

Agenda of the PCWA Partner Meeting

July 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Previous Meeting Actions

1. Approval of minutes from the May 11, 2026 meeting.

Announcements/Updates

1. PCWA NICE Framework Website

- a. Work has begun to create a section of the IUP website for employers interested in learning more about the NICE Workforce Framework. The new page will include tips and resources, and more details will be shared with partners soon.

2. Paid Internships

- a. In preparation for Y2 of the project, all industry partners will be asked to share details on open internship positions for AY 26/27 as community college partners experienced significant difficulty in finding external internship opportunities for students.

3. Barriers to Certification

- a. Encouraging students to obtain certifications has been challenging for educational partners. All partners will be asked to discuss ways to encourage students to participate in cert-prep workshops and attempt certification exams.

4. Additional Year 1 CTF

- a. Funds may be available to host an additional (K12 or College-level) Capture the Flag event in September/October 2026. Educational partners will be asked to share feedback on possible dates/times, content, and expected participation.

5. Sept 2026 Meeting Availability

- a. Partners will be asked to share their general availability and preference for the Sept 2026 meeting.

6. IUP Cybersecurity Day

- a. For the past 17 years, IUP has hosted its annual cybersecurity conference, IUP Cybersecurity Day. This year's event will be held on October 13, 2026, on the IUP main campus. We would greatly appreciate your assistance in promoting the event and helping recruit industry professionals to serve as speakers.

Agenda of the PCWA Partner Meeting

May 11, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Previous Meeting Actions

1. Approval of minutes from the April 13, 2026 meeting.

Announcements/Updates

1. First Progress Reports/Poster

- a. Staff prepared and submitted the first technical and financial progress reports on April 28, 2026.
- b. A poster was created for display at the upcoming NICE Conference, which is included on Page 2 of this agenda.

2. PCWA Partner Survey

- a. Analysis of responses to the PCWA Partner Survey has been conducted. The analysis presentation will be discussed with partners during the meeting, which is included starting on Page 3 of this agenda.

3. Paid Internships

- a. CTC has hired three interns, all of whom will start working by the end of the month. Due to limited funding for IUP student interns, some wages are being covered by PC4A.
- b. Industry partners are asked to inform project staff if they have any additional openings for community college students.

4. PCWA CTF

- a. The PCWA CTF was offered on April 17-18, 2026. 30 participants across 12 teams registered for the event, however, only 17 participants across eight teams actually participated.
- b. CTF winners have been contacted and prizes will be awarded soon.
 - i. The CTF was offered to any student enrolled in a US based high school. The top three teams were from high schools in Nevada, Texas, and New Jersey.
- c. A satisfaction survey was distributed to all active participants. Responses are still being collected and results will be used to improve future offerings.
- d. **Lessons Learned**
 - i. K-12 instructors asked that the event be open during the school day as they incorporated competition into their classwork.
 - ii. Some teams finished the event very quickly, indicating challenges were too easy.
 - iii. Multiple teams from outside the US repeatedly attempted to join the competition. Additional restrictions will be placed for future events.

5. July 2026 Meeting Availability

- a. Partners will be asked to share their general availability and preference for the July 2026 meeting.

6. Input is solicited from all partners regarding project progress and future directions.

PA CYBER WORKFORCE ALLIANCE (PCWA)

Led by Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP)

Impacting the Pennsylvania Cybersecurity Workforce



PA CYBER WORKFORCE ALLIANCE

ABOUT US

The PA Cyber Workforce Alliance (PCWA) is made up of 12 partners working together to advance cyber education in the region. Partners include: one four-year university, two community colleges, one technical education center, three K-12 school districts, and five cybersecurity companies. Visit our website using the QR code below for more information on partners, events, and activities.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES



Increase the number of students obtaining industry-recognized cyber certifications.



Provide unique opportunities for students to explore cybersecurity career pathways.



Engage K-12 students in the cybersecurity field.



Assist partners with adoption of the NICE Framework.

PROJECT INITIATIVES

Providing certification-prep workshops and exam vouchers, offering paid internships, hosting cyber competitions, collecting and analyzing data, and developing NICE Framework guidelines and implementation support.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the start of the project, we've accomplished the following:

- Subawards issued.
- Three partner meetings held.
- Website launched.
- Partner survey developed and distributed.
- Internship program established with one partner.
- K-12 cyber competition offered.
- See samples of marketing documents below.



High School CTF Flyer



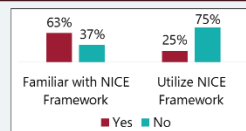
Internship Flyer

INSIGHTS FROM PARTNER SURVEY

A survey was distributed to industry partners to collect data on workforce needs. Responses were collected between December 2025 and March 2026. Insights gained are below.

