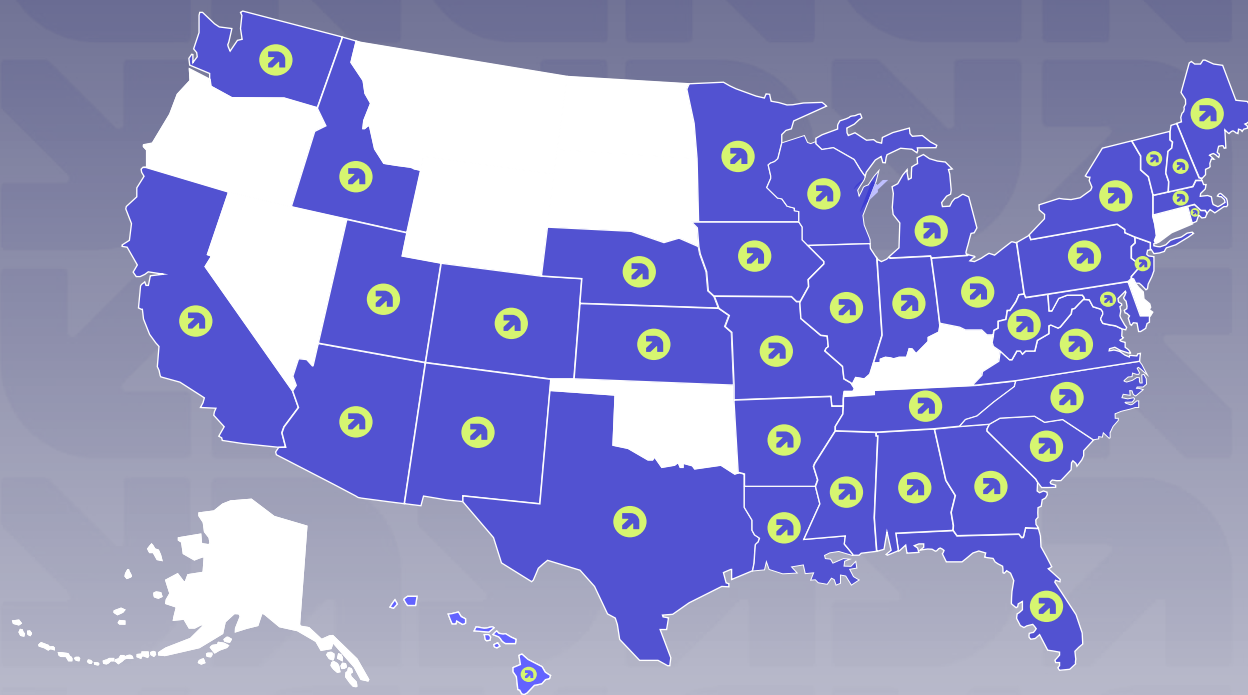
FROM LARGE, PUBLIC SYSTEMS TO SMALLER, PRIVATE CAMPUSES, PATHIFY SUPPORTS:

**273**  
CUSTOMERS

**39**  
US STATES

**5**  
COUNTRIES

AUSTRALIA  
CANADA  
DENMARK  
GRENADA  
UNITED STATES



## PATHIFY PRODUCT NUMBERS



TOTAL UNIQUE ACTIVE USERS:

**2,565,424**



NUMBER OF ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**18,477**



TOTAL NUMBER OF SEARCHES:

**17,011,669**

TOP SEARCHES:

CANVAS, EMAIL, DEGREE,  
HOUSING, BANNER, SCHEDULE

## BUILT TO LAST

LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS DON'T HAPPEN BY CHANCE. WE'RE CELEBRATING NEARLY A DECADE OF COLLABORATION WITH:

### 7 YEARS

- CORNERSTONE UNIVERSITY
- FELICIAN UNIVERSITY
- INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT SYDNEY
- MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- NORTH IOWA AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- REDEEMER UNIVERSITY
- TALLAHASSEE STATE COLLEGE

### 8 YEARS

- RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
- WILSON COLLEGE



## COLLECTIBLE COUNTS



**1,500+**

LIGHT-UP LEIS HANDED OUT



**9** MEMBERS OF THE  
PATHIFY MENAGERIE



**200+**

RUBIK'S CUBES CLAIMED

ARMADILLO	FLAMINGO	KOALA
BUFFALO	HEDGEHOG	PARROT
CROCODILE	KANGAROO	RAM

More swag, more events, more Pathify!  
Catch us on the road this year.



## LINDSEY AARUM



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lindsey Aarum graduated from Moody Bible Institute in December 2025, where she served as student body president for the 2024-2025 academic year. Her leadership approach — research-driven, strategic and relentlessly student-focused — demonstrates what's possible when advocacy meets action. Between graduation and her next endeavor, you can find her hunting for vintage treasures and sampling every coffee shop in Chicago.



# 08

## CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE HOW MY ALMA MATER FIXED THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

**B**efore I ran for student body president, I was just another undergraduate navigating the same clunky systems as everyone else.

We had an old student portal that linked out to everything — finances, grades, tuition, schedules, class registration. It felt cumbersome, outdated, obstructive, and everyone complained about it. Yet, the complaints never led anywhere. Frustrations grew so pervasive, they became normalized — and somewhere along the way, the mindset shifted to, “That’s just how the system is, deal with it.”

### The Real Cost of Clunky Systems

For me, there are a couple of pain points that stand out. One came through our weekly service hour logging. Every on-campus student must log attendance to track completed service hours. The system was so archaic it developed into a source of friction — affecting every single student, every week. The next involved one of my friends — someone considering our institution — who got so frustrated trying to navigate the student portal that he nearly abandoned his application altogether.

When frustrations multiply and compound across all the digital touchpoints students navigate (from applying all the way through graduation), the impact becomes overwhelming.

### Building a Campus Experience Campaign

Most student government campaigns promise incremental improvements — better dining options, additional parking, improved communication between students and administration. I wanted to promise systemic change, but refused to make commitments I couldn’t deliver.

I felt passionate about providing a better digital campus experience, so I asked the administration directly about the possibility.

When I shared the idea of a campus app with Dean Brett Mitchell, he mentioned he’d recently encountered Pathify at a conference in Washington, D.C., and was open to exploring how it might work on our campus. Learning more about Pathify — how it could provide a single platform for all campus resources — gave me something more concrete to include in my campaign. Fast forward a few months — I won the election, and the real work began.

### Student President and Institutional Advocate

My official responsibilities as president centered around advocacy — programming, events, keeping tabs on student sentiment, serving as the bridge between the administration and students. But I understood that if we were to catalyze real change, we needed to do more than relay complaints or fix dining hall menus — we needed to build a compelling, data-driven case for a campus platform.

One of the most important contributions included constructing a competitive analysis. I researched peer institutions — schools we compete with for students — and documented their approach to the digital student experience. The report demonstrated concrete examples of universities solving the exact challenges we faced and highlighted opportunities where we could improve or be more competitive.

The schools doing this well had something in common... they all used Pathify.

Armed with that research, I presented these findings independently to our university president and then to our VP and Dean of Enrollment. I didn’t want to complain about what didn’t work, but instead, show them what could work — backed by real examples and inspiration. After a few more months of evaluation and logistics, the college selected Pathify to power its student experience.

## Innovation

### Tackling Recruitment and Retention

Bringing on Pathify naturally aligned with some of the college's institutional priorities, too. Fall 2024 resulted in our largest incoming freshman class since before COVID — an encouraging sign that we're moving in the right direction (but our enrollment goals remain ambitious!). Pathify also aligned perfectly with why the VP and Dean of Enrollment supported Pathify — because it offered a resource for prospective and incoming students, as well as for current students. It's a rare solution that addresses multiple strategic initiatives.

### What Student Experience Actually Means

For me, the student experience encompasses everything a student goes through on campus — the positive and negative, the tangible and intangible. It's the relationships you build, the community you find, the feeling that you belong. But the student experience also includes how the institution demonstrates care through accessible resources, technologies and genuine efforts to make students feel heard.

The student body makes our campus so incredibly special — students create the community and shape the atmosphere. In my time as student body president, I wanted the confidence that what makes our campus unique isn't lost to systems that don't serve us well. I wanted to shift the culture from accepting "that's just how it is" to expecting — and building — better.

I'll never personally experience Pathify (*Editor's note — with the Alumni audience expansion, the Pathify experience doesn't end at graduation!*), but I worked hard for a solution so future generations of students can. If Pathify helps even one student stay engaged instead of dropping out, or prevents one prospective student from abandoning their application out of frustration, then every presentation, every hour spent building the case, was entirely worth it.



“The student experience encompasses everything a student goes through on campus — the positive and negative, the tangible and intangible. It's the relationships you build, the community you find, the feeling that you belong.”

— Lindsey Aarum

Photo Credit: Unsplash

# WHEN CONSOLIDATION BECOMES COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

## THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH UNITES SYSTEMS & EXPERIENCES WITH PATHIFY

On any given day at the University of Utah, thousands of people — students, faculty, staff, alumni, sports fans — turn to their phones to navigate campus life.

Until recently, each group used a different app to get what they needed, and over time, the university's mobile presence splintered into more than six separate mobile apps: a legacy athletics app, a general campus app, a donor app, a ticketing app, an alumni portal, and custom-built apps for several colleges and schools. Each lived in its own silo, managed on its own timeline and operated under its own definition of what constituted a "campus app."

The impact reverberated, with inconsistent user experiences, content redundancies, functionality gaps, and an increasing number of vendors to manage. "We wanted people to download one app as the front door to the university," said Sarah Williams, the University of Utah's Senior Product Manager. "A place for everyone, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, fans, and others, to engage with the University of Utah experience."

Consolidating half a dozen disconnected apps into a single, cohesive digital ecosystem set the stage for Utah 360, the university's Campus Experience Platform (CXP) — powered by Pathify — a hub connecting data, surfacing resources and bringing every audience under one experience.

