

# Darkwing security breached

University counsel advised the Computing Center not to reveal the way in which the system was compromised

By Parker Howell  
News Reporter

Students and faculty members who use the University's Darkwing computing system may have had their confidential information revealed on May 23 in what is being described by officials as a "major security breach."

The attack occurred when an "intruder gained unauthorized root access to darkwing.uoregon.edu," according to a May 26 e-mail that Administrative Services and Computing Facilities Director Susan Hilton posted to the Departmental Computing Group Mailing List. By accessing the root, or main directory, of the Darkwing server, the attacker "obtained copies of Darkwing's encrypted authentication data," potentially allowing the attacker to determine users' private information that was stored on the server.

A check of the system's files showed that the intruder did not modify any other files on the server, however, indicating that the attack was limited to unauthorized access to information, according to the e-mail. Darkwing users were required to change their passwords by June 1 in order to prevent additional attacks.

The Computing Center is aware of the means the intruder used during the attack and has "taken steps to mitigate that attack," according to the e-mail.

But it remains unclear whether the identity of the party or parties who committed the attack is known.

Computing Center Senior Systems Manager Robert Jones confirmed that someone infiltrated the system and said the problem has been remedied, but he declined further comment.

Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications Harry Battson said the attacker just compromised passwords, resulting in the need for all Darkwing users to change their passwords.

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Harry Battson  
Associate vice president  
for strategic communications

"The impact is that we recognize that there was a breach of the passwords," he said. "It's just another good reason for people to change passwords frequently."

Battson said the Computing Center corrected the problem quickly.

"No critical information was compromised," he said, adding that he could not discuss details of the attack so as not to encourage other hackers. Battson did say that law enforcement is investigating the attack, but he would not specify what agency or agencies are handling the case.

"This incident is under investigation by appropriate law authorities," he said. Eugene Police Department spokeswoman Pam Olshanski said EPD is aware of the cyber attack but is not investigating it. Beth Anne Steele, spokeswoman for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Portland office, said she could not comment on whether the FBI is investigating the attack.

University General Counsel Melinda Grier said she advised the Computing Center not to discuss information about the breach that would encourage further attacks or hinder law enforcement efforts related to the attack.

"We wanted to be especially cautious about relating something that would compromise security," she said. "We don't want to make anything worse than it is."

Some faculty members disagreed about how the attack was handled, however. Daniel Graham, who supports a system similar to Darkwing for the Institute of Molecular Biology, said an attacker who gains root access can read all files stored on the system.

"It's full-blown access, unfortunately," he said, adding that the breach may have been significant. "I have a feeling that the way they're hushing things up, they took more than passwords. Usually, you wouldn't be so secretive about stealing password files."

Graham said computer departments usually share information with each other about security breaches so that other administrators can fix security holes in their systems, but Computing Services had not revealed the nature of the security breach.

"It's just driving us nuts," he said. "It's sort of frustrating to those of us who in the past have always shared information."

He said computer support staff, not hackers, have been hindered by the lack of information.

"So far, the only people who have been kept in the dark are those who need to (fix similar problems)," he said.

Graham added that the May 25 e-mail sent to Darkwing users about password changes looked like a scam e-mail and confused some users. He said hackers often employ similar e-mails that obtain information by having the recipient click on a link that leads the user to transmit private information.

Graham said his department has trained users not to use similar links. "I had people who just didn't do it," he said.

Linda Foley, Executive Director of the Identity Theft Resource Center, said attacks on university computer systems are not unusual.

"The reality is that most of these computer breaches don't seem to involve identify theft," she said.

She said students should check their credit records for suspicious entries even if they do not suspect identity theft from a specific breach.

Students and staff who did not change their password by the deadline must do so to access their accounts. Individuals can change their passwords at <https://password.uoregon.edu> if they know their username and old password or the personal access code (PAC) used for DuckWeb.

Contact the city/state politics reporter at [parkerhowell@dailyemerald.com](mailto:parkerhowell@dailyemerald.com).

