

Mountain West Cybersecurity Consortium

2020 Spring Conference, Minutes

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March 9, 2020

- Chair:** Rick White, Ph.D., UCCS Interim Director for Cybersecurity Programs, rwhite2@uccs.edu
Vice-Chair: Joe Murdock, CISSP, University of Colorado Denver, joseph.murdock@ucdenver.edu
Website: <https://www.mtnwestca.org/>
Appendices: Appendix A – Conference Agenda
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Introduction: The Mountain West Cybersecurity Consortium (MWCC) held its Spring Conference on March 6th at Regis University Denver Technical Center, 6380 S. Fiddlers Green Circle, Greenwood Village, CO 80111. The event was jointly sponsored by Regis University and the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs, with funds received under Senate Bill 18-086.

Program: The one-day was arranged as listed by the agenda in Appendix A to address business in the morning, and share school experiences in the afternoon.

Business 1: Charter Ratification. The MWCC Charter was ratified with one modification, to allow for future consideration for a Board of Directors. Otherwise, this action completed a process that began when a charter was proposed at the Spring 2019 MWCC Conference, and then revised at the Fall 2019 MWCC Conference. The ratified Charter is available at the MWCC website.

Business 2: Guest Business Panel. As requested at the Fall 2019 MWCC Conference, Joe Murdock arranged for a panel discussion with invited business representatives. The three panelists listed below answered questions from both the moderator and audience.

Guest Business Panel

1. James Carder, CISO, LogRhythm
2. Ryan Fitch, Security Chief, ibotta
3. Tom Walcott, NSA Technical Director

Question 1: What are the newest trends and threats you are seeing in the current cyber landscape?
The panelists generally noted heavier volume of attacks, particularly those thought to originate from Russia, though none particularly new.

Question 2: What are barriers you are encountering while trying to overcome these threats?
Information sharing was a noted concern. Many victims have legitimate concerns for withholding vulnerability data.

Question 3: What role do you see colleges and university playing with respect to your organization?
Area colleges and universities provide an essential pipeline for heavily sought talent.

Question 4: What areas of the cyber landscape should colleges and universities be looking at and focusing on? *Application. Software skills are fundamental, but malware reverse engineering instills greater knowledge and understanding.*

Question 5: Are there opportunities for collaboration between your organization and the schools of the MWCC, and if so, what do those look like and how do we make it happen? *Businesses can be a source of “soft funds” to help sponsor projects that provide direct benefit to the company.*

Action: Joe Murdock will lead a committee to find out what kinds of funding opportunities might be available to fund collaborative projects between MWCC and industry.

Update: MWCC GenCyber Proposal. On 25 Oct 19, UCCS submitted a proposal to the NSF/NSA GenCyber program for the MWCC to host five student summer camps starting from June through August 2020. UCCS would provide the training team, equipment, and support. MWCC members would be asked to volunteer a location to conduct the camps. GenCyber began notifying teams in February whether or not they won an award. As of Friday, 6 Mar 20, GenCyber had not yet contacted UCCS about the student camp proposal. Conference participants affirmed continued interest in the project.

MWCC GenCyber Proposed Student Camp Dates

- *Camp 1: June 15 – 18*
- *Camp 2: June 29 – July 3*
- *Camp 3: July 6 – 9*
- *Camp 4: July 20 – 23*
- *Camp 5: August 3 – 6*

Business 3: MWCC Recruitment Strategy. A discussion about how to expand MWCC participation was conducted over the lunch period. Travel was identified as a specific impediment, particularly for institutions outside Colorado. To help overcome this problem, Nina Amey from Arapahoe Community College offered to host the Fall 2020 MWCC Conference at the Sturm Collaboration Campus in Castle Rock. The Sturm Campus has specially designed facilities to accommodate teleconferencing for large audiences. This capability might help the MWCC reach out farther beyond Colorado.

Business Proposal: MWCC Sponsored Cyber Job Fair. During the discussion on MWCC Recruitment Strategy, Doug MacGregor from Western State University proposed having the MWCC sponsor a cyber job fair for students from participating colleges and universities. The job fair would provide a one-stop-shop for potential employers to find in-demand talent. Many suggestions followed.

Action: Doug MacGregor volunteered to lead a subcommittee in developing the Cyber Job Fair proposal.

WiCys Teleconference. Cancelled. The Women in Cybersecurity (WiCys) Conference was cancelled due to the threat from the Coronavirus pandemic.

School Updates. After lunch, discussion was opened for participants to share their continuing program experiences in cyber education and training. Participants were specifically asked to share experiences with 1) CAE efforts, 2) online education, and 3) staffing experiences.

