[Our Summer 2024 Newsletter](#)

August 26, 2024

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UPDATE FROM
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!

After a long summer break, it is time to get back into the swing of the new academic season. We have been working all summer long to ensure that we have systems up to date and are prepared for students to return.

Part of these preparations include the continued efforts to increase the bandwidth available to state agencies. We have long been working on implementing new paths to our primary connection points to be able to support more than double our current capacity. These efforts continue to be top priority, and while WVNET is prepared to perform the upgrades, we cannot do so until our carrier partners complete physical building of these routes.

As discussed in our spring newsletter, WVNET has completed the installation of a new 500KW diesel generator. This will help to ensure that our primary datacenter will remain operational even during prolonged electrical outages. In addition, a few new computer room air conditioners are being installed in the coming months to improve the cooling capacity of our facility. These physical improvements have all been made possible through the use of federal funding.

And as a final note, we continue to perform patching and upgrades as they become available for all our systems. This is especially critical as more users become active, this provides more of an opportunity for scams and ransomware to thrive. This topic seems to be a reoccurring theme, but it is especially important as security always starts with the end user and it is up to us to keep ourselves safe.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

HUMAN RESOURCES

WVNET seeks a strategic **Chief Financial Officer** to lead financial operations, drive growth, and optimize efficiency. Join our team and let's innovate together! The CFO's responsibilities include fiscal budget management, financial planning, financial reporting, internal controls, and analyzing the organization's financial position. The CFO will also develop and monitor budgets to ensure financial stability and growth. Salary range is $95,000 – $115,000 and commensurate with experience.

WVNET is seeking a detail-oriented **Business/Accounts Administrator** to manage service agreements, user accounts, and support our business operations. This key role will ensure smooth contract management, efficient account administration, and provide critical support to our Business Office. Salary range is $45,000 – $55,000 and commensurate with experience.

For full job details, qualifications, etc. and to apply, visit https://wvnet.edu/about/careers/

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Well it's that time of the year for the WVNET business office. The staff has had a lot going on this time of year in getting all of our contracts renewed, working on the FY24 financial audit, plus staying current with our day-to-day operations. While staff works diligently to ensure the process is efficient and smooth, the occasional issue does occur. But with the cooperation of the business office staff, along with assistance from the rest of the staff at WVNET, WVNET will do everything we can to continue to support our higher education institutions, K-12, and state government entities to the best of our abilities.

We would also like to congratulate our former Chief Financial Officer, Donna Meadowcroft, on her recent retirement. She was a valuable asset to WVNET and we wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavors. We have started the process of hiring her replacement. In the meantime, if you have any questions for the WVNET business office staff, please contact us at:

- Accounts Receivable – Libby; lcress@staff.wvnet.edu or 304-225-0451
- Accounts Payable – Buffy; evehse@staff.wvnet.edu or 304-225-0487
- Manager of Business Operations, including Procurement – Phil; psnitz@staff.wvnet.edu or

304-225-0483

CLIENT SERVICES

Distance Learning

Three team members from West Virginia Northern Community College attended D2L's Fusion conference in Toronto, Ontario. Wendy Doolin (Instructional Designer), Jeremy Doolin, and David Stoffel (both professors of Computer and Information Technology) had the honor of presenting at the sold-out event with over 1,400 attendees from 16 different countries. The Northern team presented *"Removing Barriers: Fostering Excellence in Course Design"*. They shared how a small community college is leveraging their resources to remove barriers and support quality course design. The presentation focused on professional development through WVNCC's Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), and Modern Course Design, a 7-month course developed for faculty that provides training in instructional design frameworks, pedagogy, effectively using Brightspace, outcomes and alignment, student engagement and other topics. The presentation also highlighted WVNCC's standardized Brightspace template, which aims to provide a consistent experience for students as well as embedded documentation and tips for faculty and students.

Left to right: **Wendy Doolin, Jeremy Doolin, and Dave Stoffel**

Attendees of the conference were also treated to demonstrations of D2L's newest product, Lumi, an AI-powered Brightspace add-on that gives course builders the ability to generate Quizzes, Assignments, Discussion prompts, and Creator+ Practices based on course module contents. Wendy, Jeremy, and Dave came back with a lot of ideas and enthusiasm.

