Cyber Security Policy and Research Institute

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The Weekly Newsletter of The George Washington University Cyber Security Policy and Research Institute

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Scholarship applications due Saturday!

Cybersecurity is increasingly seen as an interdisciplinary field.

The CyberCorps Scholarship includes**full tuition and fees coverage, a living stipend for the academic year,**

January 26, 2015

Eleven (11) Cyber security Events are scheduled in the Greater Washington Area in the next few weeks.

Legislative Lowdown

-Members of the House and Senate introduced the Geolocation Privacy and Surveillance (GPS) Act last week, which would protect information about people's locations from the police and other people, reports The Hill. "Courts have so far been mixed about which legal protections apply for information about people's location," writes Julian Hattem. "In 2012, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that police need to obtain a warrant before attaching a GPS device to a suspect's car. The high court did not address rules for other types of tracking, however, such as the geolocation tools in someone's cellphone or a driving aide."

Hattem also writes about a coalition of tech companies that is calling for action on a proposal that would update email privacy laws and bring them out of 1986. Under current law, law enforcement officials can gain secret access to consumer and business email records that are more than six months old armed with little more than an administrative subpoena. "Last year, legislation to require a warrant for all emails and other digital documents received 272 co-sponsors in the House, well more than the 218 necessary for a majority," Hattem writes. "Still, that House bill failed to even get a committee vote. Supporters of reform have blamed the holdup on agencies like the Securities and Exchange Commission, which obtains information through

Events

Click here for descriptions of the upcoming events!

Click the Calendar to See Upcoming Events at a Glance!

CSPRI in the News

WTOP-FM spoke to CSPRI Research Scientist **Alan Friedman** about cybersecurity ahead of the State of the Union address on January 20. Click **here.**

a book allowance, and a professional development fund.

For more information on the program, click**here.**

subpoenas and might have a harder time pursuing investigations if required to get a warrant."

Cyber Security Policy News

Cybersecurity and the State of the Union
-President Obama laid out a series of broad cybersecurity measures in his State of the Union address last week, calling on Congress to pass a package of cyber legislation, including measures intended to encourage cyber threat information-sharing between the public and private sectors; a bill to better guard the privacy of student data; to raise the punishments for cyber crime; and to create a federal breach notification standard and nationwide cyber defense standards. Business Week has the lowdown on the proposals, and who stands to gain from them.

Writing for NextGov, Patrick Tucker argues that Obama's cybersecurity plans may not end up making Americans any safer. "The specific cybersecurity proposal the president unveiled last week could be a pretext for expanded, unchecked surveillance that may not actually make the nation safer," Tucker writes. "The ideas in the proposal face no strong political resistance especially since the information-collection organism would not be the government itself but rather private companies reporting user information to the government."

Meanwhile, the Obama administration has quietly abandoned a proposal it had been considering to put raw U.S. telephone call data collected by the National Security Agency under non-governmental control, according to Reuters. "Obama promised changes in the government's handling of such data in a speech a year ago after revelations by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden about the extent of the agency's electronic surveillance of Americans' communications," the publication wrote last week.

Health officials scaling back data collection
Federal health officials also are scaling back data collection and sharing plans amid privacy concerns, reports The Associated Press. Bowing to privacy concerns, the Obama administration reversed itself Friday, scaling back the release of consumers' personal information from the government's health insurance website to private companies with a commercial interest in the data," writes Jack Gillum and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar. "The administration made the changes to HealthCare.gov after The Associated Press reported earlier that the website was quietly sending consumers' personal data to companies that specialize in advertising and analyzing Internet data for performance and marketing."

Verizon's perma-cookie
For the last several months, cybersecurity experts have been warning Verizon Wireless that it was putting the privacy of its customers at risk. The computer codes the company uses to tag and follow its mobile subscribers around the web, they said, could make those consumers vulnerable to covert tracking and profiling. Now, according to

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The New York Times, it seems that experts weren't raising the alarm unnecessarily. "This month Jonathan Mayer, a lawyer and computer science graduate student at Stanford University, reported on his blog that Turn, an advertising software company, was using Verizon's unique customer codes to regenerate its own tracking tags after consumers had chosen to delete what is called a cookie - a little bit of code that can stick with your web browser after you have visited a site," write Natasha Singer and Brian X. Chen for The Times. "In effect, Turn found a way to keep tracking visitors even after they tried to delete their digital footprints."

Executives worry about cyberattacks

-Executives at this year's World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland are worried about disruptive cyberattacks in 2015, according to The New York Times. "Executives were broadly pessimistic on the topic, believing that although a number of prominent cyberattacks occurred in 2014, this year would only be worse," writes David Gelles.

About this Newsletter

This newsletter is a weekly summary of events related to cyber security policy and research, with a special focus on developments and events in the Washington, DC area. It is published by the Cyber Security Policy and Research Institute (CSPRI) of the George Washington University. CSPRI is a center for GW and the Washington area that promotes technical research and policy analysis of topics in or related to cybersecurity. More information is available at our website, http://www.cspri.seas.gwu.edu

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