



Ransomware Attack Drives US College To Close Doors For Good After 157 Years

Description

Lincoln College in central Illinois is closing its doors after 157 years. The reason: ***the one-two punch of the virus pandemic and a crippling cyberattack.***



A [statement](#) on the college's website read that **permanent closure is effective on May 13**. The predominantly Black college was named after Abraham Lincoln and opened in 1865.

*"Lincoln College has survived many difficult and challenging times — the economic crisis of 1887, a major campus fire in 1912, the Spanish flu of 1918, the Great Depression, World War II, the 2008 global financial crisis, and more, but **this is different**," part of a statement posted on the college's website read.*

*“The **economic burdens** initiated by the **pandemic** required large investments in technology and campus safety measures, as well as a **significant drop in enrollment** with students choosing to postpone college or take a leave of absence, which impacted the institution’s financial position,” the statement continued.*

*It went on to say it then fell victim to a **ransomware attack** in December 2021 that “thwarted admissions activities and hindered access to all institutional data, creating an unclear picture of Fall 2022 enrollment projections. All systems required for recruitment, retention, and fundraising efforts were inoperable.”*

Additionally, according to the statement, the college “worked tirelessly to strengthen its financial position through fundraising campaigns, **selling assets, consolidating employee positions, and exploring alternatives** for the leased building in Normal. **Unfortunately, these efforts did not create long-term viability for Lincoln College in the face of the pandemic.”**

NBC notes this is the **first example of a ransomware attack shutting down an institution of higher learning in the US.**

Cybersecurity firm Emsisoft said 62 school districts and 26 colleges and universities campuses were targeted by ransomware attacks in 2021.

“Ransomware is a multi-million-dollar problem for the education sector, but its impact is more than financial,” Brett Callow, a threat analyst at Emsisoft, told [CNN](#).

These attacks have also affected the broader economy. In recent years, cities, towns, and even infrastructure ([Colonial Pipeline 2021](#)) have been subjected to crippling cyberattacks.

by Tyler Durden

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