CYBERSECURITY FOCUS
OF CLARK STATE
INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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Summer is in full swing, a time for family vacations and respites from the routines of school, work and otherwise busy schedules. But throughout Ohio’s higher education network, the beat goes on. In this summer edition of ConnectED, you’ll see how summer courses and activities prepare students for the coming semester and for the workforce through internships, apprenticeships and job interviews.

You’ll learn about how the University of Cincinnati helps international students acclimate to academic life in America’s heartland—and how those students touch the hearts of others and broaden the world view of American students. You’ll also discover how a course in humor at Ohio University - Zanesville can create a richer understanding of the “human operating system,” and how developing an appreciation for humor can be useful in the workplace and in life.

In Ohio, summer is a time of fun, a time of continued learning and a time of exploration and progress in education and in the workplace. I hope you’ll make some time to relax this summer, while finding time to stay ConnectED.

John Carey
Chancellor, Ohio Department of Higher Education

Cybersecurity Focus of Clark State Internship Program
Clark State is successfully addressing the statewide shortage of cybersecurity professionals.

No Joke: Humor Transcends Learning from the Classroom to the Workplace
How an OU professor’s comedy writings are being used by former students

‘It’s On Us’ Student Leader Makes National Impact
The national movement championing prevention and awareness, has one goal – to stop campus sexual assaults

Cincinnati State Prepares Students for Job Interviews
Cincinnati State is preparing students to enter the workplace by rehearsing the job interviewing process

Changing the World—Starting with the View
UC students share their inspiring stories of opportunities seized, thanks to the university’s international outreach efforts
Clark State Community College is successfully addressing the statewide shortage of cybersecurity professionals. Through a National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education (ATE) grant, the Ohio community college offers enrolled high school students cybersecurity internships to develop their interest in the field.

The Cybersecurity Summer Internship Program is open to currently enrolled Clark State students as well as students from Central State University. The students form teams and are paired with a faculty extern who is a Clark State faculty member or local high school teacher. Together, they research and find a solution to a partner company’s cybersecurity problem.

Employers who are partnered with Clark State range from the national Fortune 500 company AT&T to the local United Way. Previously, students worked on VSAT Systems, a satellite
Clark State offers an Associate of Applied Science degree in CyberSecurity/Information Assurance Technology, and the curriculum is helpful preparation for many industry certifications, such as CompTIA certifications (A+, Security+, Network+, etc.) and Cisco Certified Network Associate.

Clark State recruits interns through its Intro to Cybersecurity course, which is taught in several area high schools. In Ohio, the College Credit Plus program allows community colleges to train high school teachers and certify them to teach a college-level course for credit.

This summer, 11 of the 26 students who applied will earn $10 per hour as interns, working 32 hours a week alongside six faculty externs. Each week, the teams will spend three days at the employer site and one day at Clark State, where they will work on job training and skills as well as coursework in ethical hacking. Students will also participate in a “hackfest,” during which they will determine how intruders access networks. The goal is for them to learn how to prevent hacking, said Cathy Balas, co-principal investigator on the ATE cybersecurity grant and Clark State adjunct faculty.

“As a society, we’re in the information age; everything we’re doing is tech-driven,” said Dan Heighton, professor for Clark State’s CyberSecurity/Information Assurance program and principal investigator of the ATE cybersecurity grant. “That technology has an impact on our life; it gathers data about who we are and what we do, and we need to be able to protect that data.”

Hackers have breached government employees’ personnel records, accessed credit card data at restaurants and retailers, and installed ransomware on hospital systems, keeping administrators from patient data until the ransom is paid. Because of ongoing threats to data, cybersecurity education is likely to attract a broader spectrum of people outside of information technology, Balas said.

“Years ago, you thought cybersecurity was something only computer professions had to worry about,” she said.

Nearly all Clark State interns have secured jobs in the cybersecurity field, and the high school programs have boosted enrollment at the college.

