

Governor Carney, Chief Information Officer Announce Innovative Cybersecurity Partnership for Students

Online cybersecurity training offers scholarship opportunities for Delaware high school juniors and seniors, and college students

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney announced on Friday a new, innovative cybersecurity training partnership between the SANS Institute and the State of Delaware that provides Delaware high school juniors and seniors at least 16 years old, and college students interested in a cybersecurity career, the opportunity to learn basic cybersecurity skills and test their aptitude through a no-cost online game of discovery called [CyberStart](#).

“Delaware’s future is an innovation economy where technology takes center stage, and our state needs a pipeline of talented cybersecurity professionals,” said **Governor John Carney**. “I am excited that Delaware is able to partner with an organization like the SANS Institute to engage our state’s high school and college students, and encourage them to explore the field of cybersecurity.”

An introductory practice version of CyberStart will be available [online](#) from July 14-28, 2017. Participants who complete five of the eight practice modules will be invited to compete in the full-scale program that will run from August 1-28, 2017. The practice round is mandatory for those who would like to compete.

Participants do not need prior cybersecurity knowledge. Students from Delaware who excel in the CyberStart game will

have the opportunity to share in \$150,000 in scholarships for further cyber-education, and ultimately for \$500,000 in scholarships for college and graduate-level training in preparation for highly sought-after industry certifications.

Delaware students will be competing with students from Virginia, Michigan, Rhode Island, Iowa, Nevada, and Hawaii for scholarships sponsored by the SANS Institute.

“I applaud the SANS Institute for working to ensure the cyber workforce of tomorrow is available to protect our information and systems. The CyberStart program is an excellent and fun opportunity for students who think they may be interested in cybersecurity to determine if they have the passion and aptitude to pursue it as a career,” said **Delaware Chief Information Officer James Collins**. “I hope young people all across Delaware take advantage of this great opportunity.”

Each player in CyberStart begins as a “cyber protection agent” responsible for protecting an important operational base. The student chooses and solves challenges, earning points along the way. A cyber protection agent field manual provides answers to questions that may arise and hints help when players get stuck. When the player has solved a sufficient number challenges at one level, a new level opens up and new challenges appear – for a total of 31 levels.

When asked why SANS is making this investment, SANS Director of Research, Alan Paller, said “Because the nation desperately needs more highly-skilled cyber professionals, and we have new evidence that CyberStart will radically improve the quality and preparation of people entering the cybersecurity field. SANS trains more than 30,000 advanced cybersecurity professionals each year for military and intelligence organizations and for large high-tech companies in the U.S. and its allies. We discovered that those who have mastered the topics taught and measured in the CyberStart program do far better than others in the advanced cybersecurity courses that

prepare the critically needed people. By opening CyberStart to hundreds of thousands of students we may be able to help the nation identify the next generation of talented people who will excel in this critical field.”

For more information and to get started playing CyberStart, please visit DigiKnow.DTI.Delaware.gov.