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## INNOVATION & JOB NEWS

### Walsh College opens Cyber Lab to advance student progress in cyber defense and IT

WALSH COLLEGE | TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016

Walsh College has created a custom learning space for training future cybersecurity professionals that offers realistic, hands-on opportunities to experience the physical security countermeasures faced in information technology environments.

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Part of the new addition and renovation at the College's Troy campus, the Walsh Cyber Lab provides dedicated space for research and intellectual support to train students on various leading-edge technologies in the growing discipline of cyber defense. It has been designed in response to the growing demand for highly trained cybersecurity graduates.

The Walsh Cyber Lab includes workstations, virtualization screens, and threat maps pinpointing virus and malware infestations around the world. It provides a "cloud" environment to provide penetration testing and defense deployment from anywhere in the world.

In addition, the Cyber Lab offers modern infrastructure equipment where students can learn about the latest technologies used in business environments, as well as physical servers that can be used for virtualization.

Walsh College is designated as a CAE-CD – National Center of Academic Excellence (CAE) in Cyber Defense (CD) – by the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Effective through the 2021 academic year, the designation underscores the College's commitment to high quality undergraduate and graduate information technology (IT) degree programs. Walsh has had a CAE designation since 2006.

"Companies, health care facilities, educational institutions, and other major users of information technology are demanding graduates who can provide sophisticated knowledge and the technical ability to defend systems from outside attack," said Barbara Ciaramitaro, Ph.D., professor and chair, Decision Sciences, Walsh College. "We believe our Cyber Lab enhances and expands knowledge received in the classroom."

She added, "It gives Walsh students a competitive advantage in the industry with practical, real-world experience that is both valued by students and demanded by employers."

In addition to developing technical skills, communication skills are emphasized in Cyber Lab interactions, said David Schaefer, instructor, Decision Sciences. "Employers tell us they need graduates who can effectively and succinctly explain IT challenges and solutions in this area for their organizations. While the

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actual work is important, the ability to communicate clearly about emerging issues has become critical.”

Walsh teaches students both offensive and defensive strategies to guard organizations against cyberattacks, noted Schaefer.

Walsh, one of five colleges or universities in Michigan to receive the NSA CAE-CD designation, offers four IT degrees: Bachelor of Science in IT (BSIT), Master of Science in IT (MSIT), Master of Science in IT Leadership (MSITL), and a dual Master of Business Administration (MBA)/MSITL degree. A concentration in cybersecurity within the graduate-level programs is offered as well.

In addition to ensuring that its programs meet the NSA CAE/CD requirements, Walsh College has also mapped its courses and programs to align with two other external standards: Department of Defense (DoD) 8570 and the Department of Homeland Security NICE Framework.

To support its efforts in providing leadership in cybersecurity education, Walsh established the Center for Cybersecurity Leadership (CCL). The CCL, one of four Walsh College research centers, was established in collaboration with the Management and Decision Sciences Departments of Walsh College, with strong support from business, military, and government leaders.

For more information on the Walsh College Cyber Lab, visit [www.walshcollege.edu/CyberLab](http://www.walshcollege.edu/CyberLab).

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