

FISSEA EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Name of Nominee: Jim Wiggins

Employing Organization: Federal IT Security Institute

Position and/or Title: Executive Director

Qualifications Statement: (What has the nominee done to warrant this nomination?)

I nominate Jim Wiggins, Executive Director of the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI), for FISSEA Educator of the Year:

Jim's extensive background in technical education, which specializes in security related courses such as CISSP and the Certified Ethical Hacker, led him to the pinnacle of his achievements earlier this year, in the formation of the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI - <http://www.fitsi.org>), a non-profit organization that offers an array of role-based security certifications for the Federal IT security professional.

In a sea of security certifications, the US has produced tens of thousands of certified security professionals, and yet our Federal systems remain vulnerable to attacks from an assortment of threat sources, to include hostile foreign governments. Clearly the industry has fallen short, and cries out for a program of quality and integrity; one that inspires security professionals to step up their game and answer the Cyber Security call.

That is where FITSI's Federal IT Security Professional comes in. It is broken into four individual IT security certification programs, targeted at the Federal workforce, and based upon four clearly defined roles; Manager, Designer, Operator and Auditor.

In developing these certifications, FITSI has accomplished one of the key triumphs of Federal IT training and certification; a comprehensive classification of the various roles of an IT security expert working within the framework of the Federal Enterprise Architecture. These certifications are based upon the competencies found within NIST SP 800-16.

Jim's intentions to embark on this arduous task, were sparked by the recognition, that without this essential piece of defining information, we, as educators, could not possibly develop useful curriculum that target those individual roles. That, alone, distinguishes him as the leading candidate for FISSEA Educator of the Year Award.

However, Jim did not stop there; he went on to create an organization, now 700 members strong and growing, dedicated to understanding and implementing the NIST guidelines for achieving Federal mandates. These security professionals are pioneers who have proven their knowledge by preparing for these certifications with nothing more than the standards and guidelines published by NIST, as there are not yet any independent study guides or courses geared towards the FITSP certifications. It's also noteworthy to mention that while Jim has contributed to FITSI's programs, he has done so without receiving any financial benefit.

Jim works tirelessly to connect dedicated Federal IT security professionals, and develop partnerships with other non-profit organizations and Federal agencies that will ultimately reinforce the security posture of Federal information systems. His accomplishment deserves recognition, if nothing more than to spotlight the product of his work, so that others may be motivated to understand and further the goals of securing our government's information systems.

Note: The names and contact information of persons submitting nominations are not included. Several other nominations were received for Jim Wiggins and only the Qualifications Statements are copied below:

Qualifications Statement: (What has the nominee done to warrant this nomination?)

I nominate Jim Wiggins of the Federal IT Security Institute for FISSEA Educator of the Year:

I recommend Jim Wiggins as FISSEA "Educator of the Year" for the exemplary work and dedication Jim has provided to the information security awareness, training, and education community. I have known Jim Wiggins for the past 4 years. I first met him while he was on contract at the State Department conducting IT security training to Foreign Service Personnel. Jim is passionate about our community and the FISSEA goals, his career goals are matched by his commitment to helping improve the federal information security workforce. He has put in countless hours building and promoting Federal IT Security practices, process and guidance to both civil and contractor staff inside and out of the classroom.

1. *How the organization or federal community benefited from the activities of the individual, i.e. major accomplishment;*

About two years ago, Jim approached me for guidance on establishing a non-profit organization to develop a Federal IT Security Professional credential. The outcome of that work is the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI), which oversees a professional credentialing program for Managers, Designers, Operators and Auditors based upon the work done by NIST (Special Publications, FIPS and Interagency Reports), OMB, and Congress.

2. *The impact of achievements and accomplishments within and/or beyond the nominee's organization;*

Jim is a highly accomplished IT security trainer and possesses more IT security certifications – the thought of taking that many exams would be overwhelming to most of us: CISSP, ISSEP, CISM, CISA, SCNA, SCNP, CAP, SSCP, CEH, ECSA, CHFI, LPT, TICSA, CIWSA, Security+, and MCSE: Security. The best part of Jim is that he doesn't "promote" his certifications or his knowledge, he promotes awareness of the Federal IT security space.

3. *Information on whether the nominee received any compensation or awards as a result of the activities; and,*

FITSI is a labor of love for Jim and the other staff members of this non-profit -- Jim has not received any financial benefit from his involvement. In fact, one of our earliest conversations discussed his commitment to create an organization that would serve the federal community and the FITSI members – those individuals who believe in helping the federal government to better secure its information and information systems. There are some that view certification providers as organizations that just collect high testing fees as well as high annual fees without providing any benefits to the members. Jim created FITSI and its vision and mission to be an organization that gives back to the community.

4. *If any of the activities of the nominee were part of a government contract or group effort, indicate amount and type of direct participation by the nominee as compared to other*

participants. Describe how the nominee distinguished him/herself from other members of the group.

