

Cybersecurity Workshop: Expanding Access to Cybersecurity Careers for All Students (CyberSwarm)

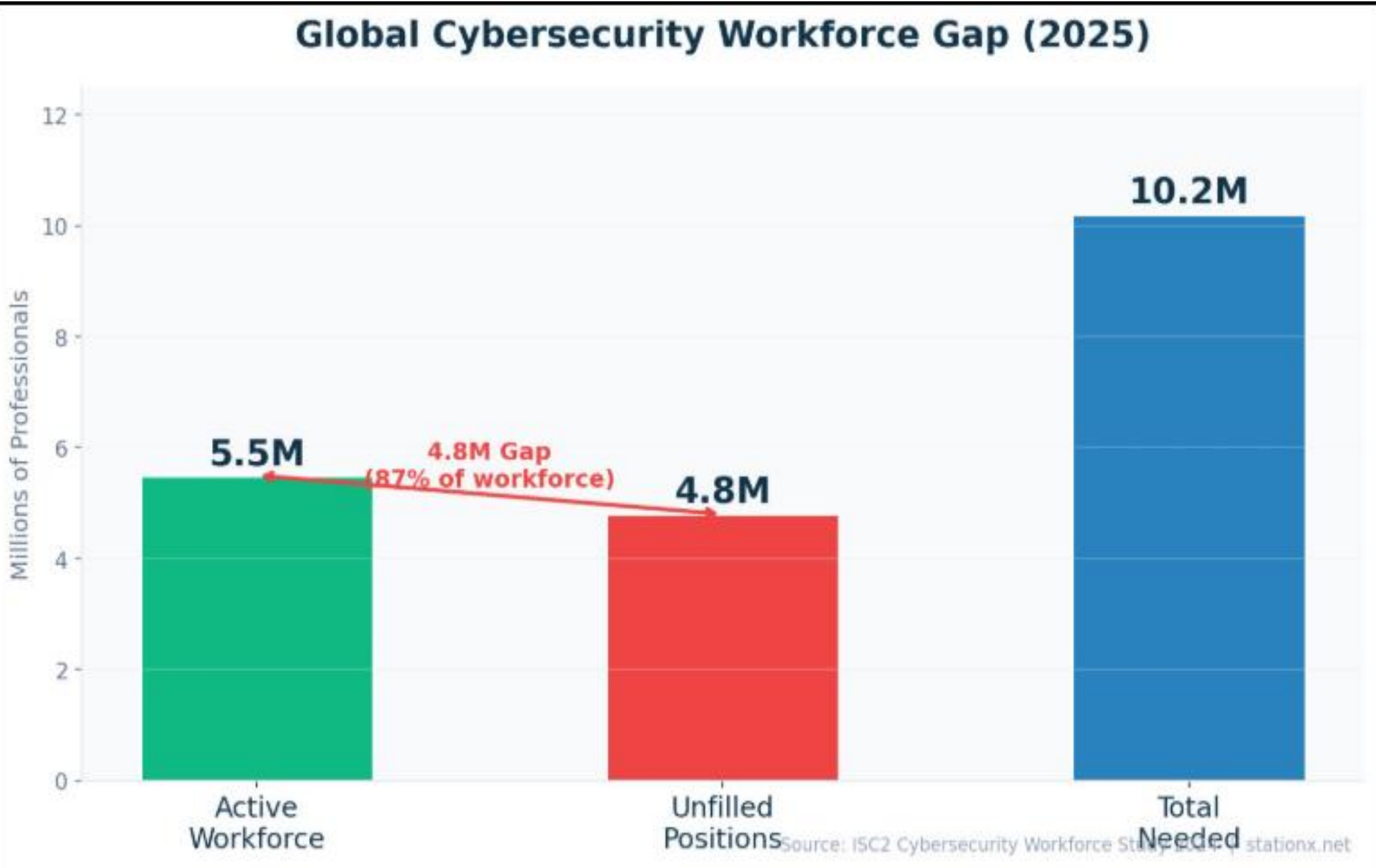
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Problem Definition & Proposal

The cybersecurity field continues to face a major workforce shortage in the United States and globally, with hundreds of thousands of unfilled positions and increasing demand for skilled professionals (ISC2, 2024; Cisco Systems, 2024; World Economic Forum, 2024; Kuzior et al., 2024). At the same time, cyber threats are becoming more frequent and sophisticated, highlighting the need for stronger cybersecurity education, awareness, and workforce development programs. Students interested in cybersecurity often lack networking opportunities, career guidance, and exposure to industry professionals, which can limit their employability and career readiness (Tomić et al., 2020; Cybersecurity Ventures, 2025; Lightcast, 2024; NIST, 2024).

