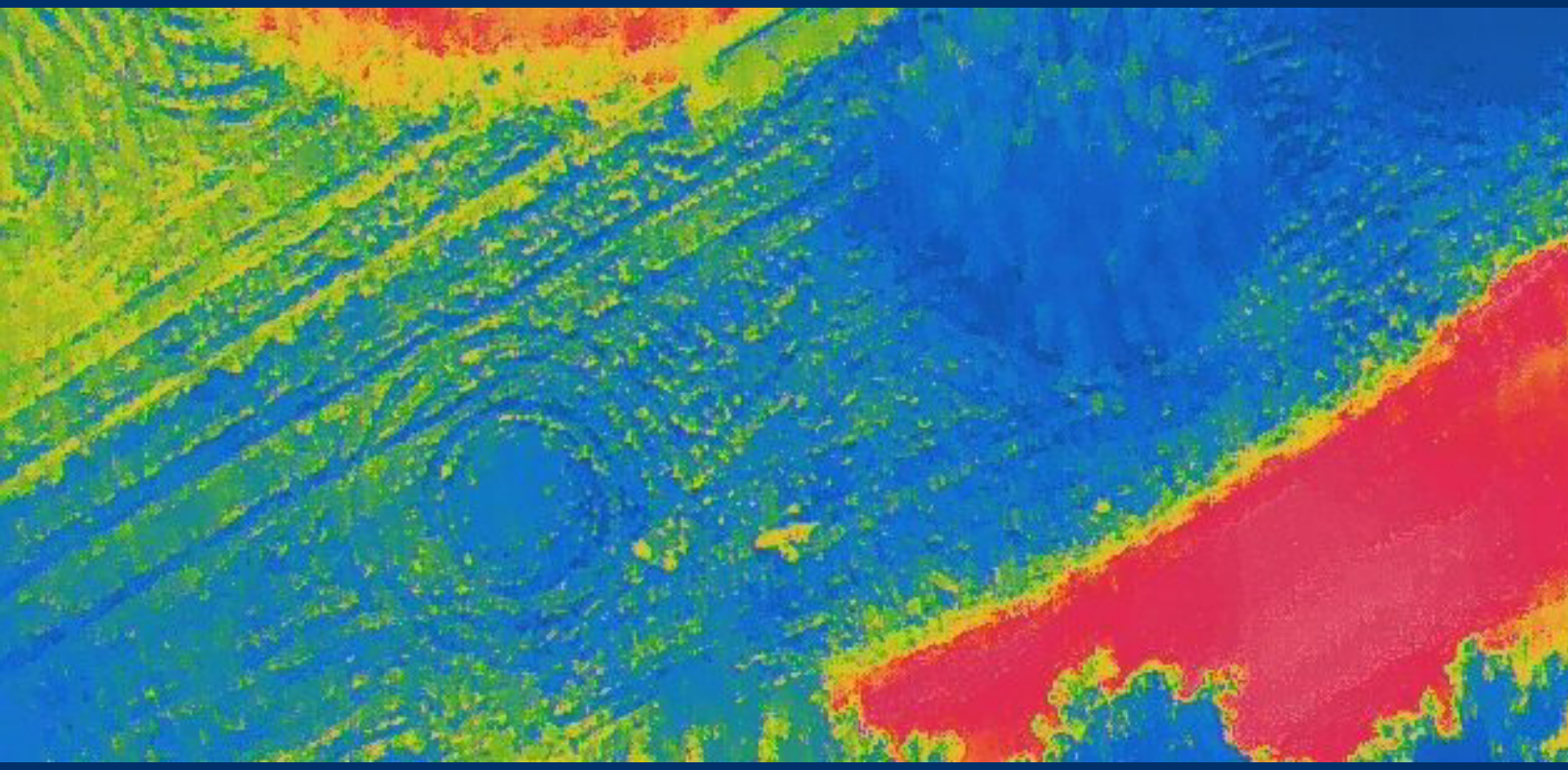
Information Technology Services

Annual Report

2025–2026



Aerial thermal footage of field at Teepee Tonka Park in Faribault, MN, Summer 2025. Read more on page 6. Image by Dann Hurlbert.

