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CIAS Hosts Second Annual National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition

SAN ANTONIO, April 9 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security (CIAS), located at The University of Texas at San Antonio, will host the 2nd Annual National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (CCDC) April 13-15, 2007 at the Hilton San Antonio Airport hotel (<http://www.nationalccdc.org>). The CCDC program consists of competitions at the state and regional levels with the winner from each regional being invited to compete in the championship in San Antonio, Texas. Participants consist of teams of full-time college students from across the country who must apply their information assurance and information technology skills to maintain a secure, operational network.

While similar to other cyber defense competitions, CCDC competitions are unique in that they focus on business operations and incorporate the operational aspects of managing and protecting an existing network infrastructure. Teams assume control of an "operational" network from a fictitious business complete with email, web sites, data files, users, and network traffic. Each team is required to correct problems on their network, perform typical business tasks, and defend their networks from hostile activity generated by a live red team. Teams are scored on their performance in each of these areas and the team with the highest score is crowned the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Champion.

Over the past three years the CCDC program has grown from five participating schools in 2005 to 45 schools in 2007, and will add three new regional competitions and an anticipated 30 additional schools in 2008. The 2007 national competition features the nation's top collegiate cyber defense teams representing Texas A&M University, University of Louisville, Millersville University of Pennsylvania and Indiana Tech. The participants advanced to the National CCDC after winning their respective regional competitions in the Southwest, Midwest, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast Regions. "We had many visiting faculty members benefit from last year's inaugural national competition as they experienced first-hand what it would be like to have to protect a company's infrastructure in a hostile Internet environment," said Greg White, director of the CIAS. "Some of the faculty even changed their instructional programs as a result of lessons learned from the competition."

The national competition could not take place without the support of sponsors like Acronis and Core Security who donate their products for use during the competition. "Acronis is proud to be sponsoring such an important event," said Walter Scott, CEO of Acronis. "Tomorrow's IT leaders need to understand not only networking's best practices, but also be able to take emerging technologies and create new best practices. These are among the best and the brightest up-and-coming network administrators in the country. While Acronis is expert at restoring failed systems, these are the administrators who must be experts at disaster prevention." Donated hardware and software from leaders in the IT industry is used during the competition to provide students with the opportunity to work with technologies they would never see in a typical classroom environment. "Up and coming network administrators and IT leaders are expanding their level of expertise and awareness at the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition. Core Security Technologies is proud to sponsor an event that helps prepare the students for what they will experience beyond the typical classroom setting, helping them reach their full potential," said Mike Yafee of Core Security.

The National CCDC is being sponsored in part through donations and volunteer support from the Department of Homeland Security (<http://www.dhs.gov>), Cisco Systems (<http://www.cisco.com>), Symantec Corporation (<http://www.symantec.com>), Northrop Grumman (<http://www.northropgrumman.com>), TippingPoint (<http://www.tippingpoint.com>), Acronis (<http://www.acronis.com>), the International Board and local Alamo Chapter of the Information Systems Security Association (<http://www.issa-alamo.org>), Coretrace (<http://www.coretrace.com>), Core Security (<http://www.coresecurity.com>), Rackspace (<http://www.rackspace.com>), O'Reilly Media (<http://www.oreilly.com>), Prentice Hall (<http://www.prenticehall.com>), ThinkGeek (<http://www.thinkgeek.com>), Information Security Magazine (<http://informationsecurity.techtarget.com>), Code Magazine (<http://www.code-magazine.com>), Pepsi (<http://www.pepsi.com>), and R&L Foods (<http://www.randlfoods.com>).

For more information please visit <http://www.nationalccdc.org> or contact the CIAS at 210-458-2118 or via email at info@nationalccdc.org.

CONTACT: Interview: Dwayne Williams, Exercise Director of CIAS, +1-210-458-2118, info@nationalccdc.org

Web site: <http://www.nationalccdc.org/> <http://www.utsa.edu/cias/>

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