PARTNERING TO DELIVER STATE-OF-ART TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE AND APPLICATIONS

Dr. Corey Bradford Sr. has been at Prairie View A&M University for only two years. But during that short time he has driven numerous technology initiatives in support of the institution's strategic plan and to meet faculty and student expectations for on-demand access to applications and services.

"Technology changes very quickly, not only at Prairie View but across the nation, and we need to be vigilant in keeping pace with it," emphasized Bradford, senior vice president for business affairs at Prairie View. "It is impossible to work and learn without current computing technology. In just two years, we have made significant technology changes at Prairie View and Ellucian has changed along with us."

Ellucian supports Prairie View through a full array of Technology Management services including an onsite CIO and 22 other Ellucian employees who provide support for enterprise, network, and desktop applications as well as academic lab support services. In addition, Ellucian employees who work offsite

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

PROFILE:

- Enrollment: 8,425
- Prairie View, Texas
- www.pvamu.edu

CHALLENGES:

- Keeping pace with changing technology and expectations
- Maintaining state-of-art technology environment to attract students and faculty

SOLUTION:

- Ellucian Technology Management Services

RESULTS:

- Technology infrastructure transformed to better serve and attract students, faculty, and staff
- Improved business processes and efficiencies

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> Senior Vice President for Business Affairs

staff the university's help desk 24/7. Ellucian has been working collaboratively with Prairie View as an outsourcing partner since 2004, improving and evolving the university's modern technology infrastructure to support quality instructional technologies and administrative processes that support the university's reputation for producing quality engineers, nurses, and educators.

"Prairie View has benefitted greatly from our long-term relationship with Ellucian," Bradford said. "Our entire technology infrastructure has been transformed to better serve our students, faculty, and staff. And we have a very reliable system now. If there is ever downtime, recovery is swift. We couldn't say that before. We work cooperatively to deliver the best service possible to Prairie View students, staff, and visitors."

Founded in 1876, Prairie View A&M University is the second oldest public institution of higher learning in the state of Texas. A member of the Texas A&M University System, the institution is dedicated to fulfilling its land-grant mission of achieving excellence in teaching, research, and service. It is considered among the finest of America's historically black colleges and universities.

NIMBLE INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTS NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The university has an aggressive strategic plan and IT applications and support play a significant role in delivering it. Currently, the IT staff is focused on five key technology initiatives:

- Providing wireless access outdoors so that students and faculty can work outside, taking advantage of the university's beautiful grounds and year-round clement weather.

- Providing virtualization across campus so that faculty and students can use their mobile devices and have access to a wide range of software applications any place on campus. Virtualization also will bring added cost savings and help position the university for growth.

- Creating a research network exclusively for faculty so they can experiment in a less restrictive environment.

- Automating registration and financial aid processes so that students can execute more administrative processes online.

- Converting manual business forms to electronic for easier access, routing, and approval, and as a means to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

