

# NICE Community Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2021 | 3:30-5:00 p.m. ET

## I. Introduction and Ground Rules

NICE Program Manager Susana Barraza opened the meeting, reviewed the ground rules, and encouraged everyone to participate in the chat space.

## II. Opening Remarks

- a. Industry Co-Chair – Jon Brickey, Senior Vice President, Mastercard
  - There is a lot of talk in industry about the number of open positions and how to reach out to those starting out in cybersecurity – good news for college students.
- b. Academic Co-Chair – Marni Baker-Stein, Chief Academic Officer and Provost, Western Governors University
  - Fewer students have returned to school this fall than did than last year, which is a historic event. There is a lot of research exploring why this has occurred.
  - There is ambiguity in our time for people trying to build a career. The book *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World* by David J. Epstein offers interesting insight. It explores the need for today's organizations to have diverse experience from multiple fields to solve complex problems.
- c. Government Co-Chair – Rodney Petersen, Director of NICE
  - The Department of Commerce is looking at ways to address the issue of non-degree job candidates.
  - There is a great deal of enthusiasm for increased funding in cybersecurity.
  - The recently signed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will have an impact on cybersecurity. It includes significant broadband investments, which will help with increasing access in rural communities and underserved populations. It also includes funding for digital literacy and grants to states for cybersecurity. Additionally, the new Office of the Cyber Director received funding.

## III. Standing Items

- a. Report Roundup – Learning from Good Ideas
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Cybersecurity*  
Presented by Robert Taj Moore, Director, Aspen Cybersecurity Group, Aspen Digital  
URL: [https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-in-Cybersecurity\\_9.921.pdf](https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-in-Cybersecurity_9.921.pdf)
  - The Playing Field  
24% of cybersecurity professionals self-identify as women; 9% self-identify as Black; 4% self-identify as Hispanic. Studies have shown that diverse teams perform better. When you have people with different experiences, you reach better results.
  - Verticals for Improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
    - Education
    - Recruiting and Hiring

- Retention
- Mentorship
- Shifting the Narrative
- Short- to Mid-term Action Items
  - Encourage conversations about diversity (R&H; retention; shifting the narrative)
  - Subsidize certification costs (education)
  - Adopt more apprenticeship and bridge programs (education)
  - Track retention and attrition rates for diverse candidates (retention)
  - Create mentorship programs (mentorship/retention)
  - Encourage employee participation in school career fairs (shifting the narrative)
- Long-term Action Items
  - Assess value of certifications
  - Examine utility of apprenticeship programs
  - Reconsider utility of existing criminal background check process
  - Establish group of experts to review and rewrite cyber job descriptions
  - Create taskforce to track company executives' DEI commitments
  - Form a coalition to develop mentorship models
  - Develop media campaigns to promote diverse voices in cybersecurity

Main Takeaway: Many actions can be taken to effect change with minimal effort.

b. Strategy Stories – New Developments that Align to the NICE Strategic Plan

*AWS Security Awareness Training*

Presented by Marianne Brockhaus, Global Head of Security Training at Amazon Web Services (AWS)

URL: <https://learnsecurity.amazon.com/>

- Security Awareness Training is aligned to the NIST Framework.
- A large percentage of the population doesn't get security training through their workplace.
- Anyone can take the AWS training in a hosted format.
- It comes with the disclaimer that it is baseline training.
- Diversity is showcased in the training materials.
- The training was built to be accessible for people with disabilities.
- It covers 10 core security concepts.
- No base knowledge is required.
- Available in several languages, including American Sign Language.

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

*Hiring Toolkit: Cyber Security Analyst*

Presented by Jacob Vigil, Senior Manager, Employer Initiatives, Markle Foundation

URL: <https://www.markle.org/sites/default/files/Hiring-Toolkit-Cyber-Security-Analyst.pdf>

- Rework America Alliance
 

A partnership of civil rights organizations, universities, corporations, non-profits, and others working to help unemployed and low-wage workers – particularly people of color who have been disproportionately impacted by the disruptions of Covid – move into good jobs. They focus on gateway roles with high-growth potential, high-demand potential, and sustainable wages.

- Hiring Toolkit: Cyber Security Analyst
 

The toolkit comes with customizable resources to promote a skills-based approach to recruiting and hiring. It includes:

  - Skills-based job posting designed to attract a diverse pool of candidates: Designed so that an employer who has never heard of skills-based practices can pick it up, understand the baseline, and find tools. It is editable and easy to use. Skills are aligned with NICE Framework skills. It includes sections for interpersonal skills in addition to technical skills.
  - Sourcing channels to reach a more diverse pool of candidates
  - Resume screening guide: An easy way to minimize bias in the resume screening process. An easy-to-use table allows you to track whether a resume shows evidence of required skills.
  - Interview and evaluation guides: An inclusive, skills-based interview helps combat bias by providing a structured, consistent approach focused on skills. It ensures all candidates are asked the same questions. The guides provide example questions for the role.
  - Interviewee selection tool: An easy way to see who demonstrated competencies in the interview process. If you disregard the scores candidates got, you move away from minimizing bias in the process.
  - Onboarding plan: Traditional onboarding plans are often one-size-fits-all and focused on compliance and HR. A skills-based plan enables more customization and training to get new hires up to speed.
  
- Q&A
 

Q: Outreach to small and medium-sized business?

A: The toolkit was originally built to help small and medium-sized businesses.

Q: Proof of concept?

A: Workday said they wanted to share it throughout their ATS system so their partners have access to it. Multiple other medium-sized companies have used the toolkits.

Q: Other frameworks?

A: The main framework in the NICE/NIST Framework.

Q: Plans for scaling the toolkit? Thoughts about publishing the skills as data so that the skills themselves could be accessible?

