

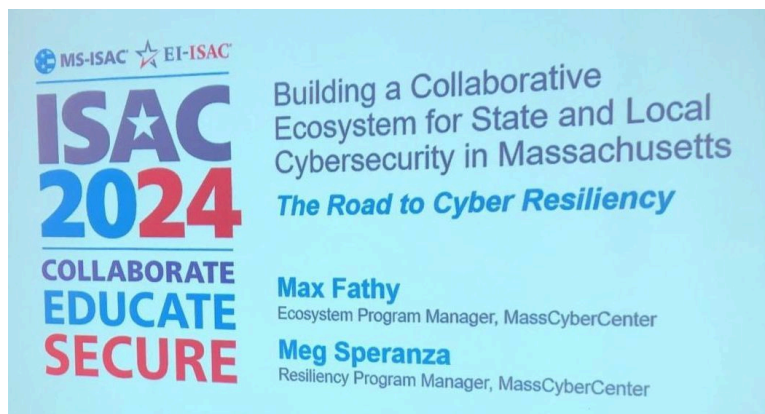
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## July Updates

### Building State and Local Cyber Resiliency in MA Spotlighted at the 2024 ISAC Annual Meeting



In June, Max Fathy, senior program manager for cybersecurity innovation and Meg Speranza, resiliency program manager presented at the 2024 ISAC Annual Meeting in Orlando, Florida. Their presentation, **“Building a Collaborative Ecosystem for State and Local Cybersecurity in Massachusetts: The Road to Cyber Resiliency,”** gave an overview of how the cybersecurity ecosystem worked together to identify and create programs to boost local cyber resiliency. The talk also highlighted the state’s new program that promotes municipal resiliency and workforce development through the establishment of a statewide consortium of Security Operations Centers (SOCs) and Cyber Ranges.

The presentation emphasized the positive outcomes of developing a similar program and recommended that states:

- **Collaborate across the cyber ecosystem**, academia, state and local government and private industry, to develop cyber programs that leverage resources and create economies of scale
- **Integrate and align federal and state cybersecurity programs** when creating cybersecurity initiatives for better understanding and utilization by

local governments

- **Create opportunities for under resourced municipalities to collaborate and network** for greater understanding and help with cybersecurity

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## SOC Range Initiative Promoted at 2024 NICE Conference



Last month, Max Fathy, senior program manager for cybersecurity innovation, attended the 2024 NICE Conference and co-presented, **“Enabling Cyber Range Training through Ecosystem Collaboration,”** with Meghan Martinez, director of cyber range programs at CyberTrust Massachusetts.

The presentation showcased how Massachusetts is supporting dynamic collaborations to grow and diversify the state’s cybersecurity workforce through the creation of cyber ranges at community colleges and universities. Providing this resource at various academic institutions allows the MassCyberCenter to best reach underrepresented groups and kick start young professionals interested in pursuing a career in the ecosystem.

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## Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Grant Program



The MassCyberCenter announced the launch of the Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Grant Program in May. This \$2.1 million initiative helps municipalities improve their cyber defenses and will provide up to \$25,000 in grants to fund narrowly focused cybersecurity technology upgrades identified through vulnerability assessments.

Massachusetts municipalities are eligible to receive a one-time grant of up to \$25,000 to support cybersecurity improvements based on a vulnerability assessment conducted by a qualified provider. Applicants may also use this grant funding towards the cost of vendors to implement the cybersecurity improvements or IT-related staff costs of the municipality performing the services in lieu of using a vendor.

Applications are open, will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed quarterly.

[Learn More & Apply](#)

