University of Montana: CyberMontana – Big Sky Country's Cybersecurity Education Hub

CyberMontana was created by the 2021 Legislative session to address the urgent need to enhance cybersecurity across our State. It directly impacts businesses and municipalities. By the end of the 2025 biennium, CyberMontana's outreach will have educated or trained Montanans in all 56 counties and all seven Native American reservations.

- **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:** Across the U.S. there are over 450,000 open cybersecurity jobs—including 1,400 in Montana. With an average annual salary of $120,000 per year, cybersecurity is one of the fastest growing and highest-paying career fields in the nation. We offer rapid training programs for adults interested in shifting employment to the field of cybersecurity. To meet the workforce demand in our state, CyberMontana engages middle school students with STEM camps and progress to dual credit and certificate opportunities for high school students.
- **WORKFORCE TRAINING:** Training the existing nontechnical workforce is essential in stopping cyberattacks. Our cybersecurity awareness programs provide education for the 560,000 Montanans in the workforce – the 98% that is non-technical as well as the 2% that has specialized IT/cybersecurity knowledge. We offer online and in-person training in a variety of formats, supporting Montana's workforce as well as our retired and senior populations.
- **PROTECTING MONTANA COMMUNITIES:** The Montana Cyber Range and the Security Operations Center serves as a protective force for small public entities as well as a training ground for aspiring cybersecurity workers. Faculty lead students in monitoring network traffic, reporting anomalies, and gaining invaluable experience that prepares them for a career in cybersecurity.
- **EDUCATION RESOURCE HUB:** The Montana Cyber Range serves as the online platforms used in K-12 and higher education. The State Community of Practice, engages all higher education institutions in the state, offering professional development opportunities for those on the front lines of developing the future cybersecurity workforce
- **POLICY AND PLANNING:** CyberMontana supports entities in critical infrastructure sectors plan and prepare for cybersecurity threats, aiding providers in healthcare, the electrical grid, agriculture, education, and local government.
- **ROI:** The return on investment for avoiding a single data breach is over four million dollars.