**Missoula College Information Technology Program Advisory Board Minutes**

**Attendees:**

* Johnathon Neff, CISO, University of Montana
* Jaron Jones, Launchpoint Software
* Jeff Arends, Adjunct Faculty Missoula College
* Jason Emery, CIO, Missoula County
* Michael Williams, Missoula Job Service
* Tim Wolsky, Director of IT, Washington Corporation
* Zach Rossmiller, CIO, University of Montana
* Rae Cooper, Director of Technology, Missoula County Public Schools
* Kasey Dirnberger, CTE Director, Missoula County Public Schools
* Tom Gallagher, Dean Missoula College
* Victor Valgenti, Faculty, Missoula College

**Location**:

Blackfoot Café, Missoula College

**Welcome**:

* Brief introductions of all present

**Status of the Program**

* Watched video of GenCyber Griz Summer Institute for summer of 2021. Explained a bit about the GenCyber program (an NSA funded governmental agency attempting to foster cyber security education across the nation). The GenCyber Griz Summer Institute taught Junior High students about cybersecurity and technology.
* Tom Gallagher presented about CyberMontana and the Cyber Range for Montana to help enhance cyber security training in Montana. Please see [cybermontana.org](https://cybermontana.org/) for more information.
  + Also discussed the workforce campaigns led by cybermontana and Missoula college for training in cybersecurity.
  + Question was asked about how the cyber range would be leveraged. Answer was training across Montana, Missoula College classes, and otherwise open to suggestions. I
  + t was pointed out that students at the Highschool were 'poking holes' in the school network. Can this be leveraged for something?
  + Also noted that the business and agencies are siloed because no one had heard of these programs yet.
  + Several cybermontana programs (classes) offered for Dual credit.
* Course sharing with Helena College and Highlands college. Collaboration with Helena College and Highlands college along with the quottly system has made it easier for students to take courses at different campuses. Further, we have worked to better standardize our curriculums.

**Future of the Program**

* A DevOps concentration at Missoula College is being considered. Opinions were solicited.
  + Comments
    - A 2 year program in DevOps is a good idea
    - Scripting is very helpful for employees to know
    - DevOps/scripting knowledge is very transferrable
    - The program needs to be flexible and stay current
    - Most of their better staff better staff has DevOps skills, but it is mostly self-taught
    - Needs to include scripting
    - Business People may soon have ARPA money, we need to develop a training program that can take advantage of this 6-12 week training funding.
* Microcredential/Non-credit Training through Missoula College
  + Question was asked about the value of limited training through Missoula College including: Tabletop exercises, Hackathons, and red-team/Blue-team exercises.
  + Comments
    - How do you get accountability of Micro-credentials? Answer: None in some case, may be tied to credit or continuing education in others.

**Questions**

* How to get more centralized handling of Internship and Job Opportunities?
  + Handshake does not seem to yield good results
    - This could be a student or University problem.
    - Previous experiences with handshake weren't very effective - very few applicants
    - Anecdotally, students aren't being shown Handshake and often have to find it themselves
  + Feels disjointed
  + Often a business wants to hire from multiple schools, but each school has internships/job offerings organized differently
  + There needs to be a more uniform internship process
  + Need to discuss this with The office for student success (OSS) needs to receive this feedback
* What does the board think of a 2-year software dev degree?
  + Many companies have specific coding needs—a degree that hits different programming needs means the employers still need to train workers. Thus, less need for strongly targeted software dev degree
  + Historically, businesses have been pleased with basic skills
  + Maybe we can develop something to teach more specialized job skills/languages etc
  + More intensive, hands-on programs would be good
  + Perhaps we could tie in the UM IT/Cybersecurity's hiring needs for the internships
  + Missoula still seems to have many businesses requiring traditional 4 year degrees
  + Leverage Montana code academy to meet some training/faculty needs?
* What are significant areas of need?
  + Basic networking skills
    - Can they explain DNS?
    - What happens when you type in google.com to your browser
  + Student's people skills
  + Ability to write technical documentation that makes sense
  + basic writing skills are necessary - typos alone disqualify some applicants
  + Knowledge of governance/frameworks
    - ITIL, COBIT
  + SQL skills were lacking
* What opportunities exist for Collaboration?
  + Need to continue working with job service, work with businesses to learn their needs
    - This meeting as a good start
  + Security at UM and our own IT staff should take our own micro credentials, rather than sending them out-of-state
  + Expose new students/high school students to students that are on the verge of graduating
  + Easier to relate to than established professionals
  + Internships tend to result in jobs without any hiccups
  + Data tracking
    - How do we track former students?
  + OSINT/linkdin research? (Perhaps require registration on linkdin as part of the internship, adding the MC as a connection so we can track them)
  + Emphasis on base fundamentals
    - people skills
    - basic networking
    - troubleshooting
    - ability to learn new languages quickly
    - keep the program flexible, current
    - The best IT people are those that want to learn, and keep learning