

WHAT'S NEW

NEWS ABOUT CURRENT PROJECTS AT WV NETWORK

SPRING 2021



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West Virginia Statewide Technology Conference Goes Virtual!

WEST VIRGINIA STATEWIDE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

After a 4-year hiatus, The West Virginia Statewide Technology Conference (WVSTC) is back for 2021! WVNET staff, along with our K-12 and higher education partners, have been working hard to organize the conference, which will be held in a virtual format this year on July 12-14th. Some presentation topics at this year's conference include distance learning, Apple iPad interactive learning, universal design for learning in Higher Education, Office 365, Apps for Teaching and Learning, and many more.

This year's keynote speakers are John Spencer and Alec Couros. Check out some highlights of each speaker and the exciting concepts they will bring to this year's conference below.

KEYNOTE Speakers

John Spencer

John Spencer is a former middle school teacher and current college professor on a mission to see teachers unleash the creative potential in all of their students so that kids can be makers, designers, artists, and engineers.

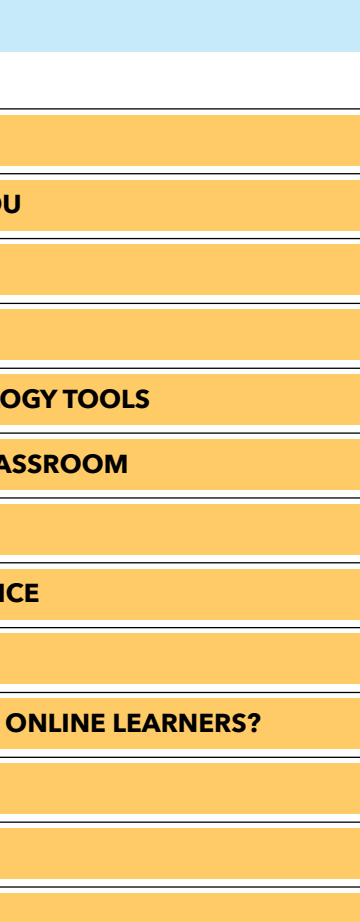
In Spencer's second year of teaching, he used design thinking for our student-centered documentary project. Everything changed. He spent the next decade on a journey to empower students to become creative thinkers and problem-solvers. This meant mural projects, service learning projects, designing STEM camps, and creating coding projects.

Along the way, Spencer helped develop the student-friendly LAUNCH Cycle, a design thinking framework for K-12 students. He is the co-author of the bestselling books *Launch* and *Empower*. In 2013, he spoke at the White House, sharing a vision for how to empower students to be future-ready through creativity and design thinking. John Spencer has led workshops and delivered keynotes around the world.

Alec Couros

A Professor of educational technology and media and the Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of Regina. He has given hundreds of workshops and presentations, nationally and internationally, on topics such as openness in education, networked learning, social media in education, digital citizenship, and critical media literacy.

Couros' graduate and undergraduate courses help current and future educators understand how to use and take advantage of the educational potential offered by the tools of connectivity.



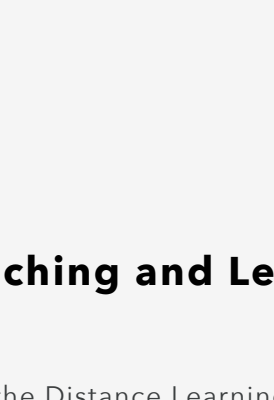
The 2021 WVSTC Conference Team encourages all higher education and K-12 staff to attend the modernized version of our statewide technology conference. Many networking and educational opportunities will be offered for all. For more information on WVSTC or to register to attend, visit our website at wvstc.com.

CONFERENCE UPDATES: **75+** PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

- **FLIPPED CLASSROOM: A SECOND LOOK**
- **KEYS TO MAKING DIGITAL CONTENT WORK FOR YOU**
- **AWESOME APPS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**
- **INFOBASE IS YOUR FIRST STEP WITH RESEARCH**
- **AMPLIFYING THINKING ROUTINES USING TECHNOLOGY TOOLS**
- **SETTING UP & RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL CLASSROOM**
- **EMPOWERED TEAMS**
- **EMPOWER YOUR STUDENTS WITH VOICE AND CHOICE**
- **START MAKING CONNECTIONS**
- **IT LOOKS FANTASTIC BUT IS IT ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL ONLINE LEARNERS?**
- **CREATING MULTI-PAGE PDFS**
- **WHAT IS A QR CODE**
- **WHAT'S NEW IN OFFICE 365**
- **BUILDING RESILIENT LEADERSHIP SKILLS**
- **IMAGES FOR ONLINE CONTENT**
- **PROTECTING WEST VIRGINIA'S STUDENTS IN THEIR DIGITAL CLASSROOMS**

Communication is Key!

