Change your passwords by May 5

The Virginia Tech Information Technology Security Office is requiring everyone using PIDs, Oracle (Banner) IDs, and VT Google Apps to change these passwords to guard against malicious use in the aftermath of the Heartbleed flaw. On May 5th, changing will be enforced. HOKIES passwords are not included in this requirement.

If you changed your passwords on or after April 22, you do not need to change them again.

The computing page—computing.vt.edu—has directions for password changes, along with more information on Heartbleed.

Collaborative Computing Solutions

As leader of the newest unit within Information Technology, Marc DeBonis oversees the integration of Microsoft Windows expertise and system administration to provide Virginia Tech with stable, scalable, and secure systems, services, and solutions.

Collaborative Computing Solutions (CCS) expands on M:SIS’s offerings in systems, services, and solutions.

The 2014 Undergraduate ePortfolio Showcase presented the top 12 undergraduate ePortfolios. To the long-used portfolio for sharing and reflection, ePortfolios add digital technologies, enabling video and multimedia presentations, as well as simplifying data collection. ePortfolios are used in every college across the university.

The 12 ePortfolios include two from each of the six award categories—leadership, mentorship, learning, professional growth, service, and research.

The hosting organization, Active Technologies for Engaged Learning, is administered by TLOS with support from the Office of the Provost. For more information, see https://atel.tlos.vt.edu/student-showcase/2014-student-showcase/.
As part of the work to operationalize the Information Technology Strategic Plan, a **communications team** has been formed from employees currently tasked to work on communications. Extending the capacity for communications, the team will also provide assistance in communications to IT units that do not currently have dedicated personnel for communications. Communications includes internal to units and to all of IT as well as to the university and beyond. Current assignments are posted in draft form on www.it.vt.edu in the “For IT Employees” section. The Strategic Plan is also on www.it.vt.edu under “Publications.”
Data Visualization Innovator, Jer Thorp

Last month, Jer Thorp visited the Virginia Tech campus as the Distinguished Innovator in Residence to talk with faculty and students about big data, data visualization, and computational thinking. The Distinguished Innovator in Residence (DIR) program was established by TLOS, and created a partnership with the University Libraries to bring innovators to campus every year. On March 20, Thorp, an artist and educator known around the world for making the biggest data sets beautifully accessible, gave a keynote address, “Making Big Data Human,” the in GLC Auditorium.

Thorp’s groundbreaking work has been featured in the New York Times, The Guardian, Scientific American, The New Yorker, and Popular Science. He is an adjunct Professor in New York University’s ITP program, and a member of the World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council on Design Innovation. He is a co-founder of The Office For Creative Research, a multi-disciplinary research group exploring new modes of engagement with data.

Over the course of his two-day visit, he shared perspectives on data mining and data ownership & privacy with students and faculty in the Honors Residential College; spoke with the faculty involved in re-inventing general education at the Pathways to a General Education Curriculum; and, gave his keynote address on the topic of humanizing big data—all in effort to increase campus-wide awareness of data visualization and computation thinking as relevant to all disciplines. He also met with faculty and students in the master of fine arts in creative technology program at the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology (ICAT), and provided one-on-one feedback to several computer science and creative technologies students’ works-in-progress.

Virginia Tech Operations Center

The Virginia Tech Operations Center within NI&S provides one of the few 24x7 call centers on campus and the only call center with a mission to support the entire university. The center strives for efficient and effective service for the university, and makes changes to achieve that goal. VTOC consists of call center operators ("Call Center" or "4Help") who support calls to 231-HELP; diagnosticians in the Network Operations Center; and University Switchboard operators. Some of the recent changes include the following:

- Relocating the University Switchboard from Cassell to 1770 Forecast Drive—(RB 14)
- Cross-training staff
- Implementing Avaya’s Contact Center application to reduce customer wait-times

And coming soon is a new trouble-ticket system that will expand capabilities while improving caller assistance.

For more information, contact Joyce Landreth, Director, Information Technology Support.