

Cybersecurity Awareness Month: Check In

October 17, 2023

Cybersecurity is a rapidly growing industry. It has become an essential part of every organization's strategy for sustainability, security, and growth. 2022 broke records for the number of cyberattacks, phishing scams, and data breaches. According to the University of Maryland, hackers attack every 39 seconds 2,244 times per day. No one is immune from the threat of an attacker.

There is also a shortage of skilled professionals. A recent Forbes article estimated there are more than 700,000 open cybersecurity jobs in the U.S. with approximately 82,000 located in Texas. Industry growth and the need for a qualified workforce creates a unique opportunity.

Central Texas Cyber Range

In September 2023, Baylor University launched the Central Texas Cyber Range (CTCR). This is a joint venture between Baylor and McLennan Community College (MCC) to educate and train cybersecurity leaders, provide research, consulting, and engagement on the local, national, and international levels.

Both institutions are designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security.

Future initiatives, in development, include certification programs and bachelor's degrees in cybersecurity with a pathway from MCC to Baylor. MCC currently offers education through the Computer Information Systems & Multimedia program, with pathways to cybersecurity certifications and associate's level degrees. This expanded partnership allows us to educate and nurture future leaders in cybersecurity.

MCC Campus Event: Tuesday, October 17th

- **Who:** Presentation by Jean Nixon, Academic Support & Tutoring, for students, faculty, and staff
- **What:** Don't Open the Door to Strangers: Stay Safe on the Internet
- **When:** Tuesday, October 17th from: 12-1pm
- **Where:** LTC 318 or Zoom: <https://mclennan.zoom.us/j/2549998332>

Safety on the Internet is a vast and important topic that affects us all. We will discuss some simple tips and vocabulary words to better educate and protect ourselves while browsing the web, using social media, or shopping online. Join us tomorrow to learn more.

2023 Key Behaviors

- Enable Multi-Factor Authentication
- Use Strong Passwords and a Password Manager
- Update Software
- Recognize and Report Phishing

What's so important about **software updates**? Updates are one of the easiest ways to boost your cybersecurity. Developers are constantly looking for clues hackers are trying to break into their systems or holes for cybercriminals. To fix these issues, and improve security, software companies release regular updates. It is important to install the latest update, to receive access to the latest features and services, and get the best security.

Automatic Updates

Set up automatic updates to make your life easier. This will ensure updates are downloaded and installed as soon as they are available from the device, software, or app creator. You may have to restart your device to fully install the update. These can be scheduled to take place when you are not using your device, like the middle of the night.

Update from the Source

Before downloading anything, be sure you know the source. Only download from verified sources or your device's official app store. Remember, pirated, hacked, or unlicensed software can often spread malware, viruses, or other cybersecurity nightmares to your network. It isn't worth the risk!

Don't Fall for Fakes!

Have you ever come across a suspicious pop-up window, urgently demanding you download a software update? These are common on shady websites, or if there is malware already on your machine. These are attempts at phishing and are fake. Don't click any buttons on these pop-ups, and close the browser. Many web browsers will warn you if you are attempting to visit an unsecure web site. Heed the warnings, and don't take the bait!

Make it a Habit

If you decide against automatic updates, make it a habit to check and update your device and apps regularly. At a minimum, check monthly. Ideally, weekly checks are best. Often times, you will be notified when updates are available. It can be a pain to close out of your programs and restart your device, but make sure you update. Remember, updates are part of our digital lifecycle. If you

embrace them, you will have more peace of mind, the latest security, and the best new features!

QR Discount for Password Manager

Remembering all my passwords is so hard! This is where a password manager comes into play. This is similar to a vault with all of your passwords in one place. You only need to remember the vault combination to open and access all of your passwords.

Dashlane is discounting their password manager, for the month of October, for all MCC students, faculty, and staff. The QR code is 50% off the first year of service (regular cost is \$60/ year).

Scan the QR code with your phone and enter code: mcl50 (Lowercase "L"). You must sign up by October 31, 2023, in order for the discount to apply.

Get Social

Do you have any tips or tricks? Share and tag your posts:

- #CybersecurityAwarenessMonth
- #BeCyberSmart
- #StaySafeOnline

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