### Seizing the Moment for Consolidation

With several legacy app contracts set to expire, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer recognized a strategic inflection point. Rather than signing the university up for another decade of fragmentation, the team issued an RFP for a single platform that could support the entire campus experience.

The university's non-negotiables aligned directly with the vision of a true CXP: stackable, flexible roles capable of accommodating the multiple audiences being



supported, user-level analytics to deeply understand engagement, and personalized dashboards and widgets capable of adapting to each individual.

One by one, competing vendors fell short — only Pathify delivered on all three key requirements. "We refused to compromise on our must-haves," Williams recalled. Once the university made its selection, next steps moved quickly. Implementation began in March, and by May, Utah 360 went live. Utah's speed reflected intent. With the window for consolidation open, the university acted quickly to take full advantage.

### Rapid Launch, Sustained Engagement

Within the first six months of launch, Utah 360 reached nearly 40,000 users. Whereas the university's previous student app saw a burst of activity during the first week of classes and then faded, Utah 360 showed steady engagement throughout the semester. "We're seeing twice the engagement compared to our previous app experiences," Williams reported. "And it's more sustained with users regularly returning." The momentum continues as students discover new features and functionality, including widgets displaying real-time parking lot availability and shuttle tracking.

The primary success metric remains straightforward: "We're keeping it simple and tracking how many people log in," said Williams. "Right now, adoption serves as the clearest indicator that Utah 360 is becoming the true front door to campus."

And, as more legacy systems approach renewal, opportunities for additional consolidation continue building. Each expiring contract enables key functionality to move into Utah 360, reducing the number of places users go for information, while reinforcing the habit of logging into a single app for everything the university offers.

### One App to Rule Them All

Today, Utah 360 runs on 225 distinct roles — a number reflecting the complexity of a major R1 university. A student interested in athletics sees different content and resources than an alumnus participating in a giving campaign. A faculty member encounters a different dashboard than a prospective student. Users tailor widgets and dashboards around their interests, whether Utah athletics, campus arts programming or academic resources.

Despite the depth of personalization, the front door remains singular. "Utah 360 adapts to support different use cases and audiences," Williams observed. "It's more than

an academic platform, more than just a sports platform — it encompasses the entire university experience."

Williams intentionally structured Utah 360 for long-term sustainability. "Because Utah 360 operates under central ownership and funding, the teams maintaining those previous, separate apps are free to focus on other priorities," Williams explained. "We're unifying and standardizing the experience while taking maintenance work off people's plates."

### Preserving Traditions

Long known as a commuter campus, the U worked for years to deepen affinity and emotional attachment. Utah 360 provided the foundation to move the vision forward. With Pathify's badging and event-tracking capabilities, the university will now capture student participation and traditions in ways previously untrackable and undocumented.

"We want to create more emotional attachment so students feel connected. Once they graduate, we hope they'll eventually become donors and stewards of the university," Williams remarked. Whether attending a football game, taking a photo at the Block U or participating in Homecoming, students capture moments that become part of a lasting digital record, preserved within the same app they use every day.

“Utah 360 adapts to support different use cases and audiences... it encompasses the entire university experience.”

— Sarah Williams

Photo Credits: University of Utah

### The Power of a Unified Audience

Utah 360's rollout revealed an unexpected advantage — strategic leverage across the university's entire community. The University of Utah competes in the Big 12 Athletics Conference, where audience engagement and scale directly influence TV and media rights, sponsorships, institutional funding, and opportunities to host major broadcasts like ESPN College GameDay.

Before the current Utah 360 app, Utah's audience lived across half a dozen apps — fragmented, unmeasured and invisible. Today, the entire community sits on one platform, fully measurable and easy to mobilize, with Utah 360 operating as both a CXP and the navigation into the university's ticketing platform. "Our goal is to engage with over 100,000 users on any given Saturday during the football season," said Williams. "It gives us huge leverage in terms of exposure and proves our ability to serve and engage a wide audience."

What began as a way to simplify operations and reduce the mobile app footprint now functions as a key strategic asset. A unified application doesn't just enhance campus life — it strengthens the university's influence on the national stage.

### The Front Door to Campus Life

Utah 360 demonstrates how a Campus Experience Platform transforms everyday campus life — from navigating classes and athletics to tracking traditions and alumni engagement. "Utah 360 consolidates experiences — from current students, all the way through alumni, parents, faculty, staff, visitors, and beyond," said Williams.

With a single entry point capable of supporting diverse roles and use cases, Utah 360 provides every audience the tools, resources and insights they need — while enabling the university to serve and understand its community like never before.



**Sarah Williams**  
Senior Product Manager  
University of Utah



Photo Credits: University of Utah



## About the University of Utah

The University of Utah is the state's flagship institution of higher education, with 18 schools and colleges, more than 100 undergraduate majors and graduate programs, and an enrollment of more than 38,000 students. It is a member of the Association of American Universities — an invitation-only, prestigious group of 71 leading research institutions. The U is advancing a new national model for higher education that delivers societal impact through education, research, health care, and community service, while making social, economic, and cultural contributions that improve lives across Utah and around the world. Learn more at [utah.edu](http://utah.edu).



# EXTENDING THE ECOSYSTEM

## CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WISCONSIN EXPANDS WITH COMMUNITIES

Concordia University Wisconsin (CUW) selected Pathify's Campus Experience Platform (CXP) in 2024 to build myCUW, a unified digital hub with full web and mobile parity. Previously, the university operated with separate, disconnected portals, including a Luminis web portal, Ready Education mobile app and numerous workarounds in between. "We consolidated our legacy web and app portals into Pathify to create a more seamless experience," said Brett Seider, Director of Administrative Computing and Chief Information Officer at CUW.

CUW's ecosystem-first approach also guided its thinking around student community and engagement. The missing piece didn't involve another tool — it extended the foundation already in place, with Pathify Communities delivering a layer that fit naturally inside myCUW, giving the university a platform to grow into — not out of.

### Closing the Gap Between Admit and Enroll

Before Communities, Concordia relied on EAB Wisr largely as an admitted student engagement tool. But the university saw widening inconsistencies. "It became clear we had a gap as incoming students transitioned into the university," said Kara Janowski, Director of Student Engagement. "We connected students early, but we also directed them to tasks and resources scattered across multiple systems. We also struggled to generate adoption and buy-in from current students."

Continuity also presented a challenge. Students joined Wisr using personal emails during the admissions process, only to face confusion during onboarding when required to use their new CUW credentials.

The team originally explored Communities during their initial Pathify evaluation — and Wisr's sunset provided the right opportunity to rethink community, connection and continuity. "We saw an opportunity to consolidate the community experience for both incoming and current students," Janowski explained.

### Reducing Barriers to Connection

Communities delivered precisely what CUW needed — an environment for students to build relationships inside the same ecosystem where they complete tasks, check coursework, access support resources, and engage with campus information.

"Pathify integrates with our single sign-on, so students don't even need to create an account in the first place — a huge step in eliminating continuity challenges," Janowski said. With automatic provisioning tied to institutional credentials, the friction of juggling personal emails, new usernames and passwords disappeared.

Automated group membership — one of CUW's most persistent needs — now places students into the right groups at the right times. "We lacked access to that functionality before," Seider said. "We wanted the ability to automatically drop students into certain groups, so the burden wasn't on students to discover. It gives us more control over their experience and how and when they connect."

### Scaling Community Experiences

CUW launched Pathify Communities in November 2025, beginning with traditional undergraduates, staff and faculty, and plans to expand groups and events for online and graduate students in the coming semester. Janowski and her team built spaces reflecting the real CUW experience, including residence hall groups, campus life communities and ministry groups tied to the university's faith-based mission — spaces where students connect authentically and organically. They also rebuilt popular logistic-based spaces, like the CUW Buy, Sell, Trade group, which quickly drew students into the new platform.

Next, the team will fully launch Communities for the incoming fall 2026 cohort, using it to strengthen new student orientation programming, build early belonging and reduce summer melt. For Janowski, even small shifts feel meaningful. "If it moves the needle — even by a few students — because they log in and think, 'wow, look at these events,' feel more connected to our community, or find a roommate, that's amazing. If early activity and engagement help them stay committed and enroll, then it's absolutely worth it."

### CUW's Digital Heartbeat

With Communities, CUW now guides students into the right groups from the moment they're admitted, keeping them engaged throughout their entire higher education journey. The university already built a strong foundation with its Pathify Hub and app, but Communities optimizes the picture — bringing students together, strengthening belonging, encouraging connection, and sustaining the kind of community that positively influences student success.



### Brett Seider

Director of Administrative Computing and Chief Information Officer  
Concordia University Wisconsin



### Kara Janowski

Director of Student Engagement  
Concordia University Wisconsin

## About Concordia University Wisconsin

**Student Headcount:** 4,577

**Institution Type:** Private university

**Location:** Mequon, Wisconsin

**Tech Stack:** Ellucian Banner, Canvas

**Technology Consolidated into Pathify:** Student portal, third-party mobile app, standalone groups & events tool

Located in Mequon, Wisconsin, Concordia University Wisconsin (CUW) is part of the Concordia University system, a nationwide network of colleges and universities each independently run but all affiliated with The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. For more than 140 years, Concordia has educated students for lives of Christian leadership and service, including across a range of professional fields and across church career education. Learn more at [cuw.edu](http://cuw.edu).



# MISSION-DRIVEN EXCELLENCE

## VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT TRANSFORMS CAMPUS TECH FOR ALL USERS

**A**nurse aide studying to become an RN between night shifts. A single parent making a mid-life career change. A veteran looking for training to support their return to the civilian job market. Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) serves every kind of student — providing the education, resources and community they need to reach their goals. But with a clunky and outdated Ellucian portal, the technology experience became a real barrier to success.

