

# Local youth log in for Cyber Camp at CRC

By Kristie West  
Special to the Citizen

With high-tech security breaches grabbing headlines around the world, and millions of people having their personal information compromised, scores of students from throughout the region spent part of their summer vacation learning vital online security skills.

More than 125 students learned about cyber security during five "Cyber Camps" in the Sacramento region this summer. As part of the camps, nearly two-dozen junior high and high school students attended the three-day education program at Cosumnes River College (CRC).

Community college professors and high school teachers led the instruction during the "CyberPatriot Cyber Camp" which also featured guest speakers from the FBI and Homeland Security. Topics included access control and system protection, system hardening, and included team competitions.

"I thought it would be cool to see what it was about and how to learn to code and be safe online," said Iyimide Agbe-Davies, who will be attending 7th grade this fall at Harriet G. Eddy Middle School. "We learned how to build a firewall and how to make sure our passwords are safe. I really want to teach my sister so she'll understand how to be safe as well."

The camp, which is part of the CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Education Program, created by the Air Force Association in 2009, was one of five being hosted by community colleges in the Sacramento region this summer.

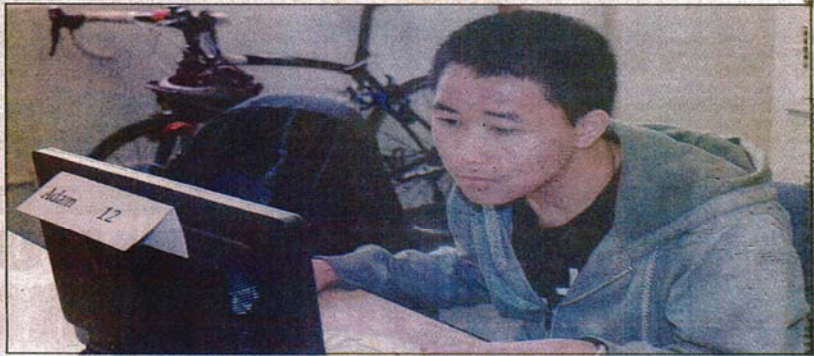
"Our hope is that these camps spark something within students to pursue a career in cybersecurity," said Sean McNally, a math teacher at Elk Grove High School and the Greater Sacramento Region CyberPatriot Middle / High School Coordinator.

"The demand for these types of careers increased something like 74 percent over the past five years and so there is a real need to fill these jobs now and in the future."

Cosumnes River College volunteered to be one of the hosts because professors felt it was important for young people to have an awareness of this growing career field.

"We see a lot of first year college students who don't have a direction on a career field, but love computers, so this type of camp sparks an interest at an early age," said CRC Computer Information Science Professor John "Buddy" Spisak.

This is the first time Cyber Camps have been hosted in the Sacramento region. Other colleges who hosted a



Adam Ha participated in Cyber Camp to help younger peers.

camp in this area included American River, Folsom Lake, Sacramento City and Sierra colleges.

At CRC's camp, those from 7th through 12th grades participated. Adam Ha, who will be a senior at C.K. McClatchy High School this fall said he joined the camp because his school will be offering it and he wants to be able to teach his younger peers.

"I want to be able to protect myself from harmful things on the internet and teach my peers how to do the same," Ha said. "This will also give me a head start on my major and I'll be more prepared when I start taking college classes." Ha wants to major in computer engineering, I.T. management or business.

Steve Linthicum organized the Sacramento area camps this year. He teaches at Sierra College and is the Deputy Sector Navigator in Information and Communication Technology/ Digital Media for the Greater Sacramento Region, representing the "Doing What Matters" initiative developed by the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

"We are laying the groundwork in providing these participating students with the knowledge and experience to obtain jobs in this high wage career path," Linthicum said. "But this isn't just about producing successful taxpayers. It is also about creating valuable citizens who will be responsible for protecting our digital resources and related privacy rights."

There are 22 Cyber Camps taking place across the country, with more than 550 participating in places like Texas, Alabama, Florida, Illinois, Virginia and Michigan.

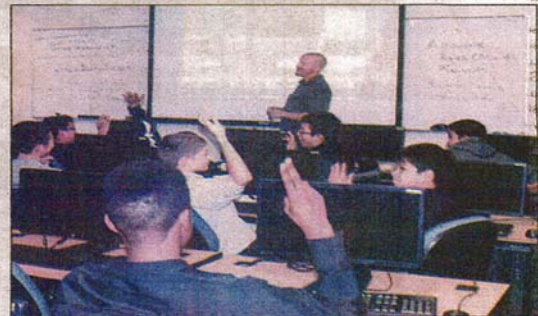
"Kids of all ages can use the skills they learn in these camps," McNally said. "Because there is a huge demand for cyber security careers, we are creating a pipeline for these students to get a jumpstart into a career which can help businesses throughout the country."



Iyimide Agbe-Davies participated in CRC's Cyber Camp where she learned how to be safe on the internet.



CRC Professor John "Buddy" Spisak answers students' questions during Cyber Camp.



Chris Reidel with the Department of Homeland Security was a guest speaker who talked about Industrial Control Systems during CRC's Cyber Camp.