



## NICE Community Coordinating Council

### Meeting Minutes

**December 2, 2025 | 3:30-4:45PM ET**

#### **I. Introduction and Ground Rules** –Susana Barraza, NICE Program Manager

- a. 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.
- b. Members are encouraged to participate in the meeting via the platform chat space. We will also be introducing polls throughout the meeting.
- c. Reminder: The meeting is not intended for marketing or other commercial purposes.

#### **II. Opening Remarks**

- a. Industry Co-Chair – Michael Alicea, Chief Human Resources Officer, Trellix
  - i. Michael Alicea shared that the past three to three and a half months had been a period of restart for many organizations due to government closures affecting initiatives and industry revenue tied to government activity.
  - ii. Michael reported increased discussion across the industry about adversaries using AI in more sophisticated ways, including social engineering intended to prompt clicks or acceptance of malicious actions.
  - iii. Michael noted that many organizations are increasing efforts to educate people at a grassroots level, and he characterized this as an important opportunity for cybersecurity education.
- b. Government Co-Chair - Rodney Petersen, Director of Education and Workforce, NIST
  - i. Rodney Petersen shared a personal announcement that he planned to retire from government service at the end of December and noted that transition planning had been underway for several weeks.
  - ii. Rodney expressed gratitude to the NICE community, the NICE team, NIST leadership, and the Department of Commerce for their support and partnership throughout his tenure.
  - iii. Rodney highlighted key accomplishments and milestones, including the early RAMPS pilot and later institutionalization with annual appropriations beginning in 2022 and more than 50 awards across multiple states.
  - iv. Rodney reflected on the origin and growth of CyberSeek and emphasized its value to the community.
  - v. Rodney highlighted the U.S. Cyber Games evolution.

- vi. Rodney recognized milestone anniversaries for the NICE Conference and Expo and the NICE K 12 Conference, and he noted the role of these events in sharing best practices and strengthening professional networks.
- vii. Rodney stated that Karen Wetzel would assume the co chair role and NICE Director responsibilities, and he expressed confidence in continued progress under community leadership.

### **III. Featured Topic**

#### **a. NICE Strategic Plan 2026-2030 Preview**

Presented by Karen Wetzel, NICE

URL: <https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/about/strategic-plan>

- i. Karen Wetzel presented a draft, pre decisional preview of the NICE Strategic Plan 2026 to 2030.
- ii. Karen explained that the plan is designed as a five-year plan that will remain a living document with annual review of goals for progress, continued relevance, and potential updates as technologies and approaches evolve.
- iii. Karen described three leading principles intended to be infused across all work rather than separated as pillars, including robust community collaboration, use of the NICE Framework as a standard to describe and define the workforce, and the integration of research and data to inform, evaluate, and improve outcomes.
- iv. Karen presented four pillars: preparing a skilled cyber workforce, transforming talent acquisition for the cyber workforce, advancing and sustaining the cyber workforce, and building cyber workforce ecosystems.
- v. Karen shared three draft goals: promoting interdisciplinary pathways, advancing understanding and adoption of work-based learning approaches, and providing insight into the credentials landscape and its impact on career development.

### **IV. Community Progress Reports**

#### **a. Project Progress Reports**

##### **i. NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference**

December 8-9, 2025, Nashville, TN

Presented by Felicia Rateliff, iKeepSafe

URL: <https://www.k12cybersecurityconference.org/>

- 1. Amber Lindsay provided an update on the NICE K 12 Cybersecurity Education Conference scheduled for December 8 to 9, 2025 in Nashville, Tennessee.
- 2. Amber noted that the conference would be hosted at the Sheraton Music City Hotel and stated that programming would be located onsite, including pre-conference workshops.

3. Amber reported that pre-conference workshops would occur Sunday, December 7 with eight 90-minute workshops and registration open through Thursday, December 4.
4. Amber highlighted keynote speakers and panels, including sessions that address AI, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies in K 12 education.
5. Amber highlighted Cyber Signing Day participation and an evening social event with live music.

ii. US Cyber Games

Presented by Jessica Gulick, Katzcy

URL: <https://www.uscybergames.com/>

1. Jessica Gulick shared updates on the U.S. Cyber Games and played a short video congratulating Team USA for placing third overall at the 2025 International Cybersecurity Competition in Tokyo, Japan.
2. Jess described the event format as including both Jeopardy style and attack defense competition and stated that AI was a major factor affecting challenge dynamics.
3. Jess announced an upcoming white paper expected in January or February focused on lessons learned and implications, including AI.
4. Jess reported that Season 4 concluded with an in-person training camp in Herndon, Virginia, and that Season 5 had begun with an overlapping timeline due to the Tokyo competition's late timing and an upcoming competition in Australia in May.
5. Jess reported that the team competed in Warsaw, Poland and achieved first place in the guest bracket and second overall out of 39 nations.
6. Jess stated that the program consolidated to one team of 40 players and explained that the team will support multiple events across the year.
7. Jess promoted "Wicked 6" as a virtual event in March during the final weekend of RSA week and noted a high school session and an open call for papers.

iii. NICE Conference and Expo

June 1-3, 2026, Philadelphia, PA

Presented by Barbara Peres-Furones, Florida International University

URL: <https://niceconference.org/>

1. Vanessa Lecker provided an update on the NICE Conference and Expo scheduled for June 1 to 3, 2026 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with the theme "From Foundations to the Future, Transforming the Cyber Workforce."

2. Vanessa stated that the call for proposals opened October 16 and will close January 19.
3. Vanessa encouraged submission of timely and thought-provoking proposals aligned to the planning committee's topics of interest.
4. Vanessa stated that early bird registration opens February 24.

#### **V. Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Reminder**

The next NICE Community Coordinating Council Meeting will be **January 27, 2026**, at 3:30PM ET.

#### **Upcoming Meetings:**

- [NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education COI](#): This group will meet at the NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference in Nashville, TN
- [NICE Cybersecurity Career Ambassadors COI](#): December 12, 2025, 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET
- [NICE Promote Career Discovery WG](#): December 17, 2025, 3:30 – 4:30 PM ET

#### **Upcoming Events:**

- [NICE Webinar Series](#):
  - [Mental Health in Focus - Managing Burnout and Finding Balance in Cybersecurity Work](#) – December 3, 2025
- [NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference](#): December 8-9, 2025, Nashville, TN
- [NICE Conference & Expo](#): June 1-3, 2026, Philadelphia, PA
- [Cybersecurity Career Week](#): October 19-24, 2026
- NICE Events [Calendar](#)