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From the CTO



Welcome to the 2025–2026 ITS Annual Report!

One of my colleagues proudly says that she is on “Team Carleton.” There are many ways that sentiment can show up. As someone who grew up in Lawrence, Kansas with parents who worked at the University of Kansas, I was Team KU in the sense of cheering for the basketball team, wearing my red and blue, and saying “Rock Chalk” as a phrase of inspiration. But our departmental commitment to Team Carleton is a lot deeper than the color of our clothing — and in many ways less visible.

Our Position on AI

ITS has invested a lot of time over the past few years learning about AI, evaluating its impact, and supporting campus exploration. In our September newsletter, I shared that “ITS staff are committed to both supporting the community in developing AI literacy and exploring our shared skepticism, as both are essential to engaging in critical thinking about this complex and quickly evolving technology.” The next two pages of this annual report detail the breadth of our engagement with AI, including ways to explore and/or avoid AI features. We also documented vendor practices that impede learning (such as Grammarly) and the evolving threat of highly personalized, AI-driven cyber attacks.

AI and Sustainability

One (of several) serious campus concerns with AI is its environmental impact. Corporate data about the environmental impact of training various large language models (LLMs) is shrouded. However, it’s obvious that less use is better. Educational Associate Kieran Barker ‘25 shared research in posts on Carleton's AI website and a flyer to help community members make choices that limit the impact when they choose to use generative AI. We look forward to a wider distribution of those resources this Fall. It’s also clear that it’s best to use the smallest, least powerful LLM needed for an activity. ITS is currently working on an on-premise approach to generative AI that will use small, open-source models powered by our greener campus infrastructure.

A Year with Significant Technology Change

To keep pace with a rapidly shifting digital landscape, ITS focused heavily this year on fortifying our infrastructure and streamlining our daily operations.

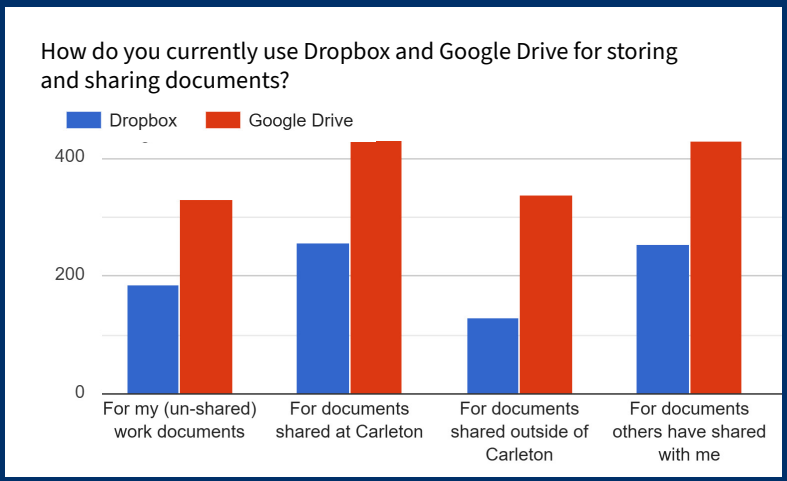
Security Changes. With AI making automated cyberattacks faster and more sophisticated, we implemented three key changes to strengthen our environment: reduced the time that multi-factor (Duo) will remember your authentication from 30 days to 7 days, transitioned the remaining Windows 10 users to Windows 11, and increased phishing simulations from four per year to a monthly schedule. Training simulations are the best way for our community to practice identifying a fake email and reporting it. When phishing gets reported, our security team members are notified and pull those messages from user mailboxes. Getting in the habit of reporting phishing is something we can all do as part of Team Carleton.

