DHS Centers of Excellence: Student Poster Session Spotlight

On May 17–21, 2021, the DHS Centers of Excellence Summit was held. This year, the summit was conducted in a completely virtual format, with a record number of registrants (over 1,200) including government, law enforcement at all levels, academia, and 65 different industry representatives, 61 speakers to include Secretary Mayorkas, 20 showcase booths, and 135 academic presentations and posters. For the third time running, CINA (Criminal Investigations and Network Analysis) hosted its Student Poster Session during the summit, and we are very pleased to continue working with research teams this summer and to showcase our center’s research in this engaging format while also meaningfully collaborating with our fellow COE’s to support our collective mission. “We appreciate the opportunity to participate in yet another virtual, discussion-based tabletop exercises where they strategized how to conduct cutting edge research into dark web marketplaces to reveal their size, scope, and characteristics.”

More than 100 students and 25 academic institutions submitted abstracts to participate in the Student Poster Session. Following the 2021 COE Summit, a total of 120 posters were selected and are now available at CINA’s website. At the 2021 COE Summit, we had a record number of registrants (over 1,200) including government, law enforcement at all levels, academia, and 65 different industry representatives. 61 speakers to include Secretary Mayorkas, 20 showcase booths, and 135 academic presentations and posters.

As many of you know, the DHS Centers of Excellence have staggered life cycles dating back to 2015. The DHS Centers of Excellence Grand Challenge: Securing the U.S. Critical Infrastructure to Mitigate Cyber-Physical System (CPS) Threats, ran from May 17–21, 2021. Leading up to the event, students could choose to focus their research on one of five areas: developing methods to detect cyber-physical system security threats, developing tools and methods to respond to cyber-physical system security threats, developing methods to prevent cyber-physical system security threats, developing methods to mitigate cyber-physical system security threats, or developing tools to evaluate the effectiveness of countermeasures.

Research was conducted on academic institutions, and industry partners, all of whom are professionals who give their time and expertise to ensure that our nation is safe. The last decade has seen a sharp rise in criminal activity on the dark web, including the trade in illicit narcotics, identity documents, stolen data and cybercrime services. This rise has been driven in part by the greater anonymity of sites not indexed by search engines. Moreover, criminal activity on the dark web, including the trade in illicit narcotics, identity documents, stolen data and cybercrime services.

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