

NICE Community Coordinating Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 | Time: 3:30-5:00 p.m. ET

SharePoint Page: <https://nistgov.sharepoint.com/sites/NICEProgram/NICEWG>

I. Introduction and Ground Rules

- a. Danielle Santos, NICE Manager of Communications and Operations, welcomed participants to the inaugural meeting of the NICE Community Coordinating Council. This group is set up to provide a mechanism for collaboration among academia, government, and industry as well as to discuss strategies and actions to aid in workforce development.
- b. Danielle introduced Susana Barraza as the new NICE Program Manager. Susana introduced herself and looks forward to supporting this group.

II. Opening Remarks

- a. Industry Co-Chair, Jon Brickey, Senior Vice President, Mastercard, welcomed members to this month's call. Jon spoke about competencies and a key study Mastercard is carrying out. Competencies are not listed in revision 1 of the [NICE Framework](#) publication but are part of the ongoing work. They will be listed in the tables in additional supporting documents.

Jon is leading the effort to adopt the NICE Framework at Mastercard. They are writing a strategy to adopt the Framework of which competencies will be a big part. They want to demonstrate to HR this is not a huge lift and can be adopted in stages. They plan to use the Framework to support recruiting, development, and retention by describing types of tasks, team requirements, to update position descriptions, and identify appropriate hiring methods. Jon would love to talk to anyone who's overcome HR obstacles.

For employee development, they are looking to identify training platforms and providers that align to the Framework. They want to coordinate with providers and make sure everyone is doing the same work.

They have a process they go through every year, part of which is to identify specific developmental areas. Competencies can help with that. The goal is to demonstrate the benefits of adopting the Framework and spread the program throughout Mastercard. Jon was an advocate prior to joining this council.

Mastercard is part of a [Cybersecurity Talent Initiative](#) designed for students. The initiative hopes to jump start careers and offers opportunities for student loan assistance. They've received over 400 applications and plan on growing as the sponsor list increases. The list of candidates is very diverse. They will publicize results over the year and are always looking for more partners.

- b. Academic Co-Chair, Dr. Marni Baker-Stein, Chief Academic Officer and Provost, Western Governors University (WGU), introduced herself as the new Academic Co-Chair. WGU is a competency based online program. They have over 130,000 students and over 200,000 graduate students enrolled. WGU offers competency-based education, meaning they start with skills and descriptions that they understand are in high demand. They reference third party labor market providers, HR, talent leaders, and competencies of professional standards and frameworks that are put forth. They have a library of skills that cluster into competencies that provide value and meaning and discern how to stack into credentials and degrees.

They offer three cyber degrees. Each program is essentially a family of skills that stacks into competencies that turn into degrees. They envision a future where students move through the coursework, they can share their skills and drive economic mobility even before they get their first credential.

WGU represents NICE in several groups. They are happy to talk about their approach. They are spearheading the Open Skills Network to be used to match WGU's competency-based curriculum with a list of workforce-relevant skills.

- c. Government Co-Chair, Rodney Petersen, Director of NICE, welcomed members to the meeting. Rodney thanked Dr. Jose-Marie Griffiths, who served as the Academic Co-Chair for the past two years. Rodney welcomed Dr. Marni Baker-Stein and believes we can learn from her and WGU.

Rodney emphasized the new [NICE Strategic Plan](#). There are three references to competencies in the objectives of the new plan.

1. Credentials are broad and diverse, so the emphasis is on improvement to increase the value of credentials and make sure they are directly related to job roles.
2. Facilitate increased use of performance-based assessments to measure competencies and the capability to perform NICE Framework tasks. Assessment applies in several ways. From an employer perspective, you assess employees throughout the new employee process.
3. Align qualification requirements according to proficiency levels to reflect the competencies and capabilities required to perform tasks in the NICE Framework. Connect dots where students, job seekers, employees are the key ingredient that providers are trying to reach.

The NICE Strategic Plan vision speaks to increased demand in jobs and types of skills. Our work in k12 and reskilling is part of this effort to grow the workforce. Cybersecurity workforce sounds limiting and can be confusing. The revised NICE Framework includes focus on cybersecurity as well as those who utilize cybersecurity skills in the workforce. The mission has not changed dramatically. However, it notes coordination among the public and private sectors and increased importance of building and coordinating an integrated ecosystem. The many values reinforce the importance of this NICE Community Coordinating Council.