With more than 30,000 students over three campuses, the district's legacy portal required significant maintenance, straining a lean IT team while forcing constant crisis management. "We wanted to get out of the business of hosting, supporting and maintaining a portal, which functioned mainly as a link farm," said Dan Watkins, Associate Vice Chancellor of Information Technology at Ventura County Community College District.

By adopting Pathify's Campus Experience Platform (CXP), VCCCD ditched the unreliable link farm portal in favor of a more holistic approach. And deploying the platform enterprise-wide supported the mission of accessibility for all — enabling VCCCD to provide top-tier support to every member of its community.

**Trusted Partnership and Proven Solutions**  
VCCCD set out to find a new solution with a partner who listened and understood their needs. "I heard about Pathify from another community college dealing with the same challenges. Peer recommendations mattered immensely — we needed a vendor who understood community colleges and treated us like a partner," Watkins explained.

Eager to leave the turn-of-the-century UI behind, the team moved quickly.

"Among the solutions we evaluated, Pathify stood out for offering the centralized hub we needed, along with the ability to consolidate existing tools," said Marc Boman, System Administrator. With Pathify, the team launched MyVCCCD, a single platform for the entire district. Ventura first piloted MyVCCCD, inviting students, staff and faculty to test the new experience while simultaneously running Luminis. "We took feedback seriously, and students overwhelmingly preferred our Pathify platform," Boman recalled. "They appreciated the improved navigation and modern graphics over the clunky experience of Luminis."

**Multi-Campus Life Made Simpler**  
From customized branding for each college to a single hub for a dispersed, commuter-based population, MyVCCCD addressed many of the district's unique challenges.

"Serving three campuses means three different identities, three sets of priorities and students who might take classes at more than one location. Our old portal couldn't handle the complexity," stated Watkins. "Pathify aligned well with VCCCD's broader technology governance strategy — supporting standardization, security and long-term sustainability across multiple campuses."



VCCCD needed, eliminating information barriers and frustration. "We've seen a meaningful reduction in complaints — MyVCCCD alleviates the pain and frustration we used to experience," Watkins said.

**The Anti-Portal**  
MyVCCCD functions beyond a static portal — it dynamically connects communities, enables audience-specific communications, and deploys tasks from the district's SIS and other integrated systems. "One of the benefits of Pathify is how simple it is for users to access and connect with resources. We're always thinking about how we can leverage technology to reduce barriers," explained Watkins.

Users navigate core campus systems like the SIS, LMS, email, events, and calendars, with one secure login, while accessing critical resources and information — like registration reminders, administrative forms and financial information — with a quick search or chat.

"We consider MyVCCCD as a campus platform, not just a student portal," said Watkins. "We serve every type of student and employee you can think of, and MyVCCCD provides each of them with a single pane of glass."

**A Front Door to Success**  
Watkins continued, "Many of our students are working adults, squeezing classes into their busy schedules. If a student can't find the answer on their phone during their lunch break, it represents a barrier to enrolling and persisting." With MyVCCCD, students experience faster access to resources, fewer logins and easy mobile access. "When students can't access what they need, they can't be successful. But a seamless technology experience supports them in reaching their goals," Watkins asserted. As VCCCD evolves, Pathify's CXP scales in tandem — future-proofing against challenges, both seen and unforeseen.

**“Implementing Pathify’s CXP dropped development time by 50%, resulting in an estimated annual savings of \$40,000 in staff time — the equivalent of half a full-time employee each year.”**

— Dan Watkins

Photo Credits: Ventura County Community College District

### Connecting Campus Without Custom Builds

MyVCCCD also reduced the volume of bugs, system outages and development hours for the small IT team. "Pathify offloaded maintenance, support and ongoing innovation, enabling us to focus on providing our students with an excellent experience," said Watkins. Using Pathify's Recipe Library, administrators stand up integrations in minutes, connecting disparate systems through MyVCCCD. The result reclaimed development hours and a more personalized, cohesive technology experience for the entire campus community.

The same foundation also supports employees. Through MyVCCCD, staff enter and approve timesheets and securely access remote work tools via an AWS AppStream integration — a security game-changer. "We've reduced risk while actually making remote work easier for our team," Watkins added.

### Decluttering the Tech Stack

Against the backdrop of tightening higher ed budgets, VCCCD reduced system sprawl by consolidating its tech stack. The district retired several standalone apps for communications, forms and engagement — including an Ocelot chatbot, clubs and organizations app and student election tool — simplifying operations and reducing the number of systems IT maintains.

Overall, implementing Pathify's CXP dropped development time by 50%, resulting in an estimated annual savings of \$40,000 in staff time. "By eliminating the manual development and management work we handled with our old portal, we're effectively saving the equivalent of half a full-time employee each year," Watkins said.

### Access For All

Accessibility also remains core to the district's mission, and Pathify plays a pivotal role in advancing this commitment. By delivering a consistent, standards-aligned digital front door, VCCCD reduces the fragmentation that often creates accessibility barriers.

"Our trusted, customer-centric partnership, along with Pathify's stability, innovation and ongoing support, remains essential," Watkins concluded. "These elements directly support our core mission — to provide accessible experiences and development for every member of Ventura County." With a unified digital experience in place, the district is well-positioned to adapt to the evolving higher ed landscape while continuing to best serve its campus community.



### Dan Watkins

Associate Vice Chancellor  
of Information Technology  
Ventura County Community  
College District

## About Ventura County Community College District

Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) is a public community college district serving residents throughout Ventura County. VCCCD's three colleges — Moorpark College, Oxnard College and Ventura College — offer programs for transfer to four-year colleges and universities, career technical training, basic skills instruction, and community service, economic development, and continuing education for cultural growth, life enrichment, and skills improvement.

Learn more at [vccd.edu](http://vccd.edu).



Photo Credits: Ventura County Community College District

# BREAKING FREE FROM THE LINK FARM

## LA SALLE UNIVERSITY REPLACES PORTAL WITH PATHIFY

At La Salle University, finding the simplest piece of information felt like a constant scavenger hunt. The university's former portal platform offered little more than a list of links, leaving students, faculty and staff clicking through endless pages to find what they needed.

This subpar experience pushed Alicia Stonesifer, Assistant Vice President of Information Technology and CIO, and Michael Nielsen, Director, Enterprise Applications, to search for a better solution. As the team sought a more user-friendly, personalized platform to serve their nearly 5,000 campus constituents (and with their legacy portal contract nearing expiration), pressure mounted as the team only had a few months to implement a new campus hub.

### Searching for a New Solution

With a small IT team, Stonesifer and Nielsen needed a solution that didn't add complexity or introduce more problems than it solved. It also needed to be mobile-friendly, with advanced push notifications.

The team remained hyper-focused on student engagement and platform extensibility — transforming the former link farm into a scalable, future-proof platform. Discovering Pathify's Campus Experience Platform (CXP) through the HESS Consortium gave Stonesifer and Nielsen the peer validation to move forward confidently.

"Pathify fits lean teams like ours," Nielsen reflected. While organizing content and workflows required some internal coordination, "the system felt straightforward to set up — another huge selling point," he added. Most importantly, Pathify would launch quickly, with a deployment pace that aligned with the university's needs and vendor expectations.

### A Smooth, Student-Approved Launch

The university re-launched my.lasalle at the end of the spring 2025 term. This included providing a beta group of users with preview access to collect feedback, then seamlessly transitioning the entire campus in time for the fall semester. "We launched very, very quickly," Stonesifer said. "It went off without a hitch."

The smooth rollout set the stage for a new level of student engagement, with student feedback notably different from previous tech launches. "Students don't usually speak up unless they're upset," said Nielsen. "Launching the new my.lasalle marked the first time our team ever received positive feedback on our campus technology."

### Features With Real Impact

Building on the early success of my.lasalle, Stonesifer and Nielsen focused on further refining student digital experiences through features like:

- **Tasks and Pathways**, which immediately gave the team new insights into student behavior. Starting last fall, Nielsen created a technology checklist covering basic tasks, from connecting to campus WiFi to setting up account access to downloading the mobile app. "Before, we never knew if students kept up with their checklist," he explained. Leveraging Tasks and seeing completion rates right in my.lasalle helped pinpoint where issues arose. Now, Nielsen is collaborating with the university's Student Financial Services department to automate Banner balance updates and trigger Tasks for students needing financial aid counseling, further leveraging the platform's Tasks capabilities.
- **Announcements**, which solved what Stonesifer described as a longtime mystery. "We always wondered what happened with communications in the old portal — it felt like a black hole," she said. Now, with clear visibility into who sees announcements, notices and alerts, the team confirms targeted communications actually reach their intended audience.
- The **Recipe Library** deploys widgets quickly and easily — a crucial advantage for a lean team managing multiple priorities. "Getting widgets up and running takes minimal effort — it's a low technical hurdle and documentation makes the process clear," reported Nielsen.
- And **Roles** and access controls keep user experiences intuitive, clean and relevant. Customizable quick links and other menu items ensure employees see employee-specific content, while students see resources and tools tailored to them.

### Up Next: Employee Engagement and Mobile Adoption

While my.lasalle currently focuses heavily on engaging and informing current students, both Stonesifer and Nielsen remain excited about expanding employee engagement through Pathify's Hub Experience tools. "Another priority involves increasing the number of users installing the mobile app," Stonesifer shared.

Since the start of the 2025-2026 academic year, mobile adoption metrics signal strong momentum — with iOS impressions, product page views and total downloads doubling compared to the same period last year.

What began as a race to replace an expiring system quickly turned into a catalyst for more effective campus engagement. With my.lasalle, Stonesifer and Nielsen built a strong foundation to expand and evolve the way its entire community connects.