Planned and Unplanned Changes. We had 9 planned maintenance outages and experienced 13 incidents when a service was slow or unavailable. We are very aware of how planned and unplanned technology changes impact our faculty, staff, and students, which is why ITS strengthened our change management process a few years ago. The ITS Change Board reviews any non-routine production change to clarify steps, backout plans, and the timing of changes. When unexpected outages occur, the Board also reviews Post-Incident Reports. Over this fiscal year, a department-wide Slack channel dedicated to managing changes had 581 threads, most of which were invisible maintenance tasks. The practices ITS has built increase the stability of our environment and our ability to respond quickly as needed.

Preparing for More Change

In October, I emailed the campus introducing an evaluation of Google Workspace as our primary productivity suite. The College currently pays $250,000 per year to other vendors for services already included in our Google license, such as videoconferencing (Zoom) and file storage (Dropbox). Against a backdrop of software cost increases that industry analysts are calling exploitative, my team has looked to lock in lower-cost, multi-year licensing and has made selective moves toward open-source solutions. For instance, during the 2024–2025 academic year, we successfully migrated from VMware to Proxmox, avoiding a quoted 500% price hike following a buyout by Broadcom.

Based on results from the October campus survey, focus groups, and a year-long evaluation, the Technology Planning & Priorities Committee (TPPC) endorsed a consolidation to Meet for videoconferencing services with limited paid Zoom licenses. As was announced in May, beginning September 1st, 2026, Zoom accounts for most users will transition from Zoom Pro to the free version of Zoom, with a pool of Zoom Pro licenses available for real-time check out.



Data from the October, 2025 campus survey.

The campus survey also revealed that many departments had already moved their collaborative work to Google apps, so ITS has begun working with those departments to migrate their Dropbox documents, making it easier to search across all of their documents and also to reduce the number of Dropbox licenses in our next renewal. This reduction process will continue over the next few years and the goals of the effort will be reviewed annually.

Wrap Up

For me, being part of Team Carleton involves balancing competing interests and finding the best middle ground. I hope this Annual Report provides insight into the care we take and the challenges that require deep thought and campus collaboration. While modern technology allows us to make individual choices every day, our collective actions dictate the safety and stability of our entire digital campus. Managing that risk is a team sport. I appreciate your partnership on this journey. Go Knights!



Navigating the Paradox of AI

While engaging within ITS and with community members over the past year, it has become clear that there is a deep tension for most of us on whether and when to use generative AI. We are all struggling with the paradox of AI offering benefits in some areas while also bringing significant drawbacks for learning and the environment. These stories convey ways ITS is supporting both the use and the avoidance of AI.

Supporting AI Use

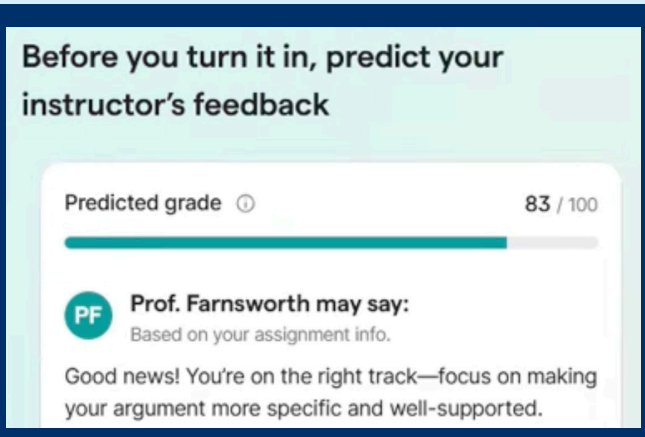
The first step in choosing how you will or will not use AI is having an informed perspective. Our Academic Technologists have created an 8-hour long, leadership-endorsed Critical AI Literacy Certificate to help faculty and staff understand how generative AI works in order to make informed decisions about how they use it in their work.[1] Over the summer, we offered three sessions with almost 60 participants, including several cabinet members. Participants explored generative AI tools for their work while discussing many hot-button issues related to AI. More sessions will be offered during the academic year and, as needed, next summer.

