

## Opinion- Is the network really secure?

BY RICHARD ONG

At a school so technologically dependent, network security is going to be an issue of primary importance. However, recent changes to the school's network security, initiated after a major breach, have not been enthusiastically embraced by the student body.

Although ITS has kept details of their security network confidential, changes beyond their veil of secrecy are apparent to students. A major update to network security has been the introduction of educational videos for students and faculty, which

are to be completed by Jan. 31. These "Securing The Human" videos can be found under the Community tab of MyNCSSM.

Furthermore, to make changes to the network ITS must shutdown the school's network. "These shutdowns typically occur when students are either away or asleep, but we occasionally do so when students and staff are potentially using the network," said Paul Menchini, head of network security. So students can expect an increase in network shutdowns in order to close gaps in security.

Behind the scenes however, ITS is engaged in a constant struggle, dealing with dozens of security breaches daily. However, a recent breach in network integrity, the kind found once out of several years, has prompted ITS and administration to make these changes.

The majority of breaches come from outside the school. "Our users have elevated privileges on the network compared to outsiders, and so one way to breach the network is to gain access via one of our users," said Menchini as he detailed the importance of the initiative to educate students.

However, a student, who wishes to be unnamed, criticized these videos. "They are a last ditch effort by administration to insert confidence into network security," said the source.

Furthermore, students are not entirely convinced these changes to network security will not limit their privileges and abilities, or are even necessary. "They already restrict where we can go on the internet. Maybe that is more beneficial to them, but students won't be happy because they can't be placated by the

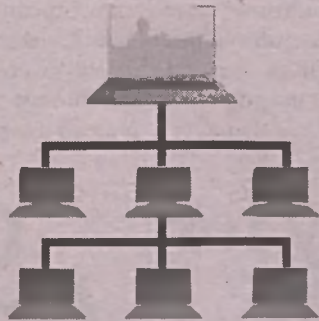
internet ... We've been on the internet as long as they have and we already know what to do," said the student.

Given the resources NCSSM invests in its network, one would expect them to protect it with greater tenacity, especially considering the importance of technology to this school.

Administration has apparently decided to entrust the integrity of the network in the users they do not trust to fully access the network. It is not surprising this decision has raised eyebrows across campus.

So the question students are asking is, "If the system works for the most part, why change it?" Is living with a network perforated by miniature faults in security worth undergoing the process of changing the network?

Unless ITS is willing to reveal more details about their new initiative and the effect it will have upon students, the student body will be left unanswered.



Courtesy of ciker.com

## Tips for staying healthy this winter

BY CAROLINE LIU

**- Be the sketchy couple in the ground watts hallway:** Yes, kissing can help you fight off colds and flu. By exchanging bacteria back and forth, you are actually enhancing your body's natural defenses and boosting your immune system. Alternatively, just use soaps without antimicrobial ingredients so you do not kill good bacteria on your body with the bad.

**- Have a good laugh:** laughter lowers cortisol levels and release endorphins, feel-good chemicals that trigger immune cells.

**- Drink coffee:** drinking hot liquids, including coffee can help wash the virus out of your mouth and down into your stomach where viruses can't grow due to the acids.

## Opinion- Obama calls for "A Year of Action" and side-steps Congress

BY ANDREW PETERSON

In the President's annual address to Congress, Barack Obama made several controversial promises that are meant to keep America on track. However, behind the bold promises for action and

seats. At this moment in his speech, Obama was appealing to a group that has supported the Democratic Party heavily in recent elections, and he is reminding them to continue their support in November.

However, Obama's call to

to pass single legislation while forcing Republicans to abandon their ideological distinctions to satisfy a growing America. Meanwhile, Republicans refuse to hand control across the aisle.

By addressing immigration through smaller reforms, Republicans hope to accomplish their goals, while still representing nearly fifty percent of Americans that voted them into office.

One of the last topics addressed in The President's Address to Congress was about his controversial healthcare reform dubbed "Obamacare."