"A state-of-the-art technology environment is important to recruiting students and faculty," emphasized
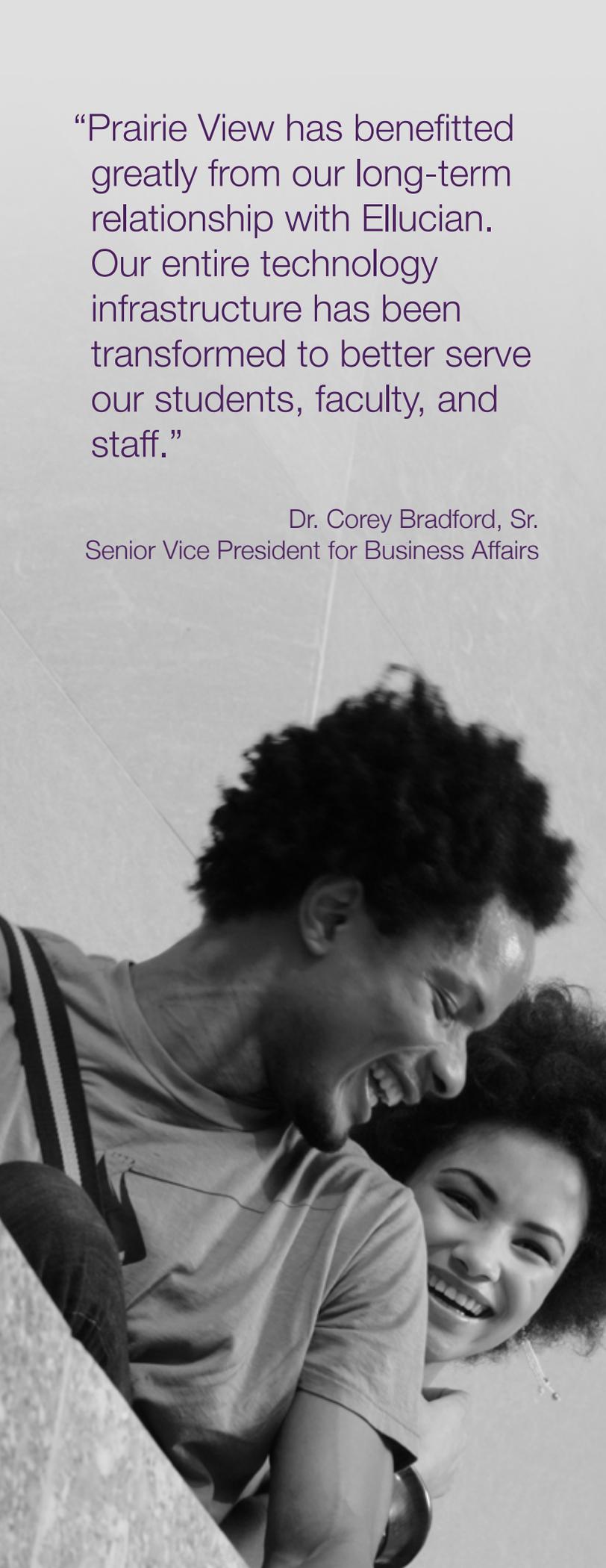
Bradford. "Visitors notice our computing lab when they tour campus; it's attractive to them. And our students let others know that we have great bandwidth, and that students can access anything they want on their iPads or other devices. Today's students live and die by technology. We want them to be able to do whatever they need to do to enhance their educational experience here.

"And faculty need an environment that supports the work they want to get done," continued Bradford. "We need a technology infrastructure with fast processing time that removes roadblocks to their research, and allows them to be creative. We want Prairie View to be a showcase; a place where others come and see our good work. Ellucian is our partner in achieving this."

Some of the significant IT projects accomplished in recent years by the Ellucian team working with Prairie View include:

- Migrated student email from Microsoft Exchange to Google mail, giving students more storage space and a lifetime PVAMU email. Saved $150k in the purchase of new hardware/software and eliminated $15K in recurring yearly maintenance expenses.
- Replaced outdated and unsecure wireless network with faster, more secure Cisco wireless technology, enabling authenticated access institution-wide on all campuses. Reduced cost by $40k per year while improving services.
- Implemented VoIP technology to allow for improved service, additional phone lines to all campus areas, and to avoid redundancy in voice communications.

- Provided integration to Banner® by Ellucian that enabled Distance Learning to move online learning from Blackboard Vista to Moodle/Mahara, improving record keeping for accreditation purposes. Saved the university $500k over 5 years by moving the service to the cloud and eliminating the need to purchase new hardware/ software and associated implementation costs.
- Migrated from SIS to Banner by Ellucian, including migration of business processes in admissions, registration, student treasury, financial aid, and information technology departments. By sun-setting SIS and archiving its information in Banner, avoided the annual costs of $150k associated with maintenance and licensing of the system hardware and software
- Implemented additional solutions to enhance business processes in three categories:
    - Improved process automation, reporting, and service delivery
    - Enhanced integration with Moodle and other software
    - Created locally developed enhancements for reports, update procedures, and compliance
- Adopted more standardization and best practices in areas of ITIL, programming standards, project portfolio management, and more
- Adopted best practices in website management so that content is updated regularly and websites have consistent look and feel
- Increased security awareness and compliance

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TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT BRINGS ADDED EXPERTISE AND WORKFORCE TALENT

The technology solutions and best practices that Prairie View implements are surfaced by Bradford through his discussions with colleagues and research, and by Ellucian.

"It's a combination of both of us," said Bradford. "Ellucian brings their experience and knowledge of the IT world, and we depend on their expertise. We want to look at any new solution that comes out that solves a problem. We live in an instant society. If I can do all my banking online, then students should be able to do all their administrative processes online,

too. Technology impacts student satisfaction and it improves our efficiency. There are so many benefits."

