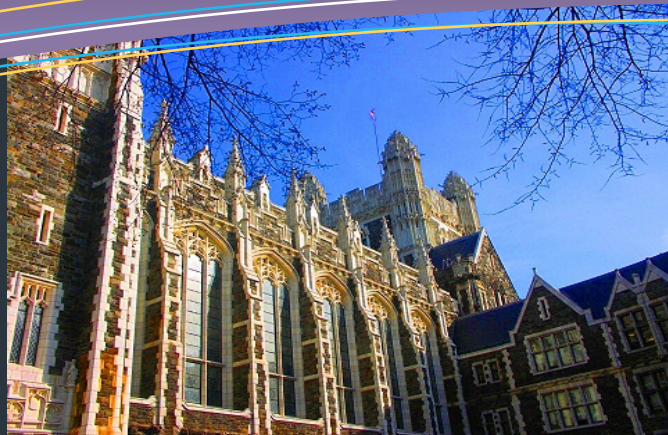


## Fall 2013



### NEXTbus comes to the Towers

**Monday - Friday**  
7:00am to 9:45pm

**Saturday**  
8:15am to 4:00pm

A CCNY marked bus stop has been added at the Towers. Transit inquiries call (212) 650-8675 (Monday-Friday) or (212) 650-6911

### Tech Center

**Monday - Friday**  
7:00am to Midnight

**Holidays**  
7:00am to 5pm

**Saturday**  
9:00am to 6:00pm

**Sunday**  
Noon to 6:00pm  
Main Office (NA 1/301)  
(212) 650-7878

### Service Desk

**Hours and location as above**  
(212) 650-7878  
[ServiceDesk@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:ServiceDesk@ccny.cuny.edu)  
<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/it>

### NAC Lab

**Monday - Friday**  
8:00am to 7:00pm  
Main Desk (NA 1/501)  
(212) 650-6483  
<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/it>

### Study and Collaboration Room Reservation

[webcheckoutreg.ccny.cuny.edu](http://webcheckoutreg.ccny.cuny.edu)

All hours are subject to change during finals and holidays. For more information contact the Service Desk at ext. 7878

<b>in this issue</b>	
Message from VP of IT and CIO	<b>1</b>
Next Up: CUNYfirst	<b>2</b>
Meet Our Staff	<b>3-4</b>
AD 2013: What and Why	<b>5-6</b>
Big Browser is Watching You	<b>7-8</b>
FYI: Student IT Updates	<b>9</b>
20 Back to School Apps: Staff Picks	<b>10-11</b>
OIT wins S.T.A.R. Award	<b>12</b>
CUNY's HPC is Here	<b>13</b>
OIT Projects	<b>14</b>
Student eServices	<b>15</b>

### Message from Praveen Panchal, VP of IT and CIO



Welcome back and welcome to the fall 2013 issue of TechTalk – OIT’s newsletter. I hope you had a relaxing summer. Over the past few months we have been busy making progress on many fronts, as you will notice.

The OIT Three Year Strategic Plan to manage our technology resources more effectively has been finalized and posted. Thank you to all the students, staff and faculty who participated in its development. Over the summer we have upgraded half of the NAC lab with new PCs and plan to upgrade the other half during the fall semester, subject to funding. These PCs will utilize a new technology called Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI). Our new e-mail and communications system for students, CityMail, has been upgraded to Office 365 which introduced many new features for improved productivity. Along with Campus Facilities we created a new Smart Classroom in NAC 7/312. And this fall we have a planned rollout of SysAid, a feature rich service desk software to replace RemedyForce and integrate all the essential IT tools into one place. This will enhance efficiency and greatly improve the end-user experience.

This year we will be undertaking the very important launch of the Campus Solutions Module of CUNYfirst (CUNY’s Fully Integrated Resources and Service Tool). This new suite of technology

tools will replace many of our rapidly aging computer systems, including SIMS and eSIMS, and is an integrated one-stop self service system where students can register, get their bill, see their financial aid awards and sign up for classes via an online shopping cart – similar to Amazon’s. Faculty will be able to communicate with students, view class rosters and post grades. Staff will have access to a wealth of information about classes and students. This will be a big change for us, which will take time to get used to, so we plan to do everything in our power to make sure you know where to get help and support.

Also, in the coming months, OIT will be busy with an important network infrastructure upgrade which will include a datacenter and core network upgrade along with new fiber cable installation across campus. This will prepare us to achieve 10 GB network speed. Please visit the OIT projects site for more on current and completed projects.

Finally, with cyber-attacks becoming increasingly common and sophisticated, it is imperative that you protect your own and others data. Update your computer with the latest antivirus software and system updates and familiarize yourself with the IT security policies posted at [security.cuny.edu](http://security.cuny.edu). The OIT staff is always available to provide you with help in keeping you safe - cyber safe.

The OIT’s mission is to provide the best customer service possible with the motto of empowering the user community. As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions. ■

## Next up ... CUNYfirst

Prepare to be  
assimilated  
By Vern Ballard



At last, we are in the final wave of the CUNYfirst rollout. Five of seven CUNYfirst modules have been live throughout CUNY for several years (including Human Resources and Finance tools, which have been at CCNY since 2009). The sixth, Procurement, is still being fully integrated. Meanwhile, CCNY is busy implementing Campus Solutions (CUNYfirst's student admin system, including Admissions, Bursar, Financial Aid, Registrar). Expected to go live in April 2014, it will replace the antiquated Student Information Management System (SIMS) and unify student enrollment management for all 24 CUNY colleges.

The improved system gives students more control over the registration process by providing a self-service, one-stop portal to access course offerings, class registration, transcripts, class schedules, tuition and fee charges, payments, and financial aid awards. Faculty and advisors will have improved administrative access to Blackboard, instructional calendars, registration requirements, transcripts, schedules, grade postings, academic status and contact information.