"I really appreciated both the information and the open forum in which to be honest about the drawbacks of AI."
—Participant in the July cohort



Supporting AI Caution

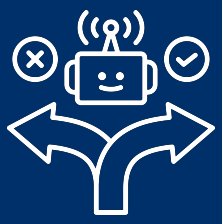
While some are eager to explore generative AI, ITS has also provided support for those who choose to limit its presence or opt out entirely. To help our community maintain control over AI use in their digital environments, we published guides and video tutorials on how to disable or hide AI features;[2] conducted a deep dive into tools like Grammarly,[3] which has evolved from a simple grammar checker into an AI platform that often tries to do the thinking for the user; and posted a sustainability blog[4] that encourages users to be mindful of their goals and the urgency of a task as they consider whether AI is necessary.



Grammarly's AI Grader predicts an essay's grade and offers feedback tailored to the instructor and course.

Left: The Critical AI Literacy Certificate Cohort from July, 2026.

Protecting Against AI



At the President's Quarterly Meeting in May,[5] Chief Technology Officer Janet Scannell and Information Security Officer Kendall George presented on how AI will rapidly and radically alter the cyberthreat landscape. AI tools increase cyberattack speed and sophistication, enabling highly targeted phishing campaigns leveraging comprehensive victim databases. AI-enabled software development tools designed to find and patch vulnerabilities can also be exploited to identify and exploit weaknesses. Generative AI tools can simulate voices and appearances with minimal data — a single photograph can generate lifelike impersonation videos for video conferences, while 10-second audio clips enable perfect voice mimicry for real-time deceptive calls. The broadening availability of these "deepfake" technologies drives increasingly compelling social engineering attacks.

Integrating AI with Teaching

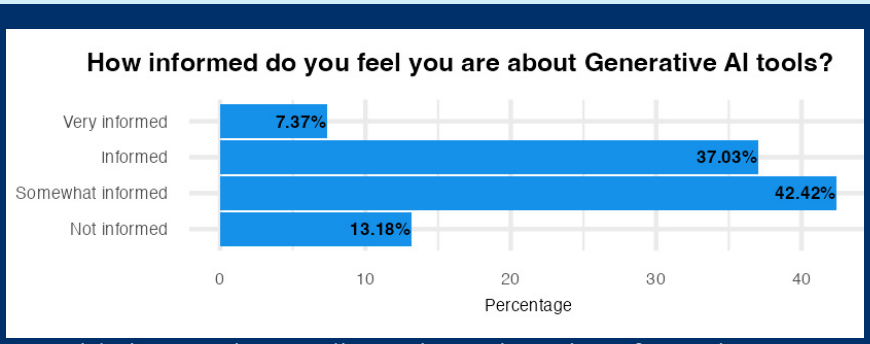
Some Carleton faculty have leveraged AI to support learning outcomes in their courses. Academic Technologist Don Vosburg assisted Psychology professor Ken Abrams in creating a custom Gemini Gem that simulates a patient with panic disorder. Students can interact with the bot to practice cognitive behavioral therapy techniques without the need for real clients or paid actors. At the end of the exercise, students submit their session transcript to Dr. Abrams for the final assessment.

Learn more about this Gem in the LTC Session.[6]



Working Toward an Informed and Empowered Campus

Several members of ITS have been deeply involved in Carleton's exploration of generative AI and the evolving presence of AI-driven features in the applications used at Carleton. This work has been guided by a campus-wide effort and a 17-person AI Coordinating Team with representatives from every division. Wiebke Kuhn, Director of Academic Technology, has worked closely with LTC Director Jennifer Ross-Wolff and Director of Academic AI Initiatives George Cusack. Janet Scannell and Provost Michelle Mattson have co-led the Coordinating Team's two-year engagement and encouraged the funding of an Educational Associate and faculty stipends for AI explorations. AI-related policies and decision-making will remain a campus-wide conversation.



