The Business Problem

Divergence Academy was seeking new ways to provide employment readiness for its students along the path of earning cyber security tradecraft certifications. In early 2017, Divergence Academy partnered with leading cyber security organizations, including EC-Council and CompTIA, to enhance the curriculum and offer certified learning for students seeking to grow in skills and competencies.

However, Divergence Academy found that its Cybersecurity Professional Penetration Tester Program needed an experiential, hands-on learning component that allowed students to build skill sets in practical application.

Sravan Ankaraju, President of Divergence Academy, and his team began researching solutions that were interactive and immersive, cognitively engaging and skill enabling—while also complementary to existing certification course work. 
The Solution

Divergence Academy found that Project Ares®, Circadence’s gamified cyber learning platform, met the criteria it was seeking in a teaching tool. Using gamified elements in battle room and mission environments, learners were drawn to the competitive and rewarding aspect of the cyber exercises presented before them. Likewise, the AI-powered advisor Athena provided another layer of instructive support to help them progress through entry and advanced cyber scenarios at their own pace and skill set.

The Benefits

Students reported being able to ‘connect the dots’ from the IT and cyber concepts they were learning in the classroom to the application of the same concepts in the real-life scenarios presented through the Project Ares cyber range. Abilities such as communication, teamwork, collaboration, and problem solving were also strengthened as a result of engaging with the platform. Students not only learned industry-wide technical competencies such as information assurance, risk management, and incident detection but also workplace competencies like organization, planning and management, and strategy.

Skills like system hacking are learned in Missions 8-10, 12, and 13 and enumeration and reconnaissance in Mission 1. To learn more about Divergence Academy and how they’re using Project Ares to support student learning, visit: https://divergenceacademy.com/.

“Project Ares has allowed our instructors to really focus on our student’s performance. The in-game advisor Athena helps students progress from activity to activity and solve problems quicker, which helps instructors prioritize the pace of learning from all students. That level of individuation is key to learning success.”

Sravan Ankaraju
President of Divergence Academy
About the Divergence Academy

Divergence Academy is a Texas Workforce Commission approved career college creating adaptive learning solutions to empower individuals to pursue the work they love using the most relevant skills of the 21st century – from data science to cybersecurity to cloud computing. It was established in 2014 as the first Data Science school in the Dallas/Fort Worth area that used a hybrid approach to learning. It offers immersive and weekend programs for working professionals, college grads, those in transition, active duty military and veterans. They are also a preferred VET TEC Training Provider through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

To learn more, visit https://divergenceacademy.com/.

Divergence Academy Fast Facts

- Industry: Vocational Career College
- Number of students: 205 and growing
- Students using Project Ares: 16 per quarter

Project Ares by Circadence is an immersive, gamified, cyber learning platform. Within Project Ares, artificial intelligence is combined with virtual machine orchestration, operational tools, network activity, and a library of authentic threat activities. The result is learning engagement for single players and teams in offensive and defensive battle room and mission learning exercises that mirror real-life threat scenarios.

Visit www.circadence.com to learn more.