

For Immediate Release

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## **ITSMF Consults Office of National Cyber Director on White House Strategy for Cybersecurity Workforce Development** *Strategy Report Released Today*

Atlanta GA: [July 31, 2023]: [Information Technology Senior Management Forum](#) (ITSMF) met with the Office of the National Cyber Director Executive Office of the President | The White House in Washington, DC earlier this month to comment on the [President's National Cybersecurity Workforce Strategy](#), specifically offering recommendations in the area of cybersecurity workforce development. The full strategy report can be downloaded at [Biden-Harris Administration Announces National Cyber Workforce and Education Strategy. Unleashing America's Cyber Talent.](#)

As an Executive Office of the President of the United States, ONCD advises the President on cybersecurity policy and strategy with the mission of advancing national security, economic prosperity, and technological innovation through cybersecurity policy leadership.

ITSMF directors, executives, and members of ITSMF's Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) Forum met with the ONCD to review the White House strategy and shared information about ITSMF's vital role in national cybersecurity workforce development and offer recommendations on strategy components that were not initially included. ITSMF will be listed as a supporter of the strategy on the ONCD website.

Rona Bunn, National Association of Corporate Directors CIO and Corporate Secretary and By-Laws Board Chairperson with ITSMF shares "It is becoming increasingly more difficult to defend against cyber threats in this country as every person becomes more reliant on technology. I couldn't agree more that building robust and diverse cyber workforce across the country must be a shared responsibility. ITSMF's commitment to expand the number Black of technology and cyber leaders, in addition to its top-notch programming, align well to support the National Cybersecurity Directors' Strategic Plan."

Recent data indicates there are currently over 1 million cybersecurity professionals, but the demand exceeds the current availability of talent by as much as 32%. The proposed workforce development strategy has four pillars, designed to expand, and diversify the cybersecurity workforce to meet the increased demand.

1. Equip every American with foundational education about cybersecurity.
2. Transform cyber education.
3. Expand/Enhance America's cyber workforce.
4. Strengthen the Federal Government cyber workforce.

In response to the strategy collaboration, the ITSMF CISO Forum drafted an official statement that will be published by the White House today:

“ITSMF’s mission is to increase the representation of Black professionals in senior technology roles, including in cybersecurity and risk management, with a focus on driving organizational innovation and growth. There are 500 Black Chief Information Security Officers in the US. By 2026, ITSMF aims to raise the number of Black CISOs by 10% and increase the cybersecurity workforce pipeline by the same percentage.

ITSMF is a membership organization with key programs including the ITSMF CISO Forum, which develops Black talent in cybersecurity for senior executive roles; the ITSMF College Mentoring Program, supporting Black college students pursuing IT careers through mentoring, career goal setting, and real-world experience opportunities; and our Global Institute for Professional Development focused on building and broadening leadership skills.

The impact of ITSMF’s efforts in these areas results in industry innovation, growth, and thought leadership through the increased representation of talented Black professionals in cyber and risk management at senior levels.”

Ibrahim Jackson, ITSMF Board Vice Chair states “In today’s digital age, cyber literacy is essential for everyone. In an increasingly interconnected world, personal and professional digital threats are unavoidable. Every digital citizen in America will require skills and knowledge to protect themselves, the communities they serve, and the businesses they support from cyber threats and attacks. ITSMF is committed to ensuring cyber education, skills, and leadership are available to everyone, regardless of their age or level of expertise. We believe that everyone has the right to be safe in all cyberspaces.”

The ITSMF CISO Forum was established to:

1. Strengthen the Cybersecurity Pipeline with Black talent.
2. Maintain a focus on emerging and disruptive technologies in cyber.
3. Prepare future Black cybersecurity professionals to excel in senior executive level Cybersecurity roles.

Cybersecurity remains a national priority and ITSMF leaders hold important seats at the table to help shape effective and equitable policies. ITSMF and ONCD are aligned on many initiatives and opportunities for future collaboration are underway::

- Continuing an exchange of workforce development guidance and strategy,
- Increasing national exposure and educating the broader public on what we can all do to increase cybersecurity,
- Expanding the career pipeline in cybersecurity, Including underrepresented groups, and
- Expanding funding resources.

“Cyber security continues to be an imminent threat to the public and private sector. We have an opportunity to influence the development of current and future cyber security professionals within our workforce. Everyone can contribute to the safety of our home and work environments and this plan focuses on meeting people where they are and increasing their knowledge and expertise so we can all protect our nation from consistent and pervasive cyber threat,” states John Gift, CISO with WestRock.

The full President’s National Security Strategy can be downloaded at [National Cyber Workforce and Education Strategy](#).

### About ITSMF

*The Information Technology Senior Management Forum (ITSMF), formed in 1996, began with a conversation between a few prominent technology executives who discovered that only 3% of information technology management roles were held by Black professionals. For over 25 years, ITSMF has remained the premier national organization dedicated exclusively to cultivating executive talent among Black technology professionals. To learn more, visit [itsmfleaders.org](#).*