



The Whistle

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TRACKING AND TRACING



Photo by Christopher Moore

NOVID Exposure Notification App Enlists Smartphones in Coronavirus Battle

JOHN TOON
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The smartphone in your pocket could be a powerful tool in the effort to control the spread of the coronavirus in the campus community — should you choose to use it.

Georgia Tech has begun using NOVID, an exposure notification app that will help students, staff, and faculty be anonymously notified if they have potentially been exposed to Covid-19. Use of the app is voluntary, and it is available at no cost. A link to information about the app is available from the COVID Central portal: (covidcentral.gatech.edu).

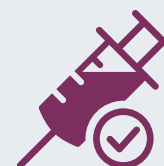
Developed by researchers at Carnegie Mellon University, NOVID captures no personally identifiable information from people using it.

Instead, smartphones running the app exchange synthetic codes with other smartphones that are nearby for more than a brief period of time. If the owner of one of the phones tests positive for the virus, they can notify other app users with whom they have been in contact without identifying themselves or sharing any personal information.

That rapid notification can facilitate early testing, slowing the spread of the virus from infected individuals who may not be showing symptoms yet — or who may be asymptomatic.

Manual contact tracing will continue to be done by the Georgia Department of Public Health with support from Georgia Tech. Contact tracing makes initial rapid notifica-

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Prepare Now for Flu Season

As the global race continues to produce a vaccine for the novel coronavirus, it's already time to get vaccinated for this year's flu season.

The best way to prevent flu illness is by getting vaccinated every year. Stamps Health Services will again offer flu clinics this year, beginning in September.

Dates and times will be confirmed in the coming week. Employees will be able to get a flu shot at one of these clinics, through their primary care physician, or at another local pharmacy or medical office.

Anyone over 6 months of age should get vaccinated. In particular, those who are at a higher risk should get the vaccine, including adults over 65 years old, those with underlying illnesses like asthma or heart disease, pregnant women, caretakers who are exposed to vulnerable groups, and essential workers, among others.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone get the flu shot in September or October, before the start of the flu season. Experts suggest that adults over 65 and those with compromised immune systems wait until at least mid-September, so that the vaccine's protection lasts the entire season.

More information will soon be available at health.gatech.edu.

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tions of close contacts in the Georgia Tech community based on information gathered from the individual who tests positive.

For contact tracing purposes, a close contact is defined as anyone who, for 15 minutes or more, was within 6 feet of the person who tested positive, anyone who had physical contact with the person, or anyone who was coughed or sneezed on by the person.

In a large community, exposure notification apps can fill in the gaps by finding individuals who might have been close enough to be exposed to the virus but not known to the individual with a positive test result. These could include, for instance, someone working nearby in a makerspace or lab — or working out on nearby equipment at the gym.

“Manual contact tracing has been proven over time to be extremely useful for tracking all of the contacts that you know about,” said Alexa Harter, director of the Georgia Tech Research Institute’s (GTRI) Cybersecurity, Information Protection, and Hardware Evaluation Research (CIPHER) Lab. “An exposure notification app is useful when you are in contact with someone you don’t know. It’s very good at the kinds of interactions that manual contract tracing doesn’t do as well.”

Installed on an iOS or Android smartphone, the app exchanges information with other phones also running the app. It records a frequently changing code to other devices so they can be alerted if necessary, but without sharing any personally identifiable information. Pairs of code interactions are stored on the NOVID server for a limited period of time.

NOVID can be downloaded from Apple’s App Store or Android’s Google Play Store. Georgia Tech staff, faculty, and students should enter the community code JACKETS on the NOVID settings page to join the Georgia Tech NOVID community.

Read the rest of this story at c.gatech.edu/novid.

THE AIR WE BREATHE



Photo by Rob Felt

As part of reopening campus, teams in Facilities Management have been evaluating and performing preventive maintenance of the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in every resident instruction building on campus so they may provide a high degree of indoor air quality. Graduate student Sabrina Westgate measures particle concentration in a classroom. Read more at c.gatech.edu/hvac.

Board of Regents Approves 2021 Health Insurance Premiums

At its Aug. 11 meeting, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG) approved 2021 healthcare plans and premiums for active employees and pre-65 retirees.

Premiums: There will be no changes to the healthcare plans and no increases in premiums for the employee, employee + child(ren), and employee + spouse coverage tiers. There will be a slight increase in premiums for the family tier (between \$3–10, or 1–2%).

Tobacco use and working spouse surcharges: The board approved the continuation of the tobacco use and working spouse surcharges at \$100 per person per month.

Well-being: The 2021 program will continue to offer a \$100 well-being credit, as well as an expanded list of activities to earn the credit.

Open enrollment for active employees will be Oct. 21 – Nov. 6. A Systemwide virtual benefits fair will be held during the week of Oct. 19 – 23. More information will be coming soon. View your current benefit elections at oneusgconnect.usg.edu.

Wiley Captures Tech Workers on the Job

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Jeff Wiley, an IT support professional in Facilities Management, is part of a nine-member team that supports approximately 550 people.

“I do a little bit of everything,” Wiley said. “I do hardware break fix, deskside support, user support, website support, and I also take photographs at staff events.”