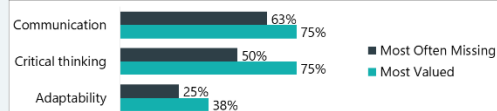
Knowledge and Use of NICE Framework

63% of respondents are familiar with the Framework, but only 25% use it. Uses include identifying skills gaps and aligning roles with standard terminology.



Soft Skills Gap

Communication and **critical thinking** are the **most valued** soft skills and the skills **most often missing** in new hires.



Important Factors in Hiring

Respondents ranked hiring factors in order of importance from 1-5. While **certifications are frequently discussed as important**, survey responses indicate they are a **lower priority** in actual hiring decisions.

Hiring Factor	Avg. Rank
Technical Skills	1.8
Work Experience	2.4
Soft Skills	2.8
Formal Education	4.1
Professional Certifications	4.1

CHALLENGES

- Participation in the partner industry survey was limited. Data collection will continue to gather more feedback and provide better insight into workforce needs.
- Internship positions are scarcer than originally anticipated. Work is underway to identify additional opportunities.



LEARN MORE

Visit our website at www.iup.edu/pcwa/ or contact us at pcwa-ramps@iup.edu.



regional alliances and
multistakeholder partnerships

Industry Partner Survey

Analysis & Insights



PA CYBER
WORKFORCE
ALLIANCE



INDUSTRY PARTNER SURVEY

OUTLINE

1. Hiring Demand and Timeline
2. Compensation and Retention
3. Certifications Among New Hires
4. Employee Educational Backgrounds
5. Knowledge/Use of NICE Framework
6. Soft Skills Gap
7. Technical Skills Gap
8. Important Factors in Hiring
9. Ideal Traits in Candidates
10. Tips for Candidate Success
11. Biggest Hiring Hurdles
12. Impact of AI
13. Academic Program Improvement
14. Key Takeaways and Opportunities

HIRING DEMAND & TIMELINE



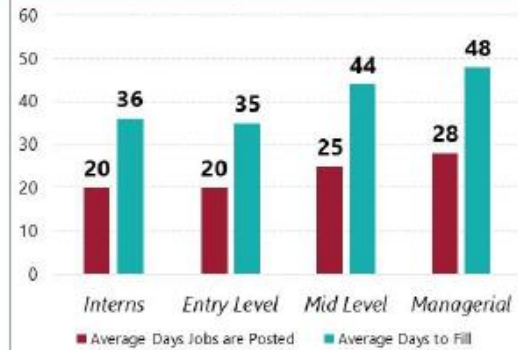
KEY INSIGHT

Open roles **exist at every level** and time to find and hire candidates increases with level.

Current Openings

Interns	16
Entry Level	10
Mid Level	27
Managerial	7

Hiring Timeline



www.iup.edu/pcwa/

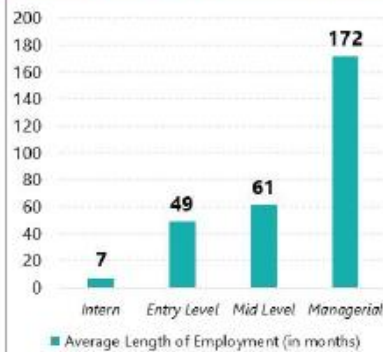
COMPENSATION & RETENTION



KEY INSIGHT

As roles advance, **compensation and retention increases**, highlighting value of cyber careers.

Avg. Employment Length



Avg. Starting Wage



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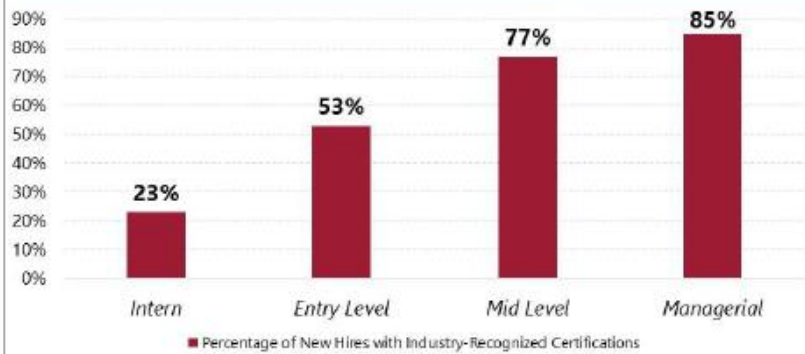
CERTIFICATIONS AMONG NEW HIRES



KEY INSIGHT

Most new hires have an industry-recognized certification, except for interns.