Graphic by Bwalya Mwila '27 based on data from the 2026 MISO Survey.

Behind the Scenes

ITS Staff members spend the bulk of our time providing user support and maintaining existing systems and services. Some of our projects are quite visible to campus, like the Workday projects or cybersecurity training. Here are some efforts that are less visible to the community but just as vital for helping people across campus do their work.

Student Security Analyst Training

A grant from the Minnesota-based Shavlik Family Foundation is advancing cybersecurity training for students at Carleton and St. Olaf. This support will fund servers for each school to host cybersecurity tools used by student security analysts. The resulting student-led security operations centers and security labs will strengthen institutional defenses against cyberattacks and provide students with hands-on experience in the growing field of cybersecurity. The student analysts also organized two phishing awareness events that engaged more than 160 students and reinforced key security concepts in a fun and memorable way.



Security Analyst Phi Anderson and student analysts at the Sproncert Phishing Pond.

"I started with no experience and ended by organizing two engaging events and a better understanding of work in cybersecurity. ... I truly feel like I am contributing towards a more secure campus."

—Nafees Abdullah, student security analyst

Supporting Student Organizations

In collaboration with the Student Activities Office and the Web team, EIS added a new area in Workday to store and track Student Organizations. It syncs with the Student Organizations Directory, making it easier to keep information on these organizations up to date. Bringing all campus student organization data directly into Workday provides centralized management of organizations and directly feeds into the campus website, ensuring that students with similar interests can easily connect with each other.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES OFFICE
CARLETON COLLEGE
WWW.GO.CARLETON.EDU/ACTIVITIES

More Options for Biometrics

Biometric authentication uses your unique physical characteristics — such as your fingerprint or face — to verify your identity, making it the most secure approach to multi-factor authentication. ITS has tested a number of devices to incorporate more biometric options for PC users, especially physical fingerprint-based biometrics. As a result, the new standard device for PC users will be a Lenovo T14 that includes fingerprint verification.

New Tech for Faculty Research Labs

Science Support Specialist Randy Hoffner has been busy helping researchers incorporate new AI and tech tools into their labs.[7]

In Eric Hoopfer's lab, high performance Graphics Processing Units located in the Weitz Center capture videos of fruit fly behavior to be analyzed with a specially trained AI model.

Matt Rand's lab is using the image recognition ability of AI to quickly and humanely identify new or previously caught *Sceloporus* lizards based on their unique belly markings during fieldwork in Colorado.



10th Annual Day of Digital Humanities

This year marked the tenth annual Day of Digital Humanities conference![9] Co-sponsored by the Humanities Center, Gould Library, and ITS, Carleton's Day of Digital Humanities is a free, one-day conference where those engaged in digital scholarship can share their work, forge connections with other DH practitioners, and learn new concepts and skills. To prepare, Academic Technologists meet with the event organizers months in advance to scope out technological needs for a successful hybrid event. But support doesn't stop at planning and execution stage — after the conference, ITS continues working behind the scenes to edit and publish recorded sessions, analyze survey results, and review suggestions for future events.

Watch the recording here[10]

Changes to Wordpress

To support the Communications team on the Carleton.edu website redesign,[8] the Web Dev team created the technical architecture to implement the new design in WordPress. This work included creating new WordPress components to house content, writing migration scripts to move content from the old design to the new one, and adding improvements to the editing interface, including guardrails to enforce accessibility and brand styling guidelines. When the work is complete, the website will run more efficiently, and website maintainers will have a modernized interface for creating polished, accessible websites.

