

MIAMI'S COMMUNITY NEWS

UWF and MDC partnership to enhance cybersecurity workforce development

BY SUE ARROWSMITH
SEPTEMBER 13, 2021



MDC President Madeline Pumariega (left) and UWF President Martha D. Saunders are pictured at memorandum of understanding signing ceremony.

The University of West Florida and Miami Dade College announced a partnership that aims to expand cybersecurity workforce development in Florida, signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Tuesday, Aug. 31, at MDC Wolfson Campus in Downtown Miami.

"The power of higher education is found in collaborative partnerships between world-class institutions," said UWF President Martha D. Saunders. "By teaming up with Miami Dade College, we can combine our most valuable resources to provide a seamless articulation pathway for a large student population and meet state workforce needs in cybersecurity."

The MOU outlines intentions for both institutions to collaborate on educational and workforce development programs and curricula. Additionally, the partnership between the UWF Center for Cybersecurity and the Cybersecurity Center of the Americas at MDC will enhance collaboration for grants, faculty training, industry and student scholarship opportunities.

"We are very excited to partner with the University of West Florida to expand cybersecurity opportunities for our students, while also creating a talented tech workforce ready to meet the growing demand across the state and beyond, said MDC President Madeline Pumariega.

"The combined efforts in cybersecurity workforce development from MDC and UWF will further position the State of Florida as a hub for talent development."

The UWF Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering and MDC's School of Engineering, Technology and Design (EnTec) will explore and develop program articulation agreements, including transfer pathways for relevant undergraduate and graduate programs in cybersecurity. The goal of the collaboration between the state university and the state college is to significantly expand the number of qualified cybersecurity professionals in Florida and across the country and enhance their competencies to address diverse cybersecurity work roles.

UWF is recognized as a national leader in cybersecurity education and workforce development. The UWF Center for Cybersecurity leads the National Cybersecurity Workforce Development Program and serves as the Southeast Regional Hub for National Centers of Academic Excellence as designated by the National Security Agency.

"MDC and UWF have developed groundbreaking programs and partnerships to prepare future generations of cybersecurity professionals," said Dr. Eman El-Sheikh, associate vice president for the UWF Center for Cybersecurity. "We are eager to bring our teams and resources together to develop innovative and scalable education and workforce programs that help our state and nation stay ahead of the cybersecurity skills gap."

The Cybersecurity Center of the Americas at MDC offers associate and bachelor's degree programs in cybersecurity, as well as certificates in network security and digital forensics.

In fact, MDC's Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity was ranked among the top 10 most affordable in the U.S. The Center also serves as a hub for cybersecurity professionals from across the region by regularly hosting and participating in cybersecurity events and training while also providing general cyber awareness information to the MDC community.

"The articulation pathways, grants and training programs we offer provide students with unique opportunities to succeed in a post-pandemic world," said Antonio Delgado, vice president for innovation and technology partnerships. "Innovation and collaboration are critical to developing a world-class workforce."

For more information about the UWF Center for Cybersecurity, visit ufw.edu/cyber. To learn more about the Cybersecurity Center of the Americas at MDC, visit mdc.edu/cybersecurity.

For more info: <https://communitynewspapers.com/biscayne-bay/uwf-and-mdc-partnership-to-enhance-cybersecurity-workforce-development/>