Percentage of New Hires with Industry-Recognized Certifications



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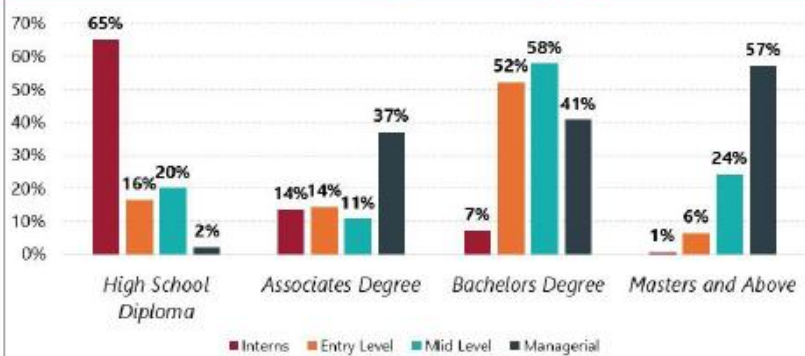
EMPLOYEE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND



KEY INSIGHT

Educational requirements increase with role level, though multiple pathways exist.

Educational Background of Employees



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KNOWLEDGE & USE OF NICE FRAMEWORK



KEY INSIGHT

Most employees are **familiar with** the NICE Framework, but **many don't use it**.

Familiar with NICE Framework



Utilize NICE Framework



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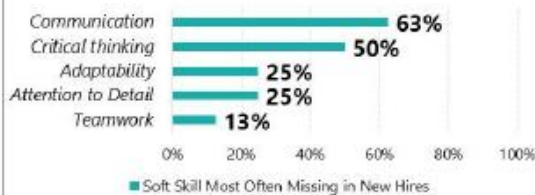
SOFT SKILLS GAPS



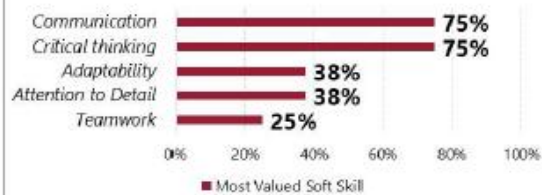
KEY INSIGHT

Communication and **Critical Thinking** are the most valued soft skills and the skills most often missing in new hires.

Missing Soft Skills



Most Valued Soft Skills



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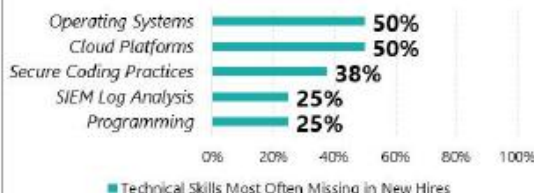
TECHNICAL SKILLS GAPS



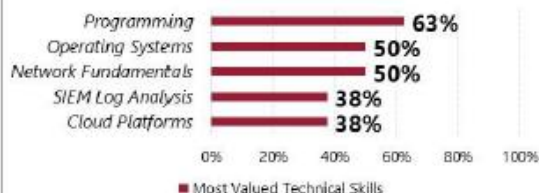
KEY INSIGHT

OS, Cloud, and Secure Coding are missing most often in new hires. Most valued skills are **Programming, OS, and Network Fundamentals**.

Missing Technical Skills



Most Valued Technical Skills



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IMPORTANT FACTORS IN HIRING



UNEXPECTED INSIGHT

While certifications are frequently discussed as important, survey responses indicate they are a **lower priority** in actual hiring decisions.

Hiring Factors Ranked from 1 (most important) to 6 (least Important)

Hiring Factor	Average Rank
Technical Skills	1.8
Work Experience	2.4
Soft Skills	2.8
Formal Education	4.1
Professional Certifications	4.1

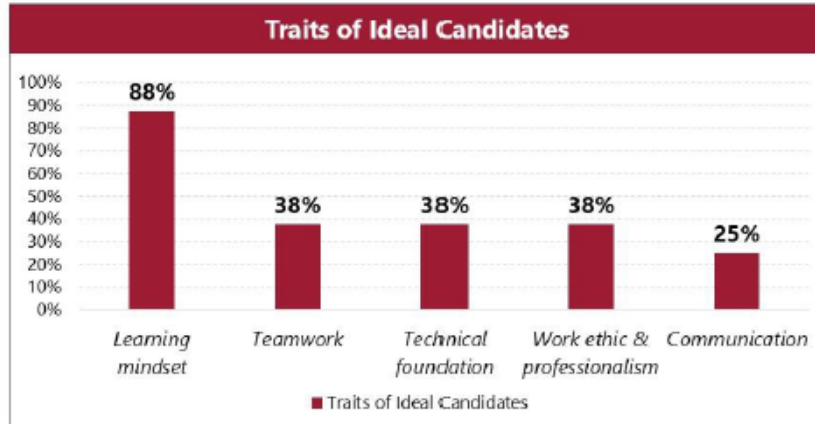
www.iup.edu/pcwa/

IDEAL TRAITS IN CANDIDATES



KEY INSIGHT

Almost all employers are looking for candidates who are **curious, adaptable, and willing to learn**.



