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Cybersecurity Skills Gap Continues to Increase, as Demand for Professionals Needed to Keep Region's Workforce Safe and Expanding

TAYLOR, Mich. – May 20, 2020 With grant funding from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, The Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan (WIN) has released an update to its 2017 Cybersecurity Skills Gap Analysis report, which analyzes changes in the emerging technologies talent system and examines occupations that most heavily rely on cybersecurity skills. Understanding the complexity of the talent supply for cybersecurity and other considerations for upcoming technologies will aid continued economic growth in the region.

In southeast Michigan, demand for cybersensitive occupations has been experiencing steady growth since 2010, with 8.5 percent expansion, and is projected to continue to rise by an additional 4.6 percent through 2028. Between October 2018 and September 2019, there were 350,472 online job postings for cybersensitive occupations, with 134,131 postings, or 38.3 percent, requiring a bachelor's degree. Comparatively, employers are interested in workers with zero to two years of experience, accounting for 27.3 percent across all indirect cybersecurity occupations

Since WIN's Cybersecurity Skills Gap Analysis was published in 2017, technology has continued to become integrated into most every workplace and the information workforce has grown substantially. Cybersecurity knowledge is critical, due in part to the overall shift in technology adoption throughout everyday life, such as connected devices, machine learning, and an increased need for data privacy. In southeast Michigan, this is especially key for the auto manufacturers, transportation planners, and policymakers working to expand the frontier of connected vehicles and smart infrastructure, the health care systems keeping the population healthy, and the growing technology sector in greater Detroit.

"New occupations will be created to sell, maintain, service and grow these technologies and their integration into teaching and service occupation," said WIN Executive Director Michele Economou Ureste. "Tracking emerging technologies and their impact on the workforce is key to preparing secondary, post-secondary and other educational markets for the changing workforce demands for employers."

In keeping with this updated cybersecurity workforce report's focus on talent pipelines in southeast Michigan, WIN provides the following recommendations for continuing cultivation of a robust, innovative skill pool in the region:

- In order to address the lack of information on both cybersecurity specialist roles and general workforce needs, information must be collected by level of worker to create a “cyber needs” database with which to target future training and standards.
- Training specific to connected devices and products, including hands-on experience, must be developed and formalized. Curriculum should be oriented toward the vehicles, medical devices, wearable technology, and other industry-specific factors.
- Ongoing learning via certification programs will be increasingly necessary. In combination with a cyber needs database, ongoing certifications should continue to be developed in collaboration between southeast Michigan training providers and employers to ensure new skill needs are consistently met.
- Businesses should take care to continuously communicate their cybersecurity needs to workforce partners, community colleges, and other talent pipeline stakeholders in order to build a workforce with the most up-to-date possible skillset for keeping information safe.

Economou Ureste concludes, “Given WIN community college partners and the other training providers in southeast Michigan, the region is poised to deliver necessary educational and training resources to support virtually every industry sector, from automated vehicles to banking and health care.”

The full Cybersecurity Skills Gap Analysis and more key findings from this report can be viewed at: www.winintelligence.org/report/cybersecurity-report/.

For more research and data from WIN, or a custom analysis, please visit: www.WINintelligence.org.

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ABOUT WORKFORCE INTELLIGENCE NETWORK FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN (WIN)

The Workforce Intelligence Network for Southeast Michigan (WIN) is a collaborative effort between nine community colleges and six Michigan Works! Agencies, in partnership with numerous other organizations, to create a comprehensive and cohesive workforce development system in Southeast Michigan that provides employers with the talent they need for success. WIN covers a 16-county area, including Genesee, Hillsdale, Huron, Jackson, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, Tuscola, Washtenaw, and Wayne. WIN was founded with the support of the New Economy Initiative for Southeast Michigan and publicly launched in November 2011.