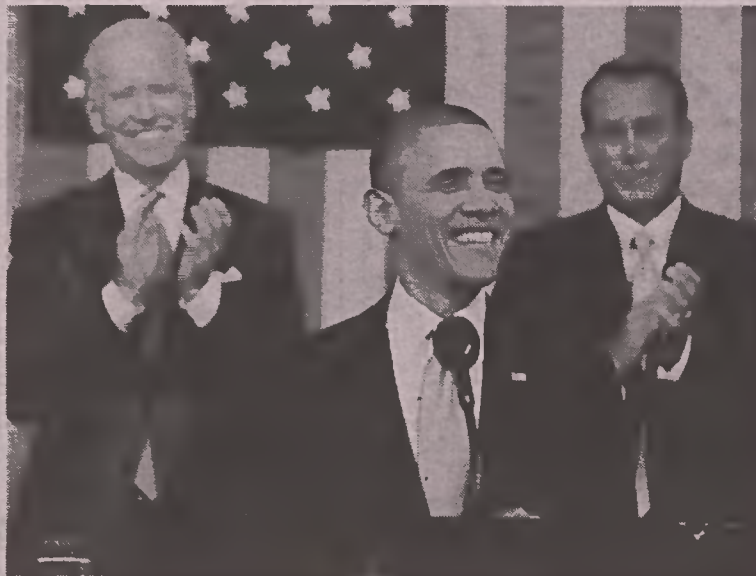
"The American people aren't interested in refighting old battles," said Obama on Tuesday night, "So again, if you have specific plans to cut costs, cover more people, and increase choice- tell America what you'd do

differently. Let's see if the numbers add up. But let's not have another 40 something votes to repeal a law that's already helping millions of Americans."

While this sounds like a harmless statement to encourage the Republican controlled House to consider the Affordable Care Act, it reflects the Obama administration's frustration as they fought hard in the Supreme Court, in Congress, and in public perception to amend the botched rollout of the flagship website. However, while Obamacare supposedly helps millions of Americans by giving them access to affordable healthcare, it also has several noticeable flaws.

The healthcare policies that the Obama administration so adamantly defended in the Affordable Care Act do not serve the Americans that most desperately need it. If the Obama Administration wants to achieve its dream of healthcare coverage for every American, then they must forget the bipartisanship that divides Congress and recognize that it is impractical to increase government spending in a time when there is not money to spend.

In his State of the Union Address, Obama called for Congress to cooperate, but he also made a mistake. He did not try to bridge the growing gap between Republicans and Democrats. If Obama truly wants to redefine his Presidency, he must find a way to bridge the divide between Republicans and Democrats. He must find a way to make government work.



The State of the Union address: President Barack Obama called for 2014 to be a "year of action" and an end to "Mad Men" workplace policies.

results, there is a President who is aware that his time in the Oval Office has been defined by many bumps in the road.

Obama promised to raise the minimum wage for those contracted to the federal government, to create a new tax-free savings bond to encourage Americans to save, to close Guantanamo Bay prison, to push immigration reforms into reality, and to veto any sanctions that Congress places to derail America's deal with Iran over its nuclear program.

However, an overarching promise to bypass America's legislature hangs eerily over every moment of his speech, "Wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that's what I'm going to do, he vows to the American people. His last year in office will be "a year of action."

In his speech, Obama addressed several key issues that have defined his Presidency. These include hot-button topics like Women Health Care, and Immigration Reform. In the beginning of his speech, Obama announced the alarming statistics, "women make up about half our workforce. But they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. That is wrong and in 2014 it's an embarrassment. A woman deserves equal pay for equal work."

Obama actually meant that Republicans could have improved their handling of the issues surrounding women, and that these mistakes costs them the last presidential election and several key congressional

women is more ironic than it seems. While the party on the left points fingers to the right, Americans have noticed that both sides are at fault. Unable to bridge the gap that divides congress, Democrats have turned to media to paint the Republican Party as detrimental to women's interests.

While it is the role of the President to support his party, he missed a crucial opportunity to Democrats to bridge the growing fissure between the Right and Left in Congress when he reminded voters of the "Republicans failure."

Another key point addressed in Obama's State of the Union Address was Immigration reform.

In his address to Congress, Obama said, "If we serious about economic growth, it is time to head the call of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement- and fix our broken immigration system. Republicans and Democrats in the Senate have acted. I know that members of both parties in the House want to do the same."

Republicans preferred to address the complicated but important issue of immigration in a series of smaller reforms, rather than approving a simplified and blanket approval thrust upon at them by the Democrats. While President Obama is waiting with bated breath as negotiations open in the Republican controlled House might be more willing to strike a deal.

Both sides need to recognize the complexity of immigration reform. Democrats, hoping to see sweeping reform, want

Courtesy of blogs.cfr.org