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Delaware puts cyber security center stage at Summer Cyber Camp

By Peter MacArthur 10:18am, July 19, 2016 - Updated 10:23am, July 19, 2016

Delaware takes a leading role in cyber security nationwide as the state plays host to the U.S. Cyber Challenge and the 7th annual Delaware Summer Cyber Camp.

More than 50 individuals took part in the camp, which wrapped up Friday, getting hands-on, in-depth instruction from industry experts.

Mark Hufe, Director of the Center for Cyber Security at Wilmington University, says the take away for the campers is real-life experience in a field that is growing, out of necessity, by leaps and bounds.

"The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects an 18% growth in cyber security jobs between now and 2024. It shouldn't be any surprise, when we look around, everything we hear is about a data breach here, a hack there. It seems we're becoming more and more vulnerable by the day."

Elayne Starkey is Chief Information Security Officer for the state of Delaware. She says an event like this, especially one with a years-long track record, boosts Delaware's profile in the industry.

"It sure does, and we're proud of that. We're small here in Delaware but we're mighty. In the end, it's all about protecting our data and trying to combat cyber threats and this camp provides us a way to do that."

Starkey emphasizes that the camp offers a major leg-up for those fortunate enough to take part in it.

"Give them a chance to learn new skills and practices as well as inform them of educational and employment opportunities."

Hufe says the proof of the program's success is palpable. A young woman who took part two years ago decided, upon graduating, she wanted to get a job at the prosecutor's office in Philadelphia. One problem: They had no openings.

"So she sent in her resume anyway and three days later got called in for a job interview and got hired to do mobile device forensics examinations in part because she had on her resume that she had participated in the U.S. Cyber Challenge."

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