TowerCares Foundation Makes $300,000 Commitment to Maryland's UMBC Cybersecurity Institute

New three-year partnership between the TowerCares Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Tower Federal Credit Union, and the UMBC Cybersecurity Institute will help support the Maryland region and educate and train the next generation of cybersecurity leaders and professionals.

Baltimore, Maryland (March 25, 2025) Cyber threats, ransomware, and data breaches have become daily realities in our increasingly digital world. However, despite the surge in cyberattacks and cybercrime, Maryland faces over 24,000 unfilled cybersecurity positions, while nationwide, that number exceeds 457,000, according to CyberSeek.

To address the urgent cyber workforce shortage, the TowerCares Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Tower Federal Credit Union, is committing $300,000 to the UMBC Cybersecurity Institute (UCI). The groundbreaking three-year partnership will create a new scholarship fund within the prestigious UMBC Cyber Scholars Program, which is dedicated to equipping students with the skills needed for careers in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and data science.

Cybersecurity is a core priority for Tower, one of Maryland's largest credit unions, providing banking and wealth management services to more than 225,000 members throughout Maryland and around the globe. Headquartered in Laurel, Maryland, Tower employs more than 610 people in the Greater Baltimore/Washington area and holds over $4.5 billion in assets.

"As Maryland has proudly established itself as one of the nation's premier cybersecurity hubs, both TowerCares and Tower Federal Credit Union are committed to supporting the institutions and programs shaping the next generation of professionals and leaders," said Allen Brisentine, Chairman of the TowerCares Foundation. "Our mission is to help our community thrive, and partnering with institutions like UMBC—recognized as a leader in information technology and cybersecurity—is a key part of that effort. The entire Maryland region benefits from UMBC's renowned and highly regarded cybersecurity program."

Empowering the next generation of cybersecurity professionals

Since its inception in 2013, the UMBC Cyber Scholars Program has launched the careers of over 100 graduates, offering financial aid and a dedicated community that includes special on-campus housing, unique courses, mentoring, and the chance to take part in cybersecurity research and internships early in their academic careers. With the support of TowerCares, even more students will gain the critical skills and experience needed to safeguard government agencies, businesses, and everyday consumers.

"The Cyber Scholars program stands out in higher education by going beyond technical education in cybersecurity to offer students mentoring, networking, and a broad education that helps them understand how diverse, rewarding, and socially important cybersecurity work can be," said Anupam Joshi, the acting dean of the College of Engineering and Information Technology at UMBC. "Last year we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the program, and it was

such a great feeling to meet program alumni who have become cybersecurity leaders. We're deeply grateful to the TowerCares Foundation for supporting this important work that both helps grow the cybersecurity workforce and makes it more inclusive."

The TowerCares Foundation will be formally recognized at UMBC's upcoming Spring into Leadership Awards Ceremony. In addition, representatives will collaborate with UMBC on mentorship programs, participation in industry panels, and networking with scholars at exclusive events.

"The TowerCares Foundation is honored to partner with UCI through this new initiative to support our cybersecurity community and help address the issue of thousands of unfilled cyber jobs in Maryland," said Brisentine. "By supporting the Cyber Scholars Program, we are helping to ensure that the next generation of cyber professionals has the knowledge, resources, and opportunities needed to combat cyber threats and safeguard the security of our local citizens and businesses throughout the Maryland region, and ultimately, across our nation."

About TowerCares Foundation
Founded in 2015 by Tower Federal Credit Union, the TowerCares Foundation was created to give back to the community by supporting children in need, military service members, and Veterans. Since its inception, TowerCares has contributed over $3 million to 119 charitable organizations and awarded $510,000 in scholarships to students pursuing degrees in STEM and foreign language linguistics. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, TowerCares proudly participates in the Combined Federal Campaign (#23594) and the Maryland Charitable Campaign (#47-4164006), and holds a Platinum-level GuideStar rating, reflecting a commitment to transparency. For more information, please visit towercaresfoundation.org.

About the UMBC Cybersecurity Institute (UCI)
The UMBC Cybersecurity Institute (UCI) provides unified academic and research leadership, partnership, innovation, and public outreach in this critical discipline. Through the UCI, UMBC is one of the few universities in the United States designated both a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD) and a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Research (CAE-R) by the National Security Agency. Additionally, UMBC has been a leading participant in the NSF Federal CyberCorps/SFS program since 2012.

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