## Cyber Range Coming to Salem State University Campus



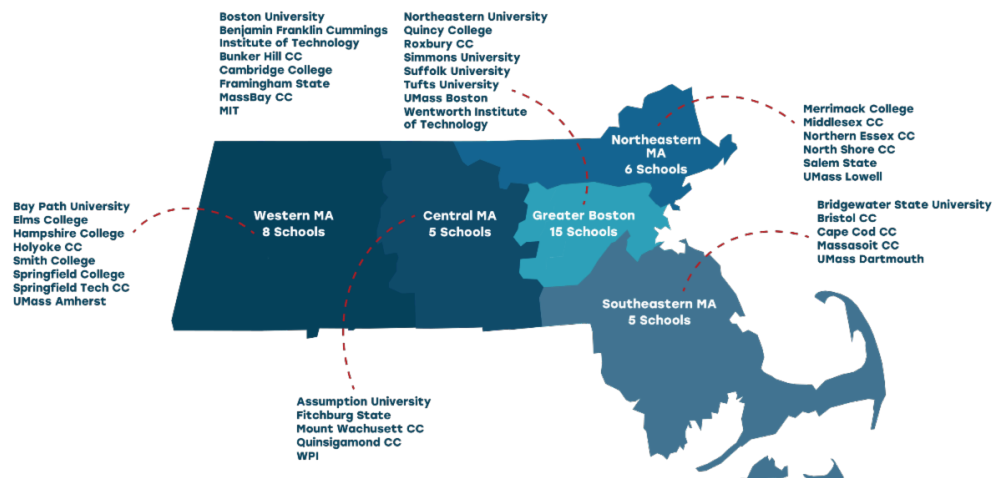
The MassCyberCenter announced a \$624,437 award to [Salem State University](#) in June to establish and operate a Cyber Range on its campus. The grant is part of the state's [Security Operations Center \(SOC\)/Cyber Range Initiative](#).

The award will support capital expenditures to construct the Cyber Range and expenditures for the first year of operations.

[CyberTrust Massachusetts](#) is a program partner and non-profit that works with academic institutions operating SOC and Cyber Range facilities, as well as industry to grow and diversify the cybersecurity workforce in the Commonwealth.

[Learn More](#)

## Cohort Apps for the MA Cybersecurity Mentorship Program Available Next Month



Applications for the Fall 2024 cohort of the Massachusetts Cybersecurity Mentorship Program will open in August. The program will be celebrating its ninth semester of matching diverse cybersecurity college students with a mentor that is a cybersecurity professional.

There are three main components to the program:

1. **Direct Mentorship:** Students and their mentor, a cyber industry professional, are matched for one-on-one, ongoing dialogue on careers in cybersecurity.
2. **Student Project:** Students and their mentors work together on a cybersecurity project. Students present their project during a showcase event towards the end of the Fall 2024 semester.
3. **Events:** Students participate virtually in cybersecurity career panels and have the opportunity to attend events during Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month.

Since Fall 2020, the program has worked with **254 diverse students** from **40 schools** across the Commonwealth, connecting them with **105 professional mentors** from **69 companies**.

For more cohort information or program updates complete the interest form below.

[Learn More](#)

[Interest Form](#)

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## Be a Cybersecurity Hero: Protecting Your Data with Strong Passwords



Passwords are often the first layer of defense for protecting data from malicious attackers. The media has shared several stories about cyber incidents that have cost organizations millions of dollars and left victims open to identity theft, extortion and more. Weak passwords, typically eight characters or less, can be “brute forced” (broken/guessed) by attackers in mere seconds.

Here are some best practices for creating strong passwords to effectively protect your data:

- Make passwords 15 characters or more; the longer the password, the stronger it is

- Use a combination of numbers, upper and lower-case letters and symbols
- Use unique passwords for each account
- According to CISA, a strong password would be a memorable phrase of 5 – 7 unrelated words. For example: *19MyHappy86Place@Home*

Remembering and creating distinctive, complex passwords for various difficult accounts is challenging, but using a password manager makes it easier.

Password managers are easy-to-use programs that:

- Store all passwords so you don't need to recall them from memory
- Prompt users to change the password if it is weak or previously used
- Identify if passwords are found in a breach

For more cybersecurity recommendations, visit the “Be a Cybersecurity Hero” webpage [here](#).

[Learn More](#)

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## Volunteer to Conduct Mock Interviews with Future Cybersecurity Heroes



Per Scholas Greater Boston is calling for volunteers to conduct mock interviews with current students to prepare them for future job interviews.

The interview dates will take place now through December and are aimed at helping the students gain confidence, refine their interview skills and prepare for future careers.

Contact [bdrees@perscholas.org](mailto:bdrees@perscholas.org) for more information.

[Sign up to volunteer here](#)

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## Have you visited the MassCyberCenter Jobs Board?

Cybersecurity jobs encompass various types of skill sets across all sectors of business and critical infrastructure. The MassCyberCenter Jobs Board features opportunities that can advance your career path.

Check out some of the latest postings:

- **Sr. Network Engineer** – UMass Memorial Health [View Job](#)
- **Systems Administrator (RPA)** – Lincoln Laboratory, MIT [View Job](#)
- **Systems Engineer** – Northeastern University [View Job](#)

[Explore Jobs Board](#)



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