

## NICE Community Coordinating Council

### Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2024 | 3:30-4:45 p.m. ET

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

- 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,
  - There is new energy around the topic of cybersecurity education. Michael is looking forward to working with this group and others to continue to drive the energy to grow programs.
- b. Academic Co-Chair – Zarina Blankenbaker, Ph.D., President, Tarrant County College – Northwest
  - Dr. Blankenbaker is joining the meeting from New Orleans where she is attending the [Workforce Development Institute](#), a conference under the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). The purpose of the event is parallel to NICE in that they seek to bring together academia, industry, and government who are committed to cultivating a skilled workforce.
- c. Government Co-Chair - Rodney Petersen, Director of NICE
  - Rodney is also at the Workforce Development Institute in New Orleans this week where he will participate on two panels. The event will focus on, not only cybersecurity, but AI and critical and emerging technologies as well.
  - Recently, there was a [hearing in the House of Representatives on creating an AI-ready workforce](#). Witnesses provided commentary on how cybersecurity serves as precedent to AI and somewhat as a success story of synergy and working together to further the workforce. Similar questions are being asked in the AI workforce. For example, what are the skills needed, what are the gaps, what are the career pathways, and how do we measure success.
  - Finally, as we begin the new year, you will notice a slightly revised meeting format for the NICE Community Coordinating Council. We will also ask poll questions during the meeting to receive feedback on what you like best/least about the meetings so that we can continue to improve them.

### III. Featured Content

#### a. Strategy Stories – New Developments that align to NICE Strategic Plan

##### *SkillsFWD Ecosystem*

Presented by Madelyn Rahn, Network Manager, SkillsFWD

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

- SkillsFWD (“skills forward”) is a collaborative to give grants to support programs/projects that make use of Learning and Employment Records (LERs).
- SkillsFWD and their funders see LERSs as critical tool in the skills-based movement and want to ensure the tools being developed are part of the broader ecosystem change, not just tools for the sake of tools. This requires understanding standards, interoperability, and ensuring that tools are meeting the needs of users.
- Grantees are funded for 18 months, with a primary goal to launch an interoperable LER lifecycle. Other objectives for the grantees are around building a broader ecosystem and ensuring program sustainment after the grant.
- There are six grantees, all taking different approaches in terms of who they’re targeting and what industries they’re working in.
  - Central Ohio Talent Network – taking a regional approach and working with a local K12 school district on the use of LERs to move students into higher education and the workforce
  - ColoradoFWD – focusing on the healthcare sector, which has been identified as a high priority industry in the state
  - (Arizona) Student Worker Employment for Skills-Based Success – a program at Arizona State University to credential students who are working at the university
  - Accelerate Montana's Validated Skills Demonstration – a state-wide effort, focused on rural and tribal communities, as well as small businesses
  - Alabama Talent Triad – a state-wide effort focused on priority industries in the state
  - Scaling the Skills-Based Workforce System in Connecticut – a state-wide effort focused on priority industries in the state
- SkillsFWD Principles are the key attributes that should be at the center at each of the grants. The Principles include philosophies such as collaborative, interoperable, scalable, and skills-centered.
- SkillsFWD also has identified Rights and Responsibilities that defines what an LER needs to be able to do for the various levels of users (holders, issuers, and requesting and relying parties). There will be opportunities for the public to provide feedback on Rights and Responsibilities.
- Q: What organizations and individuals are providing technical assistance?

- This is constantly evolving. The people and resources that are being engaged with changes depending on the scope of each individual grant project. Some examples of who they're currently working with include: Educational Design Lab, Jobs for the Future (JFF), and the Digital Credentials Consortium. If this group has recommendations for groups that SkillsFWD should reach out to, please let Madelyn know.
- Q: Are there going to be future opportunities to fund additional projects?
  - The initiative is brand new and is unsure of what the future will hold. However, they are hoping that the initiative can continue to grow and evolve. You can sign up to the SkillsFWD newsletter to subscribe to any future funding announcements (see the form at the bottom of <https://www.skillsfwd.org/>).
- Q: Are any current grantees addressing cybersecurity, IT, or critical and emerging technologies?
  - None at this point are addressing cybersecurity, in particular. However, one of Alabama's target industries is IT.