Wiley’s IT career began when he was in the Marines from 1992 to 1996. His job in the military was similar to his Georgia Tech job. “I worked in an office, and I supported people in an IT capacity,” he said. “The biggest difference is I wore camouflage and boots to work.”

The last few months have presented changes and challenges in his work at Tech.

“Covid-19 changed my job in the sense that I work from home a little more. Educating our users on how they can also work from home and be productive — and sometimes trying to do that remotely — can be a challenge,” he said.

Since the spring, Wiley has devoted a lot of time to photographing essential workers in Facilities wearing face coverings on the job.

“It’s important to me personally to put a spotlight on our essential workers after everything they have been through this year,” he said. “Because so much of their face is hidden, they tell their stories through their eyes.”

A hobbyist photographer for more than 20 years, Wiley appreciates that his colleagues are at ease with him taking their photo. “I love that our people trust me enough to tell their story. They are used to seeing me walking around with a camera slung around my neck at our staff events, and they usually don’t shy away. That’s a level of trust that I don’t take lightly,” he said.

Wiley initially nurtured his interest in photography by doing some research.



Photo by Allison Carter

Wiley works as an IT support professional for Facilities Management, but he enjoys capturing images of his colleagues while on the job.

Then he bought a camera and taught himself the basics. “It’s something that challenges me creatively,” he said. “You can take a photograph of a sporting event or an apple, and you can make either one of them interesting if you shoot them correctly.”

Away From the Office

Wiley grew up in McDowell County, West Virginia. He studied communications, and he worked in radio before joining the Marines. While stationed in Oceanside, California, he fell in love with surfing.

“I could watch surfing competitions on ESPN all day long,” he said. “If I had my life to do over, knowing everything that I know now, I would have pursued a career in professional surfing. You will never convince me that getting paid to travel the world and surf beautiful beaches is work.”

Point Break, a movie about bank robbers who surf, is one of his favorites. He’s also a *Star Trek* fan, and he has strong opinions about Batman, his



Photo by Jeff Wiley

Custodian Juanita Slaton is one employee Wiley has photographed. She has worked at Georgia Tech for 16 years.

favorite comic book character.

“Ben Affleck was the best Batman, but Christian Bale was in the best Batman film,” he says. “I’m not a fan of the Caped Crusader; I’m a fan of the Dark Knight. To me there is a difference.”

Wiley also likes spending time with his dog Oscar, a 14-year-old Dachshund. He enjoys hiking and exploring in Sweetwater Creek State Park in Lithia Springs, Georgia, and Cheaha State Park in Clay County, Alabama, among many others.

Where to Get Tested for Covid-19

All faculty, staff, and students are strongly encouraged to get tested weekly, even if you aren't experiencing Covid-19 symptoms. This is an essential part of protecting yourself and the Georgia Tech community.

There are several options for getting tested, both on and off campus. More information and resource links are available at health.gatech.edu/coronavirus/testing.

On-Campus Covid-19 Testing

Stamps Health Services



Who We Serve: Currently enrolled students and postdocs on the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) who have Covid-19 symptoms.

Location: 740 Ferst Drive, next to the Campus Recreation Center.

Hours: Stamps Business Hours

Appointments: health.gatech.edu

Cost: Free

What to Bring: Your BuzzCard on the first visit.

Asymptomatic Surveillance Test Sites

Who We Serve: Students, postdocs, faculty, and staff who do not have Covid-19 symptoms.

Hours and Locations:

Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Bobby Dodd Stadium (Gate 5), across from Peters Parking Deck.

Curran Street Parking Deck (Level 2), Turner Place entrance facing Nelson-Shell Residence Hall, near West Village Dining.

Wednesday – Friday, Noon – 5 p.m.

760 Spring Street (1st Floor), across from the Coda Building.

Appointments: No appointment is needed. Testing is done on a walk-up basis. Complete a one-time registration at mytest.gatech.edu before your first visit. No registration is needed for subsequent visits, but you will be required to complete a survey before each test.

Cost: Free

What to Bring: Your BuzzCard and a cell phone.

Results: Available within 48 hours.

Fulton County Pop-Up Test Site

Who We Serve: Students, postdocs, faculty, and staff who do or do not have Covid-19 symptoms.

Location: McCamish Pavilion parking lot.

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays through September 10

Hours: 8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Appointments: Walk-ups will be served, but registration and pre-screening at covid19.dph.ga.gov are strongly encouraged. Appointments can also be made by calling 404.613.8150.

Cost: Free

Results: Typically available within 48-72 hours.

Off-Campus Covid-19 Testing



Your Doctor's Office

Your primary care physician can test you for current or past Covid-19 infections. The time it takes for your results to come back will vary depending on the lab your doctor uses.

Georgia Department of Public Health Testing Sites

To be tested for a current Covid-19 infection, visit the Georgia Department of Public Health website at dph.georgia.gov/covidtesting to find a testing location.

Drive-thru Clinics

You can get a Covid-19 test at a rapid drive-thru clinic. Please refer to the clinic's website for details about scheduling and the type of test performed. For rapid tests, results are typically given at the time of testing, but this varies according to the organization administering the test and providing results.