Dr. Carl Powell, WVNET Director



With Spring in the air, vaccines in our arms, and children still at home, we all welcome the warmer weather, outdoor activities, and a semblance of normalcy. For WVNET, that means re-occupying our offices. Throughout the pandemic, we have been able to continue our operations remotely, with our Network Operations Center remaining onsite to provide around-the-clock support. As we begin to re-occupy our offices, we will blend on-site with online, while providing our customers with the services and support they expect from WVNET.

This past year of nomadic digital life has reinforced the importance of communication. This inaugural edition of our newsletter is just one way for us to provide more information about the goings on at WVNET. You will read about many of the projects we are currently working on, like our migration to Oracle's Cloud Infrastructure and the selection of a new Learning Management System platform. You will also hear about new members of our staff and milestone achievements of our current teammates. Finally, we want to highlight successes from all of you across the state, helping everyone capitalize on the innovation and ingenuity at each institution.

This year's **Statewide Technology Conference** will be a culmination of success stories, future endeavors, and new opportunities from across the state. Scheduled for July 12 - 14, 2021, this online event will provide you, your staff, and your teammates the opportunity to learn from your counterparts or share your own achievements. You can read more about this pinnacle event later in this newsletter, or go to wvstc.com for additional information.

Let's make 2021 a memorable year for all of us. Enjoy the newsletter!

Milestones

YEARS OF SERVICE MILESTONE UPDATES

WVNET has a long history of service to West Virginia education. Its talented staff consists of bright new minds along with dedicated employees who have been with us for many years. WVNET is certainly grateful to retain some of the expertise, experience and history as it is passed on to new generations.

We acknowledge these staff members who have reached significant milestones in their careers:

- 35 YEARS** **Barbara Long**, DegreeWorks Team Lead
- 35 YEARS** **Verne Britton**, Systems Programmer
- 25 YEARS** **Elizabeth Vehse**, Finance

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

WVNET is Hiring

Come join our team! We have opportunities for a **Information Security Specialist**, full-time, career opportunity. Systems administrator responsible for IT infrastructure environment and cybersecurity. \$60K-\$70K. For full job details and how to apply, visit: <https://lnkd.in/e9kKT2fEof/AA/ADA Employer>.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

WVNET Telecom Team Assists Eastern CTC on Upgrades

In November 2020, Bill Baldwin and Ron Hamilton of Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College approached WVNET's Telecom Team for some assistance on configuring and installing new networking hardware.

Eastern had purchased four Cisco 9300 switches, and seven 9200 switches to replace their existing network infrastructure. The old equipment was installed in 2012/2013, but had been bought in 2009, so this was a major jump forward in the capabilities of their core equipment.

Following a basic outline of progress provided by Eric Burgy, WVNET Telecommunications Manager, Chris Freeman, WVNET Data Center Team Lead began getting the configurations translated from Eastern's main router to the new top of rack 9300 switch. Nathan Justice, WVNET Telecom Network Specialist, assisted with the physical set up in WVNET's datacenter for the initial config and switch stack testing.

Once a working configuration was in place at WVNET's datacenter, transfer of the new equipment back to Eastern was arranged and installed on February 27th, 2021. After initial success, then some unexpected hurdles, including a 13-hour day, and some unplanned on-site testing, WVNET and Eastern's Technical Team were able to work together to get Eastern fully functional with the new equipment. This group effort is just one example of WVNET partnering with a West Virginia higher education institution to help upgrade our state's technical infrastructure one piece at a time.

Teaching and Learning Commons Corner

WVNET and WVHEPC has selected a new LMS.

WVNET, in correlation with the WV Higher Education Policy Commission, has selected the new statewide Learning Management System (LMS). Brightspaces, Desire 2 Learn (D2L) is the tentative winner (pending final contracts). The learning management system houses courses and grades for student. It provides a space for online learning. WVNET will be working with colleges in West Virginia to transition to the new LMS this coming academic year.