b. Framework Feature – Applications and Uses of Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity

*Systems Software Integrator (SSI) Certification Program*

Presented by Michael Coleman, Senior Certification Exam Developer, National Institute for Certification In Engineering Technologies

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

- The Systems Software Integrator (SSI) Certification Program is being developed by the National Institute for Certification in Engineering Technologies (NICET), an organization that recognizes qualified technology professionals.
- NICET is prioritizing this SSI program because there has been a massive increase in the use of enterprise systems by organizations over the past several years. There are known risks with integrating software into systems and the risks increase substantially if the software is downloaded from open source resources. These risks impact most, if not all industries (aerospace, automotive, electronics and power, and many more).
- The cost of failed or sub-optimal integrations of software is estimated to be \$1.8 trillion.
- NICET seeks to build the SSI Certification program to provide a standard evaluation of knowledge and skills to measure competency on SSI.
- NICET brought together a group of 12 subject matter experts to complete a job task analysis and define what competencies a systems software integrator should have. The group identified 22 competencies that fall under four categories: program management, quality assurance, system integration, and risk mitigation.
- With the job task analysis complete, NICET now seeks to validate the work. If you do systems software integration or supervise such work, please participate in the validation survey.

- After the validation survey is complete, NICET will be looking for experts to help write and review “items” (questions) for the SSI certification exam. NICET will then beta test the items to prepare for the program launch.

#### IV. Community Progress Reports

##### a. Working Group Update

- Modernize Talent Management  
Lead: Marian Merritt, NICE Deputy Director
  - The Modernize Talent Management Working Group is led by Justice Jo from Leidos and Olesya Menon from Google.
  - The working group has recently launched the “Issues Contributing to Talent Retention Why People Leave and Why People Stay” project team. If you are interested in participating send an email to [NICEtalent@list.nist.gov](mailto:NICEtalent@list.nist.gov).
  - The project team is creating a survey which will be available for the community to distribute among their networks. This effort is not only directed to hiring managers but human resources leaders as well.
  - The project charter is [now available online](#).

##### b. Project Progress Reports

- NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference (San Antonio, Texas) – December 9-10, 2024  
Presented by Felicia Rateliff, iKeepSafe  
URL: <https://www.k12cybersecurityconference.org/>
  - The 2023 NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference (December 4-5, 2023) marked the largest gathering for iKeepSafe since its inception nine years ago.
  - The conference sold out with over 550 attendees. Exhibitor tables were also sold out. There were over 100 speakers and 16 pre-conference workshops.
  - There were a few special activities at the conference, including the Presidential Cybersecurity Education Awards Ceremony, a National School Counselors Association counselor panel, a Gen Cyber Day hosted by Tennessee Tech University at Grand Canyon University, and National Cyber Signing Day where six students told their stories about how they entered cybersecurity internships and jobs.
  - View conference photos [here](#).
  - If you were a paid attendee, you will have [access](#) to pre-recorded sessions, discussion boards, and breakout slides until March 31, 2024.
  - If you are interested in participating in the NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference planning committee, send an email to [K12Cybercon@ikeepSAFE.com](mailto:K12Cybercon@ikeepSAFE.com).
- US Cyber Games  
Presented by Brad Wolfenden, Katzcy

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

- The US Cyber Games (USCG) Pipeline Program has 42 confirmed athletes. This program is designed to keep individuals that have participated in some of the USCG early season events. Athletes must commit to participating in 5-8 hours per week of self-guided materials, live lectures, and other assignments.
- USCG is hosting an international scrimmage titled “New Year Mayhem”. It will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024, from 11-5PM ET. The objective of this event is to bring the International Cybersecurity Championship (ICC) community together for a virtual scrimmage and give the athletes an opportunity to hone their skills, test out tooling, and network. There will be 58 teams representing 28 countries. The event will be livestreamed 5-7PM ET.
- Season III, US Cyber Team athletes and coaches will gather in Washington D.C. on February 16th-18th for an in-person training camp. The focus for this camp will be Red v Blue (attack and defense) training.
- This season, US Cyber Team athletes will complete the Clifton Strengths Assessment. This is an assessment designed to empower takers to discover what they naturally do best and learn how to develop their greatest talents into strengths. Careers & Leadership Coach, Austin Cusak (Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)), is leading this effort. Austin will provide each athlete with a 30 minute debrief on their results, and work with them to build a custom, personal development plan. If funding becomes available, a public white paper will be published to showcase the results.
- Learn more about upcoming USCG events:  
<https://www.uscybergames.com/event-schedule>

