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Voices in Education: Laura J. Brown is Media Specialist at Wheaton High School [by Peggy McEwan](#) Staff writer

Laura J. Brown is Media Specialist at Wheaton High School She was interviewed at the school Oct 15.

You were the C3 Award recipient from the C3 Institute, which supports cyber-awareness. Can you tell me what C3 is?

The three C's are Cyberethics, Cybersafety and Cybersecurity.

How did the C3 Institute know what you are doing regarding cybersecurity?

I have received three grants from the [C3 Institute] and I think it was for my work promoting the [C3] conference. I have worked consistently with the program. With each grant you get, you have to give a presentation on how you used it to encourage other teachers around the state.

What is the difference between cybersafety and cybersecurity?

Security is what we have in place and safety refers to the individual making choices on line such as not sharing passwords or not giving [personal] information online. An analogy is a car seat belt. We cannot make a person put on a seat-belt but the laws and hardware are there. The safety part is the individual's responsibility and the security part is what we [in the media center] are responsible for. We have a lot of information on our students and staff so it is important that we do our part.

Ethics is also a personal responsibility. For example students often forget their passwords and ask a friend if they can use theirs. It can turn into a situation like when [someone] doesn't use the computer for its intended purpose. The purpose (of the computer) is educational, progressing in your education.

Do students forget their passwords often?

There is not a day that goes by that we don't give 10 to 20 passwords. Because they are strong passwords the students have a hard time remembering them.

Their ID stays the same but the password changes every year. A strong password is a combination of upper and lower case letters and numbers. My theme for this year is KYP3 — that is Keep Your Password Private and Protected.

How often are the students in the media center on the computers?

We have 32 computers for student use here in the media center and there are three or four other labs in the school. We [the media center] are open before school, during lunch and after school. They are always in use. A lot of our students do not have computers at home.

We also have classes in here. Sometimes the teachers teach, I teach or it is a combination of both, it depends on what the teacher wants.

Media centers used to be school libraries; how is it used in terms of books versus computers?

I'm proud to say our circulation statistics are excellent. The students are reading. Graphic novels are extremely popular and so are fiction series. We have a clipboard on the desk where students can suggest titles. They do that and I try to get them if they are approved. That's one of the reasons our circulation numbers are high.

What is your favorite part of the job?

I think the favorite part of my job is doing research. For instance, the biomedical program was having trouble finding research so I helped them with that, I found it and set it up so they could use the information.

I enjoy teaching as well.

Finally, what is your favorite book?

I do not have a favorite book personally because it changes. Right now I am reading a great little book, "The Worst Case Scenario: Ultimate Adventure Novel: Amazon" by David Borgenicht and Hena Khan. It's a hybrid between a chapter book and a graphic novel. What I love so much about it is you are one of the characters. You are in the Amazon and in the back of the book it gives the rules for survival.

"Voices in Education" is a twice-monthly feature that highlights the men and women who are involved with the education of Montgomery County's children. To suggest someone you would like to see featured, email Peggy McEwan at pmcewan@gazette.net.

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