THE CYBERSENTINEL

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

AUGUST 2025

CyberPatriot 18 →
Cisco NetAcad Self-Paced Courses →
CyberPatriot Alumni Spotlight →
Program Highlight: CyberGenerations →
Sponsor Feature: Gannon University →
CyberPatriot in the News →

CyberPatriot 18
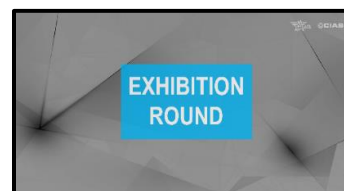
Register your team today for CyberPatriot 18!

REGISTER A CYBERPATRIOT TEAM TODAY

The deadline to register for the 2025-26 season is October 1, 2025.

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

CP-18 Exhibition Round

The Exhibition Round is now available through August 25 for all teams registered for CP-18. In the Exhibition Round, both the Windows 10 and Ubuntu 22 virtual images come with an answer key at the bottom of the ReadMe file.

EXHIBITION ROUND

CyberPatriot 18 (2025-26) Competition Timeline

REGISTRATION DEADLINES	TRAINING ROUNDS	MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION COMPETITION ROUNDS	HIGH SCHOOL DIVISIONS COMPETITION ROUNDS
April 1 Team Registration Opens *20% discount for teams registered by July 1*	**Exhibition Round** *May 16 – August 25*	**Introductory Round** *November 13 – 16*	**Round 1** *October 23 – 26*
October 1 Team Registration Closes *Last day to add new teams*	**Training Round 1** *(Basic Level)* *September 4 – October 22*	**State Round** *December 11 – 14*	**Round 2** *November 13 – 16*
October 22 Roster Finalization *Last day to add new competitors*	**Sneak Preview** *(Optional Test)* *TBD*	**Semifinals** *January 22 – 24 (3 days only)*	**State Round** *December 11 – 14*
November 5 Payment Due *Last day to pay registration fee*	**Practice Round** *October 6 – 20*	**National Finals** *(In-Person event, Bethesda, MD)* *March 20 – 24, 2026*	**Semifinals** *January 22 – 24 (3 days only)*
	Training Round 2 *(Intermediate Level)* *Oct 28, 2025 – Jan 20, 2026*		**National Finals** *(In-Person event, Bethesda, MD)* *March 20 – 24, 2026*

Upcoming Training Opportunities:
Training Round: September 4 – October 22
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 6 – October 20
The Practice Round is a re-release of the Training Round images. However, it is also a test of the 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.

CyberPatriot 18 Rules Book Updates and Clarifications:
- Image Answers will be published when Rounds 1 and 2 and the Middle School Introductory Rounds are completed. Teams will not be able to share their how-to's, scripts, or other competition materials.
- The National Commissioner must approve the registration of all teams with special cases such as composite teams and teams with the "Other" organization designation.
- All competitors on a team must belong to the organization to which the team is registered.
- A coach registering without an email address of the organization a team belongs to must be verified by the principal or vice-principal or assistant principal.
- Teams are not permitted to share Unique IDs, passwords, or other competition credentials with people outside of their teams.
- US Naval Sea Cadets teams will be registering within the Open Division this season.

** A current and up to date CyberPatriot Rules Book can be found on the [CyberPatriot website](#).

FREE Cisco NetAcad Self-Paced Courses

Want 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!**

CyberPatriot Alumni Spotlight

April Xie | CyberPatriot VII, VIII, IX

What are you up to now?
I'm currently a software engineer at Google working in Google Cloud.

How did participating in the CyberPatriot competition influence your plans for your future?
CyberPatriot exposed me to careers in information security and supplemented my technical programming skills. Although I'm not a security engineer, I work in a cybersecurity-related service at Google and having prior CyberPatriot experience gave me some foundational knowledge related to my work, such as encryption and networking.

What was the most valuable lesson you learned from CyberPatriot?
Cybersecurity is important! CyberPatriot taught me early on that cybersecurity is a huge point of emphasis for most organizations, especially ones that deal with our personal data. As cyber-attacks become more sophisticated, it pays to stay informed and protect yourself from potential malware and data theft. The more you can prepare, the better off you will be (both in the

CyberPatriot competition and in real life situations). No matter what kind of work you do, security will be extremely relevant, so having the knowledge is always helpful.

What is your advice for the next generation of CyberPatriot?
With the current burst in AI, be aware of the new risks it brings while also taking the opportunity to use it as a helpful tool. Also, don't forget the importance of teamwork! Everyone has their own strengths they bring to the table and working effectively together benefits everybody.

Fun Fact: I'm a new cat owner of a very cute British Shorthair :)

Do you want to be featured in an issue of the CyberSentinel?
Complete the survey and your story could be in the spotlight!