## V. Featured Topic

*STARs\**

Presented by Blair Corcoran de Castillo, Opportunity @ Work

URL: <https://opportunityatwork.org/stars/>

- More than 70 million workers are Skilled Through Alternative Routes (STARs) instead of a bachelor’s degree. These are talented workers that are skilled through alternative routes. They came through a variety of routes including military service, community college, boot camps, and other trainings, but most commonly “learning on the job”.
- STARs not only make up the majority of the national workforce, but they make up a significant portion of every region’s workforce.
- Gateway jobs open mobility pathways as they are accessible from a number of similarly skilled lower-wage occupations and offer valuable skills that then provide pathways into multiple higher-wage destination occupations. Fifty-one key Gateway jobs have been identified.

- Destination jobs are higher-wage jobs that are accessible from multiple lower-wage occupations. Two hundred forty-one destination jobs have been identified.
- A **Gateway Job** is a job paying above median wage with a skills profile that enables transitions to a higher-wage job and a **Destination Job** is an occupation paying above median wages which is accessible from lower wages.
- There are 3 distinct STARs segments, defined by readiness for higher wage work based on the skills profile of the worker's current job:
  - Forming STARs - 36M workers do not yet have the skills for significantly higher wage work, based on their current role
  - Rising STARs - 30M workers have the skills for significantly higher wage work (50%+), based on their current role
  - Shining STARs - 5M workers are in high wage roles today
- Only 40% of cybersecurity jobs are open to STARs and 5,000 STARs are transitioning to cybersecurity jobs each year. The Network & Computer System Administrators work role is the most common pathway for STARs to move into cybersecurity.
- Additional resources:
  - Tear the Paper Ceiling Coalition: <https://www.tearthepaperceiling.org/>
  - Stellersight\*: <https://opportunityatwork.org/our-solutions/stellersight/>
  - STARs Policy + STARs Public Sector Hub: <https://opportunityatwork.org/stars-policy-project/>
- Contact information: Blair Corcoran de Castillo ([Blair@opportunityatwork.org](mailto:Blair@opportunityatwork.org))

## VI. Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Reminder

The next NICE Council Meeting will be **February 27** at 3:30 p.m. ET.

### Upcoming Meetings:

- [NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education COI](#): February 8, 2024, 3:30-4:30PM ET
- [NICE Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity COI](#): February 9, 2024, 11:00-12:00PM ET
- [NICE Cybersecurity Career Ambassadors COI](#): February 9, 2024, 1:00-2:00PM ET
- [NICE Diversity and Inclusion COI](#): February 9, 2024, 2:00 – 3:00PM ET
- [NICE Transform Learning Process WG](#): February 13, 2024, 2:00-3:00PM ET
- [NICE Cybersecurity Competitions COI](#): February 16, 2024, 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET
- [NICE Promote Career Discovery WG](#): February 20, 2024, 3:30-4:30PM ET
- [NICE Modernize Talent Management WG](#): February 20, 2024, 1:00-2:00PM ET

### Upcoming Events:

- [NICE Webinar Series](#)
  - [Expanding Cybersecurity Learning and Workforce Opportunities for Rural Americans](#)  
February 21, 2024, 2-3PM ET
- [FISSEA Winter Forum](#): February 14, 2024, 1-4PM ET
- [Cybersecurity Career Week](#): October 14-19, 2024
- [National Apprenticeship Week](#): November 18-24, 2024
- NICE Events [Calendar](#)