Perhaps the biggest improvement it brings is the discontinuation of social security numbers for student identification. Going forward, students, faculty and staff will be assigned an individual EmplID (em-PUL eye-DEE). Those who function in multiple roles (student, faculty, staff) will use the same single EmplID to cover all

their roles for the duration of their time at any of the CUNY colleges. As well as minimizing records inconsistencies between colleges, this change brings us in compliance with federal and state data security regulations and reduces the risk of identity theft.

**“Change is always a challenge and CUNYfirst has had its critics. However, it's here”**

For administrators, there will also be an analytics dashboard, that will help discern and make sense of granular trends and patterns in student enrollment and faculty teaching loads. Ultimately this will lead to improved academic and administrative data-driven decision making and business practices. Our Bursar, Admissions, Registrars and Financial Aid staff collaborated over the summer with the CUNYfirst team on the configuration of the new system, tweaking Campus Solutions to fit CCNY's specific needs (majors, minors, prerequisites and pre-requisite courses). The next phase involves validating and migrating student data and security protocols, hands-on testing, and 'Train the Trainer' simulations for administrative and advisory staff who work closely with students. There will also be student orientations run by

students to help our student body make the transition. We anticipate going live by late Spring 2014.

The current dependence on the 1980s-era SIMS mainframe is not feasible as hardware components cease to be supported by their manufacturers. SIMS archaic computer languages and technology is unable to accommodate the pace and robustness of emerging social and technological innovation. It would be like trying to order a laptop in Latin.

Of course, change is always a challenge and CUNYfirst has its critics. However, it's here. And being in the final wave, we will benefit from the experiences of the pioneer colleges. The next task for CCNY staff and faculty - to claim their accounts, before April 2014 - will be a cinch. ■

**For more information please visit**  
<http://support.ccny.cuny.edu/cunyfirst/>

### CUNYfirst Fall Time-line

**September 2013**  
Data validation I  
Security validation I  
Business process analysis

**October 2013**  
Technical readiness evaluation  
Security validation II  
Train the trainer

**November 2013**  
Data validation II  
Training simulation

**December 2013**  
Campus training practicum



# Meet Our Staff

## Dean James

### Job Title

IT Assistant, Desktop Support Specialist

### Department

Information Security

### At CCNY

8 years



## 20 Questions

*What is your favorite geeky gadget?*

The Pebble smart watch. It integrates with your smart phone so you can access e-mail, texts, caller ID and music. I want one.

*What did you want to be when you grew up when you were a child?*

A doctor, but after dissecting a frog in class when I was seven I thought, how do you tell the difference between all the organs since they're the same color.

*What did you major in?*

Mechanical Engineering.

*How did you get into working in the IT division?*

I started in the Software Training Center, then I moved over to the Helpdesk and as my skills grew I rose up the ladder to here.

*What is your favorite app?*

Google Listen. I use it to download and organize my podcasts which is how I keep up to date on the news and tech stuff.

*What is the most useful thing you learned as a student?*

How to research. There's very little you can't find out if you know the right questions to ask.

*What do you like most about this job?*

I like being able to walk out of an office knowing I have solved someone's issue and allowed them to get on with their day.

*What don't people know about you that they might be surprised to hear?*

I am a huge *Sailor Moon* fan - it's a late 1980s Japanese cartoon which is kind of geared towards girls.

*What do you like to do outside of work?*

Gardening, baking and watching *Dr. Who*.

*What do you do to protect your own computer from malware?*

I have a mix of tools: AVG, Spybot Search and Destroy, Adblock, Noscript and Malwarebytes Anti-malware. Of course I avoid untrustworthy sites.

*What's the biggest malware disaster you have heard of?*

The recycler virus that spread around campus. In most cases the anti-virus stopped anything bad happening but a lot of people thought they had lost everything because it hid files on their flashdrives.

*What gadget that you don't already own would you like to have?*

The Sony Xperia Z Google Edition. It's the new Android phone that is water resistant and dustproof, and it does HDR video.

*What advice would you give someone who wanted to buy a new laptop or PC?*

Go for the fastest processor you can afford because everything else is easy to upgrade.

*What is the next big thing in IT?*

The merging of the mobile and desktop environments. So that desktops can be easily utilized by people trained on technology through IOS.

*What is a general purpose tip for securing your computer's data?*

If you wouldn't want to see it in a newspaper, then encrypt it.

*If you could choose a talent you don't have, which would it be?*

Singing. I like to sing and I'd like to be able to do it without shattering glass.

*If you could live in any other country for two years, where would you go?*

Japan. I love the technology and the culture.

*What is the hardest thing you've ever done?*

Get through my undergraduate degree.

*Is there anything you have wanted to do but haven't?*

Drive across the United States. ■



# Meet Our Staff

## Aswita El Sharkawi

**Job Title**  
Windows Development

**Department**  
IT

**At CCNY**  
Four months



## 20 Questions

*What is your favorite geeky gadget?*

My Dell desktop computer. I like working on the big screen. I also like my smart phone but I spend less time with it.

*What did you want to be when you grew up when you were a child?*

When I was four years old I wanted to be a doctor. Because I saw my father, who is a doctor. My neighbor was also a doctor. I was thinking a doctor can help people.

*What did you major in?*

Electrical Engineering.

*How did you get into IT?*

I started out as a programmer trainee at Mitsubishi in Indonesia. They teach you everything from scratch.

*What is your favorite app?*

Google maps.

*What is the most useful thing you learned as a student?*

The most useful things I learned were the things I learned in school as a child: how to read and how to make friends.

*What do you like most about this job?*

Great people and exciting projects. I'm new and everyone has been very supportive

and made me feel welcome. And I am so enjoying the data warehouse project, creating a database for reporting and data analysis. I like development because I like to create things from scratch.