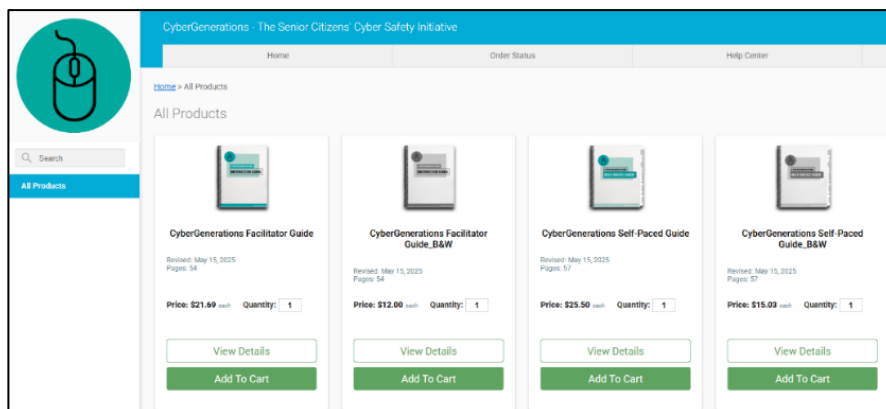## CyberPatriot Program Highlight: CyberGenerations

A team from Holloman AFB recently held a CyberGenerations workshop at Alamo Senior Center in Alamogordo, New Mexico. The team is currently four people strong, and they are working on expanding.

Team lead, Jacob Fordham said, "After some marketing on my behalf of the program and what it offers, the Alamogordo Senior Center scheduled us to teach at their July monthly Staff Meeting. They had 15 staff members attend that day and my POC there reports that they interface with approximately 300 seniors every day."

Ready to host your own CyberGenerations Workshop? Complete the Workshop Request Form and you will be provided with a download link that contains all the necessary files to host a CyberGenerations Workshop!

NEW TO THE PROGRAM: A CyberGenerations Marketplace is now available! Printed materials for your workshop can be purchased through MIMEO.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

CyberPatriot National Youth Defense Competition Sponsorships

Registration is now open for CyberPatriot XVIII. Whether you are a new or returning coach or mentor, Gannon University is here to help you and your student team succeed.

Gannon is partnering with CyberPatriot high school teams to provide an array of sponsorship opportunities to best support you and your students in preparing for the upcoming competition. Team sponsorship packages are now available free-of-charge and come with "add-ons" to customize your team's specific needs.

This year, our sponsorships are capped at a total of: 30 teams, 5 teams per school.

SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS	SPONSORSHIP ADD-ONS
Paid Registration fees (a $200+ value).	Mentorship from faculty and staff industry professionals.
Scholarships available for eligible students: • $2,000 Engineering Award • $3,000 Cyber Award	Gannon application workshops.
Special engagement with the Gannon University admissions team.	Exclusive campus visits with private use of labs and technology within our facilities.
Invitations to open houses, events and CyberPatriot Camps.	University grants to assist with means of travel, equipment, etc.
On-site classroom visits and presentations.	
Gannon University swag.	

Competitors must be added to your roster no later than October 22, 2025.
Registration fees are due by November 5, 2025.

LOCK IN YOUR SPOT TODAY

GANNON UNIVERSITY

QUESTIONS:
📞 CALL | 1-800-GANNON-U
✉ EMAIL | vonrich001@gannon.edu
or philip001@gannon.edu

CyberPatriot in the News

Beyond the Firewall: CELT Shines at National Competition

This March, Punahou's Cyber Education Leadership Team (CELT) embarked on an exciting adventure to Bethesda, Maryland, where they competed in the CyberPatriot 17 National Finals – the largest cyber defense competition in the nation. "When we started the year, we asked the students to identify what they wanted to accomplish," says Punahou Infrastructure Engineer Brian Hoole, one of the coaches for the team. "They told us they wanted to make it to Nationals – and after a lot of work and focus, here we are."

USC Upstate Cyber Camp Builds Pathway to Careers

Using the nationally recognized CyberPatriot curriculum, the week-long camp introduced students to real-world cybersecurity principles and practical coding skills. Students tackled individual and team challenges throughout the week, and they battled in a CyberPatriot competition on Friday to test what they learned.

Wallace State hosts CyberPatriot Camp to inspire future cybersecurity leaders

Wallace State Community College's Computer Science program recently introduced local students to the dynamic world of cybersecurity through an AFA CyberPatriot Camp, co-hosted by the college and the North Central Alabama STEM Ecosystem.

Camp showcases STEM career opportunities

Area teens looking to improve their computer skills, gathered last week to study cyber security during the North Alabama STEM Ecocsystem's CyberPatriot CyberCamp at Wallace State Community College.

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

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NORTHROP GRUMMAN FOUNDATION

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NORWICH UNIVERSITY

Want to be featured in the next edition of the CyberSentinel?
Please send email highlights or accolades to info@uscyberpatriot.org.