

Cybersecurity Community,

Strengthening the cybersecurity of federal networks and critical infrastructure is believed by most to be achievable through adequate societal, government, and industry interest and support afforded to educational institutions that are charged with educating the future cybersecurity workforce. Well-designed cybersecurity education programs are characterized by curricula that are balanced in breadth and depth, and optimally consist of an appropriate blend of didactic and applied experiences. Programs, such as the Maine Cybersecurity Cluster (MCSC) cybersecurity internship program and corresponding cybersecurity degree program, can serve as exemplars of great instructional potential. The MCSC cybersecurity internship program avails cybersecurity program students' practical, project-based, cybersecurity experiences that are refined by regional workforce needs, insight, and industry recommendations.

Increasing commitment and support from those organizations that employ cybersecurity program graduates, has yielded a significant "cybersecurity" return on investment. The educational institutions that produce such graduates can implement additional improvements to their respective cybersecurity curricula, raise the awareness and interest of primary and secondary education populations, form even deeper relationships with their regional partners in education, and achieve even higher production of highly qualified cybersecurity program graduates. Additional investment is needed however, to maintain their positive momentum.

Some argue the greatest challenge facing educational institutions focused on increasing the production of cybersecurity graduates, and in turn, the adequacy of the American cybersecurity workforce of the future, is a function of leadership conviction and ability to garner and spur needed investments in higher education. Conviction alone is insufficient. Much work remains to be done and it is critical that additional investments be made to achieve sufficient production of cybersecurity program graduates to ensure the cybersecurity of the Nation's most critical asset, its citizens.

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