*What don't people know about you that they might be surprised to hear?*

Nothing. I am really very predictable.

*What do you like to do outside of work?*

I like to go sightseeing when I can. And I love to be in nature because I feel that nature is beautiful. I am pretty much amazed by nature

*What do you do to protect your own computer from malware?*

I try to be careful with what I install. And I don't go to weird websites. Just the common ones that I really need to go to.

*What gadget that you don't already own would you like to have?*

The iPad. But I think a new notepad is a much higher priority for me.

*What advice would you give someone who wanted to buy a new laptop or PC?*

Make sure the specifications cater to your needs in terms of memory, processor etc.

*What is the next big thing in IT?*

Big data. There's a lot of information out there waiting to be analyzed which can be made use of to predict everything from the weather to stock prices.

*What is a general-purpose tip for securing your computer's data?*

Always log off when you leave your computer and set it to automatically log off after ten minutes of it being idle..

*If you could choose a talent you don't have, which would it be?*

To be able to do Olympic level gymnastics. Like Gabby Douglas.

*If you could live in any other country for two years, where would you go?*

Two years is too long to stay in one place. I would like to spend two years being a nomad all over the world.

*What is the hardest thing you've ever done?*

Memorizing things in certain classes at school that were of no interest to me.

*Who was your favorite teacher and why?*

My First Grade teacher, Mrs. Ngudiono, because she taught me how to read and how to count. And she was nice. ■

## Get Ready...

Okay, so it's not the Second Coming, but the new Active Directory is good news for CCONY nevertheless.

By Dean James



Late last spring, the Office of Information Technology's Client Services group began a campus wide push to integrate all computers on campus into a single Windows Server Active Directory domain. Working in conjunction with the many IT technicians on campus, Client Services began to roam the hallways, knocking on doors to spread the word about AD migration and to ask people if their computers had already converted. The workings of AD, though definitely good news for our campus, are no divine mystery. It's just another tool that OIT is putting to use to make sure that you get the best service possible.

### What's So Good About It Anyway?

At its heart, Microsoft's Active Directory is a phone book for computers. It allows us to easily keep track of how many computers are on the campus network, and to record some basic information about them, such as their names (yes, computers have names), operating systems, and so on - although what you use your computer for on a day-to-day basis will remain private and visible only to you, as is our policy. Active Directory also serves as the backbone for many other useful and exciting products that depend on it to keep track of computers and their users.

One of these, Group Policy, allows for automatic configuration of computers. No more need to call the Service Desk for Windows updates, or to have them come

over to install network printers on new machines. Printers and Wired Internet access will be configured automatically through Group Policy so that computers can simply plug in and connect to the network and print without the need to manually configure IP addresses. OIT will now be able to deploy security updates to all machines on campus the very day that they are released by Microsoft, without the need to have you create a ticket with the Service Desk. This means fewer individual technician calls, which in turn will mean shorter wait times for services that do require office visits.

**“What's that, I hear? You're extremely interested in getting these benefits A.S.A.P. and you want to know how?”**

In addition, AD deployment will allow for OIT to activate additional tools that will

enable technicians to remotely assist you with a larger array of issues. With your permission, they'll be able to remotely troubleshoot almost any computer issue you may encounter. Down the road you'll be able to install the latest versions of our free campus-licensed software such as Microsoft Office 2013, SPSS, or MATLAB with a single click. Should your computer need a complete reinstall, we'll even be able to do that remotely, cutting down on the time that you'll be unable to work, by eliminating the need to remove the computer from your office and, in some cases, scheduling some tasks to take place remotely during off hours.

The AD rollout will also pave the way for new collaborative tools, giving access to shared network drives that you can use to share files without the need to worry about e-mail attachment size limits or lost flash drives. Additional tools in the pipeline such as Exchange and SharePoint will bring shared calendars, improved e-mail, and document collaboration, among many other advantages.

Another benefit of Active Directory is that you'll have one less password to have to remember. You will be able to use the same City College user ID and password that you already use to access the campus Wi-Fi and your college e-mail to log on to your personal computer. You may have noticed that you're already able to use those same credentials to log on to

the Windows and Mac computers in the Tech Center. This is because that computer lab is already on the AD. Soon, you will be able to enjoy that same convenience in your own office.

### Rolling With the Changes

To minimize disruption and to ensure that the transition process goes as smoothly as possible, AD is being rolled out department by department. The OIT Service Desk's Level II support team, Client Services, is working on the college's administrative departments. Rollout in the School of Education, the Division of Science, the Humanities Division, and the Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership is being spearheaded by their own in-house IT technicians.

The process of actually joining your computer to the Active Directory is split into two parts. In the first part, your computer is registered with the Active Directory, and a few slight modifications are made to ensure proper communication between your computer and the server. This phase of the process usually takes between ten and twenty minutes per computer.

The second phase involves transferring your files and settings from your local account to your domain account. Different programs store your settings in different ways. The standard that Microsoft uses to store your Outlook settings is different from the standard that Mozilla uses to store your Firefox settings, for example. So individual attention is sometimes needed to ensure that everything is transferred correctly. It is important to us that you don't lose anything that you need for your work due to the migration process, so

this phase of the proceeding is done in close consultation with you. We want to ensure absolutely everything is in working order before we move on to help the next user.

### How You Can Help

What's that, I hear? You're extremely interested in getting these benefits, and you want to know how you can get this done A.S.A.P. Well, there are a few things you can do to help us along a bit, and most of them are painless.

**“It's important to us that you don't lose anything that you need for your work due to the migration process”**

First, make a list of all business-critical software and websites that you use. We have a wide array of departments on campus in a variety of fields, each of which have their own specialty software. We need to know what software is important to you so we can test that it works the way you need it to once you've been migrated. For example, IBM's SPSS software stores settings in your local computer account that would need to be captured before starting the migration process.

