



## A Year of Growth, Grit, and Cyber Excellence

The 2024–2025 season has come to a close, we reflect on a year filled with challenge, triumph, and transformation. At this year's TX-20009th AFJROTC Awards Ceremony, the Medina Valley CyberPatriot team was proudly recognized for their outstanding performance and dedication throughout the season.

We also shared bittersweet goodbyes with two graduating seniors—Julian “Llama Banna” Padilla, who was with us all four years, and Logan “Wolverine” Defelippis, who joined as a sophomore and quickly became a key contributor. Both leave behind a legacy of excellence, leadership, and humor. You'll both be missed more than you know, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

But this year's journey was more than just awards and farewells—it was a full-fledged cyber campaign. From Congressman Tony Gonzales kicking off our season with inspiration and wisdom, to national recognition in the CyberSentinel, our team embraced every challenge head-on. We trained hard, competed fiercely, and bonded over cookies and command lines. Weekly sessions like WebCrawler Wednesdays and Medina Valley Mondays sharpened our skills in both cybersecurity and critical thinking.

From Platinum and Gold Tier finishes to CTF victories and college fairs, we built confidence, capability, and camaraderie—all while having a lot of fun along the way. This is just a glimpse.

Inside this newsletter you'll find:

- Full photo spread from the Award Ceremony
- In-depth breakdown of our weekly trainings
- Details on CTF performances and rankings
- Spotlights on graduating seniors
- A look at what's next for 2025–2026

So grab your cookies (thank you, Mrs. Hall!), flip the page, and join us as we celebrate one incredible season—and begin charting a course for the next.

Cyber Like A Viking!

Coach Frank “The Cyber Viking” Hall



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“His message emphasized resilience, flexibility, and the importance of cybersecurity in today’s world, all delivered with authenticity and a personal touch that set the tone for the months to come”



## **MEDINA VALLEY AFJROTC CYBERPATRIOT TEAM: 2024–2025** **SEASON RECAP**

It’s been some time since the conclusion of our 2024–2025 CyberPatriot season, and now is the perfect opportunity to reflect on everything our cadets accomplished during an incredible year of competition, growth, and teamwork.

This past spring, the Medina Valley TX-20009th AFJROTC CyberPatriot team was honored at the annual unit awards ceremony, where cadets received their CyberPatriot recognitions for the season. For those in attendance, a brief overview of our year was shared—but here, we take a deeper look at the highlights and milestones that defined this unforgettable journey.



CONGRESSMAN TONY GONZALEZ WITH MEMBERS OF THE MEDINA VALLEY AFJROTC CYBERPATRIOT TEAM

### **Kicking Off the Season with Leadership and Inspiration**

Our year began with a special visit from Congressman Tony Gonzales, Representative of Texas’ 23rd District. As a former Navy Cryptologist and a South Texas native, Congressman Gonzales shared personal stories and professional insight that resonated with our cadets. His message emphasized resilience, flexibility, and the importance of cybersecurity in today’s world, all delivered with authenticity and a personal touch that set the tone for the months to come.

As a gesture of thanks, our team presented Congressman Gonzales with a team-signed cap and a “Cyber Like A Viking” lanyard. He pledged to display the cap in his Washington, D.C. office—an emblem of the potential and promise found in rural Texas cyber education.

### **CyberPatriot XVII: National-Level Competition**

The CyberPatriot XVII competition season brought in more than 5,050 teams from across the United States, Department of Defense schools, and Canada. In the All-Service Division, our cadets rose to the challenge with impressive results:

- Teams 1 and 2 advanced to the Platinum Tier, placing within the top 30% of competitors nationwide.
- Team 3, composed entirely of first-year cadets, earned a Gold Tier finish, placing in the next 40%.

These achievements reflect not just strong technical skills, but a commitment to preparation, collaboration, and strategic thinking. Round



MV AFJROTC CYBERPATRIOT TEAM 1

after round, our teams demonstrated the core values of CyberPatriot: excellence, resilience, and teamwork under pressure.



MV AFJROTC CYBERPATRIOT TEAM 2

Being highlighted in a publication with national reach speaks volumes about the reputation and performance of our cadets on and off the virtual battlefield.

