



**Cyber Security and Privacy Research Institute (CSPRI)**

**presents**

## **The Benefits of a Diverse Cybersecurity Workforce**

Speaker:

**Sharon Smith, Principal Consultant**

Governance Risk and Compliance, Verizon

Thursday, May 21 at 12:00 noon

***This event will be held as a webinar through Webex.***

Please RSVP to [Dr. Hurriyet Ok](#) to register for the talk.

Registrants will receive the Webex video conference details from Dr. Ok.

**Abstract:** There is a lot of talk within the cybersecurity industry about diversity and the need for more women; not only to help fill the open jobs, but also to help diversify ideas and innovation. Diversity is not all about gender it also includes education, experience, cognitive, ethnic, and age. Men and women think and lead differently as do those in different generations or from different backgrounds. In this webinar Sharon shares her story about entering the cybersecurity field with no formal cybersecurity or computer science education, the mentors who helped her and why that is an important part of diversity. She will discuss closing the gap in open positions by seeing diversity as an advantage and how to create strong cybersecurity professionals and teams through diversity.

**Bio:** Sharon Smith has been providing cybersecurity consulting and advisory services for clients since 2005. Her work has spanned a broad security spectrum as a principal security consultant, auditor, trainer, and advisor. She has conducted security and compliance assessments and audits for financial companies, healthcare, retail, and government. Sharon has taught Security+ certification courses and cybersecurity fundamentals and enjoys helping those new to the cybersecurity understand their career options. Until recently, women only made up 11% of the cybersecurity workforce and Sharon has experienced the lack of diversity first hand. She understands that diversity, not only gender diversity, is imperative for a well-rounded cyber team and a skilled workforce. Sharon received her BBA in Accounting from Eastern Michigan University and her Masters in Forensic Science, High Technology Crimes from The George Washington University. Sharon is currently a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) and Certified CISO (CCISO). She has previously held the Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH), Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), and Payment Card Industry Qualified Security Assessor (PCI-QSA) certifications.

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The intent of this and future [Cyber Security and Privacy Research Institute](#) (CSPRI) webinars is to give GW faculty and students glimpses of the vibrant security and privacy private sector in the Washington region and to promote dialog and debate regarding breakthrough initiatives. The potential for support for research or conference papers on related topics will be part of the discussion.