Second, slim down! Migrating from your local account to your domain account involves copying every file in

your personal folders, including your Desktop, My Documents, My Pictures, My Videos, all of it. If you have music, video, or pictures that you don't need for work, then please move them off your computer and on to an external drive to save space. This will dramatically speed up the migration process. It can be the difference between a 20 minute migration or a four hour migration. And, as always, be sure that your backups are up to date.

Third, make sure that you have a secure password on your email account. Active Directory has stricter requirements for password strength than the campus email systems do. A good password should be eight characters or longer and include numbers, letters and special characters such as ! and #. Passwords should not contain your name, date of birth, social security number or room number, nor items such as "CCNY" or "City College." If you need to reset your password you can do it online at <https://citymail.ccnycuny.edu/accountlookup> or in person at the Service Desk in the TECH Center.

Finally, let us know what time works for you! It is our aim to make this process as painless as possible for everyone, so schedule our visit for a time which would cause the least the interruption to your workflow.

As always, if you have any further questions, we're always eager to hear from you. You can give us a call at ext. 7878, shoot us an e-mail at [servicedesk@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:servicedesk@ccny.cuny.edu), or drop by the Service Desk in the TECH Center in NAC 1/301.

Happy Migrating! ■

# BIG BROWSER IS WATCHING YOU!

By Vern Ballard

Ever get the feeling that you're being watched? If so, you're not being paranoid. From the moment you enable any device on a cellular or Internet network you're being tapped. And if you're not worried about the NSA covertly capturing your metadata, you *should* be worried about the corporations and cyber-criminals busily gathering intel on your internet use for their own self-seeking purposes.

You may not realize it but, by default, your browser stores a lot of information about your online activities. Cookies (which track your web transactions), cached pages (stored copies of recent websites), and browser history are used to improve your system's performance – for example, storing your history allows you to go more quickly to the websites that you visit the most. But they are also used to create a profile of your surfing activities for developers and advertisers. And -worst-case scenario – all too often – by cyber criminals.

Cyber attackers are continuously honing methods to exploit vulnerabilities in your browsers, plugins and java to monitor your activities, steal your information and contacts, and gain access to other targets. Technology developers such as Apple, Google, Microsoft, and Facebook, race to deploy corrective updates (e.g., patches, bug fixes). But they don't always win, as any victim of cyber crime will tell you.

## Protect Your Browser

You can protect yourself to an extent by disabling features such as cookies. Most browsers support the ability to manually erase stored data, or to automatically erase it every time you log out. In Firefox you can open “New Private Window” – which deletes all new cookies and browsing activities after you close it.

“Corporations and cyber criminals are busy gathering intel on your internet activities for their own self-seeking purposes”

Another way is by keeping your browser updated. Developers are continuously updating features and functionality, some of which play a crucial role in addressing security vulnerabilities and known threats. Enable the auto-update feature on all your browsers (e.g., Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox) as well as your Operating System (e.g., Windows 7, OS X, iOS, Android). Chrome automatically updates every

time you restart the browser. It is also vitally important to update all plugins (A.K.A. Add-Ons) - programs you can install in your browser, including games, productivity utilities, and features extending browser functionality.

If a website unexpectedly asks you to install a plugin, it may well be an attempt to get you to install infected software. And many games, popular apps and add-ons have malware embedded in them. Only download and install plugins you absolutely need and be sure you always download from trusted sites. For example, only update your Flash player from the official Adobe site [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). Once installed, keep your plugins up to date. This can be challenging as many plugins have no automatic updating capability; you have to manually check and update them yourself. We recommend you do this at least once a month. (See the resources copy at the end of this article).

## Minimize Your Java Use

No, not your coffee intake. Java is a powerful, complex and universal computer language used to create programs that run on almost every type of computer and mobile device. Since it is designed to work on almost any computer, many software developers use it to create utilities, games, plugins, and mobile device apps that will work uniformly across multiple platforms. When you use

a browser to connect to a website one of the first things it does is announce what version of Java it uses. This makes Java a popular target for hackers, who set traps on sites all over the web and sniff Internet traffic to detect known vulnerabilities in outdated browsers.

In an effort to better protect its users, Apple distributes and updates its own release of Java based on Java 1.6. As long as you keep your Mac OS updated and current, this version of Java will remain updated. Mac users can update their computers to Java 1.7 by downloading it from the Java website; however, from then on it will have to be maintained and updated manually.

Ultimately, the best defense is simple: only install Java if you absolutely require it. If you are not sure if you have Java already installed on your computer, you can check by going to the Java website. <http://www.java.com/en/download/installed.jsp>. And if you have it but do not need it, we highly recommend that you uninstall it. Be careful during this process that you don't end up accidentally installing it.

Unfortunately, some critical CUNY applications, like CUNYfirst and BlackBoard actually require Java. In this case, disable or remove the Java plugin from all but one designated browser and use that browser exclusively for those programs. For example, disable the Java plugin in Chrome but enable it in Firefox. Recent versions of Mac OS X disable the Java plugin by default and only enable it on demand. Microsoft Windows users can verify their version of Java by clicking on the Java icon in the Control Panel to check that the latest version is installed and that it is configured for automatic updating.

If you do not have the latest version, update through the Java Control Panel.

How you disable your browser's plugin depends on what type of browser you have. Most browsers have a Preference or Settings option where you can disable your browser's Java plugin. In addition,

“The consequences of having your identity stolen can be devastating to your personal, professional and financial reputation”

with newer versions of Java you can disable Java plugins from the Java Control Panel. If you do find a website that requires Java to work, you can enable it for that website, then disable it when you are done.