Thermal Imaging and Digital Mapping

Carleton's Academic Technology group has two drones[11] — one cinematic and one thermal — available for campus use. In Fall 2025, Media and Design Specialist Dann Hurlbert used the thermal drone to assist Austin Mason's HIST338: Digital History, Public Heritage, and Deep Mapping course. The class worked with the Rice County Historical Society to document the Alexander Faribault house[12] and surrounding areas in Faribault, MN. Drones were used to create a 3D model of the house and explore nearby Teepee Tonka Park,[13] a possible Dakota village site (see cover image).

Did You Know?

Carleton's drone license is renewed each year, and drones may only be flown by registered FAA Certified UAS pilots.



ITS By the Numbers

97,307,244
Threats blocked at the firewall *(nearly **20x** more than last year's 5 million!)*

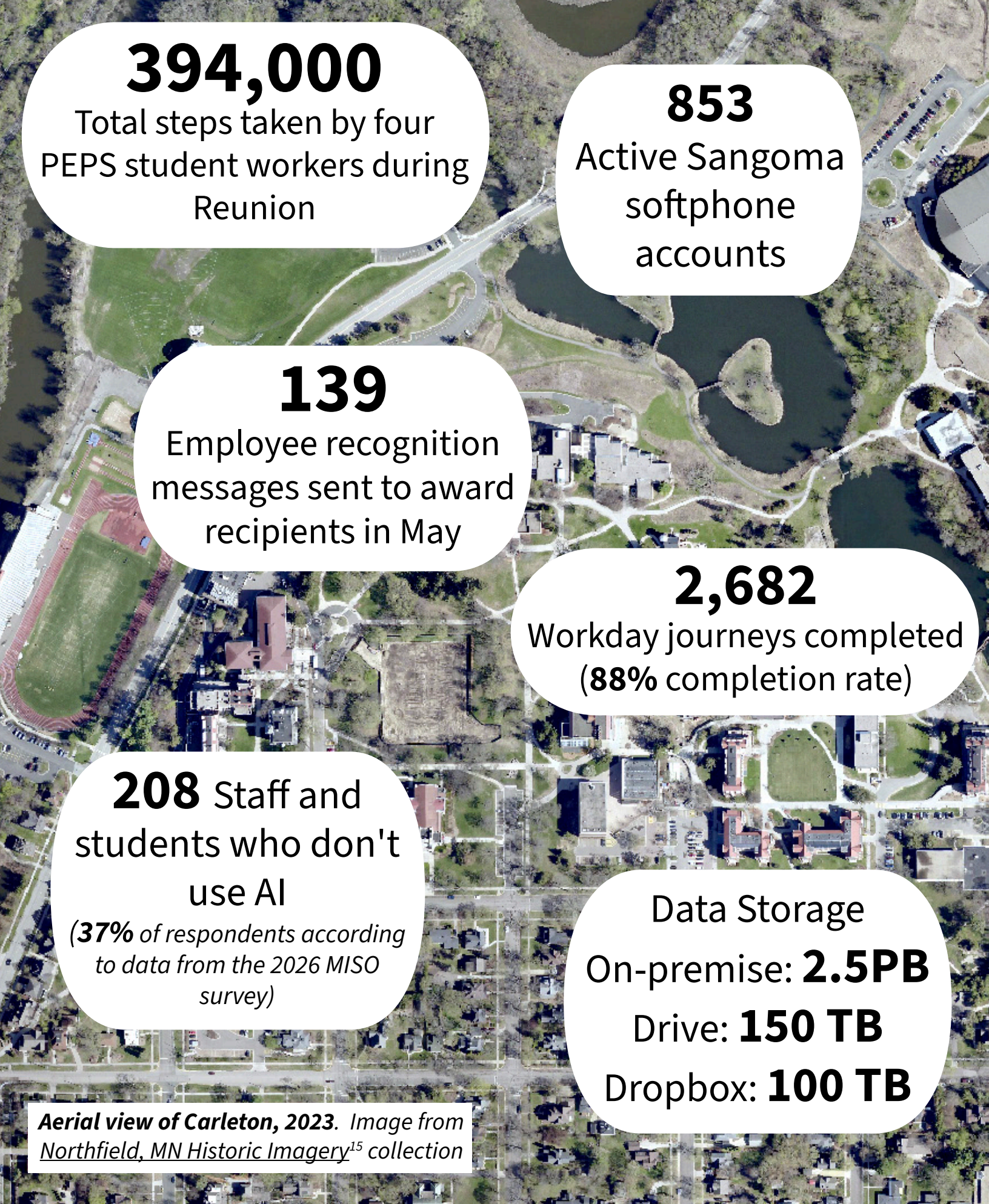
127,030
Digital assignments collected via Moodle

