

HISTORY

The Azusa Pacific University System dates back to 1899 with the establishment of the Training School for Christian Workers, the first Bible college on the west coast, geared toward training students for ministry and service. By 1939, the Training School for Christian Workers began offering four-year degrees and was renamed Pacific Bible College. PBC continued the “God First” tradition and mission of the original school, but with expanded academic offerings. As the school grew, space became a pressing issue and, in 1947, moved to APU’s current location in Azusa, CA. After continued expansion and development of the new campus, the school was renamed Azusa College in 1957.

While the Training School for Christian Workers was evolving into Azusa College, a parallel history was unfolding. In 1903, the Free Methodist Church established the Los Angeles Free Methodist Seminary with a goal of providing a quality Christian education. By 1923, the school expanded and began offering college-level courses and changed its name to Los Angeles Pacific Junior College – the first private junior college in California. As academic offerings broadened, LAPJC achieved status as a four-year institution and became Los Angeles Pacific College.

In 1965, the Boards of Trustees of Azusa College and Los Angeles Pacific College approved a plan to merge the two schools. There was mutual agreement that the newly merged institution would take the name of “Azusa” from Azusa College and “Pacific” from Los Angeles Pacific to become known as Azusa Pacific College. The subsequent years saw rapid expansion of land, facilities, and student population. In 1981, APC president Paul Sago proposed to the Board that the college change its operating structure to that of a university. The Board unanimously approved the proposal and the change of name to Azusa Pacific University.

With the advances of technology and online education, APU saw an opportunity to expand the reach and accessibility of a Christian higher education to underserved student populations. In 2010, APU established Azusa Pacific Online University, which began offering classes in the fall of 2011. Following a merger with the School of Adult and Professional Studies in 2014, APOU became University College at Azusa Pacific University with a dedicated focus on serving the unique needs of post-traditional adult students.

In order to expand its academic offerings and continue efficiently serving the unique needs of adult students, senior leadership of Azusa Pacific University and University College decided that University College would pursue its own independent, regional accreditation as a separate institution. The new institution would be part of a newly created system of affiliated institutions called the Azusa Pacific University System. In the spring of 2018, University College was granted regional accreditation as Los Angeles Pacific University, thereby reviving the name that played such a vital role in the history of both institutions. LAPU launched its first semester under the new name in September, 2018.