

Case study

Weatherford College

Weatherford, Texas



Growing college improves learning environment – gains savings

Established in 1869, Weatherford College is the oldest continuing two-year college in the state of Texas. More recently, Weatherford has been cited as the fastest-growing community college in the state with enrollment increasing by as much as 54 percent. Challenged with the deferred maintenance and rising operating costs associated with aging facilities and rapid growth, the college partnered with Johnson Controls, Inc. in solutions which will provide the college nearly \$4 million in savings over a 14-year period.

Dedicated to its mission, "To provide quality learning opportunities and effective programs that serve the needs of our students and the citizens of our service area," the college expanded its facilities and programs to respond to its rapid growth. Today, Weatherford serves more than 4,400 students at three campuses encompassing 20 buildings.

Expansion efforts began in 1990 when a \$9 million bond paid for facility enhancements, maintenance, and a new Fine Arts building. "We were not able to replace all of our HVAC systems, however," says Andra Cantrell, vice president financial and administrative affairs for Weatherford College, "and, by the summer of 1998, HVAC units and compressors were going out daily."

The situation marked the beginning of Weatherford's partnership with Johnson Controls. Today, a combination of Performance Contracts and a Facility Management Agreement provides savings, improved campus appearance, and allows Weatherford to focus in its core competency – education.

"During the initial RFQ process, Johnson Controls was rated as the most qualified of all prospective partners. They not only demonstrated long-term savings but, after working with the city utilities, they delivered an immediate credit of over \$22,000, due to a missed discount, and negotiated a better rate," notes Cantrell.



Dr. Joe Birmingham, president, and Andra Cantrell, vice president financial and administrative affairs, Weatherford College.

"Johnson Controls continues to be an integral partner in the advancement of institutional initiatives here at Weatherford College. Along with demonstrated savings, a serious commitment has been made to improve upon quality of service in facility enhancements."

ANDRA CANTRELL
VICE PRESIDENT FINANCIAL AND
ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS
WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

A better, more efficient learning environment

"Improved classroom comfort was our number one need," says Cantrell. Due to deferred maintenance, the existing 30-year-old HVAC equipment was not able to maintain consistent temperature and produced poor indoor air quality. Under a Performance Contract, Johnson Controls replaced 105 rooftop units and consolidated the condensing units in the dorms.

Lighting retrofits in all 20 buildings enhanced the learning environment. Lighting levels were dramatically improved, even though the number of fixtures was reduced by half. The installation of new shower heads, low-flow toilets, flush valves, and faucet aerators in the dorms resulted in utility savings of \$1,600 per month. Hot water heaters were also changed from electric to gas.



Meter consolidation and sub-metering throughout the campuses help track energy costs and usage patterns, resulting in lower electric rates. With the help of the Metasys® building automation system, which monitors and controls all buildings, the college is able to lease its Fine Arts facility and allocate appropriate energy costs to its customers.

In 2003, Weatherford and Johnson Controls entered a new Performance Contract involving HVAC upgrades, lighting retrofits, and Metasys system integration at the college's newest campus. The system integration allows equipment at the new campus to be monitored and controlled from the main campus. The roofs of four buildings on the main campus are also being replaced. Perhaps the most exciting addition is the college's new baseball complex, at which Johnson Controls installed two non-potable water wells, which will irrigate the new complex independently of the city water supply. And, most recently, Johnson Controls has been contracted to install a Metasys system at the college's new Coyote Village Student Housing Complex.

Since the work was completed under the original Performance Contract, the annual energy, operation, and maintenance savings have surpassed the guaranteed amounts. Combined with the additional savings that will result from the efforts of the latest contract, Weatherford will save nearly \$4 million over the 14-year life of the contracts.

A partnership built on service

To ensure constant communication during the implementation process, Johnson Controls set up an office on campus for the project manager. "Any time we needed additional help, Johnson Controls was there. When we lost an HVAC staff member, Johnson Controls helped us hire and train a new person," says Andra Cantrell.

The project manager initiated a behavior modification program for the facility staff to improve energy use habits and system operation. As a result, Metasys savings exceeded expectations, due to tighter scheduling and less run time.



Relationship evolves with facility management

Due to success of the first Performance Contract and the trust earned by Johnson Controls, Weatherford entered into a Facility Management Agreement with Johnson Controls in July of 2001. Under the agreement, all decisions are made jointly to foster the partnership, which allows Weatherford to focus in its core mission.

A total of 25 full-time Johnson Controls employees on all three campuses are responsible for HVAC, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, event set-up, vehicle maintenance, custodial, and grounds keeping at all campuses, including the baseball complex.

"We here at Weatherford College know our limitations when it comes to facility management. We are educators! With Johnson Controls as our partner, we can now think 'out of the box' on projects that in the past we would have thought impossible to accomplish in house," concludes Cantrell.



"Weatherford College has benefited incredibly due to our contract with Johnson Controls. The company provides professionally-trained staff that would be extremely difficult for us to find and retain. They have specially trained staff that can be brought in when needed. Even more important, they have significantly reduced our maintenance and HVAC expenses. We couldn't be more pleased with Johnson Controls and the services they have provided to the College."

DR. JOE BIRMINGHAM
PRESIDENT
WEATHERFORD COLLEGE

