

For Immediate Release
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Virginia Students Test Cyber Skills in 2014 Governor's Cybersecurity Cup Challenge

FAIRFAX, Va. – Eight teams from Virginia schools high schools competed in the final match of the 2014 Governor's Cybersecurity Cup Challenge, a state-wide cyber competition that offers students real hands-on learning experience in cyber defense.

On April 12, 2014, the final event of the challenge was held at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., to determine the top high school cyber defense team in the state. Team "Lil B's Penguindows" from Marshall Academy in Falls Church, Virginia, outmatched seven other teams to be crowned the 2014 Virginia Governor's Cybersecurity Cup Challenge Champion.

Team "Purple Squirrels" and Team "The AF", also from Marshall Academy, took home second and third place, respectively.

This year's challenge was made possible by an arrangement between the Virginia Governor's Office and the Air Force Association's CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Education Program, aiming to instill critical skills in technical cybersecurity among high school students throughout the state.

This competition functioned very similarly to the CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition and included two practice rounds, two elimination rounds, and the in-person finals competition for the top eight teams. Throughout the challenge, which began in January with 42 teams, competitors learned cybersecurity fundamentals and were challenged to apply those skills by securing operating systems and networks.

The event also served as an opportunity to introduce Virginia students to the burgeoning career field of information technology and cybersecurity. Guest speakers for the final challenge included Lindsay Diles, a Northrop Grumman recruiter, Dr. Peggy Brouse, director of GMU's new cybersecurity engineering undergraduate degree, and Craig Hill, a distinguished systems engineer at Cisco Public Sector.

"The Air Force Association is honored to have been asked by the Virginia governor's office to host the 2014 Governor's Cybersecurity Cup. Virginia is a key region as we extend our CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Education Program, and the students and schools of the Commonwealth 'get it'," said Bernie Skoch, AFA's CyberPatriot National Commissioner. "We are thankful for the generous support of Dean Ball and Dr. Sanghera of GMU's Volgenau School of Engineering for being so supportive of this important event."

For more information about AFA's CyberPatriot, go to www.uscyberpatriot.org.

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