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TIPS FOR CANDIDATE SUCCESS



KEY INSIGHT

Employers are looking for **proof of hands-on experience** when reviewing resumes, and a **lack of prep or dishonesty** are the most common mistakes made in interviews.



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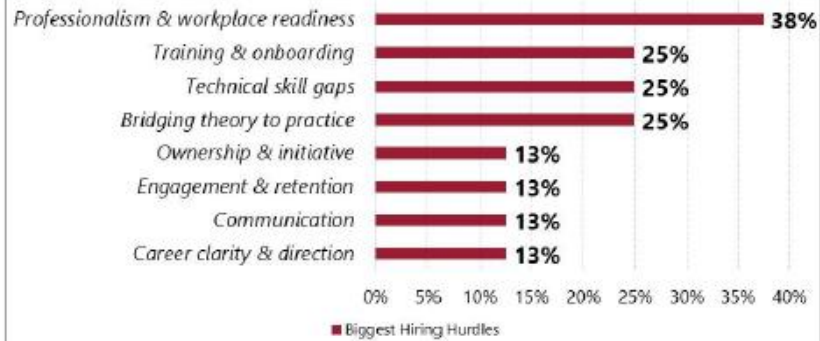
BIGGEST HURDLES IN HIRING



KEY INSIGHT

38% mentioned **workplace readiness** as a hurdle, with other factors varying widely between responses.

Biggest Hiring Hurdles



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IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



UNEXPECTED INSIGHT

While AI is frequently discussed as **reducing the need for entry level employees**, responses indicate **no impact on overall hiring**.

AI Has Impacted Processes



AI Has Reduced Employees



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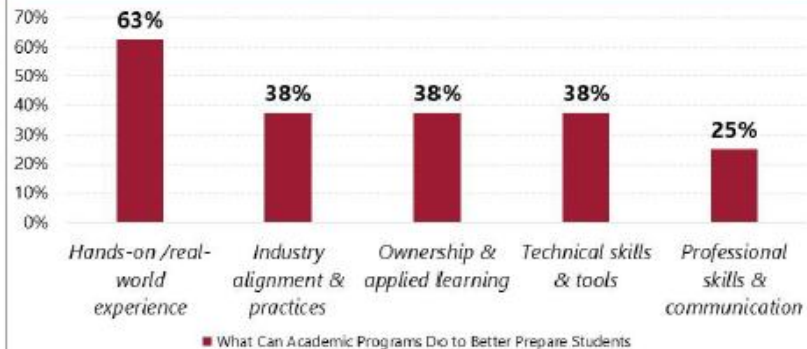
ACADEMIC PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT



KEY INSIGHT

Academic programs should **incorporate more hands-on activities** to better prepare students.

How Academic Programs Can Better Prepare Students



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KEY TAKEAWAYS & OPPORTUNITIES

Key Takeaways

- 1** **Hiring demand** exists at all levels, but roles take longer to fill as seniority increases.
- 2** **Communication and critical thinking** are highly valued and frequently missing.
- 3** Employers **prioritize hands-on experience** over certifications and formal education.
- 4** **AI has not reduced overall hiring** but may be shifting demand for entry-level roles.

Identified Opportunities

- 1** Academic partners should **increase hands-on and real-world learning opportunities** and incorporate **practice of communication and critical thinking skills**.
- 2** Employers need **increased knowledge of NICE Framework** and training **to improve utilization of Framework in hiring practices**.
- 3** Students should **highlight experience** on resumes and do **extensive prep and research** prior to interviews.