### Security Features

A key feature that almost all browsers support is giving you a warning when you visit potentially malicious websites. Today's browsers maintain a list of thousands of websites that are suspected of hosting malware or which are known to have had their security measures compromised. When you attempt to visit such websites these browsers will redirect you to a warning page. When you receive such a warning be absolutely sure not to proceed to the site in question.

Whenever possible make sure your browser connections are encrypted. This scrambles the communication in a way that ensures your online activity cannot be viewed by third parties. Encrypted connections start with https. When banking or shopping online, confirm your browser address shows https:// and a padlock icon. This will prevent malicious websites that are trying to get your information.

Nevertheless, you should keep in mind that developers cannot reasonably be expected to keep up with cyber criminals. All browser developers detect and treat threats differently. It can take days, weeks, and sometimes months between the time a malicious exploit is deployed by hackers and it being detected and remediated.

If it all seems like too much hassle to be constantly updating your operating system and each and every one of your browsers, browser plugins, add-ons, and java, remember that having your identity stolen would be an awful lot worse.

**For more on security visit: <http://ccny.cuny.edu/it/security.cfm> ■**

## RESOURCES

**Browser Plugin Check:**  
<http://tinyurl.com/26y9gb5>

**Java Check:**  
<http://tinyurl.com/jvuk>

**Uninstalling Java on Windows:**  
<http://tinyurl.com/4x66uco>

**Uninstalling Java 7 on a Mac:**  
<http://tinyurl.com/cowkxy4>

**Disabling Your Browser's Java Plugin:**  
<http://tinyurl.com/lgqn7rw>





### Citymail and Skydrive

Over the summer, we began a partial migration to Microsoft Office 365, which made some features of your Citymail account change. First, its storage capacity has more than doubled from 10GB to 25GB. Second, to access Microsoft's Office Skydrive Web Apps (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, One Note) you must now do so directly through the Skydrive website (<http://skydrive.live.com>). Your Skydrive log in is your full Citymail email address (i.e. [jdoe000@citymail.cuny.edu](mailto:jdoe000@citymail.cuny.edu)).

Skydrive retains its 7GB of online storage, plus the ability to manage your personal contacts and calendar. But because they are now different accounts, when you change the password to your CityMail account, it will no longer automatically change the password in your Skydrive account. However, the password you use to access Wi-Fi, the Tech Center and NAC Computer Lab Log-in etc, remains synced to your CityMail, so you won't need to change those passwords separately.

### Security: Passwords and Updates

To change your Citymail password use the CCNY User Account Lookup Form at <https://citymail.cuny.edu/AccountLookup/> - the same form you used to look up your user name.

Remember, since you will likely be storing sensitive information in your account –

including grades, credit card, financial, employment and health records – you should never share your password. Please follow the basic guidelines to ensure your password is a strong one. Weak passwords are easy for cyber-criminals to crack and, once hacked, not only place your identity and credit in jeopardy but also those of all your contacts.

### Tech Center and NAC Computer Lab

Beginning this semester, Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) technology has been deployed in the NAC Computer Lab and ultimately will be expanded to the Tech Center. Rather than using a workstation's hard drive to run desktop operating systems and applications software, VDI utilizes hardware on a remote server in order to run the desktop interface as a virtual machine.

What this jargon means for students is that maintenance and upgrades will be much more streamlined and cost effective. This will allow technology investments to flow to other areas, such as upgrading Wi-Fi and providing more training workshops.

Students will no longer be able to store documents on the local hard drive in the Tech Center, NAC Computer Lab and many other labs throughout campus. With so many other on-line storage options, the benefits of maintaining 16,000 potential

student profiles on every lab computer no longer outweigh the drawbacks. The same software applications will continue to be available, including Microsoft Office, MatLab, SAS and SPSS.

We encourage you to use the Skydrive or BlackBoard for storing, creating and managing your documents. These online services have the advantage of being available 24/7 (guaranteed by Microsoft!) from any web browser. Of course you can continue to use flash drives, but online services reduce the risks of data corruption, malware infection and losing physical devices. ■

## RESOURCES

Account Look up tool  
<https://citymail.cuny.edu/>

Citymail login  
<https://citymail.cuny.edu/>

Skydrive login  
<http://skydrive.live.com>

Microsoft Office Web Apps and Skydrive instructions  
<http://tinyurl.com/8yh3r6u>

Skydrive Student Resources  
<http://www.cuny.edu/it/>

For more information CUNY portal, BlackBoard and CityMail  
<http://www.cuny.edu/it/>



# 20 back to school apps

## ... to Make Life in the Classroom Easier

By *TechTalk Apps*  
Editor  
Arlene Empinado



**CloudOn**  
Category: Productivity  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

CloudOn keeps all your files in one place. Use Microsoft Word, Excel, and Powerpoint in the cloud straight from your device and sync it to your Google Drive, Dropbox, SkyDrive and Box accounts. A built-in Adobe Reader can open virtually any file type, such as PDF, PNG, JPG. Autosave makes sure you don't lose important data.



**Pocket**  
Category: News  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

Pocket, formerly known as "Read It Later", lets you keep articles, videos, web pages to access later. It's a great tool when doing research for an assignment. Once it's in your Pocket, it syncs to all of your devices allowing you to view anytime, anywhere, even offline.



**myHomework**  
Category: Education  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

myHomework is an online student planner which keeps track of your home-work assignments, tests, class schedules, study group sessions and projects. A schedule blocking feature lets you set alarms.



**Notability**  
Category: Productivity  
Cost: \$2.99  
Available for: iOS  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

Notability lets you take notes or sketch out ideas as you would on a normal pad of paper. Draw graphs, import images, highlight text, audio record lectures and more. A built-in Adobe Reader lets you import, view and edit PDFs directly from the app.



**TED**  
Category: Education  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

You must have been living under a rock if you haven't heard of TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) - a non profit devoted to spreading the ideas of the world's most inspired thinkers and speakers. Watch videos, even off-line, in over 90 different languages straight from your device.



