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October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month

In today's world, fulfilling the University of Tennessee's mission to educate, discover and connect would not be possible without computers and information technology. From virtual classrooms to paperless record-keeping, our University's daily functioning depends on the countless electronic devices and data we take for granted in doing our jobs.

What we can't take for granted is the security of University data. October has been designated National Cyber Security Awareness Month, and the unique circumstances of the higher education environment pose special challenges to our efforts to maintain data security.

Our information systems are used to produce and archive intellectual property and research, to process credit card transactions and medical records, and to function as an Internet service provider to tens of thousands of employees, students and visitors to our facilities. These and the many more necessary functions of our information technology mean we face a complex need for security, balanced against the need to have resources that also are open to a diverse array of users.

From the Internet, we face increasing threats from malicious cyber attacks, loss of privacy from spyware and adware, and identity theft and fraud.

"Stop.Think.Connect." is a national effort coordinated by a coalition of private companies, nonprofits and government organizations to help all digital citizens stay safer and more secure online. Details and more information are here: www.stopthinkconnect.org

The Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center is conducting a national Cyber Security Pledge campaign this month to help users understand good Internet safety practices and affirm a commitment to online safety. Learn more at: <http://msisac.cisecurity.org/cyber-pledge>

The UT System Administration Information Security Office website also has links to IT security resources and to your local information security information pages at: <http://security.tennessee.edu>

I encourage you to visit these organizations' websites to learn more about information security and to put that knowledge into practice in your workplace and at home.

All the best,
Joe

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The mission of the University of Tennessee System Administration is to advance the educational, discovery, creative and outreach programs of the campuses and institutes through leadership that removes obstacles, understands needs, provides advocacy, secures resources, promotes accountability, fosters diversity, promotes innovation, coordinates campus efforts and delivers efficient and effective central services.