

M Manhattan School of Music

130 CLAREMONT AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10027-4698

September 9, 2020

Dear Member of the Manhattan School of Music Community:

We are writing to inform you about a data security incident that may have involved your personal information. Manhattan School of Music takes the protection and proper use of your information very seriously. We are therefore contacting you to explain the incident and to provide you with steps you can take to protect yourself, if needed.

What Happened: We were recently notified by one of our third-party service providers, Blackbaud, of a security incident. MSM is one of many impacted schools and nonprofit organizations that use Blackbaud's software for alumni engagement and fundraising activities. At this time, we understand they discovered and stopped a ransomware attack.* After discovering the attack, the service provider's Cyber Security team—together with independent forensics experts and law enforcement—successfully prevented the cybercriminal from blocking their system access and fully encrypting files and ultimately expelled them from their system. Prior to locking the cybercriminal out, the cybercriminal removed a copy of our backup file containing your personal information. This occurred at some point beginning on February 7, 2020 and could have been in there intermittently until May 20, 2020.

What Information Was Involved: It's important to note that the cybercriminal did not access your credit card information, bank account information, or social security number. **Manhattan School of Music does not store this type of information for alumni or donors.** However, Blackbaud and Manhattan School of Music have determined that the file removed may have contained your contact information, demographic information, and a history of your relationship with our school, such as donation dates and amounts.

Because protecting customers' data is their top priority, our third-party service provider paid the cybercriminal's demand with confirmation that the copy they removed had been destroyed. **Based on the nature of the incident, their research, and third party (including law enforcement) investigation, Blackbaud has no reason to believe that any data went beyond the cybercriminal, was or will be misused, or will be disseminated or otherwise made available publicly.**

What We Are Doing: Ensuring the safety of our constituents' data is of the utmost importance to us. As part of our ongoing efforts to help prevent something like this from happening in the future, our third-party service provider has already implemented several changes that will protect your data from any subsequent incidents. Additionally, Blackbaud is accelerating their efforts to further harden their environment through enhancements to access management, network segmentation, deployment of additional endpoint, and network-based platforms.

We regret any inconvenience this may have caused you. Should you have any further questions or concerns regarding this matter, and/or the protections available to you, please contact us at privacy@msmnyc.edu.

Sincerely,



Ray Morales
Assistant Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer

* Ransomware is a form of cybercrime where a cybercriminal gains access to data and encrypts a victim's files. The cyberattacker then demands a ransom from the victim (individual or organization) to restore access to the data upon payment.