**Alicia Stonesifer**

Assistant Vice President of Information Technology and CIO  
La Salle University



**Michael Nielsen**

Director, Enterprise Applications  
La Salle University

## About La Salle University

**Student Headcount:** 4,000+

**Institution Type:** Private university

**Location:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Tech Stack:** Ellucian Banner, Canvas, Softdocs, Rave

**Technology Consolidated into Pathify:** Student portal, student groups & events tool

Founded in 1863, La Salle University is a private, Catholic institution located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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# PUT THE POLISHING CLOTH DOWN

## YOUR PORTAL DOESN'T NEED A REDESIGN — IT NEEDS A GRACEFUL EXIT

College students don't think in systems — they think in questions. *When's my next class? Did I miss a deadline or assignment? Why is there a hold on my account? Is there free food on campus today? What's the score of the basketball game?*

When institutions answer these questions with a maze of systems, logins, tabs, and apps, friction and frustration become the norm, and the eager promise of a fix stalls out somewhere between IT and Student Affairs.

For years, the campus portal served as the “solution” — a digital junk drawer of links, placing the burden on *students* to self-navigate, self-inform and self-engage. College campuses run on dozens — even hundreds — of systems. For many, those systems don't always speak the same language... and they rarely present a unified experience to the people relying on them.

### The Orchestration Advantage

Over the past year, Pathify established itself as the leading Campus Experience Platform (CXP) — the connective tissue across the higher ed tech stack. While many readers may treat “portal” and “platform” as interchangeable, the functional differences are vast.

To start, a Campus Experience Platform sits above it all: integrating systems, content, communications, people into a singular, personalized interface. And although a CXP doesn't replace immovable core systems (instead, it gets them to play nicely together!), it can replace dozens of redundant point solutions littering the tech stack.

A portal says to a student, “Here are some links.” A CXP says, “Here's what matters right now — and here's how to take action.”

This piece is key. A CXP goes beyond simply displaying or storing links; it surfaces tasks,

deadlines, alerts, and opportunities with context. It marks a subtle but incredibly important shift — orchestration versus aggregation.

### Connecting, Not Collecting

A CXP shifts users from bookmarking links to taking charge, getting involved and staying informed. And while students remain the priority, it also serves as the operational backbone for faculty and staff (and alumni, parents and prospects), offering streamlined workflows and similarly tailored communication and resources.

A CXP helps institutions stop collecting tools like they're commemorative souvenirs — a chatbot for support, an app for events, a portal for links, a separate platform for communications. Years ago, each investment might've made sense in isolation. But collectively, they created a fragmented digital ecosystem — a nightmare to govern, fund and maintain.

### The Portal Plateau

The table stakes today don't leave much room for error — students expect the same digital experiences from higher ed as they get everywhere else, staff expect efficiency-enabling technology, university leadership expects clear ROI on the systems they've invested in.

A CXP delivers on all fronts. It turns campuses from a collection of systems into an integrated ecosystem, it empowers autonomy and workflow automation, it consolidates tools and experiences.

A portal cannot deliver on these expectations — after all, it's built for redirection, not integration.

Sure, the portal had a good run. It served its purpose. But the next phase of digital engagement won't come from repainting an old model. It comes from a platform tying everything together behind the scenes, while making front-end experiences easier, smarter and more relevant.

At Pathify, we invite institutions to put the portal polishing cloth down. We suggest a different path — a platform built to be as dynamic, creative and multifaceted as the people using it.

### About the Author

Hannah Fitzsimons is a Product Marketing Lead at Pathify, where she crafts messaging and storytelling to help institutions simplify and elevate the student experience — proving that higher ed marketing can be both effective and fun. An avid runner, golden retriever fan and Vermont maple syrup devotee, she brings the same energy to her work and adventures across the Rocky Mountains of Colorado.



**Hannah Fitzsimons**  
Product Marketing Lead  
Pathify

Photo Credit: Pathify

# SMARTER MANAGEMENT, STRONGER EXPERIENCES

## VALENCIA COLLEGE MOVES TO A UNIFIED, CONSOLIDATED DIGITAL CAMPUS

Valencia College serves approximately 70,000 students across Central Florida, placing it among the largest colleges in the United States by enrollment. For nearly two decades, all content in the college's legacy portal flowed through a small team within Valencia's IT department.

Melanie Hardy, Software & Integration Architect, spent years observing how the model strained both people and processes. "IT admins managed all portal content," Hardy explained. "We had one or two people tasked to do nothing but content management." Every announcement, every calendar listing, every content update flowed through the small team. At first, centralized control made sense, but the bottleneck eventually became impossible to ignore.

Ahead of their incumbent portal's sunset, Valencia saw a timely opportunity to rethink its approach to content management, communication and overall usability. The college desired a more flexible, distributed model — one reducing operational dependency on a single department and, instead, laying a foundation for a true Campus Experience Platform (CXP).

### A More Modern Way of Working

The first big shift came in 2017 when Valencia rolled out a new Content Management System (CMS) for its website. It marked the first real step toward distributed editing, Hardy recalled. "It changed how we allocated workloads, and we knew we wanted the same capability in our next portal experience." The new platform needed comparable flexibility and personalization — qualities aligning closely with core CXP tenets.

Valencia's Enterprise Application Services department remained committed to a deliberate, methodical evaluation. "We established an informal team within our IT department to evaluate student and employee portals," said Hardy.



The shortlist included the incumbent portal solution, a potential homegrown build and Pathify. Over the next year, the group attended demos, reviewed out-of-the-box functionality and built a weighted scoring system to compare every vendor and capability — from messaging and tasks to content management.

### Setting the Bar for the Next Campus Platform

Certain non-negotiables stood out, including the need for a sustainable mobile app to replace a previous technology that proved costly and ineffective. Maintaining the legacy app fell to the college's most experienced developer, despite the app serving just 5% of the user population. With limited dynamic functionality and a disconnected experience from the web version, maintaining the app no longer justified the time and cost.

Hardy desired granular, distributed editing with tighter controls and permissions. And personalization played a key role: "Hyper-personalized experiences didn't exist before Pathify," Hardy shared. "But we needed a fundamentally different approach to meet student needs.

Personalization creates a clear differentiator in how we engage students and enables us to move beyond the archaic ways we'd been managing the student experience."

Throughout the evaluation, Valencia kept one principle front and center: choose the right system for their current problems and future evolution. A luxury, perhaps, but also a guiding philosophy. "We wanted the best solution, no exceptions," Hardy explained.

Pathify ultimately stood out — not only because it met the technical and functional criteria but because it aligned with Valencia's evolving campus experience philosophy. Three main capabilities drove the decision: Pathify's native Digital Wallet, AI Agent and something harder to quantify — the pace of development. "Pathify feels like a company building toward something, not just maintaining a static product," Hardy remarked.

### Decentralizing Content Ownership

Valencia soft-launched MyVC — its new Pathify-powered hub — in October 2024, capping an 18-month effort reshaping the college's digital experience and its organizational rhythm.

Pathify's distributed content management model (flexible to align with varying practices) unlocked a new level of shared ownership across campus. Content development and updates, group administration and day-to-day communications now sit with the people and business units closest to the work. "With Pathify, admins continue uncovering new ways to work, advancing how the entire institution thinks about communicating with students," Hardy said. Departments across campus now lead their own parts of MyVC — a shift Hardy called "very gratifying."

MyVC became the institution's connective tissue, bridging departments and unifying communities that once operated in separate digital worlds. "What we love about Pathify comes down to how it shifts our work from reactive firefighting to proactive planning," emphasized Hardy. "It helps free up our time, giving us space to plan ahead, instead of scrambling to catch up."

**“We needed a fundamentally different approach to meet student needs. Personalization creates a clear differentiator in how we engage students.”**

**— Melanie Hardy**

Photo Credits: Valencia College

### A Hub That Amplifies and Consolidates

Like many institutions, Valencia accumulated numerous tools over time, each addressing a narrow problem but collectively contributing to a fragmented experience with redundant functionality. Utilization varied, too — certain tools weren't easily visible to users — adding yet another layer of inconsistency to the experience.

Pathify streamlined Valencia's disjointed tools by integrating and consolidating several standalone systems, with additional opportunities for evaluation as contracts expire. Upcoming changes include replacing Anthology Engage with Communities, transitioning Localist event and calendar management into Pathify and launching Pathify's AI Agent in 2026.

Enterprise Application Services leads a software development reorganization that further supports unification efforts, offering the institution improved visibility into its tech stack and usage, and providing a stronger foundation for future consolidation.

"We believe the fewer pieces of technology we need to get working together, the better the results for students and staff," Hardy shared. "We focused less on consolidating for cost savings and more on simplifying our overall tech stack to deliver the best, most consistent and reliable experience."

### Transforming the Campus Experience

After a year with the new MyVC hub, the team sees a real transformation in how users interact with campus resources. "I'm excited to continue making it easier for students to find what they need," said Hardy. "Pathify gives us the tools to do this in a genuine, authentic way."

"The out-of-the-box experience is fantastic," Hardy added — a clear sign Valencia now delivers on its promise to streamline and simplify the digital experience. Beyond the technology itself, MyVC shifted how departments collaborate, empowered teams to take ownership of content and created a more connected, cohesive experience for the entire campus.



**Melanie Hardy**  
Software & Integration Architect  
Valencia College



Photo Credits: Valencia College



## About Valencia College

Across 10 campuses and centers, Valencia College delivers high-quality, affordable education that prepares learners for workforce careers or transfer to four-year universities. The college fosters a welcoming environment and outcomes-focused programs across associate, bachelor's and continuing education pathways. Renowned for its innovative practices and strong community impact, Valencia earned the inaugural Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and continues playing a significant role in Central Florida economic development. Learn more at [valenciacollege.edu](http://valenciacollege.edu).