## **MEDINA VALLEY AFJROTC CYBERPATRIOT TEAM: 2024-2025** **SEASON RECAP**

### **Earning National Recognition**

This year, our program was featured in CyberSentinel, the official newsletter of CyberPatriot. This national spotlight recognized the dedication and success of our students and celebrated the hard work being done by the Medina Valley AFJROTC community. Being highlighted in a publication with national reach speaks volumes about the reputation and performance of our cadets on and off the virtual battlefield.



FORMER PROFESSIONAL WRESTLER LASH LEROUX WITH MEMBERS OF THE MEDINA VALLEY CTF TEAM

### **Weekly Training: Real Skills for Real Challenges**

Our team's progress was fueled by rigorous weekly training. These sessions blended technical exercises with real-world applications to prepare cadets for both competition and future cybersecurity careers.

Monday sessions were filled with activities like password-cracking labs, combat coding challenges, and iCSI Capture the Flag practice. On Wednesdays, cadets explored advanced concepts including electromagnetic pulse protection, Faraday cage theory, and physical security testing during our "WebCrawler Wednesday" discussions. These weekly events not only expanded technical knowledge but also encouraged critical thinking and problem-solving beyond the textbook.

### **Capture the Flag Season and Expanded Competitions**

Outside of CyberPatriot, our team continued competing in Capture the Flag (CTF) events. At the 2024 Alamo ACE Cybersecurity Conference, Medina Valley cadets placed seventh overall in the Deloitte CTF—an impressive feat considering the caliber of professional and collegiate teams in attendance.

Additionally, our first-year team "LePwn James" made their national CTF debut with PicoCTF, scoring 1,210 points over ten days. Their performance showcased the potential and promise of our next generation of cyber leaders.



PICOCTF TEAM: JOSEF "WHISPER" CARDENAS, LY "LY GOOEY" TRAN, AND OREOLUWA "#2" OMILAKIN (NOT PICTURED)

### **Connecting with the Cybersecurity Community**

The team also participated in the CyberTexas Foundation's Mayor's Cyber Cup and College Fair. Cadets had the opportunity to network with professionals from UTSA, Angelo State University, and the 16th Air Force. They explored interactive exhibits at the San Antonio Museum of Science and Technology and shared the stage with other CyberPatriot teams from around the region. The event reinforced the importance of community and the many pathways available in the world of cybersecurity.

**"LePwn James" made their national CTF debut with PicoCTF, scoring 1,210 points over ten days. Their performance showcased the potential and promise of our next generation of cyber leaders."**



“Medina Valley  
TX-20009th  
AFJROTC Cy-  
berPatriot team  
looks ahead,  
we do so with  
pride in our ac-  
complishments  
and excitement  
for what’s to  
come. This  
past season  
was a stepping  
stone toward  
something  
even greater.  
The journey  
continues”



## **MEDINA VALLEY AFJROTC CYBERPATRIOT TEAM: 2024-2025 SEASON RECAP**

### **Gratitude and Acknowledgments**

As we reflect on the season, we recognize that our success was made possible by a wide network of support. The AFJROTC instructors, booster club members, and families who supported the team throughout the year played a critical role in every achievement.

A special thanks is owed to Mrs. Angela Hall, affectionately known as “The Cookie Maiden,” whose homemade cookies became a highlight every competition round. Her culinary support provided a much-needed morale boost and, if we’re being honest, may have been a deciding factor in a few students joining the team.



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### **Looking to the Future**

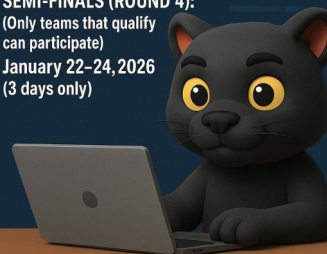
Although we did not reach the semifinals this year, our teams achieved something more lasting—growth in skill, confidence, and character. With national-level placements in both the Platinum and Gold tiers, increased real-world cybersecurity experience, and strengthened team cohesion, our cadets are well-positioned for even greater success in future competitions.

As the Medina Valley TX-20009th AFJROTC CyberPatriot team looks ahead, we do so with pride in our accomplishments and excitement for what’s to come. This past season was a stepping stone toward something even greater. The journey continues.

### **MEDINA VALLEY AFJROTC PANTHERS – IT’S TIME TO COMPETE!**

The CyberPatriot XVIII competition dates have been released.

