

# WORKING TOGETHER TO MEET THE CYBERSECURITY NEEDS OF OUR STATE AND NATION

Sen. Scott DeLano

Senate Technology Committee, Chairman

Mississippi State Senate, District 50



**MISSISSIPPI CYBER  
INITIATIVE**

# Mississippi Cyber & Technology Center

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- Will serve as MCI headquarters, adjacent to Keesler AFB
- Provides a facility where cyber experts from across the state, region, and nation can gather to collaborate on how best to meet cybersecurity demands that impact federal, state, private, and public entities
- Will serve as a technology incubator for private sector development in cybersecurity
- Will provide showcase for workforce training and development for local community colleges and K-12
- Houses a Secured/Controlled space to hold sensitive information, conduct advanced training and education, and allow collaboration on the most current cyber threats
- Managed by MSU Research and Technology Corporation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation



# The Model

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- MCI is modeled after Georgia Cyber Center in Augusta, Georgia
- Augusta is home to U.S. Army Cyber Command and Cyber Center of Excellence, creating opportunities for public/private collaboration
- Georgia invested \$100 million to build two facilities totaling 332,000 square feet
- Facilities serve as a hub for technology startups and university-led training programs
- Mississippi delegation visited Georgia Cyber Center in March 2020 and began considering a similar initiative to support Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi





# The Vision for Mississippi

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- **Build a state-of-the-art facility adjacent to Keesler AFB to serve as a hub for cyber activity**
  - Meet the mission-critical cyber training needs of U.S. Air Force and Department of Defense
  - Provide workforce development opportunities through Gulf Coast Community College and community outreach to K-12 schools to enhance pipeline of future recruits in cyber-related fields.
  - Catalyst for innovation-based economic development on the Gulf Coast and throughout Mississippi
  - Unparalleled collaboration to position Mississippi as a leader in cybersecurity training and operations

# Execution of the Mississippi Cyber Initiative

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- Mississippi State University is leading the statewide effort
- Execution of an Enhanced Use Lease of +/- 14 acres on Keesler AFB anchors the initiative on the Mississippi Gulf Coast
- Implementing partners include MSU, Keesler AFB, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College and the University of Southern Mississippi
- Success based on strong partnerships and collaboration among all stakeholders





# Capabilities and Resources

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- MSU is one of only 10 universities in the U.S. to hold all three academic cyber certifications awarded by the National Security Agency and is also home to the fourth largest National Science Foundation Cyber Corps program in the nation.
- Keesler AFB has direct responsibility for training the Air Force and Department of Defense's cyber force, graduating approximately 8,700 cyber professionals per year.
- MGCCC has well established cyber and IT programs needed to prepare cyber workforce, as well as resources and infrastructure to provide immediate support.
- USM has a growing cyber program and key partnerships through the Mississippi Defense Initiative.



# Facilities on MGCCC Harrison County Campus

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- A secondary MCI facility at MGCCC will provide immediate support and capabilities
- Renovating an existing building to create a Systems Operations Lab, Cyber Range, and Cyber Forensics Lab
- Forensics Lab will immediately boost digital investigation efforts for Mississippi Bureau of Investigation
- Cyber Range and Systems Operations Lab allow for enhanced training in network environments
- Full operational capabilities anticipated by early 2022

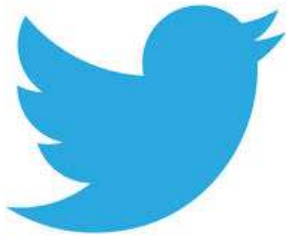
# Funding

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- Mississippi Legislature allocated \$3.5 million in 2020 to advance the MCI concept
- \$14.5 million allocated in 2021 and 2022 to support MCI and construction of the Mississippi Cyber & Technology Center
- Seeking additional funding ~\$16.5M to cover construction costs for a 100,000-square-foot facility
- Once built, MCTC can become self-sustaining by leasing office and event space







# @MS\_Cyber\_Init



**Mississippi Cyber Initiative**  
@MS\_Cyber\_Init

MCI partners are planning future events and partnerships that will impact K-12 students, institutions of higher learning, and cyber defense at the state and federal levels.



2:06 PM · Feb 8, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

1 Like

**Mississippi Cyber Initiative** @MS\_Cyber\_Init · Feb 22

Cyberattacks are an ever-present threat in day-to-day life and ransomware attacks are on the rise. This is one reason why MCI is working to promote the awareness of cybersecurity resources available in business, government, and education.



**Did you know?**

**43 %** of cyberattacks target **small businesses.**

As of 2021, a ransomware attack occurs every **11 seconds**, an increase from every 39 seconds in 2019.

Source: U.S. Cyber Command

Mississippi Cyber Initiative

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**Mississippi Cyber Initiative** @MS\_Cyber\_Init · Feb 16

Mississippi Cyber Initiative facilities being established at @MGCCC will directly support state and federal partners while working to grow the cyber workforce.



**MCI Facilities**

MGCCC Harrison County Campus

**Cyber Ecosystem**  
Provides a controlled, interactive technology environment to train up-and-coming cybersecurity professionals

**System Operations Lab**  
Supports the 336 Training Squadron at Keesler Air Force Base by hosting a platform to train network server administrators

**Digital Forensics Lab**  
Established in support of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation to aid in gathering digital information

1 retweet, 3 likes