



Gov. PHIL MURPHY | Lt. Gov. SHEILA OLIVER | Dir. JARED MAPLES

NJOHSP**OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND PREPAREDNESS**

New Jersey Joins Partnership Promoting Cybersecurity Career Track for High School Females

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TRENTON, NJ – Governor Phil Murphy today announced that New Jersey is partnering with the [SANS Institute](#) in an initiative that provides high school girls with an opportunity to learn cybersecurity skills, discover their talents, and explore what a career in the field entails. High school girls in grades 9 through 12 or the home-school equivalent are invited to participate in the GirlsGoCyberStart challenge in which teams of up to four students will compete against others throughout New Jersey and the United States.

GirlsGoCyberStart is a forward-thinking cybersecurity skills program designed to educate and inspire high school girls to discover the opportunities and rewards that a career in cybersecurity can offer.

“From a state where the invention of the transistor ushered in the information age, New Jersey has long been a leader in innovation that changes the world,” Governor Murphy said. “To maintain our leadership and meet tomorrow’s challenges requires us to develop a skilled cybersecurity workforce that can help protect our State’s and the nation’s most critical assets. We’re excited to partner with SANS and to offer this opportunity for high school girls to discover and foster a passion for innovation and cybersecurity.”

As part of the game, each participant will take on the role of a junior agent in the Cyber Protection Agency, where they will deploy their forensics and offensive skills to sleuth through challenges and tackle various online cybercriminal gangs. As they work their way through the program, players will be challenged to solve puzzles and will be introduced to a broad spectrum of cybersecurity disciplines including forensics, open source intelligence, cryptography, and web application security.

“One of our office’s strategic priorities is to develop the cybersecurity capabilities throughout the State,” said Director Jared Maples of the NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, which is responsible for Cybersecurity in New Jersey. “By partnering with SANS in the GirlsGoCyberStart challenge we’re providing young women with the opportunity to join in our efforts.”

Eligible New Jersey students can register to participate in the GirlsGoCyberStart program from January 29 to February 6. The first 10,000 registrants will get to compete in the online game between February 20 and 25.

Participating students do not need prior cybersecurity knowledge or IT experience. All that is required is a computer and an Internet connection.

Participants who excel in GirlsGoCyberStart will have the opportunity to win prizes. Each individual on the top three scoring teams will win a trip to the Women in Cybersecurity Conference in Chicago, and their school will win \$2,000. Other prizes include individual participant and school prizes for each state, including a Chromebook for individual States first prize winners and \$1,500 for their school.

More information on registration and participation can be found at <https://girlsgocyberstart.com>.

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The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (NJOHSP), a Cabinet-level agency, was created in 2006. The Director serves as the Governor's Homeland Security Advisor, and is responsible for leading and coordinating the state's counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness efforts while building resiliency throughout the state across all levels of government and the private sector. NJOHSP oversees and distributes discretionary state and federal homeland security and emergency preparedness funds on behalf of New Jersey. More information about NJOHSP can be found at www.njhomelandsecurity.gov.

The New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell (NJCCIC) is New Jersey's Information Sharing and Analysis Organization (ISAO). As the State's one-stop-shop for cybersecurity resources under NJOHSP, it serves governments, businesses, and citizens across New Jersey by promoting better awareness of cyber threats and the adoption of best practices. To learn more about the NJCCIC or to become a member, please visit www.cyber.nj.gov or follow the NJCCIC on Twitter @NJCybersecurity.