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**OSU-Okmulgee's IT Program Sponsors Competition for State's Top Cyber Security CareerTech Students**

By: **Sharon Smith**

The 2006 Oklahoma State University - Okmulgee Cyber Security Invitational Competition was held recently to recognize the outstanding efforts of secondary students, postsecondary students and Career Technology Center faculty who are preparing to address the national, regional and state needs for highly trained cyber security experts. Scott Newman, OSU-Okmulgee's Information Technologies Division Chair, says the competition allowed students to test skills they are learning in their CareerTech programs and will use in the work environment.



Individuals competing in the annual event are required to be cyber security students at one of the state's Career Technology Centers. Tulsa Technology Center, Central Technology Center in Drumright and Francis Tuttle Technology Center in Oklahoma City each sent students to participate in this year's event.

Gary Wayland, second place winner in the postsecondary category, who is a student at Central Technology Center and a resident of Davenport, says the competition was very challenging, yet fun. "We were asked to obtain information about a network - set up web pages and secure access. I finished quickly because I have been well-trained and knew where to start to solve the question."



Clint Webb, Instructor at Central Technology Center, says the competition involved scenarios that would occur in a workplace. "The students actually created a web page and secured the web server in one exercise. Another exercise involved a fictitious company and required students to recover information from a former employee's computer without knowing the password -- which happens in companies all the time."

The competition was difficult, but one that Lisa Cole, a resident of Tulsa and a student at Tulsa Technology Center - Riverside Campus, felt challenged her knowledge. "I thought it was difficult and took a lot of skill and know-how. I feel this competition helped me prepare for what it will be like to solve problems in a real corporate environment."



The competition gave CareerTech students a chance to test the skills they've learned in their classes. Tim Faulk, Tulsa Technology Center instructor, says, "In the competition, students were able to show their expertise in the skills they've learned, with the added benefit of competing with students from other CareerTechs. This is a great way for the students to learn how to sum up the skills and knowledge they've gained."

Willie Horn, a resident of Collinsville and a student at Tulsa Technology Center, thought the competition was really fun, however, "it was more challenging than I expected it to be. The tests really challenged my knowledge and skills to work through the problems in a timely manner."

Problem solving is constantly used by people in cyber security, and Michelle Wigington, a resident of Glenpool and a student at Tulsa Technology Center, says this competition tested her problem-solving skills. "This competition was a very valuable learning experience. I saw how closely I have to pay attention to details."



Jim Morris, instructor at Tulsa Technology Center - Riverside Campus, says he is very proud of his students, many of whom placed in the competition. "The OSU-Okmulgee staff and faculty did a fantastic job designing the competition. When our students get a chance to come to OSU-Okmulgee's competition, they can compare to what they're learning in our classrooms, and see where they need to improve and where they need to excel."

Morris noted that the first year for the cyber forensics program has been a great experience for his students. "We're still the only pilot program in the nation with a career path from high school through college level. We send a lot of students to OSU-Okmulgee to earn their degree in cyber security and forensics. It's great to see students get excited about their education and take pride in what they're learning."

Many of the student competitors from Francis Tuttle Technology Center in Oklahoma City have decided cyber security and forensics is the career field they want to pursue, according to Bob Rauh, instructor. "We have an articulation agreement with OSU-Okmulgee

and we market that to our students' parents because many of them want their children to earn a bachelor's degree. Many of our students will continue their education in cyber security at OSU-Okmulgee to earn a Bachelor of Technology."

OSU-Okmulgee and area CareerTechs are working together to train students in one of the most in-demand career fields today - cyber security and forensics. Partners in the only pilot program in the nation that synchronizes a career path from high school through graduate school, OSU-Okmulgee and CareerTechs are developing ways to educate students; this competition was one of those ways.

OSU-Okmulgee, Technology Centers and other educational institutions are members of the Cyber Security Education Consortium. The National Science Foundation awarded the consortium a \$3 million education grant to create new jobs for Oklahomans by offering training and academic programs covering secure e-commerce, network security, enterprise security and digital forensics. The curricula address technical, operational and managerial aspects of information systems security, as well as related legal and ethical issues.

OSU-Okmulgee's IT faculty facilitated the contest in the university's ATT/SBC Excelerator computer labs. Newman says the competition provides OSU-Okmulgee's Information Technologies faculty opportunities to interact with the state's most talented cyber security CareerTech students. "The contest provides our faculty with opportunities to get to know the state's best and brightest cyber security students, and the students with the chance to learn more about cyber security - while comparing their skills against the state's top students. Through this competition, we hope to encourage many of these talented students to pursue rewarding careers in this exciting field."

The categories of winners were divided into Secondary students and Postsecondary students. The winners were:

**Secondary Winners:**

1st Place - David Calvert from Tulsa Technology Center

2nd Place - Willie Horn from Tulsa Technology Center

3rd Place - Joe Guthrie from Tulsa Technology Center

**Postsecondary Winners:**

1st Place - Aaron Wells from Tulsa Technology Center

2nd Place - Gary Wayland from Central Technology Center

3rd Place - Reuben Fredricks from Francis Tuttle Technology Center

**The Outstanding Cyber Security Program was:**

Francis Tuttle Technology Center

**The students who participated in the competition are:**

**Central Technology Center:**

Rex Ashcraft, resident of Cushing; Jeremiah Dabney, resident of Kellyville; Dustin Ford, resident of Ripley; Cheree Goins, resident of Cushing; Ted Runt, resident of Bristow; Casey Standeford, resident of Mannford; Gary Wayland, resident of Davenport.

**Francis Tuttle Technology Center:**

Steve Copeland, resident of Oklahoma City; Reuben Fredricks, resident of Edmond.

**Tulsa Technology Center:**

Jesse Albert, resident of Tulsa; David Calvert, resident of Tulsa; Lisa Cole, resident of Tulsa; Kevin Drain, resident of Tulsa; Joe Guthrie, resident of Bixby; Blake Hobbs, resident of Broken Arrow; Willie Horn, resident of Collinsville; Keith Perkins, resident of Skiatook; Michael Smith, resident of Tulsa; Aaron Wells, resident of Owasso; Jon Woods, resident of Broken Arrow; Michelle Wigington, resident of Glenpool.

Prizes for contestants included scholarships to attend OSU-Okmulgee, SanDisk flash drives, Paraben forensics software, CompTIA certification vouchers, medals and a trophy for the outstanding CareerTech team.

**Image #1 Outline:**

Winners in OSU-Okmulgee's 2006 Cyber Security Invitational Competition were, left to right: Joe Guthrie from Tulsa Technology Center; Gary Wayland from Central Technology Center; Willie Horn from Tulsa Technology Center; Aaron Wells from Tulsa Technology Center; David Calvert from Tulsa Technology Center. The Outstanding Cyber Security Program was Francis Tuttle Technology Center.

**Image #2 Outline:**

OSU-Okmulgee instructor, Sunita Rajanala, monitors competitor Willie Horn, a student at Tulsa Technology Center - Riverside Campus.

**Image #3 Outline:**

Gary Wayland, left, student at Central Technology Center, and Clint Webb, instructor at Central Technology Center.

**Image #4 Outline:**

Lisa Cole (left) and Joannie Lovett attend Tulsa Technology Center - Riverside Campus.

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