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## **El Camino College Info Security Specialist Honored for Trailblazing Work** *Paul Yoder named 2017 Cybersecurity Leadership and Innovation Award Winner in Education*

El Camino College Information Security Specialist Paul Yoder was recently honored with the 2017 Cybersecurity Leadership and Innovation Award in the education category. Sponsored by McAfee and the Center for Digital Government, Cybersecurity Leadership and Innovation Awards recognize leading contributors to information security knowledge and best practices across several industries.

Information security is rapidly growing and steadily evolving into an important component in everyday life, from global industry to personal use. Most recently, the Equifax breach has exposed how the security of personally identifiable information is everyone's concern.

"The state of information security and the proliferation of threats around the world should concern everyone," Yoder said. "Fortunately, security best practices are something we all can learn; you don't need rigorous technical education to be proactive about your own valuable data."

The seventh annual Cybersecurity Leadership and Innovation Awards were underwritten by Intel and honor leading contributors to cybersecurity innovation in healthcare, education and government. Winners are selected based on evaluations of leadership prowess, creative problem solving, leveraging of technology and overall impact on their respective organizations.

At El Camino College, Yoder serves as the head of cybersecurity and is a member of the technology committee. He joined the staff in April 2016 and has since led a thorough transformation of the college's security posture. Yoder's work at ECC has involved developing a comprehensive InfoSec program from the ground up; specific tasks included creating a cybersecurity education program, deploying next-generation firewalls, creating appropriate policies and ensuring compliance at all levels.

Before joining ECC, Yoder worked for 15 years at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and at the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles after that. He was a member of JPL's Network Computer Security Group, which created an automated system to discover, track and remediate computer vulnerabilities. That system has since been deployed throughout NASA. Yoder also contributed to the recently concluded Cassini-Huygens mission and the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) project.

Currently, Yoder is compiling a book on cybersecurity and cyber hygiene best practices for non-experts who want to protect their digital data. He believes all citizens around the world have the power to thwart cyber criminals and stem the tide of data breaches.

“People are always the weak link in any cybersecurity system, no matter how well designed,” Yoder added. “The overwhelming majority of breaches happen because of human error, whether a misguided policy, consistent failure to follow procedures or a simple, one-time mistake. Knowledge, awareness and follow-through are key to preventing future incidents.”

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**Photos available online:**

El Camino College Information Security Specialist Paul Yoder was recently honored with the 2017 Cybersecurity Leadership and Innovation Award from the Center for Digital Government. <http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/publicrelations/photos/2017/PaulYoderphoto.jpg>