

PC4A YEAR TWO NEWSLETTER

WWW.PC4A.ORG
PC4A-STEM@IUP.EDU



FALL 2024

ABOUT PC4A

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, in conjunction with six PA community colleges, has been awarded a substantial grant from the US Department of Defense with the increasingly important goal of supporting and strengthening the cybersecurity workforce in our country.

The PC4A Project began in September 2022, and will continue until August 2025, with a possible extension until 2028.

PC4A OBJECTIVES

- Increase certification rates.
- Increase transfers to four-year institutions.
- Increase interest in DoD/DIB employment

PC4A YEAR TWO: EFFORTS IMPACTFUL IN KEY AREAS

The second year of the PC4A Project, September 2023 through August 2024, was focused on continuing efforts that had a positive impact in year one, and implementation and evaluation of new initiatives to better reach project objectives.

We are pleased with the accomplishments of our partners and look forward to seeing what we can accomplish in year three.

Continue reading to learn more about how we reached objectives this year, or visit our website at www.pc4a.org.

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PC4A is proudly funded by the US Department of Defense. To learn more about the work that they are doing to develop exceptional STEM talent, visit their website at dodstem.us.

COLLECTED PROJECT DATA SHOWS A POSITIVE IMPACT IN REACHING OBJECTIVES AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS

PC4A has been committed to accurate reporting and analysis of partner efforts since the start of the project in September 2022. To conduct this analysis, data in objective related areas was collected from all partners to establish a baseline, and was collected at the end of each project year.

To determine the impact of our efforts, data from the two years prior to the start of the project (Academic Years 2020-21 and 2021-22) was averaged and compared to the average the first two years of the project (Academic Years 2022-23 and 2023-24). The graphic below shows areas where a positive increase was identified.

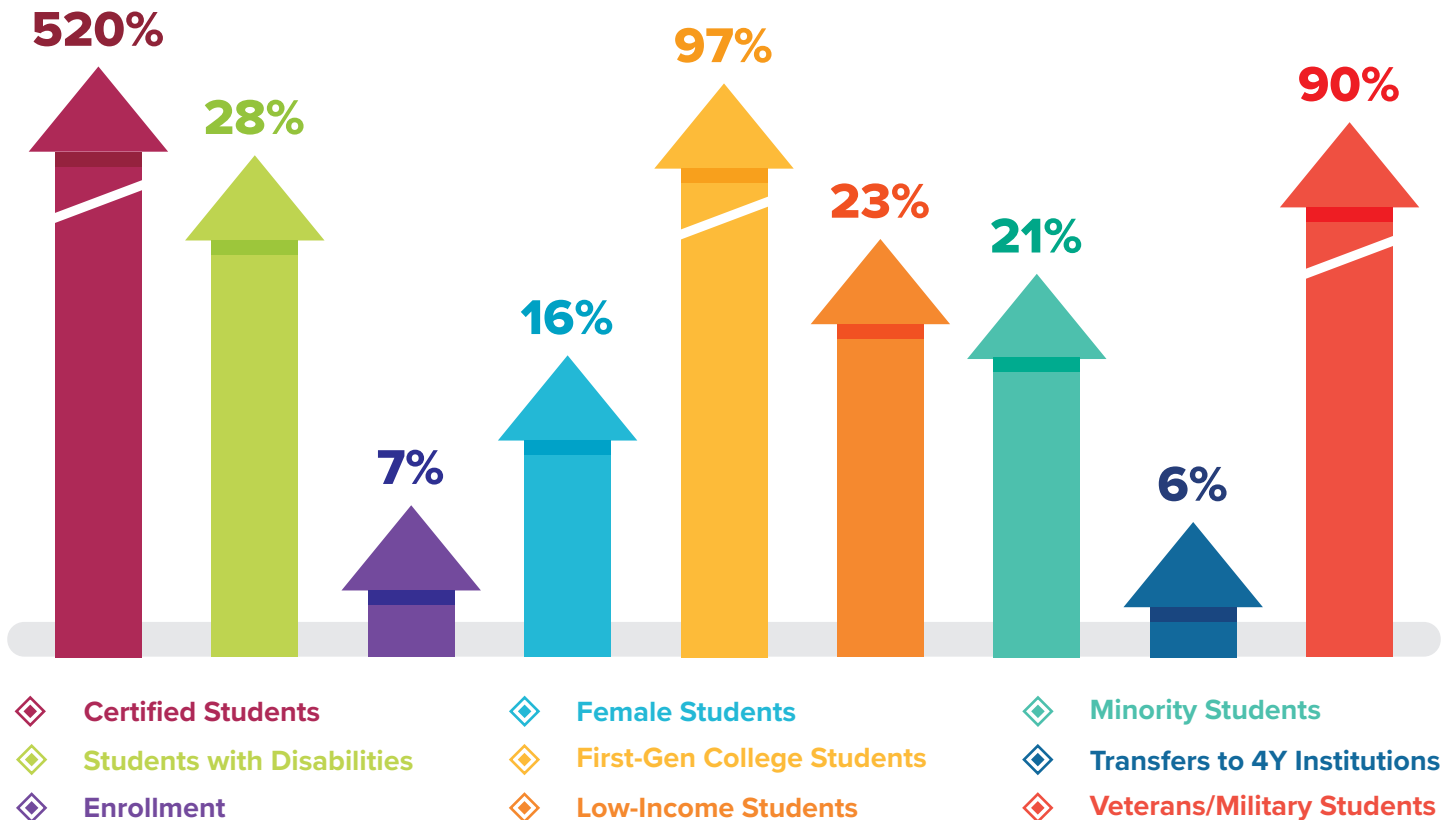
Partners are utilizing the insights from project data analysis in conjunction with results of the recent student survey to determine which of their efforts are having the most impact. For example, the increase in certified students from the two years prior to the start of PC4A compared to the first two years of the project (520%) can be attributed to our efforts in offering certification-prep workshops and free exam vouchers.

