Challenge 4: Presidential Pathways

Description:

Intercepted Message Log [#442-A]:

"We’ve confirmed that one former high-ranking member of O.C.T.O.P.U.S. has severed all ties and is now working exclusively with D.U.R.G.E. Prior to their defection, this individual operated under deep cover in the academic world, using university presidencies to experiment with subtle influence tactics. His calling cards? Structures—symbols of control and legacy. Towers, gates, and bells."

Your mission is to trace his movements through academia. Identify the institutions where he left his mark before joining D.U.R.G.E., and piece together his path of influence.

From our intercepted messages, this is what we know.

He began in Utah before heading east.

He was obsessed with rituals and symbolism — things students would walk under or through.

His signature elements? Carillons and Gates.

What You Need To Do:

Investigate the academic history of this Univserity President

Determine the three institutions where he served as university president.

List them in chronological order of his presidency.

They first started when they were 36 years old

Flag Format:

CTF{Institution1\_Institution2\_Institution3}

(Use underscores for spaces and use known abbriviaions such as UCF for University of Central Florida)

Walk-Through Solution:

We are looking for which institutions a university president has been to. We also know that they are known for building things that people walk under. They started in Utah when they were 36.

Search google with those things, we get the following. A screenshot of a computer

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

There are several location we can learn this information, one of the easiest would be Wikipedia.

A screenshot of a computer

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

The answer is right in front of us, however at this point, we aren’t certain as in the hint we are told this president built things during his time.   
  
We need to check each of the schools and see what this president did during their time.

First lets check Snow college.

A screenshot of a computer

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Checking there timeline we learn that President Benson starts in 2001. We know that Benson served until 2006. Looking through the timeline on snow college we see that the bell tower was replaced with a new one during the time he was president. This matches the hint we were given at the beginning that Benson liked bells and clocks.

A screenshot of a computer

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Next lets check Southern Utah University:

Benson was at SUU from 2006 until 2013. We need to see if he helped build anything that matches the hint with clocks, or things pass under.

SUU has a tradition that students pass under a bell tower

A screenshot of a computer

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Lets find out when that tower was built,

A close-up of a building

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

It was built in 2007, which was when Benson was president. So far 2/3 matching up with the hints we have been given. Let’s check the last school,

Looking at Eastern Kentucky University

We learn that Benson was there starting in 2013. Looking into it he was instrumental in building the turner gates. A new tradition that students “Walk through” which matches with the hint we were given.

A blue text on a white background

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A group of people in a crowd

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Based on everything above, we can be fairly certain that Michael T. Benson is the correct president. Using this information we can get the correct flag.

Chronological Order: Snow → SUU → EKU

Flag: flag{Snow\_SUU\_EKU}