

Three Organizations Pave the Way for the “Cybersecurity Dozen”

Corporate and Community Leaders Provide Training, Access, and Opportunity for a Dozen People in Career Transitions

For Immediate Release

Atlanta, GA: Cyber Leadership and Strategy Solutions (CLASS-LLC) and YWCA Metropolitan Chicago have partnered together to bring more people into the cybersecurity profession. Starting with twelve people in Chicago, the program provides a pipeline to close the cybersecurity skills gap facing the nation and the world.



YWCA in its mission to provide individuals and families support and tools they need to obtain skills and credentials and to access resources and opportunities brought in Keyaan J. Williams, Founder and President of CLASS-LLC to offer training through his Cyber Career Foundations program. These dozen participants are now prepared to enter the workforce with Security+ certification from CompTIA and the knowledge and skills required to start a new career. Williams realized that YWCA’s program and his company’s training was excellent, but that an additional valuable component would be the membership in ISSA Chicago. The ISSA Chicago members have access to networking, best practices, information sourcing, and certification assistance and possible career opportunities through the association.

“As the past-president of the ISSA International Board of Directors, I decided to invest in the future of the “cybersecurity dozen” by sponsoring their first year of membership in ISSA. The participants already invested in great training. Now, they have a great opportunity for success because of the relationships they will develop as active members of a global cybersecurity association,” explains Mr. Williams.

“The feedback I am getting from students is that the knowledge they are gaining is preparing them for an actual career in cyber security in a variety of industries that are in need of cyber security professionals. They not only receive support from YWCA Metropolitan Chicago but also the CLASS-LLC instructor and support staff,” remarks Dr. Stacia Thompson, Vice President, Workforce Innovation Institute, YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

Charlotte Bennett, YWCA participant, “Joining this cohort has really helped to enlighten my future for Cyber Security. This program opens a path for me while providing support and assistance to achieve my goals. The classroom environment overall is more than I could have ever imagined and I’m grateful for being able to have the opportunity to be a part of this fellowship program.”

Marc Thompson, Executive Director ISSA, “Keyaan’s sponsorship of ISSA Chapter membership for these dozen individuals benefits us all. Membership will not only be valuable to them, but these new members also often bring new ideas, new life, and new excitement to existing members of the ISSA.”

YWCA Participant, Latisha Layfield, “During completion of my Industrial/Organizational Psychology Master’s Degree program, my final course was the Capstone. My chosen topic was How to Retain the Autism Parent in the Workplace. Being a single mother of an Autistic child has many challenges. Finding the ability to juggle my responsibilities as a caregiving mother and successfully acquiring gainful employment is very challenging. Having the flexibility by working remotely will relieve some stressors of my unconventional lifestyle. I was fortunate enough to learn about the YWCA Cybersecurity Fellowship program. What stood out about YWCA is its dedication to diversity and inclusion and women empowerment. It was apparent that this program was an important part of the puzzle allowing me to reinvent myself, gain a valuable career skill, and also provide something so needed for the Autism and

caregiver community. The Instructors of this program have given us not only the tools to successfully acquire Cybersecurity Certifications, but also tools that will help in gaining employment within the industry.

Keyaan Williams continues, “this investment in the “cybersecurity dozen”, as I call them, speaks to the core value of what we should all be doing as business owners, mentors, and professionals. I am honored to help these really dedicated fellows with entre into my industry. These fellows are the stars because of the hard work they have invested to start a new career as adult learners. They are excited about how this opportunity will change their lives.”

ABOUT YWCA CHICAGO: YWCA Metropolitan Chicago is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. The YWCA Career Fellowship Program helps women and families achieve transformational personal and financial empowerment through training and support in jumpstarting new careers.

ABOUT CLASS-LLC: CLASS-LLC is a cybersecurity and business services firm. It is not a technology company, but aligns with strategic partners to develop comprehensive solutions. CLASS-LLC uses professional certification workshops and custom-developed training to develop the cybersecurity capabilities of the entire workforce, from general computer users to senior executives.

ABOUT ISSA CHICAGO: The Information Systems Security Association (ISSA) is a not-for-profit international organization of information security professionals and practitioners. The Chicago Chapter of the ISSA has a mission to offer a stimulating combination of discussion forums, hands-on learning, CISSP certification training, conferences, and other events, which are designed to enhance understanding and awareness of information security issues for information security professionals.

To schedule an interview with Keyaan Williams, please call Lisabeth Begin, Publicist, at 727-243-6965 or email at Lis@BeginProductions.com