



# THE CYBERSENTINEL

The official newsletter of CyberPatriot – AFA's National Youth Cyber Education Program

AUGUST 2024

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## CyberPatriot 17

Register your team for CyberPatriot 17 – the 2024-2025 season of the National Youth Cyber Defense Competition!

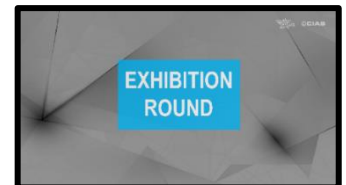
[REGISTER A  
CYBERPATRIOT TEAM  
TODAY!](#)

**The final deadline to register a team is Tuesday October 2, 2024.**

*Reminder: If you are a returning team, you must re-register for the new season. Registrations from previous seasons do NOT carry over. Payment and competitor registration is not required to participate in the exhibition round, so you can sign up today risk-free!*

### Exhibition Round

The Exhibition Round is now available for all teams registered for the CyberPatriot 17. This round is designed for practice and recruiting competitors to your CyberPatriot teams. In the Exhibition Round, both the Windows 10 and Ubuntu 18 virtual image comes with an answer key at the bottom of the Read Me file. *Access to the image will be available through August 15<sup>th</sup>.*



### CP-17 Things to Remember:

#### Competition Windows

For the CyberPatriot 17 season, we will offer a 4-day competition window. Rounds will kick off on Thursday and go through Sunday. Please note, the Semifinals Round will be a 3 day only event, running Thursday through Saturday.

#### Reduced Competition Period

Like last year, the competition period will be 4 hours for the CP-17 competition. Teams must complete all images or tasks within the consecutive time block.

#### Middle School Division Schedule

We will keep the same schedule set up as last year with the Middle School Division having a later start to competition rounds. The Middle School Division will have its first competition round, the Introductory Round, on November 14-17. The later start will allow more time for middle school teams to be formed and practice prior to the first competition round. Middle School Division teams will only have three available online rounds rather than four that high school teams will have the opportunity to participate in.

## CyberPatriot 17 (2024-2025) Competition Timeline

| REGISTRATION DEADLINES  | TRAINING ROUNDS  | MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION COMPETITION ROUNDS   | HIGH SCHOOL DIVISIONS COMPETITION ROUNDS  |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>April 1</b><br>Team Registration Opens<br><i>20% discount for teams registered by July 1</i> | <b>Exhibition Round</b><br><i>May 16 – August 15</i>                               | <b>Introductory Round</b><br><i>November 14 – 17</i>                                    | <b>Round 1</b><br><i>October 24 – 27</i>  |
| <b>October 2</b><br>Team Registration Closes<br><i>Last day to add new teams</i>                | <b>Training Round 1</b><br>(Basic Level)<br><i>September 6 – October 7</i>         | <b>State Round</b><br><i>December 12 – 15</i>   | <b>Round 2</b><br><i>November 14 – 17</i>   |
| <b>October 23</b><br>Roster Finalization<br><i>Last day to add new competitors</i>              | <b>Sneak Preview</b><br>(Optional Test)<br><i>September TBD</i>                    | <b>Semifinals</b><br><i>January 23 – 25 (3 days only)</i>                               | <b>State Round</b><br><i>December 12 – 15</i>   |
| <b>November 6</b><br>Payment Due<br><i>Last day to pay registration fee</i>                     | <b>Practice Round</b><br><i>October 10 – 20</i>                                    | <b>National Finals</b><br>(In-Person event, Bethesda, MD)<br><i>March 14 – 18, 2025</i> | <b>Semifinals</b><br><i>January 23 – 25 (3 days only)</i>                               |
|   | <b>Training Round 2</b><br>(Intermediate Level)<br><i>October 31 – December 10</i> |   | <b>National Finals</b><br>(In-Person event, Bethesda, MD)<br><i>March 14 – 18, 2025</i> |

### Upcoming Training Opportunities:

#### Training Round: September 6 – October 7

The Training Round will have several basic training images with answer keys available. This is the best training opportunity for new teams. Scores will not count towards the competition.

#### Practice Round: October 10 – October 20

The Practice Round is a re-release of the Training Round images. However, it is also a test of the new CCS software for host computers and networks. It is critical for teams to participate with at least one connecting image to troubleshoot any problems prior to the competition round.

### FREE Self-Paced Courses



Ready to continue learning about cybersecurity outside of the CyberPatriot Competition? Check out Cisco Networking Academy's FREE self-paced courses. There is a wide selection of courses available for beginner and advanced students. You can share these courses with friends and family too! [Click here to see what is available!](#)

*\*If you want some additional training, feel free to check out our [archived training materials](#) available on our website.*

## CyberPatriot Alumni Spotlight

Kavan Paul | CyberPatriot XIV, XV



### What are you up to now?

I am currently attending the University of Central Florida College of Engineering and Computer Science. I am majoring in Information Technology with a minor program in Secure Computing and Networks. I have been learning from the Collegiate Cyber Defense Club, Hack@UCF, as well as our school's software engineering club, KnightHacks. During the summer, I will also be at an IT Auditing internship at USAA in San Antonio.

### How did participating in the CyberPatriot Competition influence your plans for your future?

Participating in CyberPatriot helped me gain skills in Linux and it inspired me to start pursuing a career in cybersecurity. I utilized my CyberPatriot experience to teach other college students the basics of Linux blue teaming, as well as competing in numerous competitions. CyberPatriot also helped me in passing the Security+

exam shortly before high school graduation. Competing in CyberPatriot made me realize I thoroughly enjoyed the competition aspect. I decided to try out for the Collegiate Cyber Competition Team at the University of Central Florida and in the Fall, I competed in the National Cyber League Individual and Team competitions. This semester I also competed in NCAE Cyber Games, with our team qualifying for invitationals after winning Southeast Region 2.

