



UTSA's Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security Hosts Finals of Nation's Largest Collegiate Cyber Security Competition April 16-18 in San Antonio

5th Annual National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition Requires Students to Keep Networks Safe from Would-Be Hackers

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SAN ANTONIO--(EON: [Enhanced Online News](#))--Eight teams of college students from across the country will compete this month for the Alamo Cup at the finals of the nation's largest collegiate cyber security competition, the 5th Annual [National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition](#) (NCCDC). The national competition, scheduled for April 16-18 at the Hilton San Antonio Airport hotel, was founded in San Antonio by the [Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security](#) (CIAS), a nationally recognized leader in cyber security education and training, and part of [The University of Texas at San Antonio's Institute for Cyber Security](#).

The NCCDC is the first practical cyber security competition designed to test how well students operate and manage a network infrastructure, similar to the networks found in the commercial sector. At the start of the competition, each team inherits an "operational" network from a fictional business that includes e-mail, Web sites, data files and users. While the competitors are given minimal information about the network, its security levels and its software, they are given a few frantic minutes to familiarize themselves with their new networks before a live Red Team starts actively scanning and probing their companies.

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Scoring is determined by how well the teams keep up with the operational needs of their businesses and their user demands while maintaining service level agreements for all critical Internet services. Teams accumulate points by successfully completing business tasks and maintaining services. They lose points by violating service level agreements, recovery and restoration usage services, and when the Red Team successfully penetrates their network. At the end of the competition, the team with the highest score is named the national champion.

In all, eight teams will compete at this year's national championship. They include:

- DePaul University (Ill.): 2010 Midwest Regional CCDC Winner
- *Northeastern University (Mass.): 2010 Northeast Regional CCDC Winner
- Montana Tech: 2010 North Central Regional CCDC Winner
- University of Louisville (Ky.): 2010 Southeast Regional CCDC Winner
- *Texas A&M University, College Station: 2010 Southwest Regional CCDC Winner
- Towson University (Md.): 2010 Mid-Atlantic Regional CCDC Winner
- *University of Washington: 2010 Pacific Rim Regional CCDC Winner
- *Cal Poly Pomona (Calif.): 2010 West Coast Regional CCDC Winner

*denotes 2009 national competitor

"The CIAS is committed to establishing a pipeline of highly qualified students who are interested in pursuing cyber security careers," said Dwayne Williams, director of the NCCDC. "Through the competition, students with an interest in cyber security are challenged and evaluated on processes, procedures and tactics. This gives them invaluable practical experience and makes them more marketable when they go to apply for jobs following graduation. At the same time, the experience gives U.S. colleges and universities a chance to evaluate their cyber security curriculum and make changes to keep up with the demands of the industry."

The NCCDC has grown tremendously in its first five years. In 2005, the competition began with five participating schools. This year, 83 colleges and universities participated in eight regions. In one region, Midwest, regional organizers had to hold four state competitions to narrow the field for its regional challenge.

Competition sponsors include a variety of businesses in the information security, information technology, broadband and publishing industries in addition to a group of local businesses located in San Antonio. This year's major sponsors include the Department of Homeland Security, TASC Inc, Boeing, Core Security, Microsoft Security Response Center, Science Applications International Corp, Wolfram Research, McAfee, Northrop Grumman, Accenture, Dynetics, Innové and Denim Group.

For more information about the 2010 cyber security competition, visit <http://www.nationalccdc.org> or contact Dwayne Williams in the CIAS at 210-458-2173 or dwayne.williams@utsa.edu.

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Contacts

UTSA
 Christi Fish, 210-410-8874
christi.fish@utsa.edu

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