

THE DECRYPTED POST



David Zeichick,
NCL Commissioner

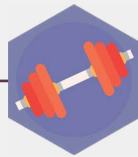
Commissioner's Welcome

In this edition of The Decrypted Post, we celebrate Women's History Month! The NCL Community is represented by strong, intelligent, influential, and caring women: symbolizing the integral role that women have within the cyber community. This month we are privileged to share stories and experiences about the women of the NCL that include Coaches, students, Alumni, Partners, and staff. These extraordinary women support and nurture lives everyday with their passion and perseverance within the cybersecurity sphere and we know they will inspire you as well.

Spring 2023 NCL Schedule



Registration
January 30 - March 17



Gymnasium
January 30 - May 27



Practice Game
March 20 - 26



Individual Game
March 31 - April 2



Team Game
April 14 - 16



Coach Spotlight

Angel Kern **College of the Lowcountry**

Angela (Angel) Kern is a Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) and Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) with more than twenty years of technology and security/risk management experience. She was VP of IT at two regional community banks and has been teaching networking and security for 15 years at both the high school and college level. Professor Kern continues to consult with various organizations on security policy, procedures and risk management.

She holds a MBA from York College of PA and a MEd from Penn State, and her BS is in business and computer science from Millersville University. Professor Kern is currently working on finishing a doctoral degree and has recently switched her research interests to cyber-security measurement and training the next generation of cybersecurity professionals.

What is your biggest achievement to date – personal or professional?

Getting the new associate degree in cybersecurity created and approved by our college, and the South Carolina Tech College system! This new degree will be instrumental in creating a pipeline of cybersecurity talent for the Lowcountry of South Carolina. Our goal is to enhance the supply chain and port security for Charleston, SC, Savannah, GA and the United States.

Tell me how you first got involved with the NCL.

Nick Giabcohe, IT Program Director at Penn State suggested I check out NCL as a hands-on learning opportunity for our cyber students.

What is the one thing your students like the most about the NCL?

The Gym because no experience is necessary to get started in learning about ethical hacking.

How do you organize your students for each NCL Competition Season?

Several of our courses have a group project requirement. I organize these students into teams

of 5-7 students and then have them write contracts, establish team rules, divide up the work and then write a report/presentation on what they learned in NCL Gym and competitions.

What is one thing that you wish people knew about your job?

Helping people find a rewarding career is THE BEST job!

What's a fun fact about you that not many people know?

I love to boat and fish.

Where is the best place you've traveled to and why?

Maui, HI... the beauty and smell of fresh flowers is overwhelming!

Register for the NCL Spring 2023 Season!

Sign up at: cyberskyline.com/events/ncl

Regular registration closes March 17. Late registration is March 18-21.



Staff Spotlight

Lauren Wolff Marketing & Graphic Design Specialist

Lauren is the graphic design and marketing specialist at Cyber Skyline. In her job role, she creates all of the marketing materials for NCL. The emails, social media graphics, and flyers you see are designed by her!

What three words would you use to describe your role?

Creative, unique, and interesting.

What do you wish other people knew about the NCL?

It provides valuable experience for people who have not yet started a cybersecurity career. Finding your first job is really hard, no matter what field you're in, because you might not have much to put on your resume. If you have something to prove your skills (the NCL Scouting Report), it makes you stand out amongst the many other job applicants.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

Music is a huge interest of mine; I have headphones

on as I'm typing this! I listen to everything, but I really love hardcore/metalcore, pop punk, emo, and a million other "rock" or "punk" subgenres. I go to a ton of concerts, and even go to some of them alone. I just love the experience.

What's the next place on your travel bucket list?

The Pacific Northwest. I think the coast and forests out there are so beautiful.

What would you do for a career if you weren't doing this?

I think animation is fascinating. If it wasn't extremely time consuming, I'd love to be an animator.



Partner Spotlight

WiCyS (Women in Cybersecurity)

Partner Spotlight: WiCyS (Women in Cybersecurity)
The NCL is proud to support and collaborate with organizations within the cyber community and WiCyS (Women in Cybersecurity) is an incredible resource for our NCL Community. The WiCyS mission "to help build a strong gender-diverse cybersecurity workforce by facilitating recruitment, retention and advancement for women in the field" is a mission statement that the NCL helps support by our Strategic Partnership commitment since 2021.

Annually, WiCyS hosts a public conference for its members, an event that includes students, faculty, and industry professionals from all over the world. We are thrilled to be a part of this incredible event by hosting the NCL @ WiCyS Capture the Flag competition. Participants will compete March

16 & 17 in a virtual capture the flag competition, taking on realistic, industry skill-based challenges, designed to test and build students' hands-on cybersecurity skills. Prizes will be awarded to top players and students, and non-students are welcome to participate. This is a great way for attendees to challenge themselves, compete with other cyber-enthusiasts and learn some awesome skills!

Our community connections are an integral part of advancing students to entry level cyber careers, and we are dedicated to supporting and encouraging our community through creative partnerships and aligning with like-minded organizations. Thank you, WiCyS, for your student support; we look forward to continuing our partnership collaboration!



Alumni Spotlight

Norma Depriest NCL Players Committee Member

Norma is a hacker, gamer, coffee drinker, cyber enthusiast and educator with over 30 years of IT experience. She also is a recent graduate of Southern New Hampshire University with a MS in Cybersecurity and is a founding member of the NCL Players Committee.

