

# PRESS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 18, 2017**

## **CyberThon Teams Ready to Compete in Record Third Year**

High school and college students representing nine area schools compete in cybersecurity challenge event

**PENSACOLA** – More than 100 local students will eagerly dive into cybersecurity competition and training this weekend as the [AFCEA Blue Angels Pensacola Chapter](#) hosts its third annual CyberThon event. Set for January 20-22 at the National Flight Academy, CyberThon brings together community leaders, cyber experts and a cadre of competitors from local schools to participate in real-world cyber operations and defense sessions. New to the event this year are an online banking environment for cyber gameplay and an industry-recognized certification training opportunity for middle school students.

After three sessions of pre-event training, ten teams representing nine area high schools and colleges are ready to compete for top honors within a Jeopardy-style challenge environment, a new feature for CyberThon 2017. Working within a themed cyber environment that includes a simulated online banking system designed by Premier Sponsor Navy Federal Credit Union, teams will work to find cyber vulnerabilities, harden their network to defend against attacks, and discover progressive questions and clues to complete new challenges. Each team is led by current cyber industry professionals volunteering their time to mentor and train students throughout the weekend event.

Also new to the event this year is CyberSAFE certification training for middle school students. A group of 15 students that participated in 2016 summer cyber camps hosted by AFCEA will be guided through a half day training session followed by an opportunity to earn their Certified CyberSAFE credential from Logical Operations. “Our AFCEA chapter is so excited to offer this opportunity for these young students,” said Randy Ramos, president of the AFCEA Blue Angels Pensacola Chapter. “We see so much potential for developing a cyber workforce for our Pensacola region, and it’s critical to get students interested early. Creating curiosity and interest in STEM learning in middle school and even elementary students is a key to sparking long term success in building our technology workforce here.” In addition to the CyberSAFE training group, more than 60 students from Belleview Elementary and Belleview Middle schools will tour the CyberThon event on Friday, participate in cyber challenge games, and observe opening ceremonies.

Middle school, high school, and college participants include students representing:

Avalon Middle School	Pensacola Christian Academy
Bailey Middle School	Pensacola State College
Belleview Elementary School	Pine Forest High School
Belleview Middle School	Ransom Middle School
Brown Barge Middle School	Sims Middle School
George Stone Technical Center	Tate High School
Gulf Coast State College	University of West Florida
Hellen Caro Elementary School	Warrington Middle School
Home School	West Florida High School
Little Flower Catholic School	Woodlawn Beach Middle School
Pace High School	

In support of the Department of Homeland Security’s mission statement that “Homeland Security Begins with Hometown Security,” the three-day event will also include keynote addresses on cybersecurity trends from leading experts in the cyber industry.

**Guest Speakers** at Friday opening ceremonies and Sunday closing ceremonies include:

Mr. Ray Murphy, VP Information Security, Navy Federal Credit Union. (Friday a.m.)  
Dr. Ray Letteer, Senior Information Security Official (SISO), United States Marine Corp. (Friday a.m.)  
Mr. Joseph Campbell Senior Industrial Security Specialist, Defense Security Service. (Friday p.m.)  
Mr. John Felker, Director, National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center, Department of Homeland Security. (Friday p.m.)  
Mr. Bill Hills, Executive Vice-President and Chief Information Officer, Navy Federal Credit Union.  
(Sunday Closing Ceremonies)

**CyberThon 2017 Sponsors:**

**Premier Sponsors:** Escambia County Sheriff’s Office, Navy Federal Credit Union

**Diamond Sponsors:** Surveillance and Cyber Security Solutions, LLC (SCSS), GBSI

**Gold Sponsors:** AMTIS, August Schell, CSRA, DHS, Gulf Power, Innovation Coast, Techsoft, UWF Center for Cybersecurity

**Silver Sponsors:** AppRiver, FloridaWest, George Stone Technical Center, PenAir Federal Credit Union, Pensacola State College, Santa Rosa Economic Development, UWF Innovation Institute, vTECH io, TEKsystems

Cybersecurity continues to be a rapidly growing industry with strong demand for skilled technical workers, and Escambia County offers a wealth of training and career opportunities for interested students. Pensacola is also home to many of the leading tech firms in the region. As the leading organization for increasing technology information in the defense, homeland security and intelligence communities, AFCEA and the local Blue Angels Pensacola chapter are thrilled to be hosting CyberThon 2017.

**About AFCEA:** Founded in 1946, AFCEA International's roots trace back to the American Civil War. Today, AFCEA serves as a bridge between government requirements and industry capabilities, representing the top government, industry and military professionals in the fields of information technology, communications and intelligence. The AFCEA Blue Angels Pensacola Chapter has been an active participant in raising scholarship funds for local technology students for more than a decade.

**For more information and event updates:**

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/CyberThonPcola](http://www.facebook.com/CyberThonPcola)

**Twitter:** [@cyberthonpcola](https://twitter.com/cyberthonpcola), #cyberthon

**Email:** [cyberthon@afceapensacola.org](mailto:cyberthon@afceapensacola.org)

**Website:** <http://afceapensacola.org/>

**Complete Event Schedule:**

<http://www.afceapensacola.org/images/SCHEDULE-OF-EVENTS.pdf>

**2016 Event Photos:**

[https://www.facebook.com/CyberThonPcola/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=432471093623952](https://www.facebook.com/CyberThonPcola/photos/?tab=album&album_id=432471093623952)

**2017 Promo Video:**

<https://vimeo.com/185993727>

**Directions to the National Flight Academy:**

<http://www.nationalflightacademy.com/documents/Map&Directions2.jpg>

Note: visitors without DOD ID must enter the base via the gate at Blue Angel Parkway

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The logo for CYBERTHON features the word "CYBERTHON" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters "CYBER" are in red, and "THON" is in blue. The letter "O" in "THON" is replaced by a blue hexagon. Above the "O" is another blue hexagon, which is slightly offset to the right. The background of the logo area is white, with a decorative blue and black graphic at the bottom of the page.