

Focusrite for Loyola University New Orleans



The recording program at Loyola University New Orleans, part of the school's College of Music & Media, has carved out a unique niche and a stellar reputation for world-class audio instruction. With a state-of-the-art five-studio production facility, an industry-recognized and Grammy-winning faculty, and a comprehensive curriculum, students gain practical, hands-on experience with the latest industry technology and practices. The program's alumni roster speaks for itself, including rapper G-Eazy, producer Carter Lang (SZA), Grammy winner Woods Drinkwater and CAA Marketing Executive Lucy Kozak, as well as employees of Google, Apple, Warner Music Group, Sony Music, Def Jam Recordings, Universal Music and HBO.

But like any great academic program, the needs evolve year to year, and the instructors and curriculum-shapers are always looking for ways to upgrade the facilities and course offerings, ensuring that students are getting the best experience possible to prepare them for the job market they will face after graduation. For several years, Lovell "U-P" Cooper, Professor of the Practice of Hip Hop and R&B, and the facility's Recording Studios Manager, has closely overseen the acquisition of an arsenal of top gear and its integration into a finely tuned matrix. Key to this setup is a state-of-the-art Dante network infrastructure, accessed via a large selection of Focusrite RedNet and Red interfaces that let students and instructors access any signal, anywhere on the network, at any time, as well as professional studio monitors from ADAM Audio. And recently, U-P helped manage

one of the facility's most significant upgrades yet: a fully immersive 7.1.4 Dolby Atmos setup in Studio C entirely featuring monitors from ADAM Audio.

U-P worked with Davey Rieley, Executive Account Manager at Custom House at Guitar Center, to source the ADAM units: seven T8V monitors for the listening plane, four A4Vs for the height monitors, and a Sub12 subwoofer for the low-end channel, along with an additional Sub12 for enhanced low end. They were able to repurpose some of the facility's existing Red and RedNet interfaces for the system, along with a few newly acquired RedNet interfaces.

The new system made an immediate impact on students. "Right now, things are in the 'wow' factor period," notes U-P. "For some of them, it's their first introduction to the world of immersive audio. Even the film department is bringing their students over to get them acquainted with the concept. It has made a huge splash. I am working hard on updating our curriculum for next semester to make this system a centerpiece. I will definitely be teaching a class on immersive audio production in the fall, revolving around what this system can accomplish and demonstrate for our students."

U-P places great importance on going above and beyond for the program's students, in terms of preparing them for the real world. "Giving students access to gear and systems like this is crucial, because immersive audio is the future. I am confident that when they find audio gigs after they graduate, they will be as prepared as possible, because of the opportunities we've given them in the classroom environment."

And more than merely familiarity with the technology, U-P stresses that great monitors create better audio engineers: "I am loyal to the brands I love, but I am loyal for a reason. ADAM Audio speakers are a class above, as far as I am concerned. With ADAM, I believe I can train my students to understand their own ears better and to hear properly. Once you understand what you're hearing with that level of detail, you have a ton of freedom to shape the sound in an intentional way. And several of our students, after graduation, have made it a priority to get their own ADAM units, because they understand the difference it makes. You can't mix a thing if you can't really hear the thing, but ADAM cuts through that problem entirely." Rieley remarks, "It was great working with U-P again on upgrading their Studio C for the students. Expanding the school's portfolio to add immersive learning is an excellent addition to an already amazing program. I look forward to working with U-P and the school more in the future!"

On the program's Focusrite RedNet collection, which includes RedNet A16R 16-channel analogue I/O interfaces, a RedNet HD32R 32-channel HD Dante network bridge, Red 4Pre 58-In / 64-Out Thunderbolt 2 and Pro Tools | HD compatible audio interfaces, RedNet MP8R eight-channel mic pre and A/D converters, RedNet PCIeR Card, RedNet AM2 stereo audio monitoring unit, RedNet X2P 2x2 Dante audio interfaces, RedNet R1 desktop remote monitor controllers and more, U-P adds, "As much as I love the ADAM speakers, I don't want to downplay the importance of

Focusrite Red and RedNet interfaces on what we do here. They are the backbone, and they help facilitate whatever we want to do, combining the different rooms for particular projects or whatever else we need. No matter what the configuration of the spaces is, RedNet gives us a way to work with it. I am proud to be a loyal Focusrite user, and I appreciate their rock-solid reliability over all else.”

U-P also has his sights set on the next expansion for the immersive system: “Since we have a strong focus on R&B and hip-hop production, I’m looking at options for additional low-end on the system, which will certainly involve more ADAM units. As far as I know, there doesn’t exist a comprehensive curriculum or set of best practices for immersive mixing specifically for R&B and hip-hop. So, I said to myself, ‘let’s literally write the book on it!’ I see big things in the future for this program, and Focusrite and ADAM will continue to be a key component of that.”

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