



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **AFA's CyberPatriot Program Announces National Finalists to Vie for CyberPatriot VIII Title**

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Air Force Association today announced the 28 National Finalist teams that will compete for the title of National Champions in the CyberPatriot VIII National Cyber Defense Competition in Baltimore, Md., April 10-14, 2016. Teams will travel all-expenses-paid to compete for the title of National Champion, scholarships, and other recognition.

The twelve Open Division, thirteen All Service Division and three Middle School Division National Finalist teams advanced through extremely competitive online qualifying rounds to earn the distinction of being National Finalists. They represent schools and other organizations from California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, Texas, and Manitoba (Canada).

A full list of the National Finalists can be found [here](#).

“With more than three-thousand teams registering this year, many of whom have competed in previous years, it is safe to say that CyberPatriot VIII has offered fierce competition,” said Bernie Skoch, AFA’s CyberPatriot National Commissioner. “We’re thrilled to be offering a program that has experienced tremendous growth, validating the excitement that CyberPatriot has generated. Our workforce is badly in need of experienced professionals to defend networks in every industry, and we’re proud to be adding to the pipeline of candidates.”

The CyberPatriot VIII competition season began in October 2015 with more than 3,300 teams registered, a 55% increase from the previous year, with each team being made up of two to six students. After two months of rigorous online challenges, the Open Division and All Service Division teams were divided into three tiers: Platinum, Gold and Silver. The teams continued to compete within their tiers for State Awards and advancement to the Regional/Category Round, but only teams in the Platinum tier, the top tier, were eligible to advance to National Finals Competition from the Regional/Category Round earlier this month.

“CyberPatriot is truly answering a national call to build a diverse, much-needed cyber workforce of tomorrow,” said Diane Miller, director, CyberPatriot Programs, Northrop Grumman. “These competitors are not only building and refining their technical skills, but they are developing leadership, teamwork, and communication skills that are critical to success in this field. Congratulations to all those who participated. We look forward to another exciting finals competition.”

At this year’s National Finals Competition, teams will compete to defend virtual networks and mobile devices from a professional aggressor team. The National Finalists will also face-off in three additional competition components: the Cisco Networking Challenge and the Leidos Digital Forensics Challenge, both of which return

from previous seasons. Facebook will also be hosting a cybersecurity event which will factor into the teams' cumulative scores. These extra challenges will broaden the students' cybersecurity experience and expose teams to new elements of the many career opportunities available to them.

CyberPatriot, an education initiative established by the Air Force Association and presented by the Northrop Grumman Foundation, is a one-of-a-kind cyber defense competition designed to inspire students toward futures in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Other program sponsors include Cyber Diamond sponsors AT&T Federal and the AT&T Foundation, Cisco, Microsoft, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense; Cyber Gold sponsors Facebook, Riverside Research, Splunk, and Symantec; and Cyber Silver sponsors Air Force Reserve, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Leidos, and University of Maryland University College.

To learn more about CyberPatriot, please visit AFA's CyberPatriot website [www.uscyberpatriot.org](http://www.uscyberpatriot.org).

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The Air Force Association is a non-profit, independent, professional military and aerospace education association. Our mission is to promote a dominant United States Air Force and a strong national defense, and to honor Airmen and our Air Force Heritage.

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