NICE Community Coordinating Council
Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2023 | 3:30-5:00 p.m. ET

I. **Introduction and Ground Rules** – NICE Program Manager Susana Barraza
- The NICE Community Coordinating Council was established to provide a mechanism in which public and private sector participants can develop concepts, design strategies, and pursue actions that advance cybersecurity education, training, and workforce development.
- Members are encouraged to participate in the meeting via the platform chat space.
- Reminder: The meeting is not intended for marketing or other commercial purposes.

II. **Opening Remarks**

- Academic Co-Chair – Zarina Blankenbaker, Ph.D., President, Tarrant County College – Northwest
   o This is Zarina's second meeting as the academic co-chair. She is learning a lot during these meetings and looks forward to getting to know the group better.

- Industry Co-Chair – Michael Alicea, Chief Human Resources Officer, Trellix
   o Michael spoke at the CyberNext Conference in Washington, D.C. earlier this month on a panel focused on diversity. He observed that many of the topics discussed during the panel were around the Framework and how it's evolving. Michael gives kudos to this group for their work, noting that the work is being recognized in the broader cybersecurity community.

- Government Co-Chair – Rodney Petersen, Director of NICE
   o October marks Cybersecurity Awareness Month, led by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and National Cybersecurity Alliance. There are four themes throughout the month: use strong passwords, turn on multi-factor authentication, recognize and report phishing, and update software.
   o This past week was Cybersecurity Career Week led by NICE.
   o NICE, being at NIST in the Department of Commerce, partners across the federal government, but also with state and local government. If you've been a part of state-led cybersecurity efforts this month, please share that information with us.

III. **Standing Items**

- Strategy Stories – New Developments that align to NICE Strategic Plan

   Cybersecurity Careers Capture the Flag Competition
   Presented by Maureen Lawrence-Kuether, Virginia Cyber Range
   URL: https://www.virginiacyberrange.org/

   o During Cybersecurity Career Week, the Virginia Cyber Range held a workshop on CTFs and opened a week-long CTF.

- o The workshop provided an overview on what CTFs are and how to get started. There is a recording of the workshop available online: https://youtu.be/yfbfAbNr3yM
- o The CTF aligned categories of challenges to the NICE Framework. This was done to help educators and students understand how challenges match up to potential work roles in the workforce.
- o The CTF was for all experience levels with several introductory challenges, but also some more difficult challenges.
- o Almost 500 participants play in the Career Week CTF. Of which, 35 players completed every available challenges. The top 3 scoring players were from Virginia. Other top players were from Georgia, Michigan, and Texas, including high school students.
- o Question: Is there a cost for joining the cyber range?
  - ♦ During Cybersecurity Career Week, the CTF was completely free, but typically the platform is free only if you are in Virginia, is the platform is funded by Virginia. Otherwise, there is a fee to use the platform.
- o Question: Is there any feedback from the participants?
  - ♦ The Cybersecurity Career Week CTF is often used in classrooms. There was positive feedback that students liked using the platform both in group and individual settings.
- o Question: Are there any efforts to increase the number of states participating?
  - ♦ The Range is more of a grassroots effort - they have an existing list of "subscribers" that they advertise to. However, they are happy for others to share with their networks to broader audiences to help boost visibility of the platform.

- Framework Feature – Applications and Uses of Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity

  TryCyber
  Presented by Anastacia Webster, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and James Ashley, California State University, San Bernardino
  URL: https://trycyber.us/

  - o The Cyber Career Pathways Tool on NICCS now has a new "micro-challenges" feature to help career explorers really see what cybersecurity jobs and work roles look like. These micro-challenges are also available directly on the trycyber.us website.
  - o CISA identified ten NICE Framework Work Roles and created micro-challenges out of the tasks associated with each role. Each challenge is intended to be a 15-minute activity to explore what the one might do in that Work Role.
  - o Four additional micro-challenge on foundational work roles were also created: database administrator, network operations specialist, systems administrator, and technical support specialist.
  - o All challenges feature a virtual mentor to help guide the user through the challenge. Mentors help provide a conversational character to encourage users and help them see themselves in the role(s).
  - o When the challenge is complete, the user is provided a resource page that links out to other information and programs to continue exploring cybersecurity as a career.

