DOD Recognizes Cyber, Information Technology Achievements

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The Defense Department recognized excellence in performance by its cyber and information technology workforce yesterday. Three individual awards and several honorable mentions were presented by DOD's chief information officer during an awards ceremony at the Pentagon.

"This is about taking a moment out of our busy days to step back and recognize the achievements of some great teams and individuals who really do hallmark [tasks] each and every day, whether it's making us a more efficient organization, more agile, more secure or better enabling the warfighter," said host and CIO Dana Deasy.

The categories for the awards are digital modernization, cloud, artificial intelligence, command, control and communications, cyber, IT reform, electronic management, information communications technology and cyber workforce management.

The following are the winners of this year's awards:

1   **Team Awards**

- DOD Vulnerability Disclosure Program, DOD Cyber Crime Center;

- Mirador Team, Defense Manpower Data Center;

- Program Budget Data Management Division, Deputy Chief of Staff, Army; and

- Project VOLTRON Team, Defense Innovation Unit

2   Team Honorable Mention Awards

- Cyber Enterprise Management Team, Navy Department Deputy Chief Information Officer; and

- Infrastructure Design Implementation and Automation Team, DISA

3   Accessibility/Section 508 Category Award

- Keyur Patel, laboratory for advanced cybersecurity research, National Security Agency

4   Electronic Records Category Award

- Team of Sandra McAfee-Symons, command records, at North American Aerospace Defense Command /U.S. Northern Command

5   Cyberspace Workforce Category Award

- Team of Carrie Waltz, cyber workforce program, Joint Staff

6   Individual Awards

- Trang Nguyen, cybersecurity policy and strategy, Defense Information Systems Agency;

- Air Force Master Sgt. Matthew T. Smith, joint staff support center, DISA; and

- Army Col. Kyle Jette, headquarters, Army Department G8 Program executive office, enterprise information systems

Honorable mentions in the individual categories went to Air Force Senior Airman Gato Harvey, Detachment 1, 460th Space Communications Squadron; and Air Force 1st Lt. Andrew Pope, 55th Communications Squadron

Among the three individual winners, Jette said he was completely surprised by his award, but, he said, "I am not surprised at all that this collective effort is being recognized, because it is going to change the Army in so many ways."

Jette said his team will continue to lead the Army's efforts in obtaining access to the sources of authoritative data from across the business mission area and from some of the warfighting mission areas within the Army.

Nguyen said her work ensured 95% of critical and high vulnerabilities were properly patched and configured across 25,000 assets. This translates into fewer vulnerabilities and an improved risk posture for our networks, reducing the DOD Information Network attack surface with respect to cybersecurity attacks.

"I am very thankful for the great opportunities DISA has given to me," she said of her work. "I have learned so much about information assurance and cybersecurity. This award is a significant milestone in my career. I feel honored to receive it but also very anxious. I will need to push myself hard to maintain what I accomplished in the past years and make more improvements."

Smith said his award nomination highlighted his expertise and collaboration efforts, which resulted in measurable improvements in systems performance while bolstering access to joint planning resources, reducing operating costs and safeguarding the joint operations planning and execution system and global command and control system-joint platforms.

"I also drove a $1.85 million operations and maintenance budget for the deployment of [Joint Operation, Planning and Execution System], [Global Command and Control System — Joint], and the life cycle management process identifying two obsolete equipment requirements, freeing $112,000 for future needs," he added.

"Being selected as the DOD-level winner is a high honor and I am grateful for all of the support I have received to pursue this award nomination," Smith noted. "I remember being in the office of a previous DOD CIO award winner and looking at their award and coin. I was just in awe of the prestige of the award and what they accomplished and I couldn't fathom how I could ever be in the same group as them. From here, I will just continue supporting our amazing and talented IT professionals the best way I can to accomplish our mission."

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