OPPORTUNITIES
Events current at time of publication. Have a virtual resource or event to share? Email us!

- June 21-August 9 – Virtual Whole-of-Government R&D Showcase
- June 28-30 – Disaster Management Summit
- August 15-19 – Pacific NorthWest Economic Region Annual Summit
- August 30-September 2 – National Homeland Security Conference

CONTACT
- Want to know more? Visit us at pnnl.gov/projects/nwrtc.
- Contact the NWRTC with questions and comments at nwrtc@pnnl.gov.

AROUND THE REGION IN HOMELAND SECURITY

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

The Northwest Regional Technology Center (NWRTC) is a virtual resource center, operated by Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), to support regional preparedness, resilience, response, and recovery. The center enables homeland security solutions for emergency responder communities and federal, state, and local stakeholders in the Northwest.

STUDENT ANALYSTS DELIVER CYBER MONITORING THAT MATTERS

Hands-on experience is a valuable education tool and one that is paying off for small, local governments in Washington State—thanks to the Public Infrastructure Security Cyber Education System, or PISCES.
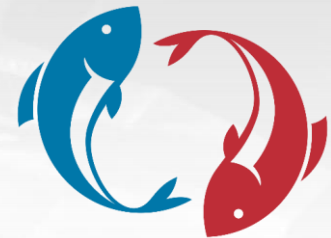
"Small municipalities need cybersecurity services to protect their infrastructure but they are unable to secure adequate resources because of limited funds. Collaboration with universities/colleges and students who review streaming data from small communities helps them meet these needs and remain protected," said Steve Stein, PISCES director and former NWRTC director.

PISCES is a nonprofit organization partnering with universities to provide students with curricula and supervised experiences to act as entry-level cyber analysts. Students analyze streaming data for small communities or agencies who may otherwise not be able to implement cybersecurity to the extent needed.

"Through PISCES, we're building a reliable high-quality pipeline to address the shortage of cyber professionals ready for the workforce while providing valuable services to organizations who need it," said Stein.

The program is wrapping up another successful academic year with several universities partners, including Central, Eastern, and Western Washington universities, Spokane Falls Community College, and Alabama A&M University. Students analysts, under supervision, made notable progress in identifying anomalies in data streams that made a difference for their community partners.

Reportable events recognized and escalated by students include:

- Large data transfers from a municipal firewall

- NetBIOS scanning activity from IP addresses in Asia

- Unencrypted credentials observed

- Persistent scanning from a European IP address

- Persistent spammers

- Probing for virtual private network vulnerabilities

- Unconfigured (default) web server and attempts to escalate privileges.

"You cannot get more real-world than this—students are in the throes of large volumes of live data and identifying irregularities that have turned out to be suspicious behavior for our partners to act on," Stein said.

PISCES is working to expand both its university and community partner base. The program also continues refining its approach to serve its customers, providing enhanced guidance and tools. Recent improvements include:

- Holding the third annual academic workshop to convene program stakeholders

- Informing customers on emerging threat events and compromised assets

- Working with customers on configuration issues

- Providing student ticket oversight and analyst service during student outages

The program was also in the headlines recently. See "Cash-Strapped Local Governments Turn to Students for Cybersecurity Help" in the *Wall Street Journal* and "Targeting Cybersecurity with Next-Generation, Washington-grown Talent," in the *Seattle Times.*

"We appreciate the impact we have been able to make in the Pacific Northwest and look forward to evolving our funding and partnering model to serve more students, more universities, and ultimately more communities in need nationwide," said Stein.

To learn more about PISCES, visit pisces-intl.org.

HAMILTON CISO OF THE YEAR

PISCES Founder Mike Hamilton was named Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) of the Year at *Cyber Defense Magazine*'s 9th Annual Global InfoSec Awards at the 2021 RSA Conference. Hamilton is CISO and founder of CI Security, which was also awarded Editor's Choice in Managed Detection and Response. Hamilton helped pioneer PISCES from the early 2000s, when he recognized local government needs for cybersecurity monitoring and the potential for university partnerships. Read the press release to learn more about the awards and visit CI Security to learn about the evolution of PISCES.