



August 14, 2020

Dear Charter Oak Community,

Charter Oak and the Foundation take the protection and proper use of your information very seriously. While we regret to inform you, we are writing to let you know about a data security incident that occurred between February and May 2020 at Blackbaud, the Foundation's third-party provider of a cloud-based platform used for constituent information management.

While law enforcement authorities do not believe that any of the compromised material can be used for identity theft or financial fraud, we wanted to alert you as a precautionary measure.

### What Happened

Several months after the incident, on July 16, 2020, Charter Oak State College (COSC) along with other campuses in the Connecticut State Colleges and University System (CSCU) were notified that Blackbaud experienced a global security incident whereby hackers attempted to install ransomware with the intent of locking out customers while extorting money from Blackbaud. This incident has affected many non-profit organizations worldwide including colleges and universities across the nation.

In its [statement about the incident](#), Blackbaud indicated that the cybercriminals involved in the cyberattack **did not access** user names, passwords, credit card information, bank account information, or Social Security numbers. In addition, Blackbaud has stated that it paid a ransom in exchange for the cybercriminals' confirmed destruction of the copy of the information stolen.

### What Charter Oak and other State Colleges & Universities are Doing

We take data security and privacy very seriously. Based on what we've learned from Blackbaud so far, **the data breach included back-up files of the Foundation's information which includes basic donor information, such as contact name, address, email, phone numbers, donor and alumni status.** As the Foundation often leaves information fields optional at the donor's discretion, each record in the database is generally populated by only that information that you have submitted. Details such as marital status, birth dates or other data may have been compromised to the extent a donor had entered such information into our forms. **Blackbaud has assured us that credit card or bank information was encrypted or not included in the back-up data set and that the compromised information has not traveled any further.** The Foundation itself does not store any bank information, social security numbers or otherwise highly sensitive data in our system.

Each of the State Colleges & Universities are joining together and undertaking a thorough investigation to independently validate Blackbaud's position that your data has not been compromised further. We take great pride in operating transparently and earning your trust and

are also seeking to understand the significant delay from Blackbaud in notifying us of the incident. **We will take all appropriate actions based on our investigation to ensure your information is and remains properly protected.**

As a best practice, we recommend you remain vigilant and promptly report any suspicious activity or suspected identity theft to your local law enforcement authorities. People may also request a copy of their credit report free once every 12 months under federal law.

Again, we regret being the means to inform you of Blackbaud's data breach; we want to assure you that we are taking the necessary steps to ensure your data is protected, and further scrutinize Blackbaud's security measures against potential alternatives for the future.

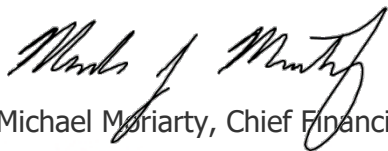
Please note, we have posted Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the Foundation Website, [www.charteroak.edu/foundation](http://www.charteroak.edu/foundation). Also, please contact Carol Hall, [chall@charteroak.edu](mailto:chall@charteroak.edu) or 860-515-3889 with any questions and concerns you may have.

We hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well, we thank you for your continued commitment to the success of our students.

Sincerely,



Ed Klonoski, President, Charter Oak State College



Michael Moriarty, Chief Financial & Administrative Officer, Charter Oak State College



Rebeka Scalia, President, Charter Oak State College Foundation



Carol Hall, Executive Director, Charter Oak State College Foundation