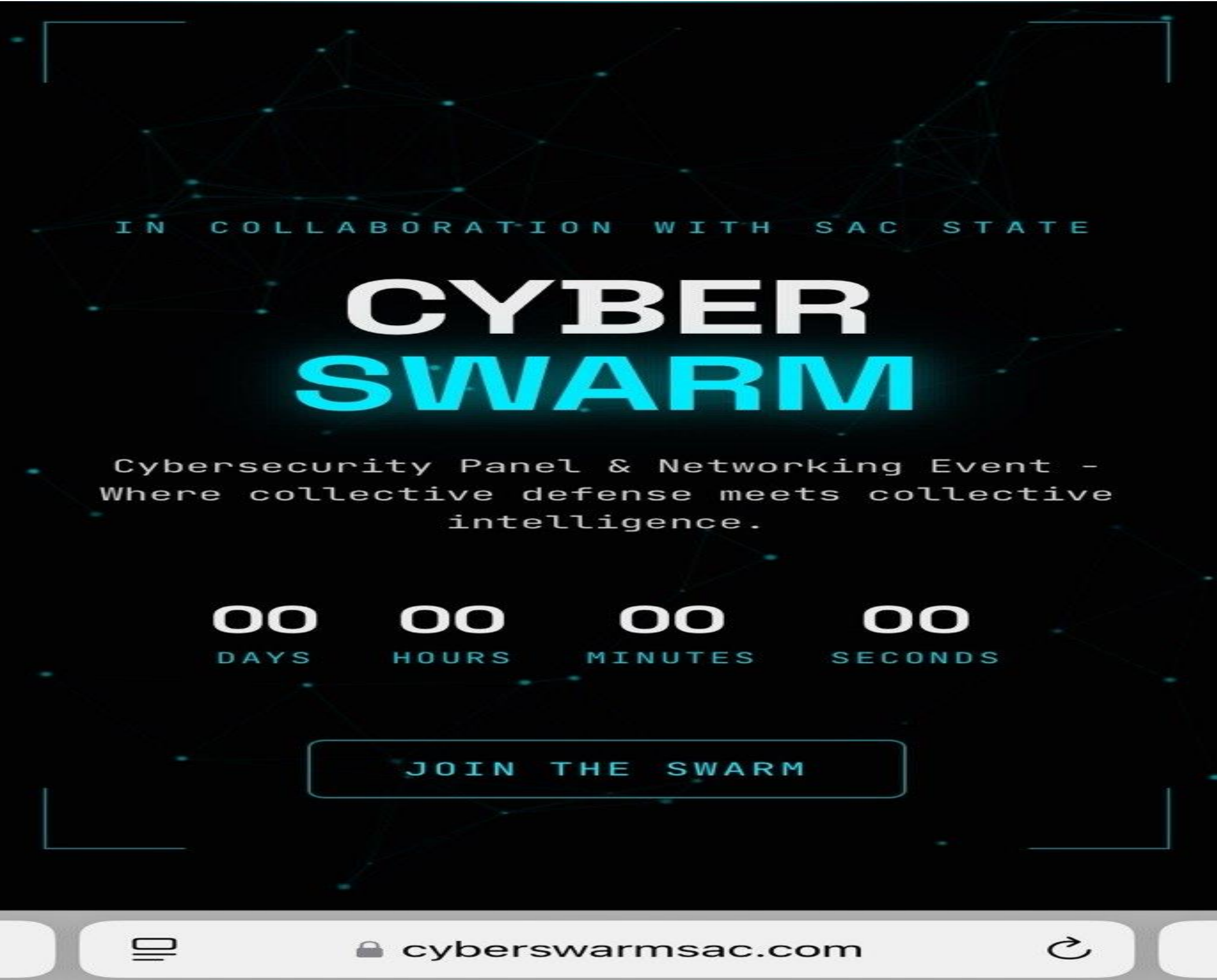
The proposed cybersecurity workshop aims to address these challenges by connecting Sacramento State students with industry experts, introducing them to cybersecurity career paths and certifications, and providing opportunities for mentorship, networking, internships, and professional development. Beyond supporting student career development, the workshop contributes to strengthening the cybersecurity talent pipeline, promoting a culture of cybersecurity awareness, and increasing enrollment and job placement opportunities in future cybersecurity programs.



Implementation

The CyberSwarm event was organized through collaboration with cybersecurity professionals, student organizations, industry sponsors, and faculty partners. Outreach efforts included contacting the MISBA Fellows group, ISACA, and local cybersecurity professionals, followed by collecting participant availability through a survey. Student assistants supported event coordination and logistics. Industry sponsors including Palo Alto Networks, Solutions Simplified, Cyera, AHEAD, Cribl, Redapt, Inc., and Computacenter contributed swag items and catering support. Six cybersecurity professionals participated as panelists, discussing cybersecurity career pathways, certifications, internships, and industry realities.

The event was held at the Terrace Suite at The WELL on April 24 from 5-8 PM and included two moderated panel discussions, networking opportunities, and student engagement activities. Student volunteers from MIS 170, ISACA, and MISA assisted with registration, catering, and event logistics. An event website and agenda were developed under the CyberSwarm name, and planning meetings were conducted with panelists in advance. Following the event, students were encouraged to connect with speakers on LinkedIn, and overall feedback from attendees was highly positive, with many participants reporting successful networking experiences.



CyberSwarm Website: Created by Juan Campos

Conclusions

This workshop supported Sacramento State's values of diversity and inclusion by providing equitable access to cybersecurity networking, mentorship, and career opportunities, particularly for underrepresented, first-generation, and international students. It strengthened collaboration among students, faculty, industry professionals, and community partners. The event outcomes will enhance MIS 170 course materials through updated cybersecurity career insights and potential guest speakers. It also supports the development and promotion of the future MS in Cybersecurity Management and certificate programs and created potential employment opportunities for our students.

