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CYBERSPACEPROFESSOR'S SUCCESS IN BUILDING CYBERSECURITY PROGRAM EARNS STATEWIDE
RECOGNITIONby [Kelli Caplan](#) | October 3, 2025*Read time: about 2 min*

Christopher Newport only offered one cybersecurity course when Dr. Christopher Kreider started teaching in 2017.

He immediately set out on a mission to change that.

Kreider, the director for [Cybersecurity and Information Science](#), knew the world was rapidly changing and students' interest in cybersecurity was growing at a fast pace. He was intent on putting CNU on a trajectory to meet the need.

He made it happen in collaboration with other CNU faculty, expanding the University's cybersecurity offerings to more than 15 classes, catapulting CNU's standing in the cyberworld and paving the way for it to become a strong educational contender in a high-demand field.

Today, the University not only features a wide range of cybersecurity classes, it also offers a major in cybersecurity and a graduate program with a cybersecurity track available through the [Master of Science in Applied Physics and Computer Science \(MS-APCS\)](#). Cybersecurity has become the second-largest major in the [School of Engineering and Computing](#).

"I have worked very hard to expand the cybersecurity offerings at CNU," Kreider said. "While some other programs started with big budgets, I started with a single class and grew it bit by bit, semester by semester, to where it is today."

His collaborative success in elevating Christopher Newport's profile in the field and his passion for cybersecurity have not only fueled the department's growth, but also earned him a significant award. The Virginia Cyber Range Executive Committee presented Kreider with the Virginia Cybersecurity Educator Award, which is given to educators who make outstanding contributions to both secondary and higher education and who demonstrate excellence in teaching, innovative curriculum design, and a deep commitment to student success.

"It is an honor to be recognized for the impact of cybersecurity education, specifically focusing on the impact on the Commonwealth," he said.

In presenting him with the award, Dr. Peggy Brouse, a member of the committee, said "Dr. Christopher Kreider's leadership, innovation, and dedication to student success make him a truly deserving recipient of the 2025 Virginia Cybersecurity Educator Award.

"Dr. Kreider is deeply committed to student development both in and out of the classroom. He advises the University's cyber defense competition team and helps students gain visibility through events such as COVA CCI-Con and CyberForge. Many of his students have gone on to prestigious graduate programs and PhD pursuits at Georgetown, Virginia Tech, and Georgia Tech. He regularly presents on best practices in cybersecurity instruction and lab design, and he has played a key role in helping students publish research on topics such as cybersecurity in Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality," she said.

The field of cybersecurity has expanded exponentially. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 29% growth in employment for information security analysts from 2024 to 2034. Approximately 16,000 openings are expected each year for information security analysts over the next decade.

Kreider said Christopher Newport is positioned well to prepare students for careers in cybersecurity.

"In terms of cybersecurity at CNU, I have seen some studies that suggest as few as 3 percent of computer science and technical graduates have had a course in cybersecurity," Kreider said. "Given the overall importance of cybersecurity in protecting individuals, organizations, and critical infrastructure, being able to offer a variety of available cybersecurity options is one of the best ways I can promote graduates who are ready to support business locally, in the region, in the Commonwealth and beyond."

In recent years, the University has placed a high priority on advancing STEM studies, including cybersecurity. A new [Science and Engineering Research Center \(SERC\)](#), equipped with cutting-edge technology and classrooms, is expected to open in January, providing critical research and teaching space for the School of Engineering and Computing. Students interested in studying cybersecurity have access to the tools, support, and knowledge necessary to succeed in the field. The new center will provide even more advanced opportunities for learning.

The center will include an Advanced Networking Lab to teach hands-on networking and cloud computing technologies. In addition, the center's Robotics and Autonomous Systems Lab will support cybersecurity research and focus on secure networking between autonomous systems and counter unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) technologies.

"I hope that our students find a place where they can develop and build their curiosity and passion for the field," Kreider said. "An important part of cybersecurity is gaining technical skills which comes from getting hands on with the hardware and cybersecurity tools. With the addition of a new networking lab in the SERC, as well as several other computer labs and research labs, we will have additional space and be better equipped to provide students with these learning experiences."