Through exposure to partner companies’ cybersecurity challenges, faculty externs learn about new technologies and techniques and strengthen their skills. Faculty members, Balas said, are “not just receiving hands-on experience, but applying a theory and putting it to work on some real-world challenges.”
Whether used in the classroom or in the workplace, humor ultimately promotes creativity, exploration and critical thinking — skills that carry on for a lifetime. Mark Shatz, professor emeritus of psychology at Ohio University, sees such value in humor that he’s taught a class on the topic and released the third edition of the book “Comedy Writing Secrets” earlier this year.

Two of Shatz’s former students, Megan Dailey and Stephanie Wahl, say the concepts presented in Shatz’s class have transferred well to their professional lives.

“When I am working with clients, I always try to pull out those elements when appropriate,” said Dailey, a mental health clinician in the Residential Treatment Unit at the Ohio Reformatory for Women in Marysville. “I even have two copies of the book in my office that I allow clients to borrow who like to write poetry and use writing as a coping skill.”
Dailey took Humor Writing as well as Thanatology – the scientific study of death – from Shatz during her undergraduate education at Ohio University Zanesville.

Wahl said someone who can teach both humor writing and thanatology has “a pretty unique and gifted personality.”

“As a therapist I utilize humor daily to earn trust, build rapport and decrease negative power differentials,” said Wahl, who serves as a clinical therapist at Mid-Ohio Behavioral Health in Zanesville. She added that clients often come to her feeling nervous and overwhelmed, and she uses humor to help them feel comfortable.

“If they leave feeling a little better than when they first walked in, then I know they will be back,” Wahl said.

Dailey said adding humor to a therapy session makes her seem “human” and helps her gain a better rapport with her clients.

“Using humor and allowing people to ‘see the funny’ can change a person’s life, and even save it,” she said. “I think about Mark’s class all the time at work, whether it’s applying the skills with clients or coworkers. I try to add an element of humor to meetings or lectures to gain attention or lighten the mood. Sometimes I use it for my own sanity so I can deal with the stress of my demanding position.”

Wahl said her work in mental health can also be stressful and demanding, but humor helps her maintain balance.

“Laughter is universal and very relational. It's like sharing a meal with someone, you are always closer to that person afterward,” Wahl said.

Shatz said humor has become a way to draw a larger audience to various topics.

“Humor as an instructional tool creates a positive classroom environment that opens minds, fosters communication and encourages active participation,” Shatz said. “More and more markets are begging for humor material – speeches, social media, advertising, blogging, podcasts and e-learning.”

As students such as Dailey and Wahl enter the workforce, they put into practice the experience they gained in Shatz’s classes as they interact with clients.

“Humor reduces anxiety concerning challenging subjects and makes difficult concepts clearer and more memorable,” Shatz said.
At university and college campuses around Ohio and across the country, sexual assault is a serious problem. It’s On Us, a national movement championing prevention and awareness, has one goal – to stop campus sexual assaults.

Bowling Green State University senior Mary Toth got involved in the student-led initiative to help improve the culture at BG. In the fall of 2015, she was chosen as one of 17 students nationally to serve on the inaugural It’s On Us Student Advisory Committee, which provides campus student leaders with an opportunity to make a larger impact. Near the conclusion of her committee term, she traveled to the White House to meet Vice President Joe Biden.

“It’s On Us has a powerful message. All institutions and individuals must continue to address this issue to make progress,” Toth said. “BGSU is lucky to have such tremendous support from President Mary Ellen Mazey, faculty and staff.”

In her committee role, Toth pushed for more opportunities for education, awareness and prevention. Her personal story shows that sexual assault is not just a statistic, but is negatively impacting people across the country.
“There is always a need to be more proactive,” Toth said. “Campuses need to create a supportive and safe environment for all.”

Given the enormity of this issue, change does not come easy. Toth works with fellow survivors and advocates on a variety of initiatives to combat sexual assault at Bowling Green and on the national committee. “Students need to stand up. Action produces an equal impact as philanthropy,” Toth said.

