

The Cyber Workforce Accelerator FAQs

What is the Cyber Workforce Accelerator?

Established in 2024, the Cyber Workforce Accelerator (CWA) program provides Cyber Ranges to all 16 Maryland community colleges for use in both workforce development programs and community college curriculum across the IT and cybersecurity spectrum. Developed by the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) and BCR Cyber, the CWA builds upon the resounding success of BCR Cyber's Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) ACT Training Program. Since its inception, the EARN ACT Training Program has trained more than 1,000 unemployed or underemployed students and transitioned them into family-sustaining wage IT and cyber careers.

Why is there a need for this?

The nation is experiencing a supply shortage of qualified IT and cybersecurity workers, and Maryland is a hotbed of demand. This documented shortage has both economic and national security repercussions. Studies indicate there are more than 30,000 cybersecurity job vacancies in Maryland alone. The CWA helps address this need, as well as helping to create employment opportunities for Marylanders.

What is a BCR Cyber Series 3000 Cyber Range?

The BCR Cyber Series 3000 Cyber Range simulates cyber-attacks and introduces students to cybersecurity concepts and operations. The BCR Cyber Series 3000 Cyber Range is the fourth iteration specifically designed for workforce development. BCR Cyber has used this device to train and place over 2,500 participants with the most advanced cybersecurity strategies and techniques in an environment that simulates real threats in real-time. The range's hands-on training encompasses cyber threat detection, compromise mitigation, and system remediation, and is complemented by placement services.

What will CWA provide?

CWA will consist of a workforce development program utilizing BCR Cyber's SOC Operations Analyst I training and certification. This certification has recently been conditionally approved by the State of Maryland as an Industry-Recognized Credential (IRC) through its Blueprint initiative. SOC Operations Analyst I Certification is an Industry-Recognized Credential designed to prepare individuals for entry-level Security Operations Center (SOC) roles. This training provides technical cybersecurity knowledge, including threat analysis, security operations, enterprise security, and hands-on incident response. The certification aligns with federal government standards, industry frameworks, and employer requirements to ensure candidates are prepared for real-world cybersecurity challenges. BCR Cyber will then lead efforts to place participants who complete this program into meaningful employment opportunities.

In addition, all of Maryland's 16 community colleges will now have access to the cyber ranges to use for their own curriculum development and course inclusion at their own physical locations. BCR Cyber will provide training to all 16 community college's faculty on how to operate the BCR Cyber Series 3000 Cyber Range. MACC and BCR Cyber will be forming an Academic Committee consisting of faculty

members from each of the 16 community colleges, representatives from MACC and representatives from BCR Cyber. This committee will meet regularly to discuss best practices of how to incorporate the range into academic curriculum. Students will now be able to demonstrate their knowledge in a hyper-realistic and stimulating environment alongside both their peers and professors.

What is the overall goal of CWA's Workforce Development efforts?

The program's workforce development goal is to close the cybersecurity workforce gap in the state of Maryland. The State had funded 1,100 participants to be trained through this effort in its first year.

What do the students receive upon completion of their academic training utilizing the range?

For academic purposes, each community college will determine how their students utilize the cyber range and what they receive because of that utilization.

How is the CWA's Workforce Development training developed?

To ensure its training programs are aligned with today's cybersecurity industry standards, BCR Cyber created a public-private consortium consisting of more than 40 strategic industry partners. Together, this consortium provides BCR Cyber with valuable guidance on industry requirements and needs.

Additionally, BCR Cyber has established valuable strategic relationships with state and federal government IT departments, enabling them to deliver cutting-edge cybersecurity training to their employees. By collaborating closely with these government entities, BCR Cyber helps in strengthening their cybersecurity posture and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

About BCR Cyber

Founded in 2017, BCR Cyber is a leading provider of comprehensive cybersecurity training and job placement services. Its comprehensive IT/cybersecurity training programs are designed to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in the field. BCR Cyber offers exceptional placement services and multiple career pathways through its Training Pipeline Management program, ensuring that our students have diverse options to kickstart their professional journeys. These pathways include internships, apprenticeships, and full-time employment. By collaborating with employers, CR Cyber aims to train and successfully place qualified BCR Cyber students in IT and/or Cyber positions.

About the Maryland Association of Community Colleges

Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) is an advocate for Maryland's 16 community colleges and the needs of the students they serve. State-of-the-art facilities, flexible curricula, and award-winning teaching staff serve full- and part-time students pursuing academic degrees, career certifications, and enrichment courses at 22 campuses and 1000+ learning sites statewide.