Welcome to Cassandra Bechard!

AHS Computing is happy to announce that Cassandra Bechard has joined the AHS Computing team.

Cassandra joined AHS Computing in September 2014 as the Information Systems & Technology (IST) Account Representative. She acts as a liaison between IST and AHS Computing. Within AHS she provides primary support for the School of Public Health and Health Systems and undergraduate students. She also assists with the migration and maintenance of AHS sites within the WCMS. Cassandra is the application contact for Microsoft Word, Adobe Reader, and Adobe Acrobat Pro, campus-wide.

The appointment of an IST Liaison is in lieu of having a co-op student provided by IST. Continuity between terms and providing AHS with a permanent representative in IST were the primary factors leading this change in personnel. AHS Computing has been a strong supporter of co-op for 20+ years.

AHS Research Drive

In an effort to take advantage of economies of scale, AHS Computing will be partnering with IST to host research drive space. 20TB of space will be provisioned (approximately 200 times the space that your current hard drive is using on your office computer).

This is an enterprise system that will be backed up hourly, nightly, weekly & monthly with various versions available at any given time. This new system is far more robust than the consumer grade portable USB drives and Network Attached Storage (NAS) devices that are currently in place.

Propel and the NiMBal research group in Kinesiology will be the initial adopters. Other research groups will be welcomed into the fold starting in 2015. If you are interested, please contact a member of AHS Computing.

AHS Computing Audit

During the spring term, Deloitte conducted an Internal Audit of AHS Computing. The purpose of the audit was to assess the design, implementation and operation effectiveness of processes and controls for IT operations, security and change management. The report from the auditors was positive, AHS Computing has designed and implemented most IT processes and controls to mitigate IT risks. The Audit specifically highlighted:

♦ well managed privileged accounts
♦ overall system protection (from devices to workstations and servers)
♦ properly documented change management
♦ participation in campus-wide initiatives

One moderate priority recommendation and three low priority recommendations were made. The three low priority recommendations have already been addressed. The moderate priority recommendation was the lack of a Service Contingency Plan. AHS Computing is busy addressing this recommendation with an anticipated completion date of April 2015.
AHSCO Update

All grad students have been provisioned a Connect account. With a cleaner and easier interface to manage, and the ability to book appointments with faculty members, it is a far superior service.

We are also partnering with Retail Services in a campus-wide printer accounting system for undergrads. This new system is leveraging Watcard to fund printing and it eliminates the need to transfer funds. RLS will be moving to this model for their graduate students in 2015.

AHS is working with IST on a faculty installation of Microsoft’s System Centre Configuration Manager (SCCM). Currently, this product is managing software installs, updates in the student computing labs and the distribution of Office 2013. AHS will be implementing this option for office and research areas to manage troublesome applications like Java & Adobe Flash and Reader.

A construction camera has been deployed by the AHS Computing team, Craig McDonald has been the lead on this project. Be on the lookout for a live feed of the progress of the new AHS wing.

WAIT! the annual computing conference on campus, was held on December 3rd. Nearly 300 members of the UW Waterloo IT community attended sessions presented by colleagues. It was a great networking opportunity as well. Craig McDonald volunteered as co-chair and Lowell Williamson as a committee member.

Upgrades to classrooms BMH 1005 & 1016 will take place in late December. New data projectors capable of supporting not only traditional VGA display but also higher resolutions or newer technology (HDMI, DVI, DisplayPort, etc) will be installed. Now more than ever it is important to familiarize yourself with classroom technology in advance. And don’t forget to bring your adaptor!

Work continues on Encrypting portable devices as part of our adherence to Policy 8. If you currently have a laptop and you are not certain if it is encrypted or not, please contact a member of AHS Computing to discuss options moving forward.

After a hiatus of over a year, AHS Computing is happy to resume production of our Newsletter. If you find our publication useful or have suggestions please let us know.

Operating System Updates

You may already have had a chance to use Windows 8. It is a drastic alteration of the user interface. The removal of the ubiquitous Start menu left users dumbfounded. Microsoft will be releasing Windows 10 and with it a return of the Start button.

There are a series of changes and upgrades to the latest version of Windows. Microsoft promises that Windows 10 will be more intuitive than Windows 8. “Windows 10 will be familiar to end users whether they’re coming from Windows 7 or Windows 8”.

AHS Computing will be investigating Windows 10 with early adopters being incoming laptops purchased commercially.

About the VPN

Have you ever worked on a document all night just to forget it at home in the morning or have your computer fail?

Luckily there is an easy way to prevent this headache. You may have used your network drive, but with a simple tool, “Cisco AnyConnect” you can access or "Map" your drive (be it N: or R:) from any device, anywhere.

When storing files here, your information is password protected, backed up, and versioned so you can restore a document if you make an unwanted change.

This service is free to students, staff, and faculty. AHS Computing is always ready to help if you have questions about keeping your files safe or mapping a drive.

Use Your Outlook Account!

Staff and faculty are constantly booking appointments, going to meetings and trying to remember all of their tasks. Outlook has made it possible for every user to create appointments with the option of inviting and notifying others. The University has invested a great deal of time and resources into this service, it would be a shame if we were not using Outlook as our primary way of booking meetings/appointments.

Why go to an outside source when Outlook is already provided and used on a daily basis? Having all our information in one place simplifies our day and ensures we do not miss anything. Use the tool that already connects us all, it works and is always available.

Need a quick tutorial on how to use the Outlook Calendar? Would you like to see a seminar on the possibilities that exist with scheduling? If so, contact a member of AHS Computing.