

Jobs, Jobs, Jobs

Maryland Meeting the Urgent Demand for Cybersecurity Workers

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Cybersecurity is one of this century's most urgent global imperatives. Financial damages are measured in the trillions of dollars and are a result of the proliferation of digital devices into every aspect of our daily lives in pursuit of the holy grail of convenience, access and speed with little or no regard for protecting valuable assets from adversaries. And these cyber adversaries are increasing the sophistication, variety and frequency of attacks. Adding to this is the fact that cyber attackers have advantages: it's easier to attack than defend, and there are many weaknesses in all but the very best systems.

Maryland's Unprecedented Opportunity

There is a silver lining in this gloomy cloud, and it's Maryland's opportunity for unmatched job creation. As a result of our proximity to and experience with the U.S. intelligence agencies and the Department of Defense as well as our stellar academic and training organizations, we have some of the most skilled cybersecurity workers and the highest geographic concentration of cybersecurity workforce in the country (according to NIST's CyberSeek program data). And with the U.S. federal government market no longer capable of delivering high job growth, focusing on capturing high

market share in a high growth, high pay industry like cybersecurity is smart.

Globally, there are 1 million open cybersecurity jobs, a number that experts project to rapidly increase to 1.5 million. With the cybersecurity jobs demand exceeding workforce supply, Maryland companies are competing with companies across the United States and internationally for existing talent, leading to a need to embrace "new collar" jobs, a phrase coined by IBM CEO Ginni Rometty referring to jobs that require skills but not necessarily specific degrees.

Solution: Maryland Cyber Jobs Platform

To take advantage of this unprecedented opportunity for job creation, the non-profit Cybersecurity Association of Maryland, Inc. (CAMI), in partnership with Germantown-based SkillSmart, recently launched Maryland Cyber Jobs (MCJ) at www.MDcyberjobs.com. MCJ is a state-of-the-art online jobs platform. What makes this platform unique and more valuable in comparison to traditional, mass-market job boards is its reliance on a skills-based methodology and algorithm to identify qualified candidates that match employers' specific needs. It's a process that ultimately saves employers time, effort and money.

The platform also helps candidates identify not only jobs that match their current skills but also skills they might need to acquire for the jobs they want. There is no cost for job seekers to create a profile and use the MCJ platform, which will show them how they stack up (score) against specific hiring requirements for individual jobs. MCJ goes a step further in the job search process, presenting job seekers with information and connections to education, training, certification, internship and apprenticeship resources where they can get the skills and experience needed for jobs of interest.

While the job opportunities must be in Maryland and the education and training programs must be offered by entities with a Maryland presence, candidates from all over the United States and the world can search and apply for jobs posted on the portal, "making MCJ a valuable workforce attraction tool for the state," notes Stacey Smith, CAMI's Executive Director.

Kaplan University is one of the first academic institutions to partner with CAMI on the MCJ program. Chris Wheedleton, Kaplan University's vice president of corporate & community partnerships, immediately saw the value of the Maryland Cyber Jobs platform, commenting, "Maryland Cyber Jobs connects all three of the critical elements for a successful workforce program: employers, job seekers and education and training resources. Add a focus on skills identification, matching and development to the mix, and you substantially increase the benefits and positive outcomes for everyone involved."

The Maryland Cyber Jobs platform is a cybersecurity workforce solution for a wide variety of Maryland employers with open cybersecurity positions, including commercial businesses, cybersecurity companies, state government and federal agencies, and "positions" can be part-time, full-time, internships or apprenticeships.

"This is a highly valuable workforce solution for the cybersecurity industry and another competitive advantage for our State. Our organization is really excited and proud to have added it to our resume," says Smith. I95