

Moraine Valley faculty earns national cyber award

Moraine Valley Community College continues to earn accolades for cyber security efforts, thanks in large part to the faculty and staff. Erich Spengler, director and principal investigator of the Center for Systems Security and Information Assurance (CSSIA) and Moraine Valley professor of computer integrated technologies, earned the first National CyberWatch Center Pioneer Award.

The National CyberWatch Center is an Information Assurance/Information Security Advanced Technology Education Center of the National Science Foundation (NSF) which aims to advance cybersecurity education and ultimately strengthen the workforce. It started a cybersecurity conference strictly for community college educators—The Community College Cyber Summit (3CS)—which was hosted through CSSIA at Moraine Valley this past July.

One of the new CyberWatch programs focuses on awards and recognitions. The Pioneer Award is one of the honors under this new program. Recipients of this award are not limited to cybersecurity educators, and it is given to someone who helps create or develop new ideas and methods.

“I personally consider Erich one of the best in any academic setting. He is someone I have professionally looked up to since I first met him in 2004 when he sat on a visiting team that came to Prince George’s Community College as part of NSF’s due diligence before CyberWatch was awarded its first NSF Advanced Technological Education grant,” said Casey O’Brien, principle investigator of the National CyberWatch Center. “Erich’s contributions in curriculum development, virtual learning environments, competitions, faculty professional development, mentoring, and successful grant management have set the bar to a standard many will try to attain for years to come. Most importantly, he’s one heck of a guy.”

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