Although FITSI has supporters, board members, and advisory boards, it is Jim's vision and his strategic plan that is building FITSI.

Qualifications Statement: (What has the nominee done to warrant this nomination?)

I would like to nominate Jim Wiggins of the Federal IT Security Institute for FISSEA Educator of the Year.

Jim is an accomplished technical trainer and information security practitioner. He has made significant contributions to the IT security certification industry in the federal market. He was instrumental in helping establish the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI) in 2009. FITSI is a non-profit organization whose mission is "To help secure the Nation's Federal Information Systems by certifying that Federal Workforce members understand and can apply appropriate Federal IT security standards." This organization runs a role based certification known as the Federal IT Security Professional. The FITSP certification validates the knowledge, skills and abilities of Managers, Designers, Operators and Auditors in a comprehensive federal body of knowledge, which consists of a library of federal statutes, regulations, standards and guidelines from NIST, OMB and Congress.

Besides guiding this non profit organization, Mr. Wiggins served on the organization's certification committee and helped pioneer the first set of exams. These exams were just released this past September, were positively received by the industry and hopefully will become the standard used to help validate the necessary skills of federal civilian, military and/or contractor staff. Candidate comments can be seen here: <http://www.fiercecio.com/press-releases/candidates-commend-federal-it-security-certification-exams>.

Jim Wiggins has donated hundreds of hours to this endeavor and has not received any compensation for his activities.

Qualifications Statement: (What has the nominee done to warrant this nomination?)

I nominate Jim Wiggins of the Federal IT Security Institute for FISSEA Educator of the Year:

I have had the pleasure to interact with Jim Wiggins for the past two years and every time I am impressed by his dedication to our trade and his visionary approach to security. Since 2009, I have been involved as an advisor to the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI), which has given me the opportunity to come to know Jim Wiggins very, very well. Jim brought me in because he knows I share his passion for all areas within information security. I have had the opportunity to see the organization take off and see the result of Jim's work as the leader of this certification body.

Founded in 2009, FITSI was established as a non-profit to help provide a certification scheme for federal IT security workers in the United States. Candidates can currently pursue up to four certification roles that are commonly found in Federal agencies in the United States government (Manager, Designer, Operator, Auditor).

While there are some people who pursue causes for their own interests, Jim is someone who sees the bigger picture and the need for a role based certification program targeted at the Federal market. Larry Ellison once said, "When you innovate, you've got to be prepared for everyone telling you you're nuts." I know that Jim has been told this many times by competitors and other industry elements; yet Jim's perseverance and determination are impressive to watch. He's a man on a mission. A mission that I think is much needed in our industry.

The fact that he has dedicated hundreds and hundreds of hours to FITSI and received no compensation, I believe, speaks volumes of the integrity of his character.

I recommend Jim to anyone who is looking for a great instructor, a dedicated security specialist, and lots of wisdom. I hope that FISSEA will award Jim Wiggins "Educator of the Year" for his tireless dedication to our industry.

Qualifications Statement: (What has the nominee done to warrant this nomination?)

I nominate Jim Wiggins of the Federal IT Security Institute (FITSI) for FISSEA Educator of the Year:

Today's federal staff are confronted with unparalleled security challenges that threaten the availability of federal IT systems, the integrity of federal data, and the confidentiality of sensitive government and personal information. The federal IT security training space is replete with vendors whose instructional body of knowledge is primarily based upon global private sector financial compliance standards rather than directly addressing federal IT security challenges.

Based on his years of experience in training and supporting workers in the federal IT space, Mr. Wiggins recognized the need to organize a role-based Federal Body of Knowledge based on the unique IT security requirements of the federal workspace. At his own initiative and expense, Mr. Wiggins created the Federal IT Security Institute as a platform to organize a Federal Body of Knowledge grounded in federal statutes, OMB regulations, and NIST documents, including Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) and NIST Special Publications.

Mr. Wiggins' aggressive commitment to this effort has yielded a role-based IT security education and training focus that is specifically tailored to the needs federal employees, military personnel, and federal IT security contractors, be they Managers, Auditors, Designers, or Operators of federal IT systems. Mastery of each of the four federal IT security roles can be demonstrated through successfully completing a focused exam that demonstrates the candidate's mastery of the relevant statutes, regulations and NIST documents.

Because of this single focus of FITSI on federal requirements, timely updates to changing guidance is routinely implemented, unlike other education and training organizations that lag many months behind changes in requirements. Unfortunately, education and certification bodies focused on global certifications, tend to ignore the uniquely federal IT security requirements upon which Mr. Wiggins has focused.

On the basis of Mr. Wiggins' educational commitment to, and support of the federal IT security practitioner, as demonstrated through the unique FITSI program and processes, I am pleased to nominate Mr. Wiggins as the FISSEA Educator of the Year.