# VALENCIA COLLEGE

# MIND THE (EXPERIENCE) GAP

## WHAT 1,000+ STUDENTS SHARED ABOUT CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY



Photo Credit: Unsplash

Somewhere on campus, a first-year student tries to register for classes. She toggles between a student portal, the course catalog, the financial aid system, and the registrar's site, piecing together whether she can afford the courses she needs and if they'll fit her schedule. Every minute she spends clicking around adds a little more pressure, and with registration closing soon, she's stressed, exasperated and questioning whether she made the right choice in enrolling at all.

She's far from alone.

Pathify's 2025 Student Digital Experience Survey gathered insights from over 1,000 U.S. college and university students and found nearly half of students missed a critical deadline — an assignment, a payment, a registration window — simply because they didn't know it was due.

In other words, the very systems designed to support students often unintentionally work against them. This is what makes this situation so important — the solution isn't mysterious or futuristic. It's clear, practical and very much within reach.

### The Experience Gap

I'm not the first to point out how today's students expect technology that just works. They're accustomed to apps remembering their preferences and interfaces so intuitive they don't need instructions or tutorials. Then, they arrive on campus only to navigate a labyrinth of platforms, logins and workflows that test their patience and will to persist.

Data backs up this disconnect: More than half of surveyed students (59%) say their institution's digital experience falls short of the technology they use in the rest of their lives — and they believe it should be better. Only 21% feel their campus tech meets the standard. This isn't entitlement — it's students recognizing dysfunction and being honest (and polite) enough to point it out.

### The Real Cost of Frustration and Inconvenience

Let's return to our first-year student. Our survey found 60% of students spend more than five minutes searching for basic information like their course schedule or financial aid status. Roughly a quarter spend 10 minutes or more. Two-thirds (66%) "sometimes," "frequently," or "very frequently" click through multiple links or platforms just to complete a simple task. Inconvenience accumulates quickly — students burn precious time hunting down information that should be front and center, not buried under clicks.

And then consider the emotional toll. Ask students how they feel about their school's digital systems, and nearly 70% report feeling frustrated at least "sometimes." For 40%, frustration happens regularly. When technology creates barriers, it's harder for students to succeed — and that technology may undermine an institution's own mission.

### Those Who Need the Most Support Face the Most Friction

Here's where the experience gap becomes fundamentally uneven. First-year students — still learning how college works while juggling new academic demands — are more likely than upperclassmen to feel "very frequent" frustration with campus technology. First-generation students are less likely than their peers to report a "very positive" impact from their school's digital experience, demonstrating how much harder navigating college becomes without built-in institutional knowledge.

For any student finding their footing in a completely new environment, technology should steady the path — not complicate it.

And those at public institutions — which often serve larger, more diverse and more economically varied populations — are less likely than their private school peers to rate their digital platform's usability as "excellent." Complexity may be expected in large public systems, but it shouldn't be the student's burden. Students are signaling the experience can (and must) improve.

Altogether, these disparities surface a simple point — poor digital experiences don't affect students equally. The friction isn't random — it impacts the students that institutions most want to support. And when that inequity goes unaddressed, it quietly pushes certain students further from the finish line.

### The Importance of Community and Connection

We know belonging contributes to student success<sup>1</sup>. Students who feel more connected persist at higher rates, engage more deeply with learning and graduate with stronger ties. Digital experiences must enable and accelerate a sense of belonging.

Yet only one-third of students use institution-provided technology to find clubs and groups. The rest rely on word of mouth, flyers, chance encounters, or unregulated social media. A resounding 65% wish their institution made it easier to discover campus organizations — that's nearly two-thirds of students saying they want to get more involved but can't figure out how. The communication gap appears even more stark — barely a quarter of students use their school's community app to connect with peers, while 64% wish their institution would make peer-to-peer communication easier.

Here's what the data tells us: students want to connect. They want to get involved, and they want to feel like they're part of a community... their current technology just isn't helping them do it.

### How Campus Tech Shapes Reputation

Students don't keep their frustrations to themselves. More than half of students (54%) say they're willing to share their institution's digital experience with prospective students — even if it's not entirely positive. In a world where social media and peer recommendations shape most consumer decisions, every student's experience becomes part of the story prospective students hear.

The enrollment implications also run deep. Thirty-two percent of current students report if they were choosing their college based only on digital systems, they would rethink their decision. In other words, nearly 1 in 3 students regret their enrollment when they consider the technology you've given them. For institutions facing enrollment pressures, this represents both a challenge and an opportunity<sup>2</sup>. Digital experience forms your institutional value proposition. Students evaluate you on it, and it offers a significant, controllable lever for making a real impact.

### One Platform, Better Outcomes

Here's the encouraging part: Students told us exactly what they want. When asked how they prefer to access student services, 75% of students chose "through a single, centralized platform" over separate tools — a 3:1 preference for a consolidated experience.

Even more compelling, 95% of students say they're "somewhat" or "very" likely to use a single digital platform if their institution offered one. This isn't risky change management. Students welcome the chance to embrace a one-stop shop. And institutions making this shift see meaningful results. Students engaging with unified Campus Experience Platforms like Pathify are:

- More than 3x as likely to only use 1 or 2 platforms to manage their college experience
- 2x less likely to experience stress from digital systems
- 3x more likely to rate their digital hub's usability as "good" or "excellent"
- Nearly 2x as likely to share their experience with others

These outcomes translate directly into the metrics institutions care about: satisfaction, persistence, success, and reputation.

### Digital Campus Experiences Matter

The data makes one thing clear — how institutions handle digital experiences matters. The institutions acting now build advantages that compound over time. The question isn't whether fragmented digital experiences create problems. They do — the data proves it. The real question becomes whether your institution will step forward to solve it.

Students show remarkable forgiveness when they see genuine improvement. And the return on getting it right extends far beyond your tech stack — it touches everything your institution aims to accomplish.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As Pathify's Head of Alliances, Shana Holman partners with university leadership teams and Pathify's customer advisory board to tackle complex challenges facing higher education. With extensive experience in higher ed and strategic partnerships, she brings practical insights on how universities can use integrated technology to create more connected campus experiences — while getting value out of the tech they already own.

Shana calls Denver, Colorado, home, where she spends as much time as possible in the mountains with her family and two yellow Labradors. She's also a parent to two college students, giving her a true front-row seat on whether campus tech actually delivers on its promises.



**Shana Holman**  
Head of Alliances  
Pathify

### ABOUT THE SURVEY

The 2025 Pathify Student Digital Experience Survey was conducted in partnership with Thrive Analytics and surveyed 1,000+ U.S. college students aged 17-24 across public and private four-year institutions. For full survey results, visit: <https://pathify.com/lp/2025-student-digital-experience-survey/>

#### Sources

<sup>1</sup>"How Student Experience and Belonging Interventions Can Support Strong Post-Secondary Outcomes" Institute for Higher Education Policy, August 2024, <https://www.ihep.org/publication/student-experience-and-belonging-strong-outcomes/>

<sup>2</sup>"Branding is a Vibe — and Your (Clunky) Digital Experience Might Be Ruining It" Collegium Magazine, Spring 2025, <https://pathify.com/blog/branding-is-a-vibe-and-your-clunky-digital->

“Poor digital experiences don't affect students equally. The friction isn't random — it impacts the students that institutions most want to support.”

— Shana Holman



Photo Credit: Unsplash

# IN THE BUSINESS OF TRANSFORMATION

## UVA MCINTIRE SCHOOL OF COMMERCE STREAMLINES AND PERSONALIZES USER EXPERIENCES

The University of Virginia (UVA) McIntire School of Commerce built its reputation by preparing students to become the next generation of business leaders, shaping the global marketplace. Through an integrated curriculum combining technology, corporate collaboration and immersive global learning, McIntire delivers undergraduate and graduate business programs recognized for academic excellence and real-world impact.

### Outgrowing the Old Model

To support a growing community and expanding content needs, McIntire relied on a homegrown portal solution, housing thousands of pages of long-form information. As the volume and complexity of content increased, students and staff found it increasingly challenging to locate key resources and answers to important questions quickly. Like many institutions, the school relied heavily on email as its primary communication channel, resulting in crowded inboxes and missed messages.

“Our old portal suffered from too much content — streamlining information became our main priority. We focused on delivering the right content to the right users,” explained Ellie Kates-da Silva, Senior Manager of Marketing Technology at UVA McIntire.

The original portal also offered limited integration with other campus tools and systems, forcing students to switch between multiple platforms and logins to complete everyday tasks. As McIntire continued to evolve its digital strategy, this infrastructure no longer reflected the seamless, modern experience the School strives to provide. With this in mind, the School began exploring solutions to better disseminate information, personalize experiences and strengthen engagement.

### From Email Overload to Centralized Hub

UVA McIntire chose Pathify’s Campus Experience Platform (CXP) to power MyMcIntire, a unified digital front door for students, faculty and staff. More than a traditional portal or standalone app, MyMcIntire provides a modern front end — centralizing information, tools and community. End-user experience now sits at the center of the McIntire School’s engagement strategy.

“Pathify gave us a centralized hub for communication and a single pane of glass where we house every tool and resource — all in one place. Now, users access Canvas, email, Handshake, and more from their dashboard,” Kates-da Silva said. This strategic consolidation of tools

streamlined the user experience but also increased access to key technologies, amplifying usage across the School’s tech stack.

### Personalized Experience for Every User

Pathify Communities sits at the core of the MyMcIntire experience, powering groups with discussion feeds, event capabilities and targeted push notifications. The CXP architecture pulls data from the student information system (SIS), giving students automatic access to cohort and program-specific groups. Additionally, students discover and opt into interest groups to fit their experience. “An undergrad concentrating in Accounting sees different content than a faculty member. Scoping content to different groups makes the experience really powerful — everything stays relevant and easy to find,” Kates-da Silva explained.

Pathify’s deep role-based functionality allows the team to tailor and deploy communications to specific audiences across web and mobile devices, while limiting site wide announcements to select hub admins. “The balance helps us avoid information overload. Pathify enabled us to rethink our entire communication strategy and leverage roles to reduce and target notifications,” Kates-da Silva noted.

