



Seneca Valley School District

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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<photo attached. Pictured L-R: Heather Schwartz, Isabella Muthler, Lihini Ranaweera and Lydia Miller.>

SENECA VALLEY STUDENTS EXCEL AT NATIONAL YOUTH CYBER DEFENSE COMPETITION

JACKSON TWP., PA (Feb. 22, 2024) Cybersecurity is vital for protecting sensitive information, and four young women at Seneca Valley have proven themselves as future leaders in safeguarding digital frontiers. Seneca Valley's Women in Computer Science CyberPatriot Team won second place in the state within the Silver division during the CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition.

This competition took place online and students worked together as a team for four hours during each round. The first round began in October of 2023 followed by additional rounds each month where Seneca Valley ultimately advanced to the semi-finals at the end of January. As part of the competition, students were challenged to find and fix cybersecurity vulnerabilities in virtual operating systems.

Seneca Valley's team includes seniors Lihini Ranaweera and Lydia Miller and juniors Heather Schwartz and Isabella Muthler. CyberPatriot is the National Youth Cyber Education Program created by the Air Force Association to inspire K-12 students toward careers in cybersecurity or other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to the nation's future.

"It was always a lot of fun competing," said Miss Ranaweera. "The machines had their own intricate challenges, which always forced us to think on our feet. I'm really proud of how we did this year, and hopefully next year the team can do even better!"

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