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Minutes of the PCWA Partner Meeting

Held Virtually on May 11, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Members Present: Waleed Farag (IUP), Lydia Taylor (IUP), Greg Paonessa (PHCC), Jamie Bretz (MCCC), Craig Russon (CompTIA), Jon David (NRL), Jen Krajic (Millennial)

Meeting Information

1. Motion to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2026 meeting was made by Greg Paonessa and seconded by Jamie Bretz. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Project leadership provided updates regarding required project reporting activities and noted that financial and performance reports had been submitted. An update was also provided regarding the project poster submitted for presentation at the upcoming NICE conference.
3. Preliminary results from the employer partner survey were presented. Project leadership emphasized that although only eight responses had been collected, the survey still provided valuable insight regarding workforce needs and hiring trends.
4. Survey findings indicated strong workforce demand across respondents. Discussion also occurred regarding continued difficulty securing internship opportunities for community college students despite reported workforce needs.
5. Survey results showed technical skills, work experience, and soft skills ranked higher than formal education and professional certifications. Industry partners discussed increased emphasis on ambition, self-learning, home labs, and hands-on experience during hiring.
6. Discussion occurred regarding increasing adoption of the NICE framework. While most respondents indicated familiarity with the framework, relatively few reported actively using it. Project leadership indicated NICE framework outreach will remain a major focus area.
7. Partners discussed soft skills and workplace readiness. Communication, professionalism, and critical thinking were identified as highly valued skills that are frequently lacking among applicants and new hires.
8. Discussion occurred regarding artificial intelligence and workforce impact. Survey responses suggested AI is primarily affecting processes such as hiring workflows and application screening rather than reducing overall hiring. Industry partners noted that AI is increasingly changing responsibilities and required skill sets, particularly in entry-level technical roles.
9. Academic program improvement opportunities were discussed, including increasing hands-on learning, expanding experiential opportunities, strengthening industry alignment, and incorporating more professional skill development within coursework.
10. Internship updates were provided by educational partners. Penn Highlands Community College reported expected summer internship placements, while Montgomery County Community College discussed both internal placements and additional internships currently under development.

11. Project leadership encouraged industry partners to continue sharing internship opportunities and reminded partners that grant funding remains available to support internship wages when applicable.
12. An update was provided regarding the K-12 Capture the Flag competition. Project leadership reported participation from multiple states and discussed lessons learned, including increasing Pennsylvania participation and expanding challenge difficulty levels for future events.
13. Partners discussed future direction of the project. Suggestions included continuing outreach activities, expanding K-12 engagement efforts, increasing hands-on opportunities, promoting certifications, and continuing workforce alignment activities.
14. The next PCWA meeting was scheduled for July 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM Eastern Time.
15. With no further business, the meeting concluded at approximately 9:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Lydia Taylor and Dr. Waleed Farag.

PCWA Partner Meeting

April 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Agenda

Previous Meeting Actions

1. Approval of minutes from the March 2, 2026 meeting.

Announcements/Updates

1. First Progress Report

- a. Project staff are currently preparing the first progress report to be submitted to the funding agency, due by April 30, 2026. Subawardees will be contacted to provide any additional information needed to ensure all project activities are accurately reported.

2. PCWA Partner Survey

- a. The PCWA Partner Survey closed on March 31, 2026. Eight responses were received, and results will be shared with partners soon.

3. Paid Internships

- a. CTC is still interviewing candidates for internship positions. In total, 15 students have applied, and six interviews have been conducted.
- b. All industry partners will be asked to share updates on possible internship openings at their companies.

4. PCWA CTF (April 17-18, 2026)

- a. Details and marketing materials for the upcoming [PCWA high school CTF](#) were shared with partners via email.
- b. All K-12 partners are asked to continue marketing the event and encourage students to participate.
- c. Currently only two teams have registered to participate, one from RVSD and one from PA Cyber Charter. If more students do not register, the event might be postponed.

5. May 2026 Meeting Availability

- a. Partners will be asked to share their general availability and preference for the April 2026 meeting.

6. IUP Cybersecurity Industry Advisory Board Meeting

- a. All industry partners are asked to attend the IUP CIAB meeting, held immediately after the PCWA partner meeting. An agenda will be provided separately.

Minutes of the PCWA Partner Meeting

Held Virtually on April 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Members Present: Hauwa Abbas (IUP), Jamie Bretz (MCCC), Stacy Dabbs (CTASD), Waleed Farag (IUP), Rob Heinrich (IASD), Kevin Pudliner (CTC), Matt Sulkosky (Millennial), Lydia Taylor (IUP), Barb Zaborowski (PHCC)