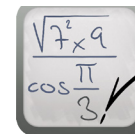
**PowerVocab**  
Category: Brain & Puzzle  
Cost: Free  
Available for: Android  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

PowerVocab helps you to build your vocabulary by playing word games - solo or with other live users. Its built in dictionary provides example sentences and even audible pronunciation. PowerVocab is the perfect - and fun - vocabulary builder for students preparing for their SAT, GRE, GMAT, and ASVAB.



**Lookout**  
Category: Utilities  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

Lookout is an all-in-one anti-theft device tracker with built in anti-virus. If your phone is lost, you can call or send it messages from any browser. It will also show its location, let you remotely change the password, and wipe all your precious data. Best of all, it will sound off a loud alarm to help you find it if you think it's nearby - even if you left it on silent.



**MyScript**  
Category: Productivity  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

MyScript lets you calculate mathematical equations or formulas by writing on the screen with your finger or stylus pen. It's so much easier than punching in numbers and symbols on a regular calculator.



**Google Drive**  
Category: Productivity  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

Google Drive lets you upload photos, videos, documents, and other files and access them from any device from anywhere. Create spreadsheets and powerpoint presentations directly in the app and share with others, giving them the ability to edit or view.



### Evernote

Category: Productivity  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

Evernote lets you create to-do lists, keep recipes, write daily journals, store pictures, record voice memos, keep receipts, bookmark web pages, and more. Add tags to keep everything organized for easy reference. Once your information is stored, it syncs it across all of your devices. There is an option to upgrade to the Premium version which allows offline access, password security, and the ability for others to view and edit your notes.



### StudyBlue

Category: Education  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating : ★★★★★

StudyBlue lets you create flashcards from class notes right on your device, set reminder alerts, send messages to (and collaborate with) your classmates. Sync it to the Evernote app to create flashcards from existing notes already stored in Evernote. It also keeps track of your study progress and gives you feedback on what you already know and what you still need to work on, and it saves your place so you can pick up where you left off studying. You can also access a database of flashcards and notes made by millions of other students.



### Dictionary

Category: Reference  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

Winner of Best App Ever for Books and Reference, and in *Time* magazine's 'Top Ten Back to School Apps', Dictionary gives definitions for over 2,000,000 words, antonyms and synonyms along with Word of the Day, audio pronunciation, idioms and phrases, spelling suggestions and more.



### Popplet

Category: Productivity  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

Popplet helps you explore your ideas. Plan school projects by creating diagrams and charts; create mood boards with images; make a presentation gallery for a class assignment. You can also share ideas and collaborate with others in real time.



### 30/30

Category: Productivity  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

30/30 is a task and time management tool that lets you set specific time goals for each task. Set up a customized list of to-do tasks with a length of time for each of them. Once the timer starts, an alarm will alert you when to move on to the next.



### Clockwork Brain

Category: Games  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

Clockwork Brain trains your mind with daily challenges and innovative mini-puzzles. Each puzzle focuses on speed to tests your visual, spatial, logic, language, arithmetic, and memory abilities. The game keeps track of your progress and adjusts itself to keep pushing your limits.



### Bump

Category: Social Networking  
Cost: Free  
Available for: Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

Bump allows you to share photos, videos, files and contact information, with others quickly and effortlessly just by bumping two phones together. You can even transfer money, with Bump Pay. And now can also transfer a file from your smartphone to your PC by just bumping the space bar on your computer's keyboard.



### NextStop

Category: Navigation  
Cost: \$2.99  
Available for: iOS  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

NextStop gives the real-time status of the arrival time of the next train. You can also access the subway map, locate nearby stations and track delays, so you know ahead of time when to leave the house. No more waiting around wondering how much longer for the next train to arrive.



### NextBus

Category: Navigation  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

Not strictly an app, but available on your smartphone, NextBus @ CCNY allows you to track the location and predict the arrival of the City College shuttle buses.



### Quizlet

Category: Education  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★☆

Created by 15-year-old high school student, Andrew Sutherland, who had to memorize 111 animal names for his french class, Quizlet makes it easy to study on the go - even offline. Pick from three study modes - Flash cards (with full screen images and audio in 18 languages), Learn (for self-testing) and Match (which makes studying into a competitive game). Create your own flashcards, or search Quizlet's database of over 21 million flashcard sets.



### TimeTable

Category: Education  
Cost: Free  
Available for: iOS, Android, Web  
App Editor's Rating: ★★★★★

Schedule all your tasks, from classes to homework to exams, into this intuitive App, and it syncs them across all your Android devices. It even automatically mutes your phone during lessons. ■

## OIT's Shining Example

We are very proud to announce that our own Senior Network Services Manager, Jonathan Zhao, is the winner of the President's latest S.T.A.R. Award



The Office of Information Technology (OIT) was absolutely thrilled to discover that one of its staff, Jonathan Zhao, Senior Network Services Manager, had won the President's S.T.A.R. award for Service, Teamwork, Action and Results.

"The core mission of OIT is to provide excellent customer service. Delivering excellent service is attainable only with a keen understanding and a sense of personal responsibility to deliver that service in a timely manner," says Praveen Panchal, VP of CIO of the Office of Information Technology. "Jonathan exemplifies all these qualities. He is a key constituent and example of how dedication translates into excellent service and success."

Jonathan (that's him in the yellow shirt, hard at work, above) joined CCNY in 2000 as a college assistant in the NAC Computer Lab. Since then, his vastly expanding encyclopedic knowledge of network technology has enabled him to earn several highly sought after certifications (CCIE, CCSP, CCDA, CCNA, CCNP, CVOICE, MCSE). His ability to pragmatically apply that knowledge has led to his meteoric rise to Senior Network Manager.

