Security breach leaves employees vulnerable to fraud

Financial system files involving reimbursement vouchers exposed

Michael Hagearty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

In the early morning hours of Sunday, March 10, computer hackers circumvented Georgia Tech server security and gained illegal access to a server in the business office.

An ensuing investigation reveals that the system was used as an illegal file transfer protocol (FTP) site and appears to have been used to distribute large digital files. The intrusion also resulted in the downloading of some 350 gigabytes of data from that server, giving the intruder an opportunity to view files that were on the server.

There are potentially serious ramifications, specifically to those who have submitted travel or reimbursement vouchers since July 1, 2000. Though the Institute has already taken steps to limit access to this information, Joel Hercik, associate vice president of Financial Services, said the foremost concern is the integrity of any personal information that may have been accessed.

“This compromise of several of our financial system files is a matter of great concern, especially as it may impact individual faculty and staff,” Hercik said. “While we are hopeful the financial and personal data contained in some supporting imaged documentation is not readily usable, we are responding to a Security continued, page 2

Committee begins search for new dean of Computing

Hopes to have position filled by fall

Michael Hagearty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

For the first time in its history, the College of Computing has begun the search for a new dean.

Appointed by Provost Jean-Lou Chameau, members of the advisory search committee have the task of recommending a replacement to the position vacated by Dean Peter Freeman in May. The 12 members represent a cross section of faculty, staff, students and external partners.

“In only 10 years, the College of Computing has experienced tremendous growth and brought first-rate professors to Georgia Tech,” Chameau said. “I have complete confidence in this committee’s ability to find a leader who not only has impeccable credentials, but also the vision to continue developing the College’s reputation as a leading center for education and research.”

The search committee held its first official meeting at the end of February, and its first task was to approve copy for an advertisement that will appear in professional magazines around the county over the next two months.

“The College has made great strides in advancing the quality and stature of its programs under Peter Freeman’s leadership,” said Richard Fujimoto, who chairs the search committee. “We are seeking an individual with a strong commitment to education, a distinguished record of research, and the administrative skills necessary to lead the College to the next level of accomplishment.”

Fujimoto added that he and the committee hoped to have a new dean selected by this fall. Though the committee has not hired a professional organization to aid in the search, it is still an option for certain aspects of the process.

Dean continued, page 3

Former President Jimmy Carter to speak on campus

Will receive award during IAC Founder’s Day

Elizabeth Campbell
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

On Friday, March 22, former President Jimmy Carter will be awarded the 2002 Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Progress and Service. the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, celebrates its Founder’s Day by awarding the former President the second Ivan Allen Jr. Prize. Last year, Senator Zell Miller received the first Prize, named in honor of former Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr. (’33), the College’s namesake. The campus is invited to hear President Carter speak about “An Open Society in an Age of Terrorism” at 1 p.m. in the Student Center Ballroom.

In addition, Ivan Allen College invites the campus to a panel discussion on “Civil Liberties in an Age of Terrorism” that morning from

www.whistle.gatech.edu
worst case scenario given the poten-
tial for multiple, interrelated changes.
Hercul said that a number of technical and operational changes are being implemented to mitigate future risk, most of which will be transparent to campus personnel. In addition, his office will be issuing preventive measure tips to units and travelers related to travel reimbursement.
Hercul’s office is working to pin-
point who may have been impacted. Initial estimates are that fewer than 1,000 faculty and staff could have had information in the compromised system.
The Institute is taking steps to limit exposure. State and federal authorities have been contacted to assist in the investigation, and the Feds of America has cancelled all of the more than 100 procurement cards used for departmental pur-
chasing. A process is in place to reissue the cards used to date as any unusual activity has occurred with any of the F-Cards.

Access to the system in question has been altered and will now have very tight access controls on those...
Long-awaited childcare center soon to be a reality

Elizabeth Campbell
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

This month, Georgia Tech and the Home Park Community begin work on a new, fully accredited childcare center, which is tentatively scheduled to open for faculty, staff, students and Home Park residents in early 2003. The current one-story, city-owned community center converted into a neighborhood childcare center in 1985, will be demolished to make room for the center, leaving the neighboring park intact.

Over the years, different groups have attempted to create a campus childcare center. In 1997, more than 5,000 surveys were distributed to faculty, staff and students to ascertain the level of interest in providing childcare services for the Tech community. Survey results indicated an overwhelming response in favor of childcare. Within the last two years, an additional opinion survey was conducted by a top childcare management company to determine the feasibility of providing childcare services on or near campus. The results of this survey convinced campus facilities to support the project.

In October 1998 the Institute received a request from the Home Park Community Improvement Association (HPCIA) soliciting financial support for the establishment of a Home Park Learning Center. After consulting with various childcare support groups on campus, a mandate from President Wayne Clough established the current Childcare Committee led by Chuck Donbaugh, associate vice president of Human Resources (OHR), and Jean Fuller, director of Employee Services. After an engineering firm examined the existing facility, the committee determined that rebuilding the facility would be more cost effective.

"As our campus population has changed with younger faculty, more female faculty and graduate students, the need for a quality childcare program becomes critical," said President Clough. "When recruiting young faculty and staff, a childcare center is a major competitive advantage."

During the past three years a childcare partnership was established with HPCIA. Tech representatives have facilitated and attended meetings with representatives of HPCIA to bring the project to fruition — including the city’s Office of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, numerous city building and zoning regulation offices, and the Mayor’s Office.

The one-story childcare center will be located at 1015 Tumlin Street, near the intersection of Tenth and State Streets. The center is designed for 120 children from 6 weeks in age to pre-school. According to the agreement with Home Park, 80 percent of the spaces are reserved for the Tech community and 20 percent for Home Park community residents.

The building and childcare program will be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation’s largest and most influential organization for early childhood educators.

The new childcare center is a unique partnership between Georgia Tech, HPCIA and the city of Atlanta. The city owns the property and the current building, which serves the Home Park community. Georgia Tech and HPCIA formed a non-profit corporation called Home Park Learning Center, Inc. (HPLC) to enter into a long-term, 30-year lease with the city and to hire a professional child care management company to operate the childcare program. The HPLC board has awarded a contract to Bright Horizons Family Solutions, one of the top child care management companies in the United States, to manage the Center.

"In the nearly 30 years the Home Park community has been operating a childcare center, the majority of enrollment has come from Tech families, so this partnership is a natural fit that helps us meet many of our goals," said Tim State, president of HPCIA.

"This joint childcare project with the Home Park Community is an exciting and positive step in Institute/Community partnership," said Bob Thompson, senior vice president of Administration and Finance. "We have several joint ventures in the planning stages and look forward to a strong community relationship with the Home Park neighborhood."

"We're taking a non-traditional approach as a public employer entering into a long-term agreement with a neighborhood association and the city of Atlanta to construct a childcare center," said Donbaugh. "It will be a first-rate educational program and facility for both Georgia Tech and neighboring Home Park."

Dean, cost it from here page 1

Freeman is stepping down after serving as founding dean of the College since 1990. He will assume a position with the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Washington as assistant director for Computer and Information Science and Engineering. Officially, he will remain a member of the Georgia Tech faculty, on assignment to NSF.