

### Find information

- [answers.vt.edu](http://answers.vt.edu)
- [computing.vt.edu](http://computing.vt.edu)
- [CNS FAQs](#)
- [Online Course Support](#)
- [Software Skills Gateway](#)
- [security.vt.edu](http://security.vt.edu)
- [antivirus.vt.edu](http://antivirus.vt.edu)
- [Annual Report](#)
- [CSC-4help](#)
- [Staff Senate](#)

### In this issue

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Data Center network upgrade                      | 1 |
| <a href="http://www.it.vt.edu">www.it.vt.edu</a> | 1 |
| Long distance federal excise tax                 | 1 |
| Personal digital certificates                    | 2 |
| Enterprise Systems                               | 2 |
| IALR beta  | 2 |
| Student affiliations                             | 2 |

## Data Center network upgrade

Communications Network Services recently completed an extensive upgrade of the university Data Center Network in the Andrews Information Systems Building. The improved performance of the Data Center network translates into faster, more reliable, and better-managed services. The new network is capable of supporting cutting-edge applications and delivering high performance services.

Approximately 480 network connections were upgraded with enhanced capabilities. New network switching components were installed and configured for operations. Server system connections were migrated to the new network access ports. Load balancing services have been implemented to yield improved scalability, redundancy and higher fault tolerance.

The work was completed between July 9 and August 1. Critical services were transitioned during maintenance windows outside normal working hours.

## [www.it.vt.edu](http://www.it.vt.edu)

The refreshed IT webpage is available at [www.it.vt.edu](http://www.it.vt.edu). The Blacksburg Electronic Village work provided services for the refresh. BEV now offers web development support for university departments and for community civic and non-for-profit organizations. The service ensures compatibility with new university guidelines and templates, and offers assistance in design and development.

## Long distance federal excise tax

If you make long distance phone calls, you will probably be eligible for a tax refund on your 2006 federal return. Since 1898, the federal government has collected an excise tax on local phone service and long distance calls. The tax was implemented to help fund the Spanish-American War. The war ended; the tax did not. The Treasury Department will stop collecting this tax on long distance phone calls as of July 31. The excise tax will still be collected on local service.

The government will reimburse three years' worth of taxes on long distance calls and on plans that combine long distance and local calling. As a not-for-profit institution, Virginia Tech is exempt from collecting and paying this tax on the institution's own long distance charges.

This information is being provided to help with your personal income tax preparation. See <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=160214,00.html>

## Personal digital certificates

The efforts to develop secure digital signatures will enter initial phases of implementation starting in October. The initial application area is salaried employees' leave reports. Work on the PKI personal digital certificates project includes IT employees in eProvisioning, Middleware, Test and Deployment, HRIS, Student Telecommunications, IRM, and many other individuals, along with staff in Human Resources working with the leave reporting system.

Personal digital certificates increase the assurance that information transmitted electronically remains confidential and uncorrupted, and that it can be reliably associated with the sender. Business processes can more readily move online, with digital signatures replacing inked signatures.

The goals of the project include:

- I. To increase assurance in a person's identity

2. To route work electronically

3. To guard against corruption of data

Each personal digital certificate will be issued by the Student Telecommunications Office. Certificates will be on a USB token.

The initial groups to use personal digital certificates to sign leave reports will be SETI and the IT Security Office for the reporting period ending October 9. Other areas within Information Technology will be phased in during the following two months.

Receiving the certificate requires:

- A valid Hokie Passport—the card must display the 9 digit VT identification number (not SSN)
- Another photo identification
- A secure passphrase

Information on individual responsibilities will be forthcoming as project dates near.

### Information Technology at Virginia Tech

Vice President for Information  
Technology  
Earving Blythe  
1700 Kraft Drive, Mailstop  
0169

Phone: 540-231-4227  
Website: [www.it.vt.edu](http://www.it.vt.edu)

### Associate Vice President Debbie Fulton

*Debbie Fulton has been in place as the Associate Vice President for Enterprise Systems since June 26. Her office is 209D AISB.*

*Areas reporting to Enterprise Systems are Administrative Information Systems (the Alumni/Development, Finance, Human Resources, and Student Banner teams and Enterprise System Support), and General Enterprise Applications (DBMS, Content and Knowledge Management, Web Hosting, Data Warehouse).*

## Microsoft selects IALR for beta project

The Institute for Advanced Learning & Research (IALR) has been selected to participate in the beta program for Microsoft new desktop operating system entitled "Vista". The IALR was selected as one of 90 small to mid-sized companies globally. The IALR has received computers to test the software and will be installing the software on selected machines at the IALR. The release date for the new operating system is tentatively set for January 2007.

## Student affiliations

The Enterprise Directory carries *affiliations* or roles that describe an individual's relationship with the university. Affiliations are useful as consistent, simple methods to authorize individuals for online services.

On July 7, the Enterprise Directory implemented a new affiliation, VT-STUDENT-RECENT, for students who have been enrolled in any of the previous four terms (one year). These student entries now appear in ED-Lite (PeopleSearch) for all students who have not chosen directory confidentiality. The affiliation may be useful to authorize individuals for services that require continuity.

Individuals with the affiliation VT-STUDENT-FUTURE now also appear in ED-Lite/PeopleSearch unless confidentiality has been selected. Incoming students receive this affiliation as soon as they have any future term registration records, including college- or department-based advanced registration in freshman courses.

Both affiliations, by definition, will occur in the presence of VT-STUDENT, but neither will cause an individual to be considered VT-ACTIVE-MEMBER. Other affiliations that exist for a person will co-exist with one or both of these newer affiliations.