Tell me how you first got involved with the NCL.

I first became involved with the NCL as a freshman in college in 2018, I was in a college that had no cyber league and very little interaction between students. I sought out to change colleges, looking for one that had a cyber league presence when I stumbled upon Southern New Hampshire University. I was immediately made to feel welcome by fellow students and encouraged to attempt to participate in NCL. Setting all nerves aside and plunging in feet first with the support of other CyberSNHUpers that had gone before me, I got the first season under my belt and was instantly hooked. I was then faced with impending graduation and did not want to have to stop experiencing the immersive learning environment that had reinforced the concepts that I was learning at school. In a panic mode, I applied to graduate school and I applied to become a Player Ambassador. I was accepted to both and now hold a master's in cyber security and still have my strong convictions of the benefits of NCL that I am a Players Committee Member (formerly known as Player Ambassador).

If you could choose anyone, who would you pick as your mentor?

I would have to say Alissa Knight, I have spoken with her multiple times and am still fascinated by her. Nicole Eagan – Darktrace as I have an extreme curiosity in AI where it comes to cybersecurity. And last but not most certainly not least, Tatiana Garcia – Director of International Security Walmart, I spoke with her at WiCyS 2019 and she piqued my interest on those invisible geographical boundaries with regard to security laws.

What do you wish other people knew about the NCL?

The first detail I wish other people knew about the NCL is how much it compliments your formal education. Being able to delve into hands-on

practice for the variety of domains in cyber security and keeping relevant on what you would experience in a professional environment is a perfect way to alleviate potential shock of not knowing what a role may need.

What is your favorite cybersecurity resource, blog, website?

Actually, I aggregate my own content on a Start.me page that allows me to pull in RSS feeds from multiple sources. The main feeds on it are DarkReading, Bleeping Computer, Krebs on Security, and I have multiple other start.me's on it that link to various cyber security tools and resources like:

<https://start.me/p/m6Kj56/osint>

<https://start.me/p/OPGKad/darkweb>

<https://start.me/p/WIAXYo/toolkit>

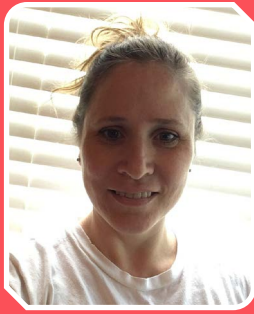
What is your motto or personal mantra?

I build unstoppable momentum with every step I take. You can do and be anything that you want to be if you have the passion and desire for it, dreams and aspirations have no space for hate of any form.



Watch Our Tutorials!

Our tutorial videos are a great resource to help you prepare for the NCL Season! Check them out on the [NCL YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).



Guest Contributor

Angela Abendroth NCL Players Committee Member

Angela is a wife, mother and an active member of the NCL Players Committee. She originally came from a medical background before discovering her true passion in technology and cybersecurity through her work with Apple and CTF competitions like NCL.

“Master of Your Destiny”

Many years ago when I was a girl, a wise man gave me advice that I found so true and powerful that I remind myself of it whenever I face a daunting life challenge.

He said, “One often meets his destiny on the road he takes to avoid it.”

Okay, so I was an adult, and the wise man was Master Oogway, the ancient turtle from Kung Fu Panda, but it’s still a powerful proverb. When I started college, I was encouraged to choose a career in medicine. Women, I was told, should be nurturers. And, yes, many women are naturally wonderful nurturers, but we have so much more to offer. Unfortunately, I believed people when they told me I would not be good with technology.

After years bouncing around unhappily in the medical field, I returned to school for a technology degree when my husband suggested my love for math, logic, and problem solving would make it an ideal fit for me. A professor introduced me to NCL, and I disappeared down rabbit holes trying to learn all about this new world. But where I often felt alone on this path at first, I have now found this supportive NCL Community, where we can achieve a new standard in our field where everyone is valued equally and celebrated as individuals.

Women in cybersecurity face many challenges. Despite the industry’s growth, there is still a significant gender pay gap. Women often face discrimination and bias in STEM fields resulting in many women doubting their own abilities. I have been there. I have missed out on opportunities and promotions in favor of less-qualified men, and I have been paid lower wages than male counterparts just starting at the same role where I have been working for several years.

However, I am here to tell you that just because this is how it has always been, does not mean it has to continue. Together, we can make a better place for ourselves and for the women who come after us. One of the most significant challenges we face as women in cybersecurity is the lack of representation. This underrepresentation can lead to feelings of isolation, exposure to harassment, and a dearth of female mentors.

To share my passion for cybersecurity with others, I started teaching my son some of the skills used in NCL challenges. He enjoyed it so much that I started an Easter scavenger hunt every year where he would solve challenges to get clues to find the next egg or gift which made for a much more exciting egg hunt for an only child. Like most mothers, I tried to teach him the things I wish someone had taught me. Eventually, my son and I started a cybersecurity club at his high school where the students learned some fundamentals and participated in team Capture the Flag competitions. It has also been a way to encourage more women to consider a career in cybersecurity. One graduating senior from the club last year sent me a very touching thank you note for introducing her to cybersecurity as she set out to start earning a degree in the field.

Overall, being a woman in cybersecurity has been challenging but rewarding. As the industry continues to grow, it is essential to encourage more women to consider a career in cybersecurity. By doing so, we can create a more diverse and inclusive industry that benefits everyone. And always remember, as Master Oogway says, “You are the master of your destiny.”