

September 17, 2020

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VIA E-MAIL

Washington Attorney General's Office
800 5th Ave, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-3188
SecurityBreach@atg.wa.gov

RE: Notification of Security Breach

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Western Washington University Foundation (“the WWU Foundation”) to inform you of a recent security incident involving alumni information. The WWU Foundation uses software provided by a company called Blackbaud for data management services. As you are aware, Blackbaud identified—and contained—a ransomware cyberattack affecting certain information stored on its servers in May 2020. Blackbaud has stated that the attack began February 7 and lasted until May 20. The attackers obtained certain files, including data from the WWU Foundation, and demanded payment to delete the data. Blackbaud made this payment, and reports it is confident that the information was deleted and not further transferred. Information about this incident has been posted at blackbaud.com/securityincident.

Blackbaud notified Western on July 16 that its files were among those obtained by the attacker. Western determined on September 9 that this incident likely impacted “personal information,” as defined under R.C.W. § 19.255.005, of approximately 165,000 Washington residents. Specifically, the files contain alumni birthdates and identifiers that were formerly student ID numbers.

Notifications are currently being printed and it is anticipated that they will be mailed beginning September 28

Please contact me at the above address with any questions or concerns regarding this incident.

Sincerely,



Amelia M. Gerlicher

Dear <Salutation>,

We want to inform you of a data security incident that recently affected a third-party software vendor utilized by the Western Washington University Foundation and Alumni Association of WWU for constituent information services. The incident involved Blackbaud, Inc., which is used by many non-profit organizations in the United States and worldwide. In May of this year, Blackbaud identified—and contained—a ransomware cyberattack affecting some information stored on its servers. On July 16, Blackbaud notified the WWU Foundation and other affected organizations about this attack and that the attackers had obtained their files from Blackbaud’s servers. We have no reason to believe that we were specifically targeted in any way. Our subsequent investigation indicates that these files likely contained information that you shared with us or with the University such as your name, address, phone number, email address, birthdate, Western Washington student ID number, and other information pertaining to your relationship with the WWU Foundation. These files did not contain any sensitive personally identifiable information such as driver’s license number, social security number, bank account, or credit and debit card information.

The attackers demanded payment to delete the data. Blackbaud made this payment, and reported to us, and in public statements, that it is confident the information was deleted and not further transferred or misused. Information about this incident is posted at blackbaud.com/securityincident. Blackbaud has engaged with law enforcement and forensic experts to investigate the incident and confirm the scope of the attack. We have been assured that Blackbaud’s teams quickly identified the vulnerability associated with the attack, including the tactics used by the cybercriminal, and took swift action to fix it. We will continue to assess the impact of this incident and the measures taken by Blackbaud intended to prevent a similar event like this from occurring in the future.

Although Blackbaud has assured us that the information was deleted and not misused, as a best practice, we recommend that you remain vigilant about your personal information. We have provided additional information regarding potential precautions below.

If you have further questions or concerns regarding this matter, please don’t hesitate to email us at advancementdata@wwu.edu, or call us at (360) 650-3027. We sincerely regret any worry or inconvenience this incident may cause you.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Bowers
President and CEO
WWU Foundation



Deborah DeWees
Executive Director
Alumni Association of WWU



Chuck Lanham
Chief Information Officer
Western Washington University

TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION

Review Credit Reports. You may obtain a free copy of your credit report maintained by each of the three credit reporting agencies by visiting www.annualcreditreport.com or by calling toll-free 877-322-8228. Review the reports carefully, and if you find anything you do not understand or that is incorrect, contact the appropriate credit reporting agency. Credit reporting agencies must investigate your report, and remove inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information.

Fraud Alerts and Security Freezes. You may also consider contacting the credit reporting agencies directly if you wish to put in place a fraud alert or a security freeze. A fraud alert will notify any merchant checking your credit history that you may be the victim of identity theft and that the merchant should take additional measures to verify the application. Contacting any one of the three agencies will place an alert on your file at all three. A security freeze restricts all creditor access to your account, but might also delay any requests you might make for new accounts. Enquire with the credit reporting agencies for their specific procedures regarding security freezes.

- **Equifax:** 1-800-525-6285; www.equifax.com; P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
- **Experian:** 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); www.experian.com; P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013
- **TransUnion:** 1-800-916-8800; www.transunion.com; Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19022-2000

Contact the Federal Trade Commission. The Federal Trade Commission also provides information about how to avoid identity theft and what to do if you suspect your identity has been stolen. The Federal Trade Commission, Identity Theft Clearinghouse, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20580, identitytheft.gov, 1-877-ID-THEFT (877-438-4338).