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CyberThon Funds Available for College Scholarships

Pensacola AFCEA chapter offers funding to 2016 high school graduates

PENSACOLA – Local high school students pursuing advanced education in a STEM field (Science, Technology, Engineering or Math) are now eligible for new funding in the form of AFCEA scholarships. The AFCEA Blue Angels Pensacola Chapter is [making \\$10,000 in college funds available](#) to local high school graduates as a result of generous sponsor support of CyberThon 2016.

CyberThon, hosted in January at the National Naval Aviation Museum and the National Flight Academy, gave high school and college students [hands-on experience in cyber defense and engagement procedures](#). Cybersecurity professionals from the Department of Defense, Industry and Academia collaborated as team members to mentor students in the [education and awareness showcase event](#) created to grow Pensacola's IT and cybersecurity workforce.

“CyberThon is a partnership between business, education and military leaders and gives students a glimpse of the real-world application of cybersecurity skills. This really is at the heart of the AFCEA mission,” said chapter president Randy Ramos. “One of the primary goals of AFCEA Pensacola is to help build an employable workforce and advance the education of our community, which is why we work so hard to raise support for events like CyberThon and make scholarships possible. The Pensacola tech community has really stepped up in recent months, and we're thrilled to be helping students in partnership with their generosity,” Ramos said. One of the key contributors making the scholarships possible is the Escambia County Sheriff's Office, which donated \$25,000 to CyberThon 2016. “By supporting these students we are developing a cyber-skilled workforce prepared for high demand careers in law enforcement, the military and in the private sector,” said Escambia County Sheriff David Morgan.

[Additional contributing sponsors](#) of CyberThon included AMTIS, AppRiver, COLSA, Dynetics, Hixardt Technologies, H2PC, Innovation Coast, Gulf Power, GBSI, Northrop Grumman, Navy Federal Credit Union, Tech Soft, VOR Technologies, SCSS, The University of West Florida Innovation Institute, The UWF Center for Cybersecurity, Escambia County Commissioner Doug Underhill, Florida West, Pensacola State College, and The U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

CyberThon 2016 participation included: thirty-seven high school students representing seven high schools and one home school across Escambia and Santa Rosa counties; the event's first-ever collegiate team of eleven members representing three post-secondary schools; and the first cyber security elementary school initiative inspired thirty-three 3rd, 4th and 5th graders from Santa Rosa schools to enhance their cybersecurity knowledge and skills.

(MORE)

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While the success of CyberThon was a catalyst for these scholarship awards, students who apply are not limited to cybersecurity studies. Any local high school senior bound for college in a science, technology, engineering or math track is eligible to apply. The AFCEA Pensacola Board of Directors will award up to 10 scholarships of \$1,000 each. Additional information, application documents and submission instructions are available at <http://afceapensacola.org/scholarships>. The deadline for application submission is May 20, with awards announced by June 1.

In addition to these scholarships, CyberThon funds will support cybersecurity summer camps hosted by the AFCEA Pensacola Chapter and other cybersecurity student initiatives to be announced soon. The AFCEA Blue Angels Pensacola Chapter is extremely thankful for the tremendous support shown by the sponsors of CyberThon!

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