

Information Security Education for the Community – the Potential, the Challenges and the Fun

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Abstract:

When you hear of a Community College what do you think of? Do you think of a school of last resort? Or do you think of excitement and possibilities? Do you think of it as the place for variety of Information Security education and training options?

In this presentation we share the experience of developing an Information Security and Assurance Curriculum at Holyoke Community College. We show the obstacles we faced while putting the program together and discuss the challenges still standing.

We also show how our effort towards establishing and recruiting for the program led to a more than just an academic curriculum and into a rich program for community outreach. At present, in addition to the fully developed academic program in Information Security, with one A.S. degree and two certificates, we offer options for non-credit instruction, customized training, workshop presentations, community events, and more. These activities have offered variety of opportunities for involvement and valuable experience for our students in a fun and exciting way and have attracted participants from the local community, including individuals, smaller and larger businesses, institutions and organizations to receive much needed awareness and training.

Biography:

Radost Koleva is a Professor of Computer Information Systems at Holyoke Community College, where she is actively involved in the design and management of the Information Security and Assurance program. She is also partly responsible for the information security lab design and maintenance. With her guidance and encouragement, her students have produced an annual information security newsletter, and have participated in an Information Security Expo open to the local community. She is a co-organizer of the Pioneer Valley Information Security and Assurance Conference and has given numerous presentations on information security to local businesses, institutions and events. She is actively involved in the Commonwealth Alliance for Information Technology Education program. She is always very excited about information security and believes that learning and teaching should be fun which she tries to achieve by bringing high energy and enthusiasm to her presentations and lectures.

She holds an M.S. degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Maryland, College Park and an M.S. degree in Physics from Northeastern University. She has been involved in information security related research and has co-authored several technical research papers.