How Higher Ed Can **Support** Cybersecurity Students

The cybersecurity field continues to grow along with the need for new workforce talent. In fact, the 2016 EDUCAUSE Center for Analysis and Research's study on the higher education IT workforce showed that cybersecurity management skillsets are among those most in demand in higher education today. Most information security jobs require at least a bachelor's degree, so the knowledge students acquire through degree programs is critical. At the same time, students should be encouraged to seek additional opportunities for professional development and growth, including the following:

▶ **Campus Internships**
Consider hiring student interns to assist in your institution's information security department. Interns can offer the department additional staffing resources, and department staff can offer interns real-world experiences and the chance to develop mentoring relationships.

▶ **Scholarships**
Full-time students pursuing a bachelor or master's degree in a formal cybersecurity program at colleges and universities selected by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are eligible to receive scholarship grants. In exchange, scholarship recipients will be placed in an internship; they will also be offered a full-time cybersecurity position after graduation with a federal agency (or other organization approved by the National Science Foundation).

▶ **Cyber Competitions**
Institutions with an information assurance or computer security curriculum can participate in regional events hosted by the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition. These events give students the chance to hone their practical information security skills, as well as experience working in teams.

▶ **Conferences.**
Students can take advantage of a plethora of information security conferences held each year. Among them is the Women in Cybersecurity conference, which seeks to recruit, retain, and advance women in cybersecurity. This annual conference brings together students and women in cybersecurity from various industries for knowledge sharing, mentoring, and networking.

How Higher Ed Can **Support** Cybersecurity Students

▶ Training Courses

The DHS National Initiative for Cybersecurity Careers and Studies (NICCS) Training Catalog includes more than 2,000 cybersecurity training courses offered in the US. A handy interactive map quickly shows viewers the number of courses offered in specific locations. Users can also search for training opportunities by keyword, location, specialty area, provider, proficiency level, and delivery method.

▶ Student Associations

The National Cybersecurity Student Association requires a small membership fee, but allows students to network through local and state chapters; learn about opportunities for scholarship, internship, and mentoring; and develop technical and leadership skills as they prepare for the cybersecurity workforce.

▶ Job Fairs

Likewise, students can choose from among numerous job fairs, including the following. DHS hosted its first Cyber and Tech Job Fair in July 2016. The U.S. Department of State maintains a list of job fair websites, including some that require a security clearance. The SANS Institute hosts a CyberTalent Fair — a virtual event for anyone seeking career or job opportunities in cybersecurity. Many campuses also host IT and cybersecurity job fairs, offering advice to students about certifications and connecting graduates or alumni with potential employers.