III. Introducing NICE Community Coordinating Council

a. NICE Community Coordinating Council (formerly NICE Working Group)

Future meetings will include the new name. The update is meant to increase the impact in our ongoing efforts and alignment to the new [NICE Strategic Plan](#). The new name reflects community and coordination among sectors.

b. NICE Communities of Interest (formerly NICE Subgroups)

The Communities of Interest groups will provide collaboration opportunity for various subject matters. These are forums to allow networking.

c. NICE Working Groups are aligned to the new NICE Strategic Plan

The goal is to measure and execute ideas. Working groups will have a five-year duration. Some current subgroups will align to new working groups.

d. Project teams will provide solutions and have shorter durations of 6-12 months.

e. See presentation and find out more [here](#).

IV. Standing Items

a. The following topics will be covered in the future meetings to keep the community informed.

Strategy Stories – New Developments that Align to NICE Strategic Plan. This topic will highlight efforts happening in industry, academia, and government. The Program Office is looking to the community to support the goals and increase awareness of what is happening in the community.

Report Roundup – Learning from Good Ideas. This topic is based on recent reports. This can include data and/or suggested reports from the government, think tanks, academic studies, and more, who are trying to draw attention to the challenges and opportunities in cybersecurity.

Framework Feature – Applications and Uses of Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity. This is a new topic designed to expand the use of the [NICE Framework](#).

Research Review – Highlighting Research Results or Topics for Further Study. This topic will include highlights of research results. This topic aligns to the [NICE Strategic Plan](#) Goal 5: Drive Research on Effective Practices for Cybersecurity Workforce Development.

- b. Members are welcome to submit ideas for monthly agenda topics to the Program Office staff: nist.nice@nist.gov

V. Working Group Updates

- a. The new [NICE Strategic Plan](#) has five goals. As of now, two goals are not being structured as Working Groups (expand the use of the Framework and driving research). The other three goals have been proposed for Working Groups. The three groups will launch in January 2021. Working Groups will begin by reviewing goals and objectives, performing environmental scans, and identifying gaps. From there, groups can dive into strategies and tactics and develop metrics for progress. The restructuring and work of the groups will reflect work aligned with the goals in the NICE Strategic Plan.
 1. Promoting Career Discovery. Co-chairs to be identified and meetings to begin in January 2021.
 2. Transforming Learning Process. Co-chairs to be identified and meetings to begin in January 2021.
 3. Modernizing Talent Management. This will be a continuation of the previous Workforce Management subgroup. Because their previous goal was to guide workforce development, it makes sense to transition them.
- b. A few subgroups are discontinued which relates to transforming. Members will receive an email detailing the status and how to join other groups.
- c. During future NICE Community Coordinating Council meetings, members will hear from Working Group Co-chairs. A lot of work will be done in the Communities of Interest (see below).

VI. Communities of Interest Updates

a. Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity

- Jennifer Oddo, Co-chair, announced that she recently left IBM and is now at Youngstown State University where she works on strategic workforce education.
- The Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity community has a robust team working on the ROI in Apprenticeships project. They want to look to the NICE Framework for how to build stakeholder value. They are also looking into how to expand apprenticeships during uncertain times.
- The next meeting for the Apprenticeships in Cybersecurity community is slated for December 11, 2020.
- Find out more [here](#).

- Rodney said former subgroup projects that continue under the auspices of the Communities of Interest are great. If they are working on a project that is cross-cutting, they might want to elevate it to one of the new Working Groups.

b. Cybersecurity Skills Competitions

- Brad Wolfenden, Co-chair, said that the competitions community is closing out the year strong. They just completed a guide to competitions, and they are about to complete a second guide. The first guide focused largely on surface-level information for hosting or sponsoring a competition. The second one is a deeper dive for competitors. It is open for comment through December 18 and then it will be posted to the website. They will look for direction from the program office about how to operate in the new year.
- Find out more [here](#).

c. K12 Cybersecurity Educators

- Laurin Buchanan, Co-chair, reminded everyone that the NICE K12 Conference takes place December 7-9, 2020.
- The K12 Cybersecurity Educators community is continuing to move forward with a couple projects. They have had interesting discussions about what is stopping people from considering a career in cybersecurity. Find more here: <https://www.helpnetsecurity.com/2020/11/09/cybersecurity-career/>
- They have also had discussions about aptitude assessments and competitions for K-5 learners. If you are aware of any competitions at this level, please email Laurin: Laurin.buchanan@securedecisions.com
- The community has a tentative date of January 13 for the next meeting. Find out more [here](#).

VII. Project Progress Reports

a. Centers of Academic Excellence (CAE) in Cybersecurity Community

Tony Coulson, California State University, San Bernardino, provided the update.