### Shared Vision for Change

During implementation, Kates-da Silva and team focused on building trust, ensuring colleagues felt supported through every stage of the rollout. They hosted practice groups, office hours and monthly check-ins with group admins and content authors to secure buy-in and empower confidence in leveraging the platform’s full potential.

The team eventually reached a shared conclusion: effectively reaching students required simplified communication rather than redundant messages sent across the platform and email. “Email became deeply ingrained in our way of working and difficult to remove from legacy processes. However, when we shared feedback with staff and faculty about how students felt overwhelmed with emails, they understood the vision for change,” Kates-da Silva shared.

The new, shared strategy led to meaningful improvements. Students’ ability to find key information and stay informed about important messages increased — outcomes widely celebrated across the community. Staff also gained a more streamlined platform, helping modernize existing manual processes. “Admins no longer need to create their own webpages,” Kates-da Silva said. “Pathify’s native content management tools help save time and engage students with more effective resources.”

### Simplified Task Management

MyMcIntire also transformed task management — giving students a clear roadmap to success. “Before, we used a static web page to list student tasks, but it offered no way to track engagement or compliance,” said Kates-da Silva.

“We use tasks heavily during orientation and graduation. Students check things off their list, and we see those updates on the back end,” Kates-da Silva added. Additionally, McIntire tracks completion in real time and downloads detailed reports to identify at-risk students. “It provides granular visibility into student behavior. Instead of guesswork, we strategically re-target students who need help,” Kates-da Silva said.

### Results and Impact

McIntire School’s shift to Pathify kicked off a strategic transformation of its student user experience and resulted in notable efficiency gains for staff. “MyMcIntire represented a welcome change for everyone,” remarked Kates-da Silva. “Staff responsible for disseminating information no longer waste time writing long webpages and emails that students ignore. And the user interface proved easy and fun for all our users — students, faculty, staff, and admins.”

### The Future of MyMcIntire

The McIntire School plans to deepen personalization with Pathify’s Dashboard Creator, delivering more customized, role-specific experiences. This evolution coincides with a comprehensive School rebrand, during which the team will integrate user feedback to expand features like FAQs and advanced task management. “Leveraging Pathify’s CXP enables us to evolve MyMcIntire over time, matching the innovative, transformative spirit of the school,” Kates-da Silva emphasized.

Ready to streamline your campus experience? Check out Kates-da Silva’s key tips:

- Listen before building — focus groups reveal real problems and friction points.
- Manage change mindfully — building trust and providing training and ongoing support help admins shift away from email-first habits.
- Design with mobile in mind — adopt a mobile-first approach to meet students where they are.
- Send fewer, more targeted messages — strategic segmentation and relevant notifications replace email overload.
- Empower content owners while keeping guardrails — admin roles allow teams to move fast while delegating certain permissions.



**Ellie Kates-da Silva**

Senior Manager of Marketing Technology  
UVA McIntire

Photo Credit: UVA McIntire

# About The University of Virginia McIntire School of Commerce

Photo Credit: UVA McIntire

**Student Headcount:** 1,200+

**Institution Type:** Public business school

**Location:** Charlottesville, Virginia

**Tech Stack:** Oracle PeopleSoft, Canvas

**Technology Consolidated into Pathify:** Homegrown student portal

For more than 100 years, UVA McIntire has been committed to delivering a transformational business education that prepares students to become global citizens who can transform business and society. Grounded in research and informed by alumni insights and corporate collaborations, McIntire's integrated undergraduate and innovative graduate programs provide experience-based learning, adopt and leverage cutting-edge technology, and offer immersive global learning opportunities. Home to seven research centers, with campuses in Charlottesville and Northern Virginia, the Commerce School is consistently recognized for its scholarly excellence, academic experience, and unparalleled alumni network. Learn more at [commerce.virginia.edu](https://commerce.virginia.edu).



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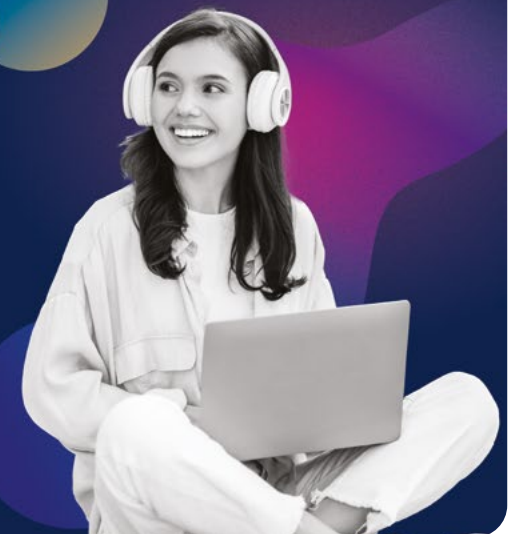


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# REBUILDING THE DIGITAL CORE

## ITHACA COLLEGE EMBRACES PATHIFY'S CAMPUS EXPERIENCE PLATFORM

When Casey Kendall, Deputy Chief Information Officer at Ithaca College, meets regularly with the college's Student Governance Council (SGC), she approaches each topic with a high level of care and detail — if it affects students, it deserves her full focus. “Our meetings give student leaders a chance to discuss campuswide initiatives, service areas or particularly frustrating experiences,” Kendall explained.

When the SGC raised concerns about the college's digital experience in 2023, Kendall listened carefully. Students described a fragmented, exhausting experience — the college's link farm offered no mobile component, communications lived across disconnected systems, essential tasks required bouncing between systems with no clear path, and nothing felt intuitive. Students made it clear: They wanted college leadership to consider a new, campuswide platform.

Rather than chasing another front-end solution or temporary fix, Kendall framed the challenge as rebuilding the college's digital core — ensuring student experience improvements were sustainable, not superficial. The search led the college to Pathify's Campus Experience Platform (CXP), built around the very idea students sought — a single front door to the entire campus.

### The Reality of Fragmentation

For years, Ithaca's tech stack functioned as a set of disconnected parts. Students toggled between Banner self-service, Canvas, Intercom email announcements, Anthology Engage, and a static page of links with minimal personalization or direction. All of the pieces worked on their own, but not together — and that became the root of the problem. “The result wasn't just inconvenience — it was lost time, missed information and unequal access to essential resources depending on a student's familiarity with campus systems,” Kendall said.

With a list of must-haves from the SGC — including a mobile app, centralized communications and a modern look and feel — Ithaca College explored several options, including Ellucian Experience and several standalone mobile apps, but none delivered the adaptability the college needed. “We wanted the freedom of both a web and mobile platform,” Kendall noted. “Other vendors' UI felt dated, with interfaces and experiences falling short of what our students expected.”

### Creating a Single Hub

Through its evaluation, Ithaca prioritized flexibility, longevity and integration — criteria that ultimately aligned best with Pathify's Campus Experience Platform, Kendall recalled. “The deciding factor came down to the ability

to unify everything without ripping out existing systems,” Kendall said. “We didn't want to completely rebuild our tech stack. We needed a platform bringing it all together — information, communications, resources, services, community.” Pathify also offered the long-term adaptability the college needed — a solution designed to stay evergreen even as core systems evolved.

### Making Digital Experience a Shared Responsibility

As implementation unfolded, it became clear the project extended beyond a typical IT initiative. Ithaca's IT and Marketing Communications teams, already experienced collaborators on the college's website, brought a similar partnership approach to the rollout: MarCom managed content while IT handled development. “Partnering with Marketing Communications made it easier to engage students,” shared Kendall. “They translated technology changes into real impact for our campus users.”

This structure ensured Pathify wouldn't become another IT-owned platform, but a shared institutional experience with clear content ownership and technical stewardship. Involving both teams from the start ensured Pathify aligned with Ithaca's brand, communication strategy and student-centered mission, creating a seamless campus experience across all touchpoints.

Behind the scenes, the initiative benefited from deep technical and cross-functional leadership. Rob Snyder, Director of Analytics and Special IT Projects, played a key role in shaping the technical integration approach, ensuring Pathify could unify systems without disrupting Ithaca's existing architecture. Lisa Efig-Guida, Digital Experience & Adoption Specialist, and Charlie Wang, UI/UX Designer, partnered closely with student leaders, facilitating and supporting student-led focus groups to ground the platform in real user needs. On the communications side, Jennifer King MacKenzie, Director of Marketing and Internal Communications, led the marketing and communications effort, with Melissa Pittinaro, Executive Director of Marketing Strategy, contributing to the broader strategy that helped translate platform changes into clear, student-centered messaging.

### Built to Connect and Evolve

myIC — Ithaca's Pathify-powered hub — launched during the fall 2025 semester. “Today, students can check grades, schedules, assignments, emails — in one place,” said Kendall. “They can access core academic and campus services, and the tools available in the platform continue to grow.”

Integrations with systems like Banner, Canvas and DegreeWorks eliminated the constant tab-switching that once defined the student experience. “It feels much more cohesive,” Kendall explained. “Students don't need to think about the system they're in — they focus on what they need.”

### Charting the Next Phase

Looking ahead, Ithaca is expanding engagement beyond current students. During the coming semester, the college will partner with Orientation Leaders to embed myIC into first-year onboarding, recognizing that early digital fluency is critical to helping new students navigate campus systems with confidence from day one. “Student feedback didn't just inform the platform — it actively shaped how myIC was designed, prioritized and introduced to campus,” said Kendall.

Next on the roadmap: configuring announcements and tasks, followed by deeper integrations and expanded personalization. Rather than treating launch as a finish line, Ithaca views myIC as a living platform — shaped by student feedback, evolving institutional needs and ongoing integration work. The college also plans to explore Pathify's Parent Hub — a strategic move to reduce administrative burden while giving families easier access to information and content.