Likewise, outsourcing the management and implementation of technology to Ellucian has many advantages. "Ellucian supplies the expertise we need to create the environment we want for our students, faculty, and staff. And because they are a global company, they can tap into a much larger workforce pool. They also provide remote access support. We have people monitoring our network and our help desk 24/7, and if we have a major problem, they can bring in additional support to fix it. Ellucian is an industry leader in higher education and technology and we benefit from their support."
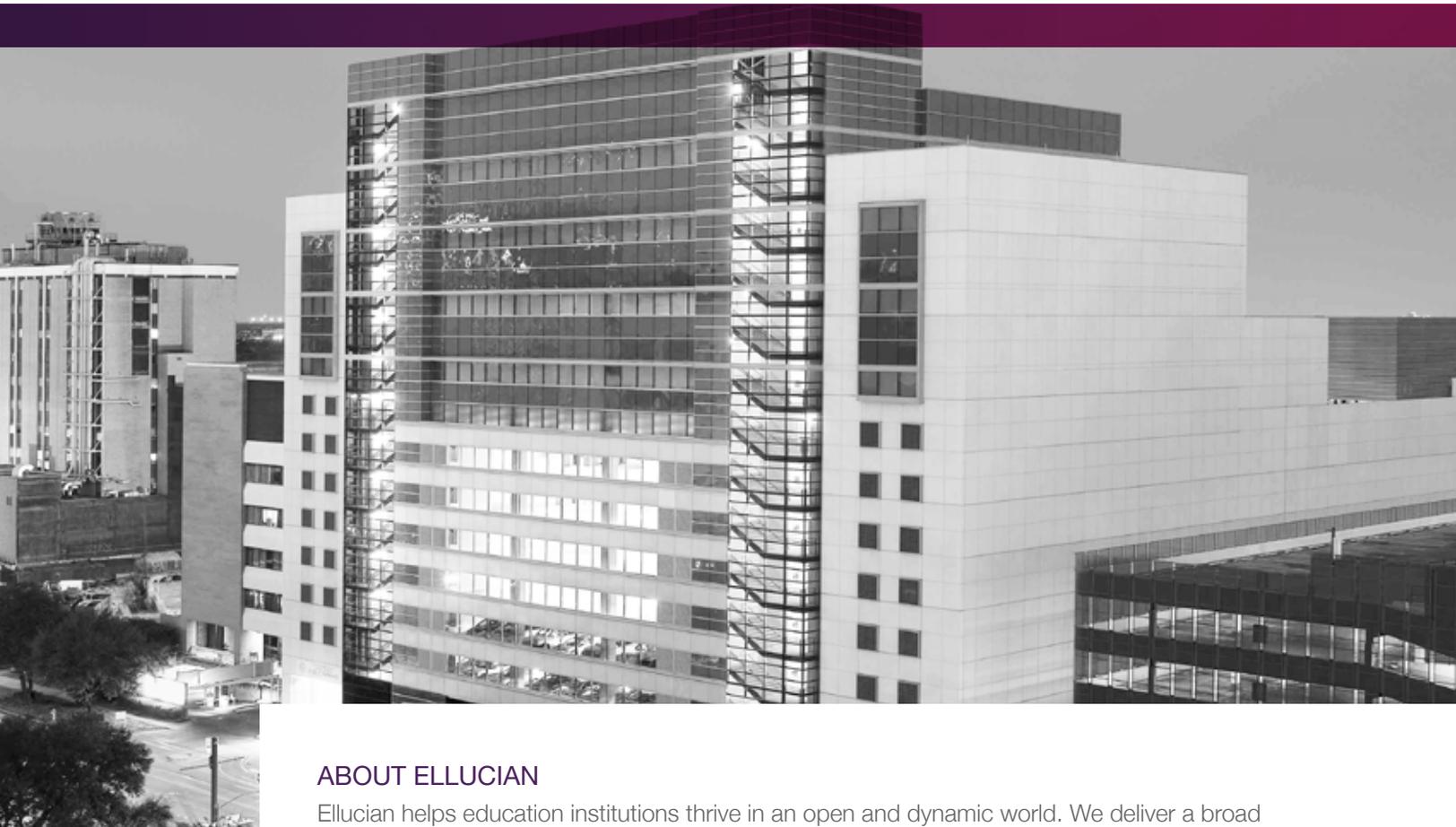
ABOUT ELLUCIAN

Ellucian helps education institutions thrive in an open and dynamic world. We deliver a broad portfolio of technology solutions, developed in collaboration with a global education community, and provide strategic guidance to help education institutions of all kinds navigate change, achieve greater transparency, and drive efficiencies. More than 2,400 institutions in 40 countries around the world look to Ellucian for the ideas and insights that will move education forward, helping people everywhere discover their futures through learning.

To learn more, please visit www.ellucian.com

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