In Washington, D.C., Toth met with the other 16 students on the national committee, as well as her mentor, It’s On Us initiative director Kristin Avery, and Andrea Pino, a national leader and subject of the 2015 documentary, “The Hunting Ground.”

This academic year, Vice President Biden visited dozens of university and college campuses to meet with sexual assault survivors and administrators working to make change. Toth’s invitation to Washington D.C. showcases the support from the White House and its partners.

Before her involvement with It’s On Us, Toth made a difference through her work with the Office of Residence Life. During her time at BGSU, she was a resident adviser, was involved in the National Residence Hall Honorary and the Resident Student Association, and even had a job managing the front desk in Kreischer Residence Hall.

A political science and history major, Toth knows her work will not stop when her committee term ends. After graduation in August, she will be pursuing a career in nonprofit or political work focused on sexual assault advocacy and policy.

To learn more about the It’s On Us program at Bowling Green, visit https://www.bgsu.edu/recwell/wellness-connection/sexual-assault-awareness.html.

For information on Changing Campus Culture, the Ohio Department of Higher Education’s statewide initiative to better prevent and respond to sexual assault on college and university campuses, visit https://www.ohiohighered.org/ccc.
In politics, major candidates routinely prepare for a big debate by rehearsing with a trusted colleague who plays the role of the opponent.

Cincinnati State Technical and Community College is following suit as part of its process for preparing students for the workforce.

Each semester, Cincinnati State conducts “mock interviews” to help students prepare for the real thing, which can help them secure jobs or co-operative education placements.

“We go out of our way to make this as realistic as possible,” said Kelly Harper, director of Cincinnati State’s extensive co-op program. “They might be called mock interviews, but there’s nothing mocking about the process. We’re dead serious about it.”

Experiential, on-the-job learning has been incorporated into Cincinnati State’s curriculum since the college was founded in 1969. Almost all degree programs require students to complete at least one co-op or, in the case of health care, clinical assignment that is related to their primary course of study. The college’s decentralized co-op system, in which coordinators are assigned to each of the four academic divisions, also forms the core of Cincinnati State’s job placement services for students.

The mock interview program relies heavily on co-op coordinators to serve as interviewers, but also brings in local employers, retirees and Cincinnati State faculty and staff.

The mock interviews are set up in half-hour time slots over two full days each semester for students who pre-register. The interviewer who serves as the employer typically spends about 30 minutes with each student. Fifteen to 20 minutes are spent on the actual interview, and about 10 to 15 minutes are devoted to giving the student feedback. Students are also given an evaluation sheet in which the interviewer assigns ratings on such measures as appearance, body language and how well the student answered questions. Students also have a chance to ask questions.

Prior to the event, organizers send students information on how to prepare for an interview, how
to dress and what questions may be asked. This information is also shared with interviewers so they understand how students are being prepared.

“Most students say they’re nervous as they come into the process. Afterward, however, they feel more confident,” Harper said. “We’ve even had several employers tell us that they’d hire particular students upon completion of the mock interview.”

Participation in the mock interview program is controlled by academic division. Each semester, organizers determine which programs are going to participate. Typically, more than 100 students sign up each semester.

Feedback from students has been consistently positive.

“The mock interview was very helpful!” said Tabitha Myrick, who is working toward an Associate of Arts degree at Cincinnati State. “It helped me to get over the fear of interviewing, and the person that interviewed me taught me how to better conduct myself when being interviewed… The mock interview really taught me that I could take the time to actually think about the question being asked and answer it in a timely manner.”

Maria Adams, another student earning an Associate of Arts degree, said her only interview experience prior to her session at Cincinnati State was for a job at a convenience store. That one, she recalled, was done on the spot, lasted about five minutes and took place when she was wearing shorts and a crop top.

Volunteers from the business world said they also find the process satisfying.

“Volunteers from the business world said they also find the process satisfying.

Matt Hoeller, marketing & communication leader for Bayer Becker in Cincinnati, said participating in the mock interview process helps him keep abreast of what kind of applicants are looking to enter the workforce, while simultaneously being a great way to help students.

