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MTC joins effort to train cyber security specialists

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Computer security is a growing concern as cyber crimes continue to rise.

To help meet the demand for cyber security specialists, the University of Tulsa, four community colleges and six CareerTech Centers, including Stillwater's Meridian Technology Center, have formed the Cyber Security Education Consortium.

"The purpose is to give students a seamless pathway to pursue higher education," said DeAnna Little, program instructor and chair of the information technology program at MTC. "The end goal is to provide a qualified workforce for Oklahoma to secure our digital infrastructure."

MTC implemented its cyber-security training program last spring as part of its information technology division. Currently, there are three high school seniors enrolled in the program and several adults have also enrolled for the spring semester. Students must be at least 18 years old and pass a criminal background check.

Darin Killough, director of full-time programs at MTC, said with technology changing so fast, schools must work hard to keep up with the changes.

"There is so much commerce that relates to electronics right now," he said. "This is a field that is growing so fast."

Little said students in the MTC program get to work with first-rate cyber security equipment including a retina scanner.

As a member of the Oklahoma Center for Information Assurance and Forensics Education, the CareerTech system is training cyber security technicians and professionals. The CareerTech certification program includes five core courses: principles of information assurance, network security, enterprise security management, secure electronic commerce and digital forensics.

Students completing the certificate program exit with a variety of career opportunities and postsecondary education options.

Law enforcement, information technology and security professionals can also learn the latest information assurance and forensic techniques at one of the 54 technology center campuses or by using the CareerTech mobile lab. The CareerTech system provides a variety of training options to support homeland defense efforts.

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