

On May 20th, 2020, a Woonsocket High School PTech team of four ladies competed in the Girls Go CyberStart National Championship. The team came in 1st place for Rhode Island and 51st overall out of 276 teams. Girls Go CyberStart is open to students who identify as female and contains "hundreds of hours worth of challenges, tasks and games that have been designed to build a student's technical confidence and nurture their interest in the cybersecurity industry. Girls Go CyberStart gradually builds a student's knowledge base by introducing them to exciting topics like cryptography, web vulnerabilities, Python, Linux and digital forensics". The winning team consisted of Lena Inthisenouk (junior), Nina Kachittavong (junior), Rushie Vilane (junior), Kaycie Tanabe (sophomore), and was mentored by Ms. Nancy Koczera. The CyberCrew demonstrated teamwork, critical thinking skills, and technical knowledge in cybersecurity while competing in the Girls Go CyberStart National Championship.



Lena Inthisenesouk is a junior at Woonsocket High School and a third year PTech Computer Science student at Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center. She is the Public Relations Officer for the junior class of the National Honor Society. A high honor roll student throughout high school, Lena is amongst the top 1% of the class of 2021. Lena is the recipient of General Treasurer Seth Magaziner's Young Leader Award for Woonsocket High School. This annual award is given to "exceptional students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in math, economics, and business-related courses, as well as commitment to community and established leadership skills". She is a varsity student athlete competing on the school's soccer and tennis teams. Lena is a student leader that has been working on a team with the high school's community partner, CVS, to understand health literacy and how it affects/influences the community and high school students. The PTech computer science curriculum sparked Lena to captain this year's CyberPatriot team that finished 1st place Gold Tier for the State which allowed them to advance to the Regional Round. "CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Education Program is designed to excite, educate, and motivate students toward careers in cybersecurity and other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to our nation's future".



Nina Kachittavong is a junior at Woonsocket High School and a third year PTech Computer Science student at Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center. Nina is a student leader that has also been working on a team with the high school's community partner, CVS, to understand health literacy and how it affects/influences the community and high school students. Nina led the Girls Go CyberStart team through her perseverance and determination by scoring 1,250 points out of the teams 2,100 total points.



Rushie Vilane is a junior at Woonsocket High School and a third year PTech Computer Science student at Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center. She is a varsity student athlete who competes on the school's tennis, basketball and softball teams. Rushie is a student spotlight video on the PrepareRI's website for her interest in PTech's computer science program.

Kaycie Tanabe is a sophomore at Woonsocket High School and a second year PTech Computer Science student at Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center. Kaycie is involved in the school's chorus. This was her second year competing in CyberPatriot where her team competed in the Gold Tier during the state round for both years.



Ms. Nancy Koczera is a Worcester Polytechnic Institute graduate in Chemical Engineering who became a second career mathematics teacher after graduating from Rhode Island College. She also has a MBA from the University of Rhode Island. Currently, Ms. Koczera is the Mathematics Department Chair at Woonsocket High School and is a PTech Computer Science teacher at the Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center. She has spent her teaching career integrating STEM into her lessons. She is involved in the National Honor Society, CyberPatriot, Girls Go CyberStart, and SkillsUSA. She is an AP reader for Computer Science Principles. Ms. Koczera is a 2017 Rhode Island Presidential Award Nominee for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) and the Rhode Island 2019 NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Educator Award Recipient. Ms. Koczera continues to develop her professional skills by being trained in Project Lead The Way's Computer Science Essentials, Computer Science Principles, and CyberSecurity courses. Her PLTW CyberSecurity training was generously sponsored by SENEDIA. This training has helped her guide, mentor, and spark student interest in cybersecurity in order for students to compete in cybersecurity challenges such as CyberPatriot and Girls Go CyberStart.