A: Other groups are working in those areas. The goal is to form partnerships so that everyone is aligned around these efforts.
  
- d. Research Review- Driving Research on Effective Practices
 

*Best Practices for Diversity and Inclusion Report*  
 Presented by Diann Mccants, Ph.D., Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering

  - Overview: A collaborative effort of representatives from 19 federal agencies. This is a priority of the current Administration. (Executive Order 14035)
  - Key topics
    - Definitions

- Current status of the federal STEM workforce: There is a lot of space for improvement in this area.
- Barriers to diversity and inclusion in STEM: There are both institutional and individual barriers
- Key areas for advancing diversity and inclusion in STEM:
  - STEM Pathways: Career pathways are not always linear. Focus on guided pathways, pathways for specific groups such as military veterans, and appealing STEM pathways.
  - Access and Recruitment: Broad access and intentional recruitment are critical. Partnerships in support of individuals from groups currently underrepresented in STEM.
  - Retention: Retention is key in maintaining D&I. Alignment of institutional culture and climate. Institutional commitment and accountability. Data disaggregation and intersectionality.
  - Achievement and Advancement: Achievement can be related to individuals, but the opportunity for achievement is systemic. Establish clear guidelines for evaluation and promotion. Develop robust systems of support. Create opportunities and pathways for growth.
- Promising and emerging practices
- Recommendations to help increase recruitment, retention, achievement, and advancement of underrepresented groups. Recognize that each agency has its own specific mission and needs.
  - Recommendations are grouped into four categories.
  - Use of definitions for evidence-based, emerging, and promising practices
  - Barriers to participation in STEM
  - Ways to increase diversity and inclusion in STEM
  - Incorporating emerging and promising practices

#### IV. Working Group Updates

##### a. Promote Career Discovery

Co-chairs: Roland Varriale II, Cybersecurity Analyst, Argonne National Laboratory;  
Monica Gomez, Cisco

This working group saw a 40% increase in membership at the last meeting, where they focused on looking at possible project ideas.

##### b. Transform Learning Process

Co-chairs: Richard Spires, Instructor, Learning Tree

Donna Schaefer is the new co-chair of this working group. They are working on two project charters. They are looking at partnering with the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration to promote cybersecurity in public policy academic programs.

##### c. Modernize Talent Management

Lead: Marian Merritt, Deputy Director and Lead for Industry Engagement, NICE

This working group focused on developing a project charter for objectives related to promoting entry-level opportunities. A very small percent of job postings state that they are entry level. The group is very open to new members.

## V. Community of Interest Updates

### a. Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity

Co-chairs: Tony Bryan, Executive Director, CyberUp; Jennifer Oddo Executive Director, Strategic Workforce Education and Innovation, Youngstown State University

The next meeting will be on December 10, 2021 at 11 a.m. ET.

### b. Cybersecurity Skills Competitions

Co-chairs: Amelia Phillips, Highline College

At the last meeting they received a debriefing of Cybersecurity Career Awareness Week (CCAW), including the competitions that were held.

### c. K12 Cybersecurity Education

Co-chairs: Terrance Campbell, CCTE Cybersecurity Teacher, Shelby County Schools; Laurin Buchanan, Secure Decisions; Thomas Trevethan, Palo Alto Networks

The received a debriefing on CCAW at the last meeting and discussed what can be improved on for next year. There were more than 400 events, including 86 webinars, 125 training opportunities, and a CTF hosted by the Virginia Cyber Range.

The NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference takes place December 6-7, 2021. The COI will lead some of the sessions.

### d. NICE Framework Users

Karen Wetzal, Manager of the NICE Framework

The December 15, 2021 webinar will focus the evolution of the NICE Framework. A lot of updates have been made to the Framework over the past year. They are looking for feedback on what should be covered during the webinar.

## VI. Project Progress Reports

### a. NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference (Virtual) – December 6-7, 2021

Presented by Davina Pruitt-Mentle, Lead for Academic Engagement, NICE

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

- The pre-conference workshops start December 4.
- More than 100 speakers and panelists will participate in the conference.
- More than 550 attendees have registered, including 120 who received scholarships.
- There will be three keynote speakers, a K12 student panel, school counselor panel, National Signing Day presentations, on-demand videos, posters, games, networking, virtual meet-ups, and much more.

### b. NICE Conference and Expo (Atlanta, Georgia) – June 6-8, 2022

Presented by Paola Hechavarria, Florida International University

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

- Registration and hotel reservations are available online.
- Call for Proposals is open. The deadline is January 16, 2022, for the first three tracks and March 6, 2022, for the fourth track.
- Sponsorships and exhibit booths are still available.
- The November 16, 2021, NICE Symposium is available to watch on YouTube.

## VII. Featured Topic

### *CyberSeek Updates*

Presented by Will Markow, CompTIA

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

Several enhancements have been made to CyberSeek, including:

- Full data refresh: Access up-to-date data on cybersecurity job opportunities. There were nearly 600,000 cybersecurity job openings in the past 12 months. There was a slight downturn with COVID but it rebounded stronger than ever.
- New training provider locator: Find local cybersecurity training providers in your region. This tool will be continuously updated.
- New skill and credential pathway: Identify skills and certifications that prepare you for core cybersecurity jobs. Detailed information on what careers are unlocked if you add certain skills or certifications to your portfolio.
- New supply and demand data: New demand model considers factors such as the current workforce, job openings, recent graduates, unemployed workers, worker transitions, and “active” supply, i.e. workers reasonably likely to leave their current jobs.
- CAEs are included as training providers.

## VIII. Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Reminder

The next NICE Council Meeting will be **January 26, 2022**, at 3:30 p.m. ET.