Hoeller helps students realize the importance of first impressions, starting with punctuality, and studies their responses to see if they are comfortable explaining what they have done in past positions. He said the most common mistakes that students make in mock interviews are “checking their phone, not asking questions and failing to understand what the prospective company does.”

William W. Luggen, a General Electric retiree who volunteers as an interviewer, said he looks for the little things during the initial encounter — such as eye contact, firmness of handshake, a smile and saying “nice to meet you.” He also notices the more esoteric elements that will emerge during the conversation, such as “preparation, poise, good verbal and non-verbal communication, strength of resolve, commitment to their chosen field of endeavor, self-confidence and self-awareness.”

“I must say that I have been very impressed with the Cincinnati State students I have interviewed,” Luggen said. “Most come well-dressed and well-prepared to the interviews, which I attribute to the class or classes they take in job preparation skills.”
For Raj Mehta, vice provost for the University of Cincinnati’s International Services, the presence of foreign students on UC’s campus is a greater benefit to American students than to the visiting scholars. It’s an intriguing perspective, based on the student representatives Mehta presented during the Ohio Board of Regents’ May meeting at the University of Toledo.

“International students have powerful stories to tell, and their influence on American students’ world view cannot be overlooked or undervalued.”

Exposure to the student stories provided powerful testimony to Mehta’s assertion. And without a doubt, UC’s impact on Mehta’s young ambassadors has been nothing less than transformational. As the students shared their stories, board members had no reason to doubt Mehta’s claim and every reason to support programs such as the international program at UC.

**ANJANI LAHANE**

Born and raised in the small farming village of Mangaon, India, Anjani was one of seven children who walked 90 minutes from home to school. Anjani demonstrated excellence in academics at Mangaon Junior College and was the recipient of UC’s Global
Scholarship. The cultural shocks were many along the way, but Anjani surmounted language barriers and academic challenges to find success at UC as a recent graduate. She credits her immersion on UC’s campus, study abroad experiences and additional international internships with giving her the confidence to succeed.

“None of this would have been possible without the University of Cincinnati,” she said.

“There are so many people to thank.”

ABDULLAH BDAIWI

From the town of Baiji, situated midway between Mosul and Baghdad, Iraq, Abdullah and his family fled the country in June, 2014 when ISIS took over his hometown. The family of six fled to Kurdistan as refugees. The recipient of an Iraq government scholarship, Abdullah came to UC in December, 2013 to study physics.

Speaking no English when he arrived, Abdullah took eight months of intense English training and is now enrolled in UC’s master’s degree program in physics. Abdullah credits his faith, his professors and the support of UC for his success so far. And Mehta credits Abdullah with teaching the message of hope and tenacity on the UC campus with his buoyant nature and persistence in the face of obstacles.

PRERNA GANDHI

Prerna Gandhi’s journey to college began at Cincinnati’s Shriner’s Hospital when she arrived for surgeries made necessary after a brutal acid attack in her native India. The attack left Prerna with disfiguring injuries that remained even after 25 surgeries in India. The world famous Shriner’s hospital stepped in to help along with a Cincinnati host family and, ultimately, UC, where Prerna now studies business. “I am learning to dream again,” Prerna said. “And my dream today is to give back to others like they gave to me.”

And that summarizes Mehta’s main message about UC’s International Student program. While the program offers much in the way of services to visiting students, Mehta believes the university’s investment is returned many times over in cultural understanding and the personal, cultural contact and enrichment.
SUMMER 2016
Ohio State Fair in Columbus

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A special thank you to all of those who contributed stories and articles:

Cybersecurity Focus of Clark State Internship Program
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Cincinnati State Prepares Students for Job Interviews
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University of Cincinnati
Abdullah Bdaiwi
University of Cincinnati
Prerna Gandhi
University of Cincinnati
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We welcome story ideas, links to articles of interest, and news releases.

Please send story ideas to Jeff Robinson at jrobinson@highered.ohio.gov.