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EIU Notifies Applicants of Possible Security Breach Involving Personal Data

Dec-04-2009

Eastern Illinois University officials have mailed letters of notification to approximately 9,000 former, prospective and current undergraduate students regarding a possible security breach into files containing personal information.

During a routine review on Nov. 16, employees of Eastern's Information Technology Services Department discovered that a server used by the university's Office of Admissions had been infected with a number of viruses, including several that would allow an external person to access the server.

Investigators know that an unknown individual outside of the university may have had access to the server from approximately 7:30 a.m. Nov. 11, until 12:30 p.m. Nov. 16. They cannot, however, verify whether or not any files containing student information were accessed.

This particular server contained electronic admissions application data from prospective undergraduate students dating from March 10, 2000, to Nov. 16, 2009. Those who did not submit their admission applications electronically are not affected.

The investigation continues. Meanwhile, advisory letters have been sent to those whose information appeared on the server. In addition to official notification of the incident, the letters include safety recommendations that individuals may take.

Also, Eastern has contracted with Experian®. As a result, those individuals potentially impacted by this incident are eligible to receive a free one-year membership in Triple Alert from ConsumerInfo.com, an Experian® company.

The university has created a Web page with information about the breach and answers to frequently asked questions. It may be viewed at <http://www.eiu.edu/notice>.