- o Question: Have you had any initial feedback on the tool?
    - ♦ Yes, overall the feedback has been positive. The tool was released only a month ago and has already seen over 4,000 challenges deployed. The tool is still in its beta release, but is expected to be fully launched in January. In beta, users are provided a link to a survey to provide feedback. Some have indicated an interest in non-technical roles being added to the tool.
  - o Question: Is there a possibility of a micro-credential upon completion of the challenge?
    - ♦ The team hasn't thought about implementing this yet. There are some other updates, such as adding more challenges, they want to address first. Additionally, no personal data is collected when participating in the challenges. This was meant to encourage free and open use. Collecting this data to be able to provide a credential may deter people from participating.
  - o One challenge talent acquisition firms have is showing people how cybersecurity careers would fit for them. This tool would be great to integrate into talent acquisition platforms to help people understand that they could be a fit.

- • Research Review- Driving Research on Effective Practices

  Role Models Matter - How Role Models Influence Career Awareness and Attainment
  Presented by Drew Curtis, Senior Consultant and Researcher, Gallup
  URL: https://www.gallup.com/analytics/506696/amazon-research-hub.aspx

  - o Research was done in partnership with Amazon and conducted via an online survey to just under 4,000 employed adults aged 18-40. Questions on the survey covered middle and high school experiences with career education and role models.
  - o Key findings include:
    - ♦ 50% of respondents reported that they did not remember receiving career education in middle or high school. Further, 70% of this group said that they did not receive this education because their family struggled financially.
    - ♦ Characteristics of effective roles models: they are relatable, made their career seem attainable, and shared information about their job. Respondents also said that effective role models demonstrate expertise, humility, were motivating, and helped build self-confidence.
    - ♦ Those from low-income households who did report having a role model said that the role model came from outside of their family.
    - ♦ Adults report that they wish they had more hands-on activities and on-going connections to someone who could help them learn more about career opportunities.
  - o Question: What are the implications of this study for the work that this group is trying to do?
    - ♦ The research did look at STEM careers and the differences in certain demographics and the impact of role models.

IV. Working Group Updates

- • Promote Career Discovery
  Co-chair: Karl Cureton, Council Exchange Board of Trade (CEBOT)

- The group held a webinar during Cybersecurity Career Week to provide insight on career experiences and success. A recording of the webinar is available online: https://www.nist.gov/news-events/events/2023/10/cybersecurity-paths-and-ladders-webinar
- The group is exploring future projects and has had recent discussions on a multi-strategy approach to bridging the workforce gap.
- Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/promote-career-discovery
- Next meeting: November 15, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. ET

- Transform Learning Process
  Co-chair: Dr. Donna Schaeffer, Marymount University

  - The group will be taking on one large project in support of NICE Strategic Plan Goal 2.6 (Champion the development and recognition of teachers, faculty, and instructors as part of the in-demand workforce).
  - This large project will be broken into smaller projects focusing on:
    - Determining the scope and significance of the cybersecurity education workforce gap
    - Influencing policies that enable hiring and retention of diverse educators.
  - Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/transform-learning-process
  - Next meeting: November 14, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. ET

- Modernize Talent Management
  Co-chair: Olesya Menon, Google

  - The group has put together new project team that is exploring the topic of talent retention. A final deliverable of the project will be a discussion guide to be used by hiring managers and employers to discuss common issues that cause people to leave.
  - The group is seeking to learn about and welcomes people to send them any data or research on talent retention.
  - Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/modernize-talent-management
  - Next meeting: November 16, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. ET

