

**Subject:** News from the CIO, November, 2024  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 26, 2024 at 8:32:03 AM Eastern Standard Time  
**From:** Dave Baird  
**To:** Rachel Schnepfer

 **Wesleyan University**  
**Information Technology Services**

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**Issue #43, November, 2024**

**The "Thanksgiving Edition"**



Dear Colleagues:

It's the week of Thanksgiving break and I think it safe to say that we are all looking forward to some rest and relaxation... But first, some gratitude is due to everyone who has worked so hard to adapt to new ways of working since we went live on Workday a short five months ago. Believe me, we understand the impact of changing so many processes... many of you have had to re-learn how to do jobs which have become second nature after decades of optimizing how you work. Yet, I was reminded at the board of trustees meetings this weekend that we need to operate with the long term health of Wesleyan as our priority, and part of that entails replacing out of date systems that are no longer viable (PeopleSoft) with new systems that enable the adoption of modern business processes used by our peers. So, while we acknowledge the disruption that this change brings in the short term, I am bolstered by the fact that we have such capable staff and faculty working to make this transition, and extremely grateful for the implementation team who continues to do yeoman's work. OK, on to the articles...

In this newsletter:

- ITS Community Partnership with STEAM Train
- Efficient Data Transfers for Faculty Research Using Globus
- Apple users: Update your OS!
- Want to Meet?

Let's get to it...

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**ITS Community Partnership with STEAM Train**

Over the past two years ITS has partnered with the Middletown based [STEAM Train](#) organization and recently hosted our third ITS STEAM Train apprentice at the ITS Service Desk.

STEAM Train is a non-profit organization that is committed to moving generations, especially underserved, under resourced, and underrepresented populations, to careers in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and beyond.

This fall semester, ITS Service Desk Manager Alex O’Neil hosted a STEAM Train graduate of the [FAST Track Academy](#) for 40 hours of training, instruction, and experiential learning. During the 40 hours, the apprentice worked with our Service Desk, Service Center, and alongside our Desktop Support staff to assist in the delivery of IT service and support to the Wesleyan community.

Additionally, our ITS Service Center prepared and donated several retired Wesleyan desktop and laptop computers which will be utilized by STEAM Train in various aspects of their Fast Track Academy curriculum to prepare future students for information technology careers.

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### **Efficient Data Transfers for Faculty Research Using Globus**

ITS recently collaborated with Dr. Sarah Wellons, Assistant Professor of Astronomy, to optimize her research process using the [Globus](#) network for secure and efficient data transfers. This project was supported by Henk Meij, Assistant Director for Unix Systems and High Performance Computing, who worked with Dr. Wellons to address this need.

Dr. Wellons is part of a collaboration running highly-parallelized simulations of galaxy formation and evolution using national supercomputing facilities. These simulations generate terabytes of data, making data transfer to Wesleyan’s local cluster for analysis challenging. Before using Globus, Dr. Wellons had to rely on cumbersome methods involving her personal computer to download and re-upload files.

As Dr. Wellons explained:

*“Globus provides a means of securely sharing large data sets between computer clusters across institutions. Copying an entire simulation took only a couple of hours and happened mostly without my supervision, which is a huge relief compared to the way it worked before and gives me much more flexibility in terms of choosing which simulations to host locally at any given time.”*

To streamline this workflow, Henk established a Globus endpoint on Wesleyan’s cluster enabled by Wesleyan’s membership in Internet2’s InCommon, a trust federation that provides secure, privacy-preserving access to online resources and services across higher education institutions, research organizations, and their partners.

This is one example of the ongoing faculty partnerships in which Henk engages to further the goals of Wesleyan’s research.

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### **Apple users: Update your OS!**

Running an up-to-date version of your operating system doesn’t just provide new features, it also protects your computer from various attacks hackers have developed. Microsoft understands this and forces users to update, which is why 99.8% of the Windows devices that are used at Wesleyan are running current versions of the Windows operating system. Apple (unfortunately) lets users delay needed updates, resulting in only 15% of Wesleyan managed Macs being fully updated. To remedy this, we are exploring enabling automatic upgrades. If you don’t know how to upgrade your Mac, please reach out to your DSS technician for help.

Lastly, if you haven’t already, please take a few minutes to complete your cyber security awareness training (see link in the Security bucket in WesPortal, deadline is January 31, 2025).

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### **Want to Meet?**

Each semester, Rachel Schnepfer, Erik Quimby, and I offer to meet with academic departments across campus. These meetings are a valuable opportunity for us to meet new faculty, share news on upcoming projects, and, most importantly, hear directly from you about any challenges, concerns, or technology needs within your department. While many departments consistently take advantage of this time, we have yet to connect with a few departments, and it’s unfortunate that we and they miss out on these collaborative conversations. At the same time, some faculty with appointments in multiple departments wind up hearing our updates more than once! I encourage all departments to join us in fostering a strong, communicative relationship with ITS, which ultimately enhances the

support and resources we provide to the entire Wesleyan community.

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Finally, as a reward for reading this far, here is your Random Seasonal Lyric...

From Ukrainian mandolinist Peter Ostroushko's 1989 album *Blue Mesa* comes "[Horizontal Hold](#)". Last Friday, my band (Rats in the Attic) covered this tune at [Trinity Stage](#)'s Music on Main series where we were honored to share the billing with Wesleyan's own Mattabeset String Collective!

*It's getting cold the radio said  
Let's go upstairs, go back to bed  
You get the chips, I'll get the spread  
Now grab the cat, let's go to bed*

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Until next time, please be in touch if you want more information on any of the above or if you have suggestions for future topics, and thanks for reading!

Dave Baird  
VP for IT & CIO