Jonathan's major responsibilities include

designing, managing, maintaining and troubleshooting all deployments, components, events and issues related to the college-wide CCNY network infrastructure. From upgrading critical network appliances, to provisioning wireless access points, to troubleshooting bandwidth bottlenecks, Jonathan's tireless efforts identifying and providing an immediate response to the needs of CCNY is nothing but amazing.

**"During his off hours he can usually be found in the Wingate gym freely dispensing nutritional and workout tips"**

No matter what the time of day, no matter the type of request, if you reach out to Jonathan, he is always available and willing to give 110% to the matter in hand - even (more than once) remediating a threat to CCNY's network connectivity

while vacationing in China. It's all part and parcel of the job to be available at any time, as far as he's concerned.

When he's not on the job, Jonathan moonlights as CCNY's fitness guru. During his off hours and lunch breaks, he can usually be found in the Wingate gym, freely dispensing nutritional and workout tips and motivating his colleagues to reach their fitness goals. As a result of his influence, dozens of members of the CCNY community are living healthier lives.

"The gym is a big part of my life at this point," says Jonathan.. "It makes me do a better job at work because it helps me keep focused and gives me discipline. Being consistent in the gym spills over into the job. I believe that consistency is the key to everything."

The award came as a complete surprise. "I was very taken aback because I'm not the only one working this hard," says Jonathan, somewhat modestly. "But I was very happy. I called my sister at home right away and she was thrilled." But he won't be resting on his laurels any time soon. "Knowing that your work is being recognised, it makes you want to work even harder." ■

# Need a High Performance Computing Cluster?

CUNY's HPCC is here



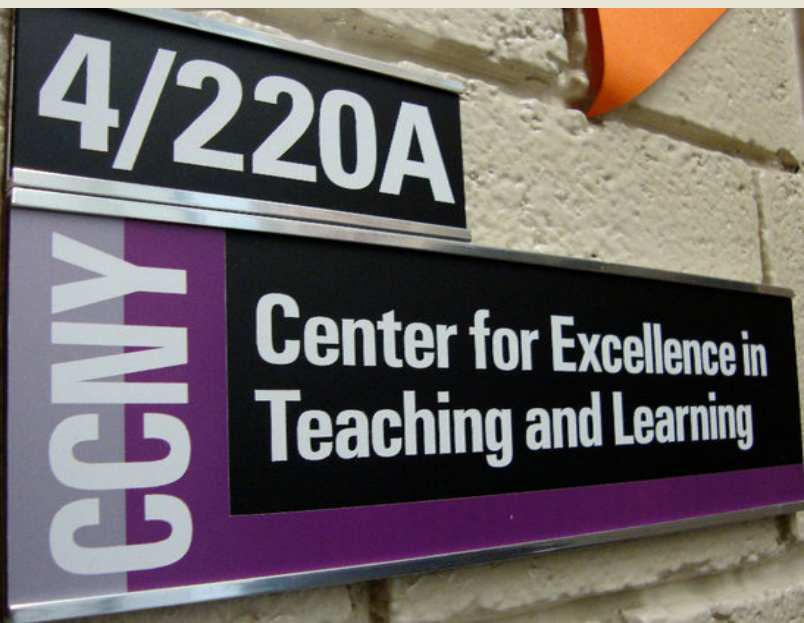
**HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING CENTER**  
*The City University of New York*  
[www.csi.cuny.edu/cunyhpc](http://www.csi.cuny.edu/cunyhpc)

The City University of New York (CUNY) High Performance Computing Center (HPCC) is located on the campus of the College of Staten Island. The HPCC is accessible from all campuses throughout the CUNY network. On offer are commodity clusters ranging in size from 16 to 2,816 cores. These address the scientific computing needs of all CUNY faculty, students, staff, and their public and private sector partners by making state-of-the-art HPC resources and expert

**“ Supporting the scientific computing needs of CUNY faculty and their collaborators ”**

technical assistance available. From nanoseconds to billions of years, from nanometers to a billion billion kilometers - that is only part of the world of research that is enabled by commodity cluster-based supercomputers that support interactive as well as batch computing and visualization.

**For information on how to access the HPCC please visit <http://www.csi.cuny.edu/cunyhpc/>**



The City College Center for Excellence in Technology and Learning has recently expanded its mission. CETL now includes faculty, staff and student training in the process of building 21st century skills. The Center offers workshops in a variety of essential technologies - including Blackboard - to make campus participants better prepared for the challenges of campus and workplace settings.

**For a list of workshops please visit us online at <http://cetl.ccny.cuny.edu/>**

# OIT Projects

Working to improve your IT experience

## Current and Recent Projects

### SysAid Service Desk

SysAid is a new service desk software system which is scheduled to become operational by Monday, September 23. In addition to migrating historical service tickets and user information, we will be rolling out new resources, including a comprehensive IT Service Catalog, formal Service Level Agreements, automated routing procedures, and a self-service portal for users to submit and track their service incidents and requests. Over the coming year additional SysAid modules will be adapted to our environment, including asset management, service analytics, remote software update management, mobile application support, and IT project management.

### Active Directory

The Active Directory rollout is currently in full swing. For students, several computer lab have been joined, including the TECH Center, NAC 1/501, NAC 1/207, and NAC 1/114. In order to avoid disrupting classes, work on that front will not resume until the Winter break.

For staff, technicians are working their way through the Division of Science, the Colin Powell School of Civic and Global Leadership, the School of Education, and a few administrative offices such as Enrollment Management, and Communications and Public Relations.

## At Planning Stage

### Network Core Upgrade

OIT is in the developmental stage of implementing a campus-wide network infrastructure upgrade. The first phase of this plan will be to upgrade the network core in the Network Operations Center in the NAC building, along with the disaster recovery site in Marshak. This extensive redesign will substantially increase and improve network performance. It will also provide a reliable foundation for delivering exemplary service in anticipation of the high volume, high performance, next generation technology we expect our student, teaching and research communities will be relying upon for the foreseeable future.

