

Pace's Cybersecurity Camp Inspires Next Generation of Students

Utilizing underwater robots, aerial drones and cutting-edge coding techniques, 50 high school students from throughout the region gained hands-on cybersecurity experience as part of Pace University's Camp CryptoBot on Aug. 1.

Inspired by a mission to motivate younger students to pursue cybersecurity – especially women and those from underserved areas – the camp is supported by the National Security Agency (NSA) and the National Science Foundation as part of the national GenCyber program. Earlier in July, Pace also hosted a two-week cybersecurity workshop for teachers to help integrate cybersecurity concepts into lessons and after-school activities.

"Pace University's commitment to cybersecurity education benefits the whole nation. Everything we do today has a cybersecurity component to it," said NSA National Cryptologic School Commandant Diane M. Janosek. "GenCyber gives students the opportunity to learn about the role cybersecurity plays in their daily lives and encourages them to consider working in this field."

By 2020, it's estimated that up to two million unfilled cybersecurity positions will exist in the United States, said Professor Pauline Mosley, who spearheaded the camp on behalf of Pace University's



Some of the 50 high school students who attended the Aug. 1 cybersecurity camp at Pace. The camp helped to introduce students to a career in cybersecurity where it has been estimated that there will be as many as two million unfilled positions in the United States by next year.

Seidenberg School of Computer Science and Information Systems.

"From national security to personal privacy, this shortage poses a critical

threat to our society – but also an opportunity for students," Mosley said. "Pace University is committed to closing that gap by inspiring younger students to

pursue cybersecurity and by equipping teachers with the resources they need to incorporate these lessons."

In addition to hands-on labs, Camp CryptoBot also taught students to understand safe online behavior and how ethics applies to cybersecurity. The five-day camp was free for all accepted students and included breakfast and lunch.

Fourteen-year-old Nickole Leite, who attends Yonkers Middle/High School, said that although topics such as cipher codes are complicated at first, once you get to know them each becomes simplified and very secretive – something she's been drawn to since she was a young child.

"When I was little, I used to read a lot of mystery books, so learning about different kinds of codes before decrypting and encrypting them is like something out of a movie," Leite said. "To know it's real life and I know how to do this is amazing."

GenCyber offers summer free cybersecurity camps to students and teachers in grades K-12. Since 2014, more than 12,000 students and 3,000 teachers have attended GenCyber camps. This year, 122 GenCyber camps will be held at 76 institutions across 38 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico, reaching more than 3,000 students and 800 teachers.