

## Media Relations

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### UNH Hosts Cyber Defense Competition March 14 – 16

DURHAM, N.H. – Next week, some of the region’s brightest up-and-comers in the hot field of cyber security will gather at the University of New Hampshire for the Northeast Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition, hosted by UNH’s computer science department March 14 – 16, 2014.

The UNH Cyber Security Club Wildhats (a play on “black hats,” slang for hackers) will compete against teams from Alfred State College, Champlain College, Northeastern University, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), SUNY IT, Syracuse University, University of Maine, University of Massachusetts Boston, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI).

“Hosting this year’s NECCDC is not only a big opportunity for us personally, but for the computer science department and our university as a whole. It proves that we are serious and invested in excelling in the area of cyber security,” says Wildhats team president Greg Hilston ‘15. “It is an opportunity to exhibit our skills and talents as students, all while showcasing the lovely buildings, surroundings, and academic environment that make UNH what it is.” The UNH team took second place in the 2012 competition, their second outing ever.

“Every year I am so impressed with how much the students learn about what it takes to secure real-world systems,” says coach and event organizer Ken Graf, an instructor in the computer science department. “The competition is keen, the attackers are world class. I am honored to be coordinating this competition for our future leaders, because the students are truly amazing.”

The event will open with keynote speaker Brigadier General Ronald M. Bouchard ’77, senior vice president at NCI Information Systems, a leading provider of IT and professional services to U.S. government agencies. He’ll discuss threats and attack trends, malware, common attack vectors, response strategies, and the federal government perspective. Bouchard’s talk, which is open to the public (please register here: [https://www.events.unh.edu/RegistrationForm.pm?event\\_id=16283](https://www.events.unh.edu/RegistrationForm.pm?event_id=16283)), will be Friday, March 14, at noon in DeMerritt Hall, Room 112.

For the competition, each of the 10 teams runs a common set of systems typical to a small business: email, websites, VPN (virtual private network), remote access, and others. During the three-day event, as each team’s “CEO” makes requests to these ersatz IT departments, some of the world’s best hackers, from the U.S. military, government, and top security firms, try to attack the teams’ systems. The winner and one alternate from the competition go on to compete nationally in Texas in April.

In addition to the educational benefits of the competition, the opportunity to connect with bright young minds in the increasingly relevant field of cyber security attracts industry leaders, many of whom support the competition and recruit participants for internships and employment. This year’s NECCDC lead sponsors are Akamai, Dell, Liberty Mutual, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; additional sponsors are EMC2, Microsoft, Cigital, CrowdStrike, and Spawar.

The [University of New Hampshire](http://www.unh.edu), founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,300 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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