Summary of *The Core of Federal Cyber Talent*

The CyberCorps program has largely been a success since its inception considering its longevity and sustained congressional funding. The program is working to satisfy an increasing need of cyber talent and to create pathways into the cyber workforce. This is certainly an indication that some form of expansion is needed, but it does perhaps require a revisitation or reassessment of the real and immediate federal cyber needs so that grant awarding, renewals, and employment pathways can be clearly defined.

Conducting interviews with 25 Principal Investigators (PIs) at institutions with active CyberCorps programs, we find that:

1. PIs would like to see increased inclusion of PhD candidates and community and technical college talent.
2. The program should prioritize reductions in hiring uncertainties and retention efforts for CyberCorps recipients.
3. PIs would also like to streamline the renewal process for successful programs and consider other metrics for program evaluation.

We recommend:

1. **Any initiatives to expand the CyberCorps program should begin with an assessment of the federal demand for all levels of cyber talent.** Supporting more PhD CyberCorps students might not necessarily be in the program's best interest without knowing the actual federal demand for this talent. PIs also reported that community college graduates are not always "qualified" for federal jobs. This is likely due to a predominant focus on four-year degrees as a metric for qualification that limits the potential of community college talent.
2. **Because participating institutions only graduate a small number of CyberCorps students each year, the program should prioritize reductions in hiring uncertainties and retention efforts for CyberCorps recipients.** Anecdotally, we learned that some students have reported no real preference in hiring due to their status as CyberCorps recipients, and others have experienced a lack of awareness about the program from hiring managers.
3. **Streamline the renewal process for successful programs and consider other metrics for program evaluation.** PIs would like to see accurate costs of living taken into consideration when granting or renewing an award.

For more information:

- Download the Report: https://cset.georgetown.edu/publication/the-core-of-federal-cyber-talent
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