- ROUND 1: October 23–26, 2025
- ROUND 2: November 13–16, 2025
- STATE ROUND (ROUND 3): December 11–14, 2025
- SEMI-FINALS (ROUND 4):  
(Only teams that qualify can participate)  
January 22–24, 2026  
(3 days only)



**CYBER LIKE A PANTHER!**

## **THE CYBER VIKING SYSLOGS** **MY PRESENTATION AT BSIDES SATX 2025**

On July 12, 2025, I had the privilege of speaking at BSides San Antonio, one of Texas's premier cybersecurity community events. The conference brought together professionals, students, educators, and tech enthusiasts from all over the state for a full day of presentations, workshops, and networking. For me, it was the perfect opportunity to talk about something I care deeply about—teaching cyber safety to my CyberPatriot teams and the next generation of digital citizens.

In my presentation, I pulled back the curtain on the hidden dangers of online platforms, starting with the story of Chatroulette—a site that began as a quirky viral sensation but quickly became a cautionary tale. Its history showed how anonymity, poor moderation, and a lack of accountability created an environment ripe for inappropriate content, predatory behavior, and exploitation. But my talk wasn't just about the past—it was about what's happening right now on platforms like Roblox, Minecraft, and Discord. These can be incredible spaces for creativity, learning, and connection, but they also present real risks, including scams, cyberbullying, inappropriate content, and even predators.



One of my main objectives—both at BSides and in my role as a CyberPatriot coach—is to make sure my students not only recognize these dangers but also know what to do if they encounter them. I shared with the audience the same rule I tell my teams:

“If something happens to you online—first tell your parents, then come to me, an AFJROTC instructor, or another trusted adult. You never have to face it alone.”

I want my students to feel confident speaking up, whether it's a strange message from someone they don't know, a conversation that turns uncomfortable, or content that just doesn't seem right.

During my talk, I gave practical tips for staying safe online:

Use privacy settings and parental controls to limit exposure to strangers.

- Watch for red flags like requests for personal information, offers that sound too good to be true, or pressure to keep secrets.
- Practice “digital street smarts” just like you would in the real world.
- Speak up early when something feels wrong.

I used real-world cases, research findings, and stories from my own CyberPatriot teams to make the point that online safety is a shared responsibility. Parents, educators, and community leaders all have a role to play, and so do the kids themselves.

In true Cyber Viking style, I kept things lively with humor, storytelling, and some surprising examples that got people talking in the hallways afterward. The feedback I received was encouraging—many attendees told me the talk was “eye-opening,” “engaging,” and “something every parent needs to hear.”

At the end of the day, my mission is the same whether I'm at BSides SATX, in a high school classroom, or at a CyberPatriot practice: I want to prepare my students for more than competitions. I want them to understand the world they connect to every time they go online, to recognize the dangers that might be hiding there, and to know they have a trusted network of people ready to help.

Because in cybersecurity—and in life—the best defense starts with awareness and the courage to speak up.

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Medina Valley High School

CyberPatriot Team

We are the Medina Valley CyberPatriots!! We are the cyber warriors that relentlessly defend networks from attack. Our cyber hunting skills cannot be matched. We find threats, eliminate them, and strategically launch counter attacks against our cyber enemies. We are CyberPatriots!!

Medina Valley High School

CyberPatriot Team

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Angela M. Hall—Chief  
Editor

## **ABOUT THE MVHS CYBERPATRIOT TEAM**

### **The Vision**

The vision of the Medina Valley CyberPatriots program is to promote cyber awareness, computer security practices, and cyber ethics. All of these are essential attributes for creating a secure network infrastructure, teaching the students how to detect threats, and how to defend against cyber-attacks in a safe virtual environment.

The skills and knowledge the students will gain from participating in this program will give them an advantage to obtain information technology certifications, scholarships in computer related fields of study, and ultimately provide an opportunity to start a great career in information technology and cyber security.

### **The Mission**

The mission of the Medina Valley CyberPatriot program is the proper instruction and implementation of information technology principals and cyber security practices. All students will be taught how to use various operating systems, interconnecting network devices, and how to secure the entire infrastructure. The students will also be taught how to properly use tools and methodologies to assess and troubleshoot problems that range from inoperable workstations to misconfigured networking equipment. These are the skills that will be necessary to compete in the CyberPatriot competitions and will enable us to advance to each round and ultimately to the national finals.