Meeting Information

1. Motion to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2026 meeting was made by Kevin Pudliner and seconded by Barb Zaborowski. The motion passed unanimously.
2. An update was provided regarding internship activities through CTC. Fifteen students from partner institutions applied for internships and six interviews had been completed at the time of the meeting. CTC indicated they were preparing offers for two to four students, pending final budget review.
3. Discussion occurred regarding limited funding available for internships within the PCWA project. Project leadership noted that additional funding sources may be explored to support more students.
4. Industry partners provided updates on internship opportunities. Millennial Software Inc. indicated that internship opportunities would likely be limited this year due to challenges within the government contracting sector.
5. An update was provided on the upcoming K-12 Capture the Flag (CTF) competition scheduled for April 17–18, 2026. At the time of the meeting, only three teams with six total participants had registered.
6. Partners discussed outreach efforts for the hackathon and the importance of increasing participation. K-12 partners agreed to continue sharing promotional materials with school districts and computer science teachers. Project leadership noted that the event may need to be postponed if participation does not increase.
7. Additional announcements were shared regarding cybersecurity engagement opportunities. Partners were encouraged to share information about an upcoming cybersecurity industry event in the Pittsburgh area as well as a free cybersecurity summer camp for high school students hosted by IUP in August 2026.
8. Discussion occurred regarding recruitment for the summer cybersecurity camp. Partners emphasized the importance of distributing information early due to limited space availability.
9. Industry partners were asked to sponsor prizes for the K-12 hackathon. Matt Sulkosky indicated that Millennial would sponsor prizes for the event.
10. The next PCWA meeting was scheduled for May 11, 2026 at 9:00 AM.
11. With no further business, the meeting concluded at approximately 9:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Lydia Taylor and Dr. Waleed Farag.

PCWA Partner Meeting

March 2, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Agenda

Previous Meeting Actions

1. Approval of minutes from the January 29, 2026 meeting.

Announcements/Updates

1. PCWA Partner Survey

- a. Response collection for the PCWA Partner Survey will **conclude on March 31, 2026**. Only eight responses have been received so far. All partners are asked to make one final push to their employees and strongly encourage completion of the survey.

2. Paid Internships

- a. A [new webpage](#) has been created to help advertise PCWA internship opportunities, and applications are now open for positions at CTC. All other industry partners are asked to contact the PM as soon as possible to discuss number of openings and internship logistics.

3. PCWA Hackathons

- a. The high school Capture the Flag competition is scheduled for April 17-18, 2026. Registration information and marketing materials will be shared with partners as soon as available.

4. April 2026 Meeting Availability

- a. Partners will be asked to share their general availability and preference for the April 2026 meeting.

5. IUP Cybersecurity Industry Advisory Board Meeting

- a. All industry partners are asked to attend the IUP CIAB meeting, held immediately after the PCWA partner meeting. An agenda will be provided separately.

Minutes of the PCWA Meeting

Held Virtually on March 2, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Members Present: Tristan Boheim, James Bretz, Stacy Dabbs, Jon David, Waleed Farag, Rob Heinrich, Shawna Little, Kevin Pudliner, Lydia Taylor, Barb Zaborowski

Meeting Information

1. Motion to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2026 meeting was made by Kevin Pudliner and seconded by James Bretz. The motion passed unanimously.
2. Partners were reminded to complete and distribute the industry survey. Only eight responses have been received to date. Partners were encouraged to share the survey within their organizations to improve response rates, as results will inform project interventions.
3. An update was provided on the CTC-supported internship program. Job postings are active and being promoted to students across partner institutions. At the time of the meeting, no applications had been submitted. Partners were encouraged to continue promoting opportunities and submit internship requests.
4. Details of the upcoming K-12 virtual hackathon were shared. The event is scheduled for April 17–18, 2026 and will allow students to participate individually or in teams. Registration materials are pending finalization of the registration link. A 'save the date' communication will be distributed if delays continue.
5. Discussion occurred regarding outreach and recruitment for the hackathon. K-12 partners emphasized the importance of clear promotional materials and early communication. The project team will provide flyers and registration details as soon as available.
6. The group discussed the need for sponsorship of student prizes for the hackathon. Industry partners were invited to contribute funding or prizes. Lydia Taylor will follow up with additional details and a formal request.
7. The next partner meeting was scheduled for April 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM. Calendar invitations will be distributed in advance.
8. With no further business, the meeting concluded at 9:30AM.

Respectfully submitted by Lydia Taylor and Dr. Waleed Farag.

PCWA Partner Meeting

January 29, 2026 at 11:00 AM

Agenda

Previous Meeting Actions

1. Approval of minutes from the PCWA Kick-Off Meeting, held on November 10, 2025.

Announcements/Updates

1. Updates from Ramps Office Hours - January 14, 2025

- a. Three new work roles and two competency areas are being added to the NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework. Public comments are being requested, and partners can use [this link](#) to review changes and submit comments. Comments are due February 2, 2026.

2. PCWA Partner Survey

- a. In December 2025, IUP secured IRB approval for the [PCWA Partner Survey](#), which was sent to all industry partners. Survey responses will provide data required to achieve project objectives.
- b. Only four responses have been received so far, and all industry partners and their employees are kindly urged to complete the survey **as soon as possible**.