## 2014

### Wireless Upgrade

The proliferation of mobile devices is fundamentally transforming the role of Wi-Fi connectivity. To address some of the deficiencies in our current system, we will be upgrading and expanding the current Wireless Infrastructure to provide enhanced and uninterrupted coverage as users move between locations, and improve security, and increase capacity and bandwidth in high density areas. The implementation of this proposal will increase the number of total Wi-Fi access points from 270 to 360 (a 33% increase), including replacement units, to increase the signal range and strength in most public indoor spaces (classrooms, cafeteria, libraries).



Are  
**YOU**  
Ready?

### 1. Activate your account

It doesn't hurt to claim your account early but, if you do, don't forget to make a note of your password and security questions

### 2. Talk to your colleagues

CCNY's CUNYfirst team is collaborating with faculty, staff and student leaders to host public meetings to discuss its opportunities. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to your colleagues at the other CUNYfirst colleges.

### 3. Get training

See the online training resources on the CUNY first website and get prepared to sign up for targeted training workshops for administrative and advisory staff

<http://www.ccnycunyu.edu/cunyufirst>

# Student Services

## e-Services Available to CCNY Students

<b>Blackboard</b>	An interactive on-line learning tool which allows you to receive course content, take tests and quizzes, participate in on-line discussions with your fellow students, and/or instructor(s), submit course materials, view course syllabus, etc. <a href="http://cunyportal.cuny.edu">cunyportal.cuny.edu</a>
<b>eSIMS</b>	Online system to register, pay your tuition, check your grades, view and print your transcript, view your class schedule, and check your financial aid status. You must select CCNY as your primary college on the Portal. <a href="http://cunyportal.cuny.edu">cunyportal.cuny.edu</a>
<b>ePermit</b>	An online system for requesting approval to take a course at another CUNY college. Solely for CUNY students, faculty and staff. <a href="http://cunyportal.cuny.edu">cunyportal.cuny.edu</a>
<b>DegreeWorks</b>	An easy to use web-based degree audit and academic advising tool. It includes an orderly display of all courses taken, a checklist of outstanding requirements to graduate, active stops on a record, current registration appointments and initial English and Mathematics placement levels, etc. <a href="http://cunyportal.cuny.edu">cunyportal.cuny.edu</a>
<b>CUNY eMail</b>	A virtual shopping plaza, where merchants offer a variety of discounts and other promotional programs and FREE software to faculty, staff and students. Should you choose to purchase goods or services from any of the listed eMail providers, you are contracting directly with them for the goods and services that they provide. <a href="http://cunyportal.cuny.edu">cunyportal.cuny.edu</a>
<b>CCNY Libraries</b>	Find e-Journals, reference databases, research assistance, subject guides, and useful resources compiled by the subject specialists at the City College Of New York Libraries. <a href="http://libguides.ccny.cuny.edu">libguides.ccny.cuny.edu</a>
<b>CUNY Alert</b>	Subscription service to receive text or voice alerts of emergencies and weather-related closings on your campus via your cell, your home phone or your e-mail. <a href="http://www.cuny.edu/news/alert.html">www.cuny.edu/news/alert.html</a>
<b>CityMail</b>	A new state-of-the-art e-mail and communications suite for CCNY students. Everything you do online - e-mail, shared calendars and chatting - now works together better than ever with 24/7 reliability. Provided by CCNY through a CUNY-wide partnership with Microsoft. <a href="http://www.citymail.ccny.cuny.edu/">www.citymail.ccny.cuny.edu/</a>
<b>Skydrive</b>	Store your Office documents in SkyDrive, and Office Web Apps lets you view and edit them in your web browser. Avoid the hassle of sending documents as email attachments. Instead, store documents on SkyDrive, where you can link to them in email, on social networks, and in your blog. Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations, and OneNote notebooks display in the browser just as they look in the Office programs. Login: <a href="http://skydrive.live.com">http://skydrive.live.com</a> Information: <a href="http://tinyurl.com/8yh3r6u">http://tinyurl.com/8yh3r6u</a>
<b>YouTube</b>	The CCNY OIT YouTube channel is a collection of tutorials demonstrating how to access or configure a variety of City College IT resources. <a href="http://www.youtube.com/info4ccny">www.youtube.com/info4ccny</a>
<b>InYourClass</b>	A student portal combining educational and social networking technologies for academic use. <a href="http://www.inyourclass.com">www.inyourclass.com</a>
<b>CCNY Wi-Fi</b>	Use your e-mail userid (e.g., jsmith01) and password to access the campus-wide wireless network.

For help with any of the above please visit the Service Desk in NAC 1/301 x 7878 or email us at [servicedesk@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:servicedesk@ccny.cuny.edu)

### TechTalk Team

#### Editors

Tessa Souter  
Vernon Ballard

#### Copy Chief

Tessa Souter

#### Layout and Production

Tessa Souter  
Arlene Empinado

#### Photography

Tessa Souter  
Arlene Empinado  
Sirin Samman

#### Copy

Praveen Panchal  
Arlene Empinado  
Dean James  
Vernon Ballard  
Tessa Souter

#### Special Thanks

Gina Medranda  
Daniel Friedman

#### How are we doing?

Send feedback or suggestions for future issues to [techtalk@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:techtalk@ccny.cuny.edu)



[facebook.com/ccnyIT](http://facebook.com/ccnyIT)



[info4ccny](http://info4ccny)



[@ccnyhelpdesk](https://twitter.com/ccnyhelpdesk)

#### CCNY OIT Website:

[tinyurl.com/ccnyITservicedesk](http://tinyurl.com/ccnyITservicedesk)