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TU students win Mid-Atlantic Cyber Defense Competition

March 17, 7:44 PM » [Harford County Education Headlines Examiner](#) » Richard Webster



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Earlier this week we reported that students from several [Maryland colleges were scheduled to provide defensive measures against simulated cyber attacks](#). Today we're happy to report that the Towson University student team has just won the mid-Atlantic Regional Cyber-Defense Competition, and will now be competing in the National Final, to be held in San Antonio from April 16-18.

The mid-Atlantic region consists of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Fifteen institutions participated in the initial round of the competition, including: George Mason, George Washington, James Madison, UMBC, University of MD College Park, University of Pittsburgh, and Wilmington University.

Five teams, including Towson U. made it to the regional finals. The Regional Final lasted three days (Thursday 3/11 - Saturday 3/13). During the final, each of the student teams had to run and maintain the IT infrastructure of the fictional town of Avalon. The team had to run and support a range of technologies including e-mail, multiple web sites, multiple databases, a SharePoint site, an Open Conference System, instant messaging, and a disaster management system.

The students had to do so while under constant attack from a "Red Team." The Red Team, which eventually numbered over 20, consisted of a mix of professional penetration testers and students of

offensive network warfare. This team attempted to attack the systems that the students were maintaining in a variety of ways, from network attacks to wireless attacks to hacking the RFID system that was used to control the door to the student work area up to the surreptitious use of microphones and camera equipment aimed at the student teams.

Simultaneously, the students were given "business injects" that would require them to complete various tasks. For example, the students were told that a (fictional)



earthquake had damaged one of their servers which had to be replaced during the competition.

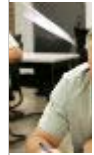
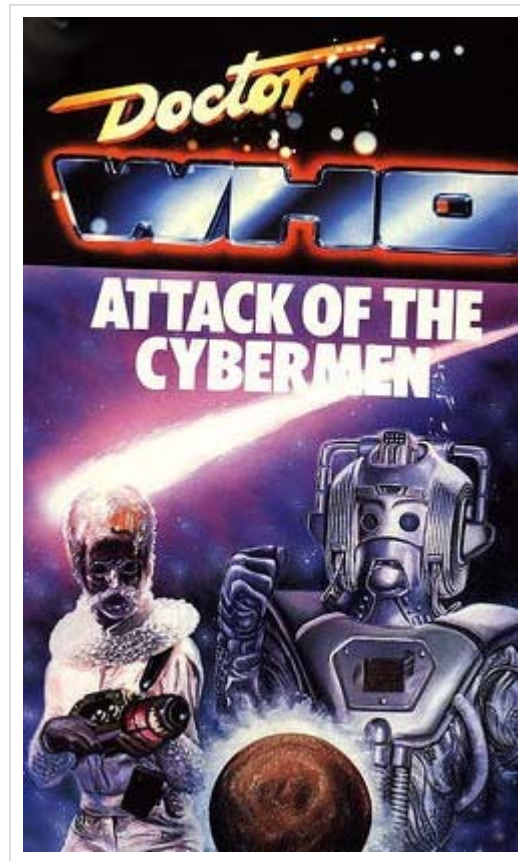
To win the competition, the student teams needed to keep their systems up and running, keep the Red Team hackers out of their systems and simultaneously respond to all of the business injects over the course of the competition- over two full days of attacks (Friday & Saturday).

The competition was run at the conference center at the new SAIC facility in Columbia. Other corporate sponsors included Boeing, Northrop Grumman, CSC, Cisco, Tenable, Core Security Technologies, White Wolf Security, and Solera.

There were two camera crews on site during the competition, one to develop a documentary for the organizer while a second was hired by Solera. Solera was providing the competition with some of their enterprise level data capture products to allow staff and visitors to see what was happening on the network, and their film crew was there to get footage that can be used in their promotional activities. Interestingly, the primary Solera representative was Finn Ramsland- the (now very proud) father of one of the members of the Towson student team.

The Towson University student team consisted of :

- Madeline Pelkey, Junior (Team Captain)
- Brian Haar, Graduate Student
- Shane Lester, Senior
- Felix A. Mercado, Graduate Student
- Brian Namovicz, Senior
- Finn Ramsland, Senior
- Bryan Sizemore, Senior
- Jon Wiseman, Senior



The initial round of this year's mid-Atlantic Cyber Defense competition was a three hour session done remotely - though it had to be postponed twice due to the snow storms. After the team made it to the finals, student preparation activities increased again, including an all-day session held on the Saturday before the competition in one of TU's Computer Security Laboratories.

Congratulations to the TU student team.

The web site for the National Cyber Defense Competition: <http://www.nationalccdc.org/>

The web site for the mid-Atlantic Regional Competition: <http://www.midatlanticccdc.org/CCDC/>

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