V. Community of Interest Updates

- Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity
  Co-chair: Debbie McLeod, McLeod Information Systems
  - Abigail Allen from the Department of Labor provided an update on National Apprenticeship Week and encouraged the public to get involved. Submit an event or proclamation for National Apprenticeship Week.
    URL: https://www.apprenticeship.gov/national-apprenticeship-week
  - The Co-chairs received feedback to provide examples of effective employer engagement in apprenticeship program development. Therefore, they had guest

speaker, Olwyn Deputron, director of Step It Up, UST, discuss how they bring individuals with diverse backgrounds into their program.
- o The apprenticeships one-pager is going under final review and will be available to the public soon.
- o Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/apprenticeships
- o Next meeting: November 8, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. ET

- Cybersecurity Skills Competitions
  Co-chair: Jessica Leung, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
  - o The group published three documents:
    - ♦ Cyber Range Paper
    - ♦ Guide for Competitors
    - ♦ Building a Competition
  - o The group is creating a dashboard to list cybersecurity competitions. They aim to have the website available to the public by the end of 2023.
  - o Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/cybersecurity-skills
  - o Next meeting: November 17, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. ET

- K12 Cybersecurity Education
  Co-chairs: Thomas Trevethan, Palo Alto Networks
  - o Members of the K12 Education Community of Interest shared their plans for Cybersecurity Career Week within their communities.
  - o NICE staff, Davina Pruitt-Mentle, represented the group in all in-person cybersecurity career events in Washington, DC.
  - o Willie Henderson from CYBER.org presented on cybersecurity career resources that align technical skills together with soft, or power skills to job roles and careers.
  - o The Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program project lead, Jasmine Jackson, provided an overview of the Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program which launched on October 16, 2023.
  - o Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/k12-cybersecurity-education
  - o Next meeting: November 9, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. ET

- Diversity and Inclusion
  Staff: Susana Barraza, NICE

  - o The NICE Diversity and Inclusion Community of Interest did not meet during the month of October.
  - o Next month's topic will focus on retention and recruitment.
  - o Website: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/diversity-and-inclusion

- o   Next meeting: November 17, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. ET
- NICE Framework Users
  Staff: Mike Prebil, NICE

  - o   On Thursday, October 26, 2023, at 2 p.m. ET the NICE Framework Users Group will meet to discuss cybersecurity in space.
  - o   Featured speaker, William Ferguson, will share how his organization leverages the NICE Framework to train space cybersecurity professionals.
  - o   Additionally, they will be discussing applied learning scenarios, interactions with other frameworks, and approaches for assessing learners.
  - o   Framework Users Group: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/community/community-coordinating-council/nice-framework-users

VI.   Project Progress Reports

- Cybersecurity Career Week - October 16-21, 2023
  Presented by Davina Pruitt-Mentle, NICE

  - o   Davina gave thanks to everyone for making Cybersecurity Career Week a success.
  - o   They approximated an impact on more than 250,000 individuals worldwide.
  - o   There were over 750 events, over 70 different webinars and podcasts, and 15 different competitions.
  - o   Both the House & Senate Cybersecurity Caucuses, SANS|GIAC, and NICE started the week with a kick-off event to highlight Solutions to a Skilled & Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce on Monday, October 16th at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.
  - o   Following the Capitol event, US Cyber Games hosted Season III Draft Day at District E in Washington, DC. Season III US Cyber Team will compete in international competitions on behalf of the USA.
  - o   There was a six-day #MyCyberJob Social Media Challenge. Individuals were encouraged to share short videos, pictures, or stories on social media to help spread information about cybersecurity careers.
  - o   The Cybersecurity Careers Capture the Flag Competition was hosted by the Virginia Cyber Range.
    - ♦   1st Place: Daniel Tomoy, Old Dominion University
    - ♦   2nd Place: Gage Mazaika, old Dominion University
    - ♦   3rd Place: Prakhar Sah, Virginia Tech
  - o   Save the date: 2024 Cybersecurity Career Week will take place from October 14-19, 2024.
- NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference (Phoenix, Arizona) – December 4-5, 2023
  Presented by Amber Lindsay, iKeepSafe
  URL: https://www.k12cybersecurityconference.org/

  - o   The NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference will take place in Phoenix, AZ from December 4-5, 2023.
  - o   Hotel rooms are expected to sell out, please reserve your room as soon as possible.