Open Educational Resources

As college textbooks costs soar across the county, West Virginia and the WV Higher Education Policy Commission are working towards a solution. Open Educational Resources are free educational materials which can be used in the classroom, adapted, shared, and reimaged. WVHEPC offered several grants to college faculty across the state to utilize and create OER materials for their classrooms to save students money. Check out our new OER website, wvoer.org.

WVNET Teaching and Learning Commons

WVNET adapted the Distance Learning and Educational Services group to the Teaching and Learning Commons during the early days of the pandemic. WVNET offers a variety of professional development and training for higher education and K12 teachers. Many of our sessions focus on remote teaching and online learning. Check out our tlc.wvnet.edu site to see some of our offerings.

Network Operations Center (NOC) Update

Did you know our WVNET NOC operators receive an average of 240 calls, OZ tickets, and emails from our customers every week?

240 CUSTOMER interactions per WEEK

The largest volume of calls received in the NOC is related to after hour support of the West Virginia Office of Resonance (WVOT). NOC staff work to unlock user accounts and reset passwords for state employees working outside traditional business hours, and routinely go above and beyond fulfilling those tasks. The NOC staff happily assists employees that have limited technical skills and walks them through changing passwords, utilizing their email, as well as assistance with Kroons and other applications.

WVNET's Banner application requires the second largest volume of tasks received by the NOC. The Banner-related requests are received through our OZ ticketing system or via phone call. NOC staff takes the information they receive and assigns the ticket to the appropriate person in the Banner group or a DBA for completion.

Other items the NOC staff are trained to assist customers with LMS user assistance for students and instructors, KidsConnect user troubleshooting with device use issues and password resets, email help, fielding vendor calls for staff, and many other needs that come up during the course of the week. WVNET's NOC is staffed 24/7 for you!

Systems Update Oracle Cloud Migration

For many years, WVNET has been providing our customers Oracle database services for applications such as Banner and Degreeworks. These applications have historically been hosted on enterprise hardware from our datacenter in Morgantown, WV. As hosting costs increase and cloud services become more prevalent, WVNET's systems team worked with Oracle on evaluating the costs and benefits of continuing the database services in their current state versus moving to the Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI). It was determined moving operations to OCI will allow WVNET to provide the same level of service without concerns of cost increases and will provide an environment that is easier to scale to better meet our customer's needs.

This migration is part of the continual progression and improvements being made by WVNET to maintain secure and reliable Banner services. Other steps taken in the past year include the implementations of

Oracle REST Data Services (ORDS), to allow the retirement of the Oracle Web Logic servers that had previously hosted Banner 8 technologies.

WVNET's systems team has begun working with Oracle to setup an environment in which all migration paths can be fully investigated in effort to move all information to OCI with minimum customer impact. Several staff members have been rigorously examining a test environment platform and researching the complexities associated with it. From the ground up and with the advice of OCI experts, WVNET systems staff are ensuring that the implementation of the entire environment is designed with security being a central focus.

The migration process will be a long and complex journey and will take many months to complete. The WVNET systems team will continue to provide updates to customers on project status.

Introducing: The WVNET Development Team

While WVNET has always offered software development and programming, we have revamped our "development" focus to include far more than just "software." The WVNET Development Team is a new solutions-focused team of developers and designers with extensive background in web, application, content development, and project management. This group not only works on new projects, but also consults with our customers on existing websites and applications. We offer support that is often outside of the customer's capability to support in-house.

This agile approach and commitment to support allows our team to offer their decades of experience to our customers in a way the fills a need not easily found in the public sector in the state.

Our Development team is lead by supervisor, **Sarah Barnes**, who has over 20 years of experience as a web developer in the public and private sectors and over 15 years of working with WordPress, the primary content management system supported by WVNET.

Newest to the Development team are **Lisa Bridges** and **Adam McKeown**. Lisa is coming to WVNET with an unparalleled graphic design portfolio combined with 7+ years of web development and communications in higher education. Her expert design eye has enabled WVNET to elevate not only what we offer our customers, but our social media presence as well.

Adam joined the team in early March and has hit the ground running with assisting the team across the board with a focus on customer service. He comes to the team from the WVNET Network Operations Center (NOC) and years of experience with WordPress. When not assisting with web projects, Adam is working on tools that will assist our K-12 customers better manage their websites.

WVNET is excited to have this team in place and ready to work with our customers on developing solutions for whatever challenges come their way.

**** WVNET plans to make this service available to interested customers in the future. Please contact us if you want to learn more.**