BANNER & DEGREE WORKS

WVNET Banner and Degree Works Training

The WVNET Client Services team, including experts from Banner Finance, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, and Degree Works, joined forces to deliver a comprehensive two-day training session for the staff at West Virginia Northern Community College. This training covered various aspects relevant to each department, helping them address current challenges, master new skills in Banner and Degree Works, and find effective strategies to start their Fall semester smoothly. The WVNET team was enthusiastic about sharing valuable insights and essential training with the Northern Community College team and looks forward to continuing the conversations into the future.

TELECOM UPDATE

The WV Governor's Office of Technology selected Segra as the state data and VOIP provider. All customers should be migrated to Segra from Verizon by this coming November. To that end, the WVNET Telecommunications Group has been busy migrating many customers to the Segra network. If you are a Verizon customer, please reach out to Jason Chastain jchastain@staff.wvnet.edu to assist with your migration process.

On April 1st, WVNET sent out new bills to many customers that included new charges for the use of public IP addresses and appropriate bandwidth utilization as a result of internal auditing. If you received a new bill and have questions about it, please contact Jason Chastain jchastain@staff.wvnet.edu and he will be happy to review your information to ensure accuracy.

SonicWall has released security updates to address a critical flaw impacting its firewalls that, if successfully exploited, could grant malicious actors unauthorized access to the devices. The vulnerability tracked as CVE-2024-40766 (CVSS score: 9.3), has been described as an improper access control bug. "An improper access control vulnerability has been identified in the SonicWall SonicOS management access, potentially leading to unauthorized resource access and in specific conditions, causing the firewall to crash," the company said in an advisory released last week. "This issue affects SonicWall Firewall Gen 5 and Gen 6 devices, as well as Gen 7 devices running SonicOS 7.0.1-5035 and older versions."

Read more here https://www.securityweek.com/sonicwall-patches-critical-sonicos-vulnerability/

Cybersecurity threats are ever-growing, especially with the conflict in Ukraine and the upcoming elections in November. If you are concerned about your cybersecurity posture, please reach out to us for information on our security services and advice on hardening your network.

SYSTEMS UPDATE

On July 19th, the cybersecurity vendor CrowdStrike released an update to millions of computers with a kernel-level bug that caused a halt to countless amounts of critical IT infrastructure worldwide. This update was intended to add additional parameters to detect novel threats during the scans performed by their Falcon XDR software. However, it was aggressively pushed out with minimal testing, and the effects of this catastrophic overlook are still being felt weeks later in many sectors.

The Falcon software runs in what is called Kernel-space, which gives it the utmost level of insight and privileges to a system. This level of access is typically beneficial for a piece of software that is designed to scan your system for vulnerabilities from the bottom-up, but if the software crashes due to a bug in the code, this crash can not be handled safely as it would in User-space. Therefore, you get the Blue Screen of Death on Windows, and in this particular case, someone needs to manually fix the issue by removing the offending files from the system so it can finish its boot sequence.

We were fortunate enough at WVNET to not have our critical operations affected by this negligence. Although this issue put the world on a halt and caused unforeseen amounts of money to be lost in nearly every business sector, the need for XDR solutions like Falcon and others remains invaluable. These solutions help mitigate the possibility of a large-scale attack of this magnitude with malicious intent, rather than an unforeseen bug from the XDR provider that can be recovered from. XDRs take information in a holistic approach from many security domains within a system and combine all of that information into reports or unified interfaces for security teams to view an abstracted view of possible concerns. Without these tools, it would be nearly impossible to monitor the complex systems that are commonplace in today's IT infrastructure.

How Are We Doing?

Your satisfaction is very important to us. WVNET has implemented a customer satisfaction survey link in our OZ ticketing system. When a help ticket is closed, the reporter will receive an email update with a link to allow customers to fill out the survey, and, if desired, request a call from a manager. To access the form in the OZ email, click on the link.

If you're not using OZ and you wish to take the survey, please feel free to complete the survey at **https://wvnet.edu/satisfaction-survey/**. We look forward to hearing from you. Have questions? Contact Harmony Garletts at hgarletts@staff.wvnet.edu.

Customer Satisfaction Survey