- o Early bird registration is now closed. Regular registration is $375, and it includes breakfast and lunch. Government employee registration is $295 plus $50 per day for meals.
- o There are sixteen pre-conference workshops that are an additional $50 per ninety-minute session at Grand Canyon University on Saturday and Sunday. They have a brand-new facility where all the workshops will be held. A free box lunch will be provided for the sessions as well. A shuttle will be available from the hotel to Canyon University.
- o The WHOVA app is now available. Attendees can view full agenda, speaker line-up, exhibitor information, logistics, discussion boards, and arrange meet-ups.
- o Gen Cyber Day will be hosted by Grand Canyon University and Tennessee Tech on Friday, December 1, 2023. It is free admission for local students and lunch will be provided.
- o Five students have been selected for 2023 National Cyber Signing Day. They are coming from the following states: Iowa, California, Arizona, and Virginia.
- o There are four keynote speakers. More information about them can be found on the conference website.
- o The next planning committee meeting is on Monday, October 30, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. ET. The planning committee dinner is on Sunday, December 3, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. ET.
- o Please contact iKeepSafe with questions at k12cybercon@ikeepsafe.org.
- o URL: https://www.k12cybersecurityconference.org/

- NICE Conference and Expo (Dallas, Texas) – June 3-5, 2024
  Presented by Randy Pestana, Florida International University
  URL: https://niceconference.org/

  - o The conference will be held at the Sheraton, Dallas, Texas.
  - o The theme has been announced: Strengthening Ecosystems – Aligning Stakeholders to Bridge the Cybersecurity Workforce Gap.
  - o Call for Proposals is now open. Learn more and submit a proposal by Monday, January 22, 2024: https://niceconference.org/proposals/
  - o Regional Initiative for Cybersecurity Education and Training (RICET) was held in October in the Bahamas. The recording will be available soon.

VII. Featured Topic

Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program
Presented by Connie Bragg, Cybersecurity Career Ambassadors Community of Interest Co-chair
URL: https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/events/cybersecurity-career-week/cybersecurity-career-ambassador

- The Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program was originally created as a project team under the NICE Promote Career Discovery Working Group.
- The Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program development was approximately 18 months.
- The program aligns with the NICE Strategic Plan Goal 1: Promote the Discovery of Cybersecurity Careers and Multiple Pathways.

- The Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program seeks to create a network of employers, educators, industry representatives, non-profit and community-based organizations, and other stakeholders who serve as champions to prepare, grow, and sustain a diverse and skilled cybersecurity workforce.
- Cybersecurity Career Ambassadors serve to promote careers in cybersecurity by raising career awareness, provide career insights, and engage with underserved communities.
- The program's workstreams are focused on organizational fundamentals and outreach for sustainability. These involve communications, implementation plans, partnership and outreach, recruitment, and engagement.
- The Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program project team has created a one pager, teaser video, website content, create forms and process, training models, and many other resources.
- The Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Program officially launched on October 16, 2023, during the Cybersecurity Career Week Kick Off Event on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.
- The program is currently being represented by 5 countries outside of the US. These countries are Peru, Costa Rica, Poland, Germany, and Mexico.
- The [NICE Cybersecurity Career Ambassador Community of Interest](#) was launched on October 18, 2023 as a mechanism to grow the Ambassador Program.

VIII. Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Reminder
The next NICE Community Coordinating Council Meeting will be **November 28, 2023** at 3:30 p.m. ET.

- The November 28th meeting is the combined November-December meeting and will be our last meeting of the year.