3. Paid Internships

- a. Industry partners will be asked to share expectations for internships, available positions, and other details so internship programs can be launched soon.

4. PCWA Hackathons

- a. PCWA will host two hackathons through Hack the Box, one for K-12 and the other for college students. All partners will be asked to share timeframes, possible topics, and assist with marketing strategies, and help recruit student participants.

5. PCWA Logo and Website (<https://www.iup.edu/pcwa/>)

- a. A website for the project has been created through the IUP system. Additional information will be added to the site as the project progresses.
- b. A logo has been designed which will be distributed to partners to use digitally as needed.

6. February 2026 Meeting Availability

- a. Partners will be asked to share their general availability and preference for the February 2026 meeting.

PCWA Partner Meeting Minutes

Held Virtually on January 29, 2026 at 11:00 am

Members Present: Tristan Boheim, Jon David, Stacey Dabbs, Waleed Farag, Erick Lauber, Kevin Pudliner, Craig Russon, Matthew Sulkosky, Lydia Taylor

Meeting Information:

1. Motion to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2025 meeting was made by Jon David and seconded by Kevin Pudliner with the requested correction to include comments made by Craig Russon regarding CompTIA's ability to offer a few free vouchers for events.
2. Partners were asked to review the three new work roles and two new competency areas that are being added to the NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework. Partners can submit comments [online](#), which are due by February 2, 2026.
3. Partners were asked to complete the [partner survey](#) as soon as possible, and to distribute the survey to their employees. This survey will provide data required to achieve project objectives.
 - a. Erick Lauber requested the survey link to distribute to the workforce investment board. The PM sent the link during the meeting.
4. Partners were asked to share updates on possible internships to be offered this year.
 - a. CTC, Millennial Software Solutions, and Netizen all expect to have positions available. NR Labs may have an open position and will confirm later.
 - b. The PM will work with partners to determine next steps for intern placement.
5. Two capture-the-flag style competitions will be held this year. IUP successfully offered a similar event in Spring 2025 through a separate project, PC4A.
 - a. The following details from the previously offered competition were shared:
 1. Held over two days (Friday and Saturday in March 2025).
 2. 30 students participated.
 3. Students could compete individually or in a team of up to five.
 4. Some community colleges set aside space for students to compete on campus, other students competed virtually only.
 5. All high school students are welcome to compete; however the target audience is 10th-12th grade.
 6. The current package is limited to 100 students, but more can be added if there is enough interest.
 - b. After discussion and feedback from K-12 partner, the HS CTF is tentatively planned for April 17-18, 2026. Marketing materials will be shared as soon as possible.
6. A logo and website have been designed for the project. Partners are asked to review the website and send any feedback to the PM. The logo will be shared with partners soon to be used on marketing materials as needed.
7. Partners were asked to share their availability for the February 2026 partner meeting. A survey will be distributed to determine the best meeting time soon.
8. With no further business, the meeting concluded at 11:35 AM EST.

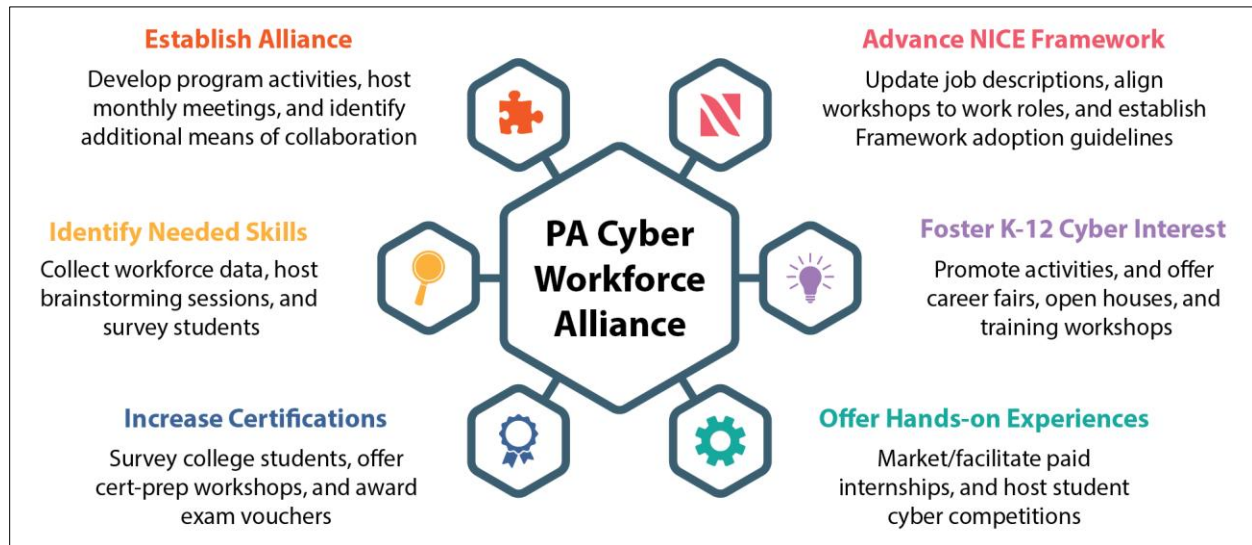
Respectfully submitted by Lydia Taylor and Dr. Waleed Farag.