Ithaca's experience reflects a bigger shift across higher education — a move away from scattered tools and disconnected experiences and toward a more connected, intentional ecosystem. With Pathify's CXP, the college positions itself to meet student expectations today while laying a strong foundation for the years ahead.



**Casey Kendall**

Deputy Chief Information Officer  
Ithaca College

Photo Credit: Ithaca College

## About Ithaca College

**Student Headcount:** 4,700

**Institution Type:** Private university

**Location:** Ithaca, New York

**Tech Stack:** Ellucian Banner, Canvas, Anthology Engage

**Technology Consolidated into Pathify:** Legacy link farm portal

Ithaca College, located in the picturesque town of Ithaca, New York, is renowned for its blend of liberal arts education and professional training. The college boasts an impressive array of programs across its five schools: Communications; Business; Music, Theater, and Dance; Health Sciences and Human Performance; and Humanities and Sciences. Beyond academics, Ithaca College is committed to fostering a vibrant campus community. The college's location provides a stunning backdrop for a variety of outdoor activities and student life is enriched by a plethora of clubs, organizations and athletic teams. The college's commitment to inclusivity and sustainability are also central to its mission, preparing graduates to be thoughtful, ethical leaders in a global society. Learn more at [ithaca.edu](http://ithaca.edu).



## EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

FROM ED TECH SPOTLIGHTS TO MAJOR HEADLINES, SEE WHY THE MEDIA CAN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT PATHIFY.



Scan to catch up on the latest news



Photo Credit: Unsplash

# COOK'S CORNER

By Libby Evans

Some combinations simply do not belong together. Take Coca-Cola and Mentos, toothpaste and orange juice, or socks and sandals!? But somehow... cherry and pistachio? Chef's kiss.

Trust us, the combo is delightfully buttery, sweet, tart, and absolutely divine.

Pathify's Campus Experience Platform (CXP) brings that same energy to campus life. You already have the essentials — LMS, SIS, email, events, calendars, content. A CXP doesn't replace them — it folds, layers and whips everything into one smooth, mouthwatering experience.

While our Product team stays busy cooking up platform-related recipes (turn to page 45 for what's coming next), we couldn't resist whipping up our own take on a CXP — a **Cherry X Pistachio** sheet cake.

Packing a classic-with-a-twist base layer, we pile on flavor, texture and finishing touches. When added to a sprawling, somewhat disjointed family meal (tech stack), it's cohesive and elevated, bringing all eaters (users) together in a way no other dessert (software) could. So, tuck in and help yourself to a slice of our CXP (cake) and don't forget the liquid accompaniment — a **Citrus X Prosecco**.

Photo Credits: Pathify

## Cherry X Pistachio (CXP) Cake

A soft, nutty confection topped with cream cheese frosting and finished with bursts of bright cherries — where punchy flavors come together to create something beautifully transformative.

**Prep Time:** 30 minutes

**Cook Time:** 60 minutes

**Total Time:** 90 minutes

**Yield:** One 9 x 13 sheet cake; serves 8-10

### Ingredients:

#### For the Pistachio Sheet Cake

**3 sticks** unsalted butter

**1½ cups** sugar

**3 limes**, zested

**6 large** eggs

**1 tsp** vanilla bean paste

**1 cup** all-purpose flour

**2 cups** shelled pistachios (unsalted)

**1 cup** raw almonds (unsalted)

**1½ tsp** baking powder

**1 tsp** salt

#### For the Cherry Compote

**1½ cups** fresh cherries, stoned and halved

**¼ cup** sugar

**1 tbsp** lime juice (approx. ½ lime)

**¼ tsp** almond extract (optional)

#### For the Cream Cheese Frosting

**1/3 cup** unsalted butter (room temperature)

**1/2 cup** cream cheese (room temperature)

**3 cups** powdered sugar

**2 tsp** vanilla bean paste

#### For Garnish

**3 tbsp** pistachios, finely chopped

### Assembly and Cooking:

**Preheat the Oven:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a deep 9 x 13 baking pan and line the base with parchment paper.

**Make the Nut Mixture:** In a food processor, blitz the pistachios and almonds until finely ground. Add the flour and pulse to combine. Transfer to a bowl, whisk in the baking powder and salt and set aside.

**Prepare the Batter:** In the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together the butter, sugar and lime zest until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes.

**Incorporate the Eggs:** Add the eggs one at a time, beating until fully combined. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and beat in the vanilla.

**Combine Wet & Dry Ingredients:** Gradually add the nut and flour mixture and mix on low speed until combined. Scrape the mixture into the prepared baking pan and spread into an even layer.

**Bake:** Bake for 50–55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Remove from the oven and cool completely in the pan on a wire rack.

**Make the Cherry Compote:** While the cake bakes, combine the cherries, sugar, lime zest, and almond extract (if using) in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat until boiling, then simmer for 2–3 minutes, until the cherries soften, but hold their shape. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the cherries to a separate bowl. Continue simmering the remaining liquid until reduced to a syrup, then pour it over the cherries. Refrigerate until completely cooled.

**Make the Cream Cheese Frosting:** Beat the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Gradually add the powdered sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Mix in the vanilla.

**Assemble the Cake:** Slather frosting over the cooled cake, drizzle with cherry compote and garnish with chopped pistachios. Slice, serve and enjoy alongside a glass of our Citrus X Prosecco cocktail.

## Citrus X Prosecco (CXP) Cocktail

Now this is Pathify in liquid form. Separate ingredients, intentionally stirred together into one bubbly experience — just as a CXP is meant to do!

**Total Time:** 5 minutes

**Servings:** 4 cocktails

### Ingredients:

**1 cup** freshly strained citrus juice (we like Meyer lemon, tangerine, blood orange, or grapefruit)

**½ cup** simple syrup

**4 cups** prosecco or other dry sparkling wine

Ice

Citrus rounds or wedges (optional)



### Assembly:

In a large pitcher half-filled with ice, combine choice of citrus juice, simple syrup and prosecco. If using, toss in citrus rounds or wedges.

Gently stir and taste. Adjust as needed: add a squeeze of citrus juice if the drink is too sweet or another glug of simple syrup to cut the tartness.

Pour into four glasses. Feeling ambitious? Top with an extra splash of prosecco — **Cheers for eXtra P**unch!



Photo Credits: Pathify

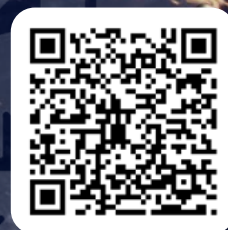
#### Non-Alcoholic Alternative:

Skip the prosecco and swap sparkling water for a refreshing mocktail.

# CAMPUS EXPERIENCE PLATFORM

COMMUNICATION.  
CONNECTION.  
COMMUNITY.  
ALL IN ONE PLACE.

Learn more about CXP here



# LOOKING AHEAD

## PATHIFY'S PRODUCT ROADMAP

Photo Credit: Unsplash

Campus experience equals perpetual motion — and Pathify moves with it.

Our product roadmap blends momentum with intention. We continue strengthening the platform's core capabilities, expanding integrations and unlocking new ways to connect people and resources. The result delivers a more personal, engaging, future-ready experience for the entire campus community.

Take a look at what's planned for the rest of this year.



### AI Agent Enhancements

Formerly Pathify's GenAI Chatbot

Pathify's AI Agent delivers timely support by centralizing answers, actions and escalations into one experience. Built directly into the Pathify platform, the Agent streamlines support while enabling more personal, responsive experiences at scale. Here's what's next:

#### Live Agent Handoff

Seamlessly transition complex or sensitive questions from the AI Agent to a live human agent — without requiring users to repeat themselves.

#### Conversation History

Preserve prior chat context so the Agent can intelligently reference previous interactions over time. By "remembering" what users asked or completed, the experience becomes more continuous and personalized.

*AI Agent enhancements will roll out in phases throughout 2026.*



### Integrations

Pathify continues releasing new out-of-the-box integrations and recipes, connecting core systems and simplifying workflows. Surface the right information and actions in one place, reduce handoffs between tools and deliver a more modern end-user experience.

Planned 2026 integrations include:

- Formstack
- Slate
- Softdocs
- Stellic
- Expanded payment providers (within Communities), including Transact, PayPal, Square, and others

*Have an integration in mind? Connect with [product@pathify.com](mailto:product@pathify.com) to help grow this list!*

## **User Profile Uplift**

Pathify's User Profile Uplift turns basic user profiles into rich digital snapshots. A refreshed two-column layout creates space for photos, videos and role-specific details, while clearer privacy controls empower users to decide exactly what's visible — and to whom.

Behind the scenes, admins gain simpler tools to manage profiles at scale, making it easier to securely and intentionally connect across campus.

*User Profile Enhancements are scheduled for release in Q2 2026.*

## **Content Creator**

Enhanced Content Creator tools give teams an efficient, accessible way to build, manage and publish content — without duplicating work. Using structured components that meet WCAG standards, teams create consistent, compliant experiences across devices.

Bring professional-grade content management to Pathify, reducing reliance on external CMS platforms and helping teams move faster while remaining compliant.

