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Focusing on Cybersecurity

University of Dayton

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Focusing on Cybersecurity

The University of Dayton will establish the Center for Cybersecurity & Data Intelligence with a lead gift from Premier Health to enhance the cyberhealth of the Dayton community.
"We want to help spread a culture of cyber-mindfulness™ across the community. Everyone should be ‘cyber-mindful™’ of threats and able to alert others when things don't seem quite right," University of Dayton CIO Tom Skill said. "The majority of network intrusions happen because someone willingly, but unknowingly, gave their ID and password to a bad guy."

The center will initially focus on the healthcare environment, Skill said, but is seeking lead partners representing other industry sectors to broaden the scope of the center's work.

In making a substantial gift to establish the center, Premier will collaborate with the University's faculty experts and information technology staff to identify and test new cybersecurity practices, create education and awareness programs for employees, and share best practices with the greater Dayton community.

Initially, the University and Premier will share expertise and train information technology teams on incident readiness and response and bring that expertise into University classrooms through deep and meaningful experiential learning. Both institutions support the goals of educating, attracting, retaining and supporting a local workforce that can recognize and respond to growing threats to information security personally and professionally.

Several University departments and Premier will also develop free, public resources to help protect sensitive data, especially health information, including a blog, tips via social media, forums and webinars.

"Thousands of University of Dayton and Premier employees come in contact with thousands of bits of electronic information daily, so you can imagine the millions of touchpoints affecting most everyone in the region," Premier Health CIO Gary Ginter said. "While UD and Premier must continue the training of employees, it's important that we provide understandable and attainable recommendations to the greater Dayton community for protecting their personal data, including health information. Our vision is to build awareness of the cybersecurity risks we face, ensure people understand the best ways to limit these threats, and help them take meaningful steps to protect themselves."

Other proposed initiatives include sharing information technology infrastructure designs, developing methods for monitoring and documenting threats, and communicating them to executives; integrating best cybersecurity practices with new employees during the orientation progress; establishing protocols for unmanaged personal communication devices brought onto the respective campuses by employees.

"We are very thankful for Premier's lead gift and its investment as a lead practice partner in healthcare," Skill said. "But we both recognize healthcare information is not the only information in our region that needs to be secure. Cybersecurity requires a multidisciplinary approach. The center will be utilizing University faculty in computer science, computer engineering, management information systems, law and technology, communications, political science and criminal justice. So it's important we work to attract additional lead practice partners in other sectors who can bring expertise in their respective areas to the center."

Skill said bringing industry partners into the center will increase its capabilities, especially in trainings for incident readiness and response.
"Just a quick glance at today's headlines reveals cybersecurity has become a global challenge," Skill said. "Health information is among the most valuable data for cybercriminals and protecting that information is a team effort. This partnership will help us develop and test leading practices that can be shared among professionals and the community."

Any organization interested in becoming a lead practice partner in the center can contact Derrick Dukes, assistant vice president for corporate relations for the University, at 937-229-4523 or ddukes1@udayton.edu.

Lead partners will also benefit from enhanced opportunities to interact with University of Dayton students and graduates for internships and employment recruitment, as well as discounted access to the cybersecurity center's training and continuing education workshops, institutes and certification sessions.

*Cyber-mindful and cyber-mindfulness are trademarks registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office.*

For more information, contact Cilla Shindell, director of media relations, at 937-229-3257 or shindell@udayton.edu.