



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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iQ4 AND NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE AWARDED 1ST PLACE IN 18TH BEST PRACTICES COMPETITION

**EXTENDING THE CAPACITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO SCALE
THE OUTPUT OF VERIFIED WORKFORCE-READY GRADUATES**

Washington, D.C. The Board of Directors of PESC is pleased to announce [iQ4](#) and the [National Student Clearinghouse](#) as 1st Place Winners of PESC's 18th Annual Best Practices Competition for its submission, **"Extending the Capacity of Higher Education to Scale the Output of Verified Workforce-Ready Graduates."**

The award-winning submission received high praise from the PESC Board for its open and broad collaborative approach, sophisticated automation, transparent capacity, use of national standards and innovative technology employed, and for the positive results and outcomes it immediately produces.

The overall goal of this initiative is "to scale the next generation workforce by accelerating technology-risk and cybersecurity skills training," and is accomplished through a financial, industry-driven coalition, the Cybersecurity Workforce Alliance (CWA). The CWA originally formed in 2015 with iQ4, City University of New York (CUNY), John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the State University of New York, University at Albany, and eight senior cybersecurity executives, and now has 500+ members. CWA members "virtually mentor the college student workforce in solving scenario-based cybersecurity business problems to accelerate awareness, experience readiness and scale the student workforce, so they are more attractive to hire and can provide almost immediate value to the private sector by improving a company's technology and security capabilities globally."

The competency-based model, proven in the cybersecurity sector, is transportable across all faculty, disciplines and industry sectors, and leverages the NIST Critical Infrastructure Framework and the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE Workforce Framework), now automated on the iQ4 Workforce Risk and Mobility platform and made available as open source.

Students from public higher education institutions can now graduate with a combined academic and workplace skills portfolio, captured in a co-curricular transcript, and are landing career-inspired jobs, having no prior background or experience, with companies that have never hired from those institutions before. "On-the-job training while in class" is transformational and salary levels are life-changing.

"On behalf of the iQ4 team, the CWA and our strategic partner the National Student Clearinghouse, we are thrilled and honored to receive this 1st place award and very special recognition. Data Standards, Trusted Source, Empowerment, Mobility and its value to students, education and employers, are the centerpieces of our work. Our teams continue to work relentlessly to solve the student workforce readiness challenge, that can measure applied knowledge, performance and progression, at massive scale, core to our Skills Passport co-curricular data driven credentialing. Industry can now utilize academic and applied learning data, to map student skills, competencies and academic accomplishments to their hiring needs. Working together we will transform our next generation workforce."

FRANK C. CICIO, JR., CEO and Founder, iQ4 Corporation

MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS | ONE VISION

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“This is a next generation solution that is showing real results. Determining industry and job profile standards are at the heart of this initiative along with the platform itself, enabling workforce and education to collaborate. The result is a demonstrable closing of the skills gap. The National Student Clearinghouse and iQ4 are very honored to be recognized.”

RICARDO D. TORRES, President and CEO, National Student Clearinghouse

“When the history of cybersecurity is written, the CWA and the Epic Challenge Program will be hailed as trailblazers in cybersecurity education. I strongly believe that we, the consortium members of the CWA, are not only creating the next generation of the cybersecurity workforce, but also preparing them to protect and defend this great nation. The work we do here protecting our national critical infrastructures is a part of our journey towards the attaining the ultimate technological nirvana: cyber-resilience and freedom from cyber warfare.”

GOPAL PADINJARUVEETIL, Vice President, Chief Information Security Officer Auto Club Group, Michigan

“We are pleased at the University at Albany, SUNY to be working with our partners on this virtual internship in this cybersecurity project-based course. It inspires our students to work hard and learn in a powerful way that builds on their academic curriculum to get them work-ready before graduation. The documentation in the iQ4 platform of the skills learned adds a critical component and the partnership with the National Student Clearinghouse provides authenticity, access, and scale. From my perspective in Higher Education, this work is transformational and the PESC award recognizes that.”