*Enhanced content creation functionality is expected in the second half of 2026.*

*Functionality and listed features are subject to change throughout the development process.*

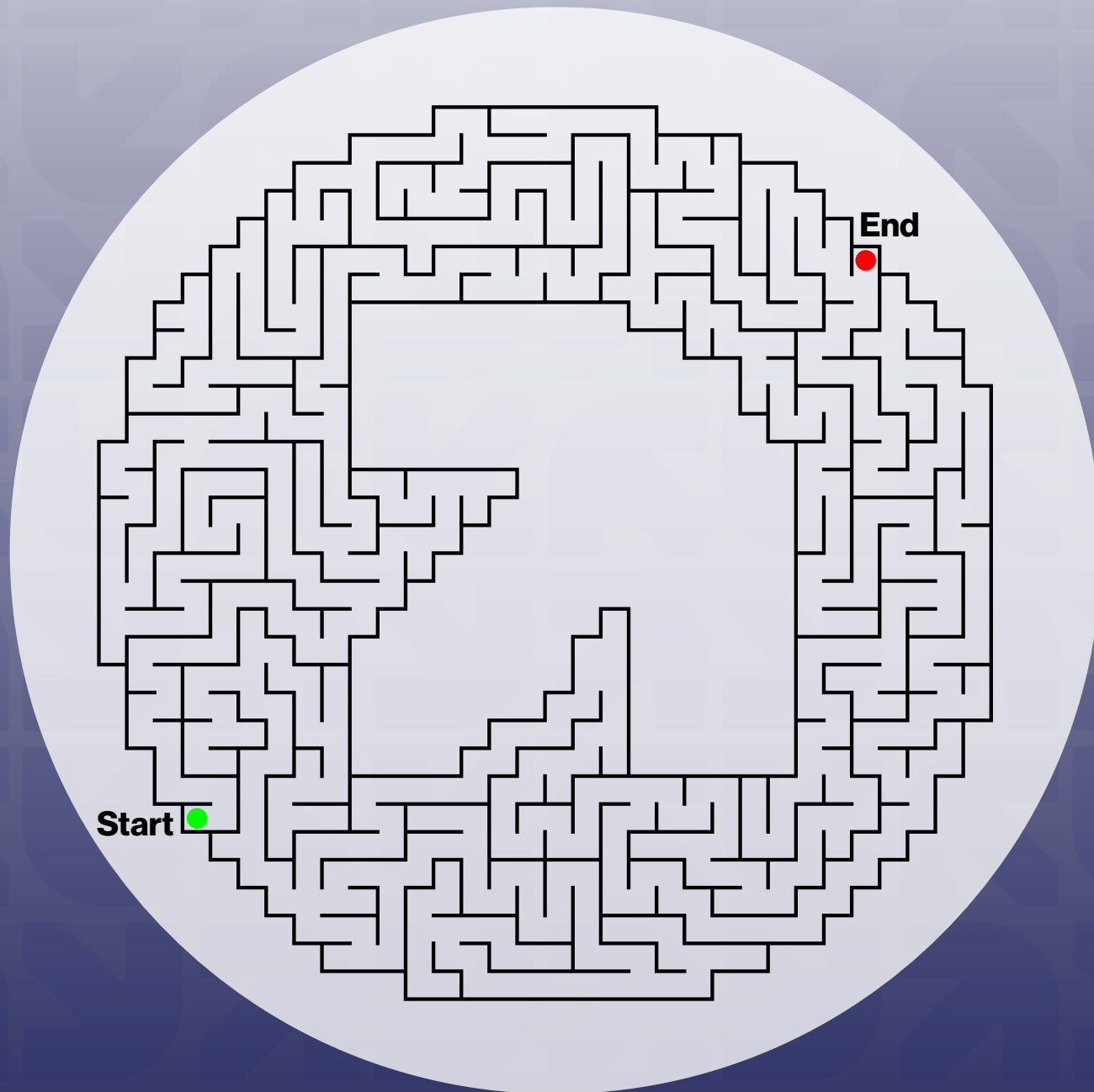
Photo Credit: Unsplash

# BRAIN GAMES

PATHIFY PUZZLE CHALLENGE

## MAZE

Find your way from the **Start** to the **End** without hitting any walls.



Scan for answer key



## SUDOKU

Each row, column and square must contain the numbers 1-9, without repeating numbers within the row, column or square.

6						3	8
	8			9		7	
4		2		6			
5		3		1	2		
1			4				
					5		3
			2		4		6
				7			2
	5			9	3	7	

## PATHFINDER

Connect letters in any direction to find hidden words, using up every letter in the grid.

E	I	T	I	N	U
S	T	E	C	M	M
Y	F	C	O	O	O
T	I	H	N	L	G
N	C	H	T	A	Y
E	X	U	E	S	P
M	P	S	C	C	S
E	G	A	G	N	E

# THE FINAL WORD

By Matt Hammond

Let me start with the obvious. In 2026, higher ed remains under siege in a way never before experienced. Hard stop. In last year's Fall edition, I referenced what we at Pathify call "The Perfect Storm." I'm certain the 11 brave souls that made it to the bitter end of that article have a crystal clear recollection of how we define it... but for everyone else, I'll summarize quickly:

People made fewer babies during the Great Recession, so fewer students now graduate from high school. Regulation changes make enrolling international students more difficult. Prospective students gravitate toward less expensive options, while increased focus on degree ROI saps confidence. And no matter what side of the fence you sit on, higher ed now finds itself weaponized politically.

And I'm not sure if you've heard it mentioned in passing — but people seem to be talking about this weird little noun called AI. (Person, place, thing, idea)??

I never want to suggest things were *easy* in the past. But I do believe it's fair to say, looking at the first couple of decades this century, things seemed *easier*. Traditional student counts increased, full tuition international students drove growth and a majority of people carried a positive view of higher ed. I read one stat the other day that said as recently as 2018, 73% of teenagers viewed higher ed as a likely next step. In 2025, that number dropped to 45%. I was the guy in college whose lone math class was "The Art of Deceiving With Digits" (Intro to Statistics), so I'm no mathematician — but that seems bad. Real bad.

What's so wild is that it felt like it all just changed so *quickly* last year. So let me check in here... same page? Am I crazy?

It's no secret that students' expectations have shifted massively. And if there's one message I want you to hear, it's that higher ed can no longer expect to deliver a positive overall experience if the way the community experiences technology day-to-day stinks.

We spoke with thousands of students over the last year, and three "new" expectations consistently beat out the rest. Students expressed zero interest in being a nameless face. They simply won't engage with clunky VHS-era technology impeding their path to success. And they now rank an institution's technology as "very important" to their final decision.

It's fair to say institutions delivering a consumer-grade technology experience will prove significantly more competitive, and therefore, digital transformation must move to the top of the priority list. Unfortunately, this is where a lot of teams really get stuck.

Here's my (always unsolicited) advice when wrapping your head around the Perfect Storm, digital transformation and what feels like a monumental effort to deliver consumer-grade technology to your entire community.

- Upgrading legacy SIS portals solves only a fraction of the problem, and letting all resources be sucked into the SIS to the cloud black hole delivers zero value to how your broader community experiences technology. It probably makes it worse — for years. You need to do this, but it cannot be at the expense of everything else.
- Drinking the CRM Kool-Aid that ultimately requires you to somehow consolidate ALL your data into a single place for AI agents to save the world requires more time and resources than most Fortune 100 companies bring to bear.

Annually updating two or three of the 37 front-end UIs students use on any given day is actually the antithesis of digital transformation. This is not a consumer-grade strategy.

So here's where Pathify asks folks to think differently.

As soon as possible, prioritize dramatically improving the way the broader community experiences technology, focusing on solutions that deliver tangible ROI in less than a year and do not dramatically increase overall spend long term. Focus on closing the rapidly widening Experience Gap driven by the exponential, AI powered advances people enjoy with consumer technology.

Closing this Experience Gap comes down to stopping the daily — maybe hourly — treasure hunt people find themselves navigating with your tech stack. Pathify does this like no other by consolidating all the clunky front doors and interfaces that accumulated over time into a single personalized front-end experience.

Think about an AI-powered student concierge that answers questions and nudges on what's next to actually help get things done. And at the end of the day, integrating people and the community into the mix remains absolutely critical. It never ceases to amaze me how community and people connection seem to fall out of the equation with enterprise software. We put the community front and center.

Welcome to the CXP, baby.

Pathify's Campus Experience Platform isn't perfect. It will not do coursework for you or guarantee a diploma. It does not eat pressure for breakfast. And it certainly won't deliver a six-figure career within 10 minutes of graduation.

But it's still pretty damn cool. The CXP enables schools to eliminate the cost, overhead and completely obsolete experience of maintaining a multitude of legacy front-end systems and portals. It does not require ripping and replacing super-heavy source systems (while actually increasing usage of some of the really cool tech you've already invested in). And it is absolutely not just a "portal 2.0" or app refresh. The CXP is a fundamental shift in philosophy and strategy — built with the campus community at the center.

Back 10 or 20 years ago, nobody really desired a crappy technology experience. People didn't want to be treated as numbers. Prospective students probably were not seeking a stuck-in-the-mud technology posture. IT folks really didn't want to maintain an expensive, siloed, Rorschach test of a tech stack.

Instead, because of the headwinds facing higher ed, and because of the AI revolution, people now take these expectations much more seriously. To the point where they're desperately searching for institutions that also take them seriously. What happens if public opinion of higher ed continues to erode, losing its place as an invaluable beacon of knowledge and experience that truly makes people better? This is happening, and it's up to us to listen. The next decade will be the most challenging faced by higher ed since the Great Depression. And if we choose not to listen, choose not to take action, we will continue to lose ground to all the other options people *perceive* cost less — and make more.

We kicked off this edition with a challenge: *the question is no longer whether higher ed will change...but what today's leaders will leave behind for the generations and communities who follow.* If you agree closing the Experience Gap represents a solid first step in this direction — you're one of us — so let's get moving. Yesterday was better than today. Today is better than tomorrow. And tomorrow's better than next year.

Look at that — I think I also ended with the obvious.

**“The CXP enables schools to eliminate the cost, overhead and obsolete experience of maintaining a multitude of legacy front-end systems and portals... It is a fundamental shift in philosophy and strategy — built with the campus community at the center.”**

**— Matt Hammond**



Photo Credit: Unsplash



**THE NEXT  
CAMPUS CHAPTER**

THE PATHIFY MAGAZINE

**Collegium**

Front & Back Cover: University of Utah  
(Proud Pathify customer since 2025)