Godwin uses an artistic analogy to explain: “Programs like Snort are tools essentially. Tools are like paint-by-numbers art. Some technique can help you stay in the lines, but you still know exactly what color to put where. What we want is original artwork.”

This is why The CNS/F program stresses immersive, hands-on training and learning in small environments, where students can get an intimate learning experience and all the individual help they need. According to Godwin, CNS/F classes usually have only 4 to 8 students.

For SCTD students, their knowledge of network security can lead to steady jobs as consultants or network support staff at major help desks or small business. The CNS/F Associate degree also sets a solid foundation for advanced degrees in computer forensics and security.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics consistently puts data information networking, security and related services on the tops of their fastest growing industries lists. It can also be a very lucrative career field. Godwin says proof of that is all around us. Data breaches are making headlines and the nightly news—from celebrity phone-hacking scandals to compromised information on worldwide gaming systems.

“The world is starting to see how important security is,” she says.

That means job opportunities, but only for well-trained professionals, like the ones budding in the computer labs of SCTD.

If you want to learn more about CNS/F program, visit sctd.edu.

Microsoft Security Essentials (It's free!) is up to date.

Ensure your operating system (OS, such as Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7, etc.) is updated.

Don't surf the Internet casually, or social networking on your computer, unattended. Do NOT shop online with your main account. This reduces your risk of identity theft by 75 to 85%!

Customer service numbers are often located in your computer's operating system.

Strong passwords are a must! The more complex and varied your password should be.