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Flux magazine release party honors publication

Students are invited to attend a release party today to celebrate the publication of the 2004 issue of Flux magazine, which is created by students in the School of Journalism and Communication.

The event will take place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at DIVA (Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts) on the corner of Broadway and Olive Streets.

The event will feature "THE ART OF FLUX," an exhibit of some of the most compelling, prize-winning photography from current and past issues of Flux. The students, who wrote, edited, designed and took the photographs for the magazine and its online counterpart, inFlux, will attend. Refreshments and copies of the magazine will be provided, along with a video display of Web-only features.

This year's issue contains profiles of a Portland grandmother who is raising her incarcerated daughter's five children, a young man making the difficult decision to enter the priesthood, the acclaimed documentary photographer Mary Ellen Mark and a student who learns to cope with sudden blindness with help from a teacher who also lost his sight years before. The new issue also contains a personal essay by a student living with lupus, a photo essay documenting the many varieties of marriage, features about the resurgence of ukulele music, the outdoor adventure sport called geocaching and a Brazilian dance/martial art form called capoeira, and stories about birth control and mental illness.

The inFlux Web site contains video, audio, animation and extra stories and sidebars along with the stories included in the print version.

The magazine and its online companion are created in a class offered

spring term, Magazine Production, by a staff of more than 30 students.

— Jennifer Marie Bear

### Music Building will have much-needed makeover

Many talented University students must practice playing their musical instruments in hallways and restrooms due to a lack of practicing rooms in the Music Building. Closets and storage rooms also have been converted to offices, with up to four graduate teaching fellows per space.

Soon, space will no longer be an issue at the Music Building, thanks to \$2.35 million in donations which will help expand the School of Music.

Nearly 500 music majors and 4,000 other students practice and perform in a 83-year-old building designed to accommodate only 300.

The staff at the music school plans to raise \$7.6 million in private funds and matching state bonds to expand and renovate the building. So far, six donors have given \$2.35 million toward that goal.

Thelma and Gilbert Schnitzer donated \$250,000 to create a new small performance space. The Thelma Schnitzer Hall will include a grand piano and will host small recitals and performances, as well as be a 148-student classroom. The new room will be equipped with permanent risers and new audio-visual equipment.

"Music and education have always been important to our family," said the Schnitzers in a press release. "We are both grateful for the education that we received at the University of Oregon, and this gift is a wonderful way to share our love of music by helping music students of tomorrow."

Other donors include Audrey Aasen-Hull, Kathleen Daugherty, Richards Grubbe and Leona and Robert DeArmond.

— Lisa Catto

## SYNERGY

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bands featured in the magazine.

"My goal was to focus on the graphic design pretty heavily," he said.

Abbott recruited the six writers with the help of his advisor, Professor Mary-Kate Mackey, who teaches Magazine I. Mackey had never heard

of such an ambitious project piloted by an undergraduate, but said it was Abbott's resilience that got him through the grueling process.

"He just stuck to it," she said. "That makes the difference between someone who dreams and someone who delivers."

Contact the people/culture/faith reporter at [moriahbalingit@dailyemerald.com](mailto:moriahbalingit@dailyemerald.com).

## CAMPUS BUZZ

### Monday

Art exhibit entitled "The Student Furniture Show" featuring work by students of Professor Wayne Jewett, Monday-Sunday, LaVerne Krause Gallery, Lawrence Hall, Opening reception 6-8 p.m. Monday.

### Wednesday

Officers of Administration Council, EMU Umpqua Room, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Campus Planning Committee meeting, EMU

Metolius Room, 1:30-3 p.m.

### Thursday

Associate vice president for Information Services candidate presentation by John Streck from North Carolina State University, Browning Room, Knight Library, 10:15-11:20 a.m.

### Friday

Oregon ballroom dance, Room 220, Gerlinger Hall, 7:30-11:30 p.m.

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