PA Cyber Workforce Alliance (PCWA)

Kick-Off Meeting Agenda

November 10, 2025 at 3:00 PM

1. Welcome and partner introductions.
2. Overview of project phases and planned activities.



3. Partner responsibilities and reporting requirements.
4. Institutional Review Board requirements and data collection.
5. Branding and logo options.
6. Monthly meeting schedule.

Minutes of the PCWA Kick-Off Meeting

Held Virtually on November 10, 2025, at 3:00 pm

Members Present: Tristan Boheim, Jamie Bretz, Jon David, Stacey Dabbs, Waleed Farag, Robert Heinrich, Erick Lauber, Greg Paonessa, Kevin Pudliner, Craig Russon, Matthew Sulkosky, Lydia Taylor

Meeting Information:

1. All partners were thanked for joining the alliance, and introductions were made to the group.
2. PI, Dr. Waleed Farag, provided an overview of PCWA:
 - a. The PA Cyber Workforce Alliance (PCWA) was officially funded by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) on October 1, 2025, and will continue through September 30, 2027. The project has the following goals:
 1. **Establish Alliance**
 - This goal was completed prior to the submission of the project proposal.
 2. **Identify Needed Skills**
 - Partners will be asked to complete a survey that collects data related to employment trends, certifications, skills, etc. More details will be shared as soon as possible.
 3. **Increase Certifications**
 - Educational partners will be offering cert-prep workshops to help prepare students for important certification exams. Upon completion of workshops, students will be awarded free exam vouchers.
 4. **Advance NICE Framework**
 - Data on partner knowledge and implementation of the NICE Framework will be collected as part of the previously mentioned survey. More details will be shared as soon as possible.
 5. **Foster K-12 Cyber Interest**
 - Cyber competitions, classroom visits, and other activities will be planned to engage with K-12 students.
 6. **Offer Hands-on Experiences**
 - Industry partners will offer paid internships to improve real-world experience of students.
3. The PI shared responsibilities and expectations for partners:
 - a. **K-12 and College Partners:** Publicize activities to students and recruit participants.
 - b. **Industry Partners:** Complete workforce surveys, offer paid internships, and share their experience with the group.
4. The PI will work with the IUP Institutional Review Board as necessary to ensure project-created surveys meet required guidelines.
5. Branding and logo options are delayed and will be shared with partners at the next meeting.
6. Monthly meetings are planned to ensure the project remains on track to meet objectives.
 - a. Partners agreed to meet again in December.

7. Partners were asked to share any comments, ideas, or feedback for the good of the group:
 - a. **Kevin Pudliner, CTC:** College and high school students are not typically aware of the requirements for obtaining security clearances. The CTC security team regularly meets with students to discuss the clearance process and help students be prepared. CTC will be willing to share this experience with members of the PCWA alliance.
 - b. **Jon David, NR Labs:** As a smaller company, hiring decisions are critical. When placing interns in the past, enthusiasm for outside projects has shown to be more valuable than technical aptitude. This has been proven with a recent intern who had a strong go-getter attitude, and who was hired as an employee at the conclusion of his internship.
Matthew Sulkosky, Millennial Software, agreed that enthusiasm is an important intangible in strong candidates.
 - c. **Greg Paonessa, Penn Highlands Community College:** To better prepare students for planned Capture-the-Flag (CTF) and hackathon style events, simulations or training will be provided so students have more trust in their skills.
 - d. **Waleed Farag, IUP:** As part of another federally project, PC4A, a CTF was offered to students in Spring 2025. All participants had never competed in a CTF or other competition-style event before. Similar events will be planned for K-12 students, and any preparation we can provide the students with will be beneficial.
8. The next step in the project is the development of the Industry Partner Survey, which will collect expectations, workforce needs, etc. The survey will be submitted to the IUP Institutional Review Board and will be distributed to partners as soon as approved.
9. The PI will be in touch with K-12 partners regarding workshops and other activities for students.
10. With no further business, the meeting concluded at 3:38 PM EST.

Respectfully submitted by Lydia Taylor and Dr. Waleed Farag.