### What was the most valuable lesson you learned from CyberPatriot?

The most valuable lesson I learned through CyberPatriot is the value of teamwork. You cannot do everything by yourself. It may sound like a good idea at times to escape to a corner and work on only what you need to, but your teammates are very valuable. You must rely on others and understand the needs of the team. As a team captain during CyberPatriot, it makes me proud to see what my previous team members are up to now. Despite me being the team captain and having the most experience with Linux, I absolutely had to rely on others for their input and have trust in them. You must be able to help them learn in a constructive way. It really made me proud to see how much my team members grew through the competition.

### What is your advice for the next generation of CyberPatriot?

My advice for the next generation of CyberPatriot is to start as soon as possible. There are a ton of free resources online to learn what you need. Work on personal projects and compete in other competitions. If possible, find a mentor and learn as much as you can from them. What you do now will be very valuable to you in college and in your career. Learning this early gives you a massive head start and is very powerful for the future.

**Fun Fact:** I love hiking, traveling, and playing guitar. Some of my favorite hikes include Pikes Peak in Colorado and Upper Yosemite Falls in California. In my free time I also enjoy programming and working on personal cybersecurity projects.

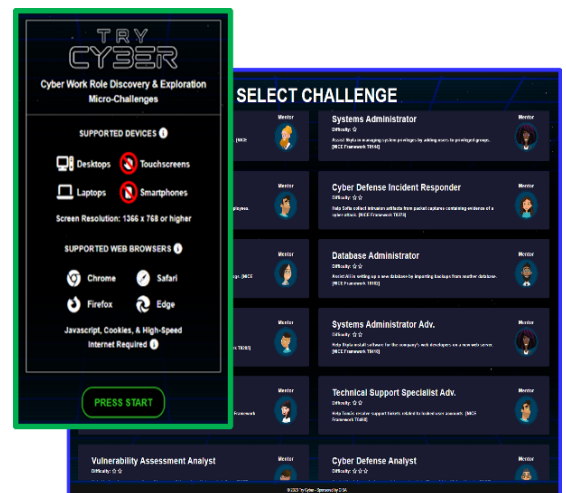


**Do you want to be featured in an issue of the CyberSentinel?  
Complete the [survey](#) and your story could be in the spotlight!**

## Try Cyber

In September 2023, CISA released Try Cyber. Try Cyber ([Try Cyber | Cyber Work Role Discovery & Exploration](#)) provides 14 micro-challenges as resources for cybersecurity awareness and career exploration. The micro-challenges are open to the public. The micro-challenges are quick, 15-minute, hands-on experiences that put users into cybersecurity workforce roles and ask them to execute the core cybersecurity tasks performed by cybersecurity professionals. The content is intended to help users understand the scope of cybersecurity careers, help explain some of the core tasks for the workforce roles and enable all users to see themselves in a cybersecurity workforce role.

This tool is great for those thinking about entering the workforce and having trouble deciding which career in cyber is right for them. The challenges are at a beginner level and are intended to help users discover their cybersecurity career.



## Presidential Cybersecurity Education Award



The Presidential Cybersecurity Education Award honors two K-12 teachers for excellence in cybersecurity education, and the call for nominations is now open!

The award is part of a coordinated federal effort to develop and maintain a superior cybersecurity workforce. The U.S. Department of Education recognizes the critical role teachers have in preparing students with the skills needed to fortify our nation's security and to succeed in the ever-evolving cybersecurity environment.



The award is presented annually to two teachers, one at the elementary level and one at the secondary level, who demonstrate superior achievement in instilling skills, knowledge, and passion with respect to cybersecurity education and cybersecurity-related subjects.

**The nomination period will close on September 13, 2024.** You can find the rules, terms, and conditions and details on how to apply on the [PCRN website](#). Award recipients are selected for their superior accomplishments as teachers, academic achievement indicators, and leadership contributing to the field of cybersecurity. Anyone may nominate a teacher for this honor; self-nominations are also permitted. Nominations should be submitted to [CyberAwards@ed.gov](mailto:CyberAwards@ed.gov).

## CyberPatriot Highlight

Franklin High School, CyberPatriot 16 National Champions, have been busy this Spring/Summer, relishing their championship and spreading the word of CyberPatriot along the way. In April, Franklin High School appeared on Good Day Sacramento (Video attached: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHH4ta70wc0>).

Later that month, the team visited the California Office of Emergency Services and were presented letters of recognition by Director of CalOES Nancy Ward, Director of Homeland Security Tom Osborne, Amy Tong, Secretary CA Government Operations, and several additional director level officials. The team coaches and mentors were also treated to a tour of the California Cybersecurity Integration Center by Director Osborne.

In June, the team was invited to the California State Assembly floor by District 10 Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen and each team member received a framed certificate of recognition. Later, the team was also invited to the Elk Grove City Council Chambers and received certificates of recognition signed by the council members including Mayor Bobbie Singh-Allen.



## CyberPatriot in the News



### Cyber Camp Helps Teens Hone Security Skills

Several area high school students got the chance to test their skills at the first-ever USC Upstate Summer Cyber Camp this June, held in the Upstate Crime Analysis Center (UCAC) on the Upstate Greenville campus. Using the AFA CyberPatriot curriculum, faculty presented the fundamentals of cybersecurity and highlighted the careers open to students interested in cybersecurity, IT and related STEM fields.

***Thank you to all the CyberPatriot Sponsors who make our program possible:***

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Please send email highlights or accolades to [info@uscyberpatriot.org](mailto:info@uscyberpatriot.org).*