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Cybersecurity Internship
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Reflection Paper 3

Over the course of my cybersecurity internship, I have developed a deeper understanding of the essential role that electronic access control plays in modern security systems. Access control goes beyond just locking doors or limiting access, it directly impacts how secure and efficient an environment can be. One of the most eye-opening experiences during my internship was learning how vital access control is in securing assets and facilitating smooth operational flow, especially in educational environments like Old Dominion University.

Recently, I had the opportunity to take what I've learned into the field, when I helped install card readers on classroom doors in the Batten of Art and Letters building. This experience was not just about the technical process but also about seeing firsthand how important the transition from physical to digital security measures has become. The university had historically relied on card-based access systems, which served their purpose well. However, we've now reached a point where mobile technology is revolutionizing how we secure and access spaces. This is where mobile credentials come into play.

In our recent projects, we've been phasing out card readers that only worked with physical cards and replacing them with systems that can accommodate mobile credentials. The new reader I helped install was a part of this transition, and the difference in convenience and functionality is remarkable. Mobile credentials offer faster access and eliminate the need for carrying multiple cards, which can easily be lost or damaged. With this mobile integration, the new system works much better with the devices we already rely on every day, like our smartphones. The process is seamless, user-friendly, and, most importantly, more secure.

The ability to work hands-on with both the installation process and the technological shift has been a defining moment in my internship. It's one thing to learn about cybersecurity concepts in class, but being able to apply them practically has deepened my understanding of how crucial it is to stay ahead in this ever-evolving field. By helping to implement these modern security systems, I've been able to contribute to the university's goal of enhancing its infrastructure, while also learning valuable skills that I will carry forward in my career.

This experience has reinforced my belief that cybersecurity is about staying agile, understanding emerging trends, and integrating them into real-world applications for maximum impact.

A key thing my boss told me, "Never give someone more access then they are supposed to have, or need." Understanding that is vital when it comes to electronic access control.