NATIONAL CYBERWATCH CENTER TO HOST THE ANNUAL COOL CAREERS in CYBERSECURITY FOR GIRLS WORKSHOP
November 13, 2013

Careers in Cybersecurity to be Explored

Developed to help students learn more about the skills necessary to navigate the professional pipeline in the vast fields of CyberSecurity and Information Assurance, as well as, other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, the National CyberWatch Center is set to host their *Annual Cool Careers in Cybersecurity for Girls Workshop* November 13th, 2013. "We are happy to partner with the University of Maryland's Maryland Cyber Security Center (MC2) to host the event at the Riggs Alumni Center, College Park, Maryland," states **Casey O'Brien**, Director of the National CyberWatch Center (NCC). Over 300 middle school girls, accompanied by parents and teachers attend the full day event. At the workshop, a Cyber Crime Scenario is presented to the girls. The attendees break off in to small CSI teams and rotate around different "cyber tables" to gather clues to solve the cyber crime. Each table has a different activity led by a women professional in the field. The girls use the first part of each rotation to gather a clue, and the remainder of the time is used to learn more about the career and how each representative entered the field. Girls find out more about the education skills needed, likes and dislikes and salary range. Activities include: cryptography, assembling a computer, steganography, penetration testing, and cell phone forensics.

"The annual event stems from the need to attract and retain women in the STEM workforce, and the growing need for cybersecurity professionals, particularly in this geographic location," shares **Dr. Davina Pruitt-Mentle**, Executive Director of ETPRO and the National CyberWatch Center K12 Division PI. Indeed, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 48 percent increase in jobs for computer software engineers and a 55 percent growth in jobs for network system and data communications analysts by 2018. Projections for Maryland mimic the same trend. While computer operators and computer programmers are projected to decrease, computer software engineers, network systems and data communications analysts, and network and computer systems administrators are projected to go up between 40 and 50%, and computer and information systems managers are projected to grow by 23%. Much of this is fueled by the growing IT industry, which is in particular demand in MD, DC, and VA, because of the large federal infrastructure including intelligence and Department of Defense government agencies and related contractors. "The Cool Careers in Cyber Security for Girls Workshop significantly contributes to increasing the number of women in this critical field, which is one of the core goals of the education activities led by the Maryland Cybersecurity Center," said **Dr. Michel Cukier**, Associate Director for Education at the Maryland Cybersecurity Center (MC2), "and we are excited to partner with NCC to offer this unique opportunity." "As the demand for cyber security professionals continues to grow for the foreseeable future, it is important to provide students with the necessary information to explore the exciting opportunities in the cyber security field," said **Chandra McMahon**, Vice President of Commercial Markets and Cyber Security at Lockheed Martin.

The National CyberWatch Center has hosted the annual event since 2005, impacting over 1300 girls from the MD, VA and DC area, with funding from the National Science Foundation. Support this year also comes from Lockheed Martin.

For more information on the Annual Cool Careers Event visit
http://www.edtechpolicy.org/cyberk12/c3workforcecareers.html or contact Dr. Davina Pruitt-Mentle at dpruitt@edtechpolicy.org .