We also attribute the increase in enrollment in targeted programs, at least in part, to the increase of marketing efforts to advertise programs at partner schools and benefits available to students, including scholarships, free textbooks, access to virtual labs, paid internships, certification exam preparation workshops and free exam vouchers, among many other benefits.

We will collect and analyze data throughout the remainder of the PC4A Project, and are confident that our efforts will continue to have a positive impact on students.

Overall Impact of PC4A Efforts

Averages of the two years prior to the start of PC4A and the first two years of the project have been compared to determine the impact of PC4A efforts. Below are the areas where data analysis shows a positive impact.



STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS SHOW INTEREST IN DOD EMPLOYMENT, IMPACT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

All partner students were surveyed in spring 2024 to obtain evidence of the impact of our efforts, and to collect data in key areas including students' desire to work for the DoD, hurdles to obtaining certifications, and the impact of financial support provided to students through the project.

The graphics to the right show insight gained from analysis of the survey. Partners will use this data to implement objective-focused activities.



are planning to transfer to a 4YI or may consider transferring in the future.



reported an increase in motivation as a result of receiving financial benefits.



are interested in working with the DoD and another 34% would consider it.

PC4A HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL PARTNER CONFERENCE AT MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

On August 5, 2024, all PC4A partners met face-to-face for a collaborative and informative conference, hosted by Montgomery County Community College. The event included partner reflections on year two progress, a discussion session for partners to identify additional means of collaboration, overall year highlights provided by PC4A Program Director Dr. Waleed Farag, and a presentation on changes and innovation at CompTIA from guest speaker Craig Russon. Representatives from the IUP Research Institute also attended the conference and provided tips on invoicing procedures. For complete details, please visit pc4a.org/annual-conference.



From left: Rory Butler-BUCKS Co-PI, Brian Stokes-NCC Faculty, Celisa Counterman-NCC Co-PI, Marshal Miller-NCC Faculty, Becky Hays-MCCC Dean of Academic Affairs, Shane Watson-WCCC Intern, Guy Patra-NCC Co-PI, Michele Krutch-Paonessa-PHCC Student, Les Graves-BC3 Faculty, Sherri Mack-BC3 Co-PI, Adam Divey-PHCC Intern, Waleed Farag-PC4A Program Director, Erica Reighard-PHCC Dean of Faculty, Greg Paonessa-PHCC Co-PI, Barb Zaborowski-PHCC Dean of Library Services and Special Projects, James Bretz-MCCC Dean of STEM, Paul Process-BUCKS Co-PI, Michael Caglia-WCCC Co-PO, Christie Sever-WCCC Co-PI, Donna Reed-MCCC Grant Manager. Not Pictured: Calogero Gambino-IUP Research Institute, Tim McCroskey-IUP Research Institute, Lydia Taylor-PC4A Project Manager.

FIVE PARTNER STUDENTS AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS TO TRANSFER TO IUP'S CYBERSECURITY DEGREE PROGRAM

One of PC4A's three main objectives is to increase the number of students who continue their education at a four-year institution. To encourage transfers, PC4A created a transfer scholarship program, which includes one year of free in-state tuition to any student who transfers into IUP's Computer Science-Cybersecurity Track bachelor's degree program.