JAMES STELLAR, Interim President, University at Albany, SUNY (State University New York)

“The virtual internship has provided our students with a remarkable learning opportunity. Through it, they learn about what cybersecurity work is like; they develop soft skills through industry mentor feedback that help them gain entry to one of fastest growing global career sectors.”

ANNE LOPES, Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Dean of Graduate Studies, John Jay College/CUNY (City University of New York)

“Preparing the next generation of cybersecurity experts through higher education is a mutual passion between iQ4 and EC-Council. This starts by incorporating real-world skills, hands-on education and stackable credentials in Cybersecurity domains. Tracking knowledge, skills and abilities within these credentials, while being able to translate those into marketable records for students to showcase to employers is invaluable. We congratulate iQ4 and the National Student Clearinghouse on their successful efforts.”

WESLEY ALVAREZ, Director of Academics, US. The International Council of E-Commerce Consultants (EC-Council)

“Congratulations to the CWA for being recognized for its hard work in preparing students who are ready to meet the demands of the financial industry. It is exciting to see CWA, a financial, industry-driven coalition, successfully address many of the objectives in NICE's Strategic Goals, *Accelerate Learning and Skills Development, Nurture a Diverse Learning Community, and Guide Career Development and Workforce Planning.*”

BILL NEWHOUSE, Deputy Director for the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), U.S. Department of Commerce

“This program takes a unique approach to teaching by applying assignments to actual work the student would likely perform on the job. In addition, the use of current cyber security threats and industry professionals involved in the creation of the curriculum, assignments, lectures, and the live critiquing of assignments provides students with the ability to hear what the expectations as a future employee. The often long jump that a student needs to make from learning theory in the classroom to applying their learning and demonstrating their ability is eliminated through this learning approach.”

CHRYSANTHE CUPONE, Manager, Information Security Awareness, IT Risk Management and Services, American Express

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"By the extension of the workplace into the classroom via mentors and 'real world' curriculum, the program provides one of those unique opportunities to positively impact not only students, but security professionals (mentors), the Cybersecurity industry, and the Business. It is truly a win for all."

TERESA DUROCHER, Information Security Professional

"Working with our partners, we have "cracked the code" in creating an innovative technology solution, that presents complex data, and respects privacy, in a powerful and compelling user experience! We are all exploring new groundbreaking frontiers that will raise the bar and help level the playing field for students globally."

KYLE HAMILTON, Chief Innovation and Data Science Officer, iQ4

"The NIST National Cybersecurity Workforce Framework (NCWF) is being adopted internationally, so this initiative has two key values: first for overseas students studying in the USA and then returning home with verifiable credentials and, secondly, for the global expansion of the Cybersecurity Workforce Alliance with workforce ready candidates."

PETER MEEHAN, Head of International and Partnerships iQ4

The award-winning submission made by iQ4 and the National Student Clearinghouse is posted on the PESC website with prior winners at <http://www.PESC.org>. An Awards Ceremony will be held during the General Sessions at PESC's Spring 2017 Data Summit being held May 3-5, 2017 in Washington DC at the Embassy Row Hotel.

For more information about iQ4, please contact CWA@iQ4.com or visit www.iQ4.com.

For more information about the National Student Clearinghouse, please visit www.studentclearinghouse.org.

For more information about NIST NICE including an upcoming webinar on Wednesday April 19, 2017 2:00 pm EDT *Rethinking Credentials for Cybersecurity Careers*, please visit <https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice>.

PESC's [Empowering the Mobility of Digital Academic Credentials](#) | Spring 2017 Data Summit on *Best Practices in Education Data Systems* is being held May 3–5, 2017 in Washington DC and is co-sponsored by [Connecting Credentials](#).

PESC celebrates its 20th Year Anniversary October 18–20, 2017 at [EDiINTEROP 2017](#) | PESC Fall 2017 Symposium and Data Summit to be held at the Radisson Admiral Hotel Harbourfront in Toronto.

NEW GROUPS FORMING AT PESC

JSON Task Force - PESC is establishing a Task Force to advise PESC Members and the education community on the impact and utility of JSON in the education domain and its relationship to XML. Under the continued leadership of the PESC Technical Advisory Board, this Task Force will continue the ongoing discussions about JSON and ultimately recommend what action, if any, PESC should undertake as a result of the emergence of JSON.