150 Student devices repaired at the Drop-Off Center

2,540
Calls answered by the Helpdesk

11,680
Tickets created for technology support (issues, requests, events, new hardware)

***Aerial view of Carleton, 1957**. Image from Northfield, MN Historic Imagery[14] collection*



394,000
Total steps taken by four PEPS student workers during Reunion

853
Active Sangoma softphone accounts

139
Employee recognition messages sent to award recipients in May

2,682
Workday journeys completed (**88%** completion rate)

208 Staff and students who don't use AI
*(**37%** of respondents according to data from the 2026 MISO survey)*

Data Storage
On-premise: **2.5PB**
Drive: **150 TB**
Dropbox: **100 TB**

***Aerial view of Carleton, 2023**. Image from Northfield, MN Historic Imagery[15] collection*

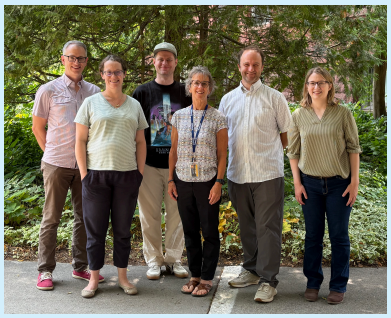
Team Highlights

The **Technology Purchasing Coordinator** orders all of the hardware, software, and IT equipment for the campus. The **Information Security staff** are responsible for all dimensions of Carleton's IT security program.



- Transitioned the campus softphone system from Zulu to Sangoma in coordination with the Systems and Infrastructure Group and the Technology Support Group
- Responded to increasing security risks with additional controls and training
- Received a grant from Shavlik Foundation to train students as security analysts *(read more on page 5)*
- Student security analysts conducted two engagement events: Ice cream pong in Sayles and a "phishing" pond at Sproncert

The **IT Planning and Communication Group** partners with all areas of the college to create and support Carleton's web presence and implement project management practices to help us work better together. They also collaborate with ITS peers to make sure the campus is informed on IT-related matters.



- Implemented a new Office Move Form to improve coordination between offices
- Completed the transition away from WebPub to more modern platforms
- Developed a data request Asana workflow for the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
- Standardized and modernized the ITS Update newsletter using Publicate

The **Technology Support Group** (TSG) supports Carleton community members' use of technology in offices, classrooms, labs, event spaces, and remote locations. This includes services such as the ITS Helpdesk and PEPS, and functions such as hardware and software purchasing, configuration, and distribution.



- Transitioned ITS's internal knowledge base from Confluence to MediaWiki, including migrating over 1500 pages
- Upgraded the Helpdesk chat and remote support system from Bomgar to BeyondTrust
- Replaced old Intel Macs and dual-boot machines in labs with new Silicon Macs
- Provided 38 laptops to incoming students with designated financial need

The **Academic Technology Group** (AT) consults with the community on current and emerging curricular and research technologies. AT supports all types of learning and teaching with technology, centering on strategies and tools for inclusion, diversity and equity. They partner with faculty to help integrate digital literacy and design into the curriculum, with a recent emphasis on generative AI.