Applications were collected in spring 2024, and five students were chosen. Recipients include Bachir Aoude-WCCC, Joe Johnson-WCCC, Jack McCullough-BC3, Juliet Ozore-WCCC, and Shane Watson-WCCC.

If funding is available, scholarship awardees can apply for an additional scholarship year in AY 2025-26. For complete details on the program, visit www.pc4a.org/pc4a-transfer-scholarship.



From left: Bachir Aoude, Shane Watson, Waleed Farag, Juliet Ozore, Joe Johnson. Not pictured: Jack McCullough.

UPCOMING PC4A EVENTS



PC4A AND CONCURRENT TECHNOLOGIES CORPORATION (CTC) SECURITY CLEARANCE LUNCH AND LEARN OCTOBER 22 & NOVEMBER 5, 2024

Students are invited to virtually attend a lunch and learn event hosted by PC4A with information provided by CTC detailing the security clearance process and best practices. Visit www.pc4a.org/clearance for details.



INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA 17TH ANNUAL CYBERSECURITY DAY OCTOBER 29, 2024

The Annual Cybersecurity Day at IUP features presentations from cybersecurity experts in government, academia, and industry. The event will be held at the IUP Main campus, and streamed virtually for PC4A partner students. Visit bit.ly/IUP-CSDay for details.



BUTLER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMPTIA NETWORK+ CERT-PREP BOOTCAMP DECEMBER 2024

BC3 students who are proficient in networking topics will be invited to participate in a certification-prep bootcamp to prepare for the CompTIA Network+ exam. Students who complete the bootcamp will be awarded an exam voucher. Students should contact les.graves@bc3.edu with questions.

PC4A ACTIVITY STATISTICS

Since the start of PC4A, all involved have worked tirelessly to offer activities and participate in events that will help reach project objectives. Below is an overview of all accomplishments through August 2024.

SCHOLARSHIPS

683

tuition scholarships
awarded

1,539

lab/book vouchers
awarded

CERTIFICATIONS

27

certification prep
workshops offered

241

certification exam
vouchers awarded

262

workshops
participants

53

certifications earned
by students

EDUCATION

2,854

hours of free
tutoring provided

29

courses added
or updated

FACULTY

21

faculty training events
hosted or attended

114

faculty trained in
cybersecurity topics

INTERNSHIPS

53

paid internships
offered

4,843

internship hours
completed

MARKETING

200+

posts on PC4A
Social Media

3

national project
presentations

6

marketing campaigns
launched or continued

NOTABLE EVENTS

106

events hosted
or attended

COLLABORATIONS

73

collaborations with
outside institutions

44

bi-weekly meetings
held with partners

PC4A PROJECT LEADERSHIP AND CONTACT INFORMATION

INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Dr. Waleed Farag, PC4A Program Director

Director, IUP Institute for Cybersecurity

Professor, Computer Science

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BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mr. Paul Proces, Co-PI

STEM Professor

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NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Dr. Celisa Counterman, Co-PI

Professor of Mathematics

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Dr. Guy Patra, Co-PI

Assistant Professor of Biology

Email: gpatra@northampton.edu

PENN HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mr. Greg Paonessa, Co-PI

Instructor of Computer Technology

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Mr. Joshua Hamilton, Co-PI

Instructor of Computer Technology

Email: jhamilton@pennhighlands.edu

WESTMORELAND COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mr. Michael Caglia, Co-PI

Associate Professor, Computer Science

Email: cagliam@westmoreland.edu



JOIN US IN REACHING PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Effective collaboration is at the center of PC4A, and it is an important factor in reaching project goals. Join us in our efforts as we strive to create a stronger cybersecurity and STEM workforce.

PC4A is actively seeking:

- Internships
- Employment opportunities
- Guest speakers
- Faculty development
- Transfer agreements
- Facility Tours

Visit www.pc4a.org/get-involved or contact us at pc4a-stem@iup.edu.

WANT TO STAY UP TO DATE WITH PC4A?

JOIN THE PC4A MAILING LIST
AT [BIT.LY/PC4ANEWSLETTER](http://bit.ly/PC4ANEWSLETTER)
OR CONNECT WITH US ON
SOCIAL MEDIA:

 **FACEBOOK**
[@PC4ASTEM](https://www.facebook.com/PC4ASTEM)

 **LINKEDIN**
[@PC4A](https://www.linkedin.com/company/PC4A)

 **INSTAGRAM**
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