CREDENTIAL ENGINE/HR-XML/PESC Mapping Workgroup – A joint Workgroup is forming to open discussions with stakeholders in credentialing to analyze, compare, discuss enhancements and identify opportunities to advance interoperability. Under the continued leadership of the PESC Academic Credentialing and Experiential Learning Task Force and with input from the Education Record User Group (ERUG), this Workgroup will identify updates or enhancements to PESC Approved Standards.

EWP/EMREX/PESC Mapping Workgroup – PESC is forming a Workgroup to analyze, compare, discuss enhancements and identify opportunities to advance interoperability with Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) and EMREX. Under the continued leadership of the ERUG, this Workgroup will identify updates or enhancements to PESC Approved Standards.

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XML REQUEST/RESPONSE Development Workgroup – PESC is forming a Workgroup to develop Request and Response XML standards for all PESC Approved Standards. Under the continued leadership of the Steering Committee of the Standards Development Forum for Education and with input from the ERUG, this Workgroup will develop and produce Request and Response formats useable for all PESC Approved Standards.

The inaugural convenings of these Groups will occur at PESC's Spring 2017 Data Summit, taking place May 3-5, 2017 in Washington, D.C. at the Embassy Row Hotel in Dupont Circle. See www.PESC.org for more info.

PESC IS SPONSORED ANNUALLY by [Credentials Solutions](#), [National Student Clearinghouse](#), [Oracle](#) and [Parchment Inc.](#) PESC partners include [AACRAO](#), [APEREO](#), [ARUCC](#), [EMREX](#), [EWP](#), [Groningen Declaration Network](#), [Internet2](#), [SHEEO](#), and the [US Department of Education's Common Education Data Standards \(CEDS\) Initiative](#).

PESC IS A PROUD EXHIBITOR at [AACRAO's Annual Meeting](#), [ARUCC's Annual Meeting](#), and the [Annual STATS-DC Conference](#) of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the US Department of Education.

PESC IS A PROUD SPONSOR of [AIR's Annual Conference](#) and of the [Annual California Electronic Transcripts Workshop and CCCApply](#).

PESC IS A PROUD MEMBER/AFFILIATE/SIGNATORY of is [AACRAO](#), of the [NCES National Forum on Education Statistics](#), and of the [Groningen Declaration Network](#).

PESC HAS A STRONG HISTORY that includes AACRAO, SPEEDE, EDI, ANSI, X12, Canada, the US Department of Education and Y2K. Read more at www.PESC.org.

IN FULFILLING ITS NON-PROFIT MISSION, all PESC Approved Standards are available to the education community online free of charge at www.PESC.org.

ABOUT PESC

ESTABLISHED IN 1997 AT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION & HEADQUARTERED IN WASHINGTON DC, PESC is an international, 501 (c)(3) non-profit, community-based, umbrella association of data, software and education technology service providers; schools, districts, colleges and universities; college, university and state systems; local, state/province and federal government agencies; professional, commercial and non-profit organizations; and non-profit associations & foundations.

LEADING THE ESTABLISHMENT & ADOPTION OF DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS ACROSS THE EDUCATION DOMAIN. Through open and transparent community participation, PESC enables cost-effective connectivity between data systems to accelerate performance and service, to simplify data access and research, and to improve data quality along the Education lifecycle. PESC envisions global interoperability within the Education domain, supported by a trustworthy, inter-connected network built by and between communities of interest in which data flows digitally and seamlessly from one community or system to another and throughout the entire eco-system when and where needed without compatibility barriers but in a safe, secure, reliable, legal, and efficient manner.

ABOUT PRIVACY While PESC promotes the implementation and usage of data exchange standards, PESC does not set (create or establish) policies related to privacy and security. Organizations and entities using PESC Approved Standards and services should ensure they comply with FERPA and all local, state, federal and international rules on privacy and security as applicable. For more information, see www.PESC.org.

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