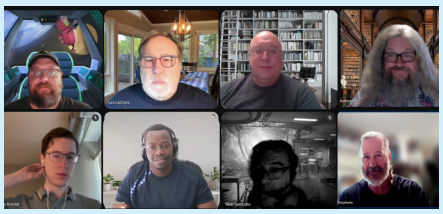
- Taught 3 Ed Tech series, covering a wide variety of topics, including AI and moving towards Google Meet and Google Drive
- Developed gems and chatbots for immersive learning experiences
- Updated AV in multiple spaces, including Chapel's new screen and projector
- Migrated two large datasets (Arboretum and Election data) to new locations to ensure sustainability and better access

The **Enterprise Information Services Group** (EIS) administers software applications for campus student information, financials, human resources, document management, reporting, and data warehousing. EIS also provides analysis and process review for interested campus departments.



- Moved historic financial aid data into the Workday environment for permanent safekeeping
- Created and implemented a new area in Workday to store and track Student Organizations
- Revamped the scholarship donor process, which uses data in Workday, PowerFaids, and Advance (all data is now gathered in Workday for scholarship processing)
- Integrated Workday with LinkedIn Learning to bring LinkedIn training courses into Workday

The **Systems and Infrastructure Group** (SIG) maintains Carleton's core technology infrastructure: datacenter, servers, storage, and networking, including authentication and identity management across hundreds of applications. SIG works closely with the Information Security Officer to safeguard college systems.



- Migrated over 200 virtual machines off of legacy VMWare infrastructure to the new Proxmox stack
- Retired legacy NetApp and replaced it with diversified NAS infrastructure
- Upgraded Carleton's IdP (SSO service) and re-platformed it in alignment with ITS's modernization strategy
- Replaced 60 switches across 35 buildings and rewired Facilities and Boliou to eliminate Cat5 cabling

Getting Support

Need Help Now?

For help with an urgent classroom issue, call 507-222-5999

For help with a work-stopping issue, call 507-222-5999

For help with a non-urgent issue, visit go.carleton.edu/helpdesk or go.carleton.edu/servicecatalog

Connect with Us

To discuss an idea or get connected to specific expertise, contact any of the ITS managers or Janet Scannell, CTO, at jscannell@carleton.edu

Stay in the Know

To check whether a service is down or experiencing an outage, visit go.carleton.edu/its-service-status or carleton.edu/its/news/

To get alerts via text when email is unavailable, follow the instructions at go.carleton.edu/tech-alert to add your cell number

To learn more about ITS, check out our Campus Projects, Newsletter, and Blog

Scan the QR code to view the digital version of the Annual Report

This Report was created using Adobe Express, which is now available to all Carleton users through Adobe Creative Cloud.

Resources Linked to in the Report

1. carleton.edu/ai/blog/employee-certificate-for-critical-ai-literacy/
2. carleton.edu/its/newsletter/news/managing-ai-creep/?issue=welcome-back-2025
3. carleton.edu/ai/blog/grammarly-revisited/
4. carleton.edu/ai/support-resources/using-generative-ai-sustainably/
5. carleton.edu/president/events/quarterly/#acc1_0
6. carleton.edu/ltc/ltc-archives/news/april-28-2026-development-of-ai-chatbot-simulations-in-psyc-254-psychopathology/
7. carleton.edu/neuroscience/research/faculty-research-labs/
8. carleton.edu/communications/website-redesign/
9. carleton.edu/dayofdh/
10. carleton.edu/dayofdh/keynote-address/
11. carleton.edu/its/services/learning/drones/
12. medhieval.com/classes/deepmapping/virtual-alexander-faribault-house/
13. medhieval.com/classes/deepmapping/mapping-modeling-teepee-tonka-park/
14. experience.arcgis.com/experience/6ae9d76722554ac9b2461ef99d7f5993/page/Page
15. experience.arcgis.com/experience/6ae9d76722554ac9b2461ef99d7f5993/page/Page