- Tony reported that they just completed the CAE in Cybersecurity Symposium, which complemented the annual NICE Conference. They are doing a lot of realignment, focusing on applied academics and want to be sure they complement the NICE Strategic Plan. They have rolled out several initiatives aligned with increasing the cybersecurity workforce pipeline.
- They focus on three communities of practice:
 - Cyber defense
 - CAE Research
 - Cyber operations

- At the symposium they announced new personnel at CAE. They now have 335 colleges and universities working together to help solve the problem of the shortage in the cybersecurity workforce. A lot of the back chatter at the symposium was about the release of the revised NICE Framework. Email Tony if you want to learn more: tcoulson@caecommunity.org
- Find out more [here](#).

b. Cybersecurity Career Awareness Week

Danielle Santos, NICE, provided the update.

- Danielle said there was great turnout this year for Cybersecurity Career Awareness Week, and she thanked everyone who participated. There is a web page with archived recordings, including YouTube videos, of some of the events.
- Next year, the event will be moved to October 18-23 to better align with Cybersecurity Awareness Month. They are dropping the word “National” from Cybersecurity Career Awareness Week to expand more internationally.
- See presentation and find out more [here](#).

c. NICE Annual Conference

Randy Pestana, Florida International University, provided the update.

- Next year’s NICE Conference is being planned for in-person in Atlanta.
- Randy offered a wrap-up of conference stats:
 - Presentation proposals were down this year, but they still received 123 proposals.
 - Registration cost went down exponentially, and it was free for students.
 - 635 people registered: About 40 percent were from academia, including a large increase in student registration.
 - [Recordings](#) and [presentations](#) from the conference are available online.
 - Randy asked that anyone who attended the conference complete the conference survey.
 - He thanked the conference sponsors. Finally, he noted that while they are anticipating an in-person conference next year, they will be flexible depending on pandemic conditions.
- See presentation and find out more [here](#).

d. NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference

Susana Barraza, NICE, provided the update.

- The K12 Conference will take place December 7-9, 2020.
- Registration for the pre-conference workshops is closed.
- See presentation and find out more [here](#).

VIII. Featured Topic

Topic: Revisions to the Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity (NICE Framework)

- Karen Wetzel, Manager of the NICE Framework, provided the update. Rodney Petersen introduced Karen Wetzel, the new manager of the NICE Framework. Karen explained that the [NICE Framework](#) has a new title: *Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity*. The new title reflects the idea that the Framework is not only for those whose primary work is in cybersecurity but for anyone else who is involved in cybersecurity. One of the goals is to expand the use of the Framework:
 - Align the Framework to other publications
 - Establish processes for regular review and updates
 - Include new tools and integration into existing tools
 - Identify automation opportunities for tasks
 - Expand international outreach and adoption

The Framework is meant to have broad applicability for employers and learners in addition to education, training, and credential providers. Its main attributes are agility, flexibility, interoperability, and modularity.

The main building blocks of the Framework are tasks, knowledge, and skills. Skills and knowledge describe the learner, while tasks describe the work.

The revised Framework introduces competencies as a way for organizations to assess learners. Employers help NICE identify the competences.

NICE is hosting a webinar, "[Competencies – The Next Frontier for Closing the Cybersecurity Skills Gap](#)," December 16, 2020.

Milestones for the Framework in the year ahead include:

- December 20, 2020: New NICE Framework Users Group launches.
 - January 21, 2021: Request for Comments to NICE Framework Competencies issued.
 - February 21, 2021: Requests for comments to change process issued.
 - March - September 2021: Community workshops conducted – this is still being planned.
 - November 21, 2021: Updates to TKS statements, competencies, and work roles announced.
- Q&A

In response to a question, Rodney said that a repurposed SP 800-16 is forthcoming. SP 800-50 is a publication on the edges of what NICE traditionally does.

Rodney introduced another new employee in the NICE Program Office, Kofi Ansah-Brew, Lead for Government Engagement and FISSEA Program Lead.

In response to a question about the validity of 2017 NICE data, Karen said that the data is still valid, and they will be working to make sure it is up to date. She will discuss that further at the webinar this month. They will also be looking TKS statements and work roles.

In response to a question about overlays from other organizations being integrated or linked with the NICE Framework, Danielle said there are tools in the [Resource Center](#)

that link to different databases. There will soon be tools for pulling the data and using it for your own tool creation. There are other websites that allow for more searchable versions of the Framework. They will be working on better organizing the resources.

Karen said one of the goals is to integrate the Framework with existing tools. They want to make sure it is as broadly useful as possible and would like feedback on this.

Rodney mentioned the [Open Skills Network](#). He said that the work on the Framework to date and in the future is bidirectional: They want to want to hear from others involved in this kind of work, and they also want to set the standard that others rely on.

Rodney thanked everyone for their engagement and reminded them that transitions within the NICE community are underway. He thanked all of the subgroups that have been actively working for the past couple years and wished everyone safe and happy holidays.

- See presentation and fine out more [here](#).

IX. Next Meeting Reminder

The Next NICE Community Coordinating Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2021.