Programs. Participants reported a generally growing trend for cybersecurity programs and enrollments at both colleges and universities. UCCS reported a slate of new cybersecurity concentrations opening within the College of Business, plus a \$5.9M award from the Department of Labor to launch a cybersecurity apprenticeship program.

CAE Status. According to Joe Murdock, the NSA is granting extensions to CAE status while they continue to consider changes to the program. The culmination of changes are expected to streamline the process and make it quicker to achieve certification. How long until this is completed is still unknown.

Teacher Recruitment. Teacher recruitment continues to be problematic, especially among smaller and more rural institutions. Doug MacGregor reported that Western University will pay for a master's degree for their latest recruit. A number of institutions reported that they continue to lose faculty and they're not being replaced.

Online Experience. John O'Rourke from Norwich University reported that Texas A&M has released a complete set of online cybersecurity courses available at <https://teex.org/program/dhs-cybersecurity/>.

Discussion: This was the best attended and most collaborative conference yet. Twenty-one participants attended, the same number who registered (though not all the same people). Three new initiatives were proposed: 1) Host the Fall MWCC Conference at the Sturm Collaboration Campus in Castle Rock and use their teleconferencing centers to reach more participants, 2) Organize a Cyber Job Fair making it easier to match employers with students with in-demand job skills, and 3) Explore funded collaboration opportunities with industry. Two subcommittees were formed to investigate the last two initiatives. Participants also expressed continued support for the GenCyber grant should it yet be awarded. And the one-day conference format again seemed to work well.

Conclusion. The MWCC Spring Conference succeeded in finalizing the organization charter, truly making it an independent forum. And participants began working together and planning future projects, truly making it a collaborative forum. These are significant strides compared to last year. And though the progress may be small, it is an encouraging sign of positive momentum. October 16 was tentatively set as the date for the Fall MWCC Conference at Arapahoe Community College Sturm Collaboration Campus in Castle Rock. Announcements will be sent out once the date and location are finalized, and as necessary depending what happens with GenCyber and the other subcommittee findings.

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Appendix A

Conference Agenda

March 6, 2020

Regis University Denver Tech Center Campus
6380 S. Fiddlers Green, Cir #200
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

- 08:00 Reception/Breakfast
- 09:00 Welcome & Introductions
- 09:15 Business 1: Charter Ratification / GenCyber Update
- 09:45 Business 2: Guest Business Panel
 - James Carder, CISO, LogRhythm
 - Ryan Fitch, Security Chief, ibotta
 - Tom Walcott, NSA Technical Director
- 11:30 Business 3: MWCC Recruitment Strategy
- 12:00 Working Lunch / WiCys Teleconference
- 13:00 School Updates
 - Program Updates
 - CAE Status/Efforts
 - Online Experience
 - Staffing Experience
- 16:00 Adjourn

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Appendix B
Conference Registration
 March 6, 2020

Registration

	Last	First	Affiliation	E-Mail
	1	White Rick	UCCS	rwhite2@uccs.edu
✓	2	Klein Gary	UCCS	gklein@uccs.edu
	3	Burd Stephen	Univ. New Mexico	burd@unm.edu
	4	Walcott Tom	USU	walcott@unr.mt
	5	Oravels John	Norwich U.	JohnOravels@Norwich.edu
	6	BATTY Michael	UNIVERSITY of Denver	michael.batty@du.edu
	7	CARDER James	Loghythm / U Denver	james.carder@loghythm.com
	8	Fitch Ryan	Ibotta	Ryan.Fitch@ibotta.com
✓	9	MacGregor Doug	Western	dougmacgregor@western.edu
	10	Frost April	PPCC	april.frost@ppcc.edu
	11	Johnson Terri	PPCC	terri.johnson@ppcc.edu
	12	Piche Jen	NSA	Jennifer Piche pichej@nsa.mil
	13	Murdock Joe	UCD	Joseph.murdock@ucdenver.edu
✓	14	Harmon Bruce	DU	bruce.harmon@du.edu
	15	Amey Nina	ACC	nina.amey@arapahoe.edu
✓	16	Hoare Eugene	UNM	erhoare@unm.edu
✓	17	Glen Sagers	SUu	glen.sagers@suu.edu
	18	Wyle Chris	UNCO	Chris.wyle@unco.edu
	19	Fulton Steve	USFA	steven.fulton@USFA.edu
✓	20	Ayala Chris	CU Boulder	Christopher.Ayala@colorado.edu
	21	Chris Javan	RRCC	Chris.Javan@rrcc.edu
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	23			
	24			
	25			

✓ Not on sign up/registration list

MWCC Spring Conference

25 26 April 2019

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