

# SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL

## **GUEST COLUMN: SAN ANTONIO'S CYBER STORY IS A POSITIVE ONE BEING WRITTEN TOGETHER**

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October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and as recent headlines have apprised, the security of our nation's private information in all areas remains under attack. From more than 20 Texas entities being victims of ransomware attacks in August to our nationwide concerns over election security, the need for comprehensive solutions, and a prepared workforce to implement those solutions, has never been higher.

I serve as vice chairman of the **Texas Business Leadership Council**, a public policy organization consisting of senior business executives in our state. In 2017, the **TBLC** helped design the Legislature's Texas Cybersecurity Act, an omnibus piece of legislation that elevated Texas state agencies' preparedness to operate in the 21st century. While we remain pleased with this effort, it underscored the importance of developing our cyber infrastructure for the good of our state and nation.

Along those lines, I am so proud to call San Antonio home. I am obviously proud for a myriad of reasons including our people, our culture and, of course, our beloved Spurs. Additionally, I am quite proud of our city's efforts over many decades that have converged to our being labeled Cyber City, USA. Our longstanding military innovation and academic and workforce preparation have led to San Antonio being home to the headquarters of more than 40 cybersecurity firms.

Home of the new Information Warfare Component-Numbered Air Force (16th Air Force) and National Security Agency in Texas, San Antonio is a critical location of global national security operations. Facilitating this military excellence, the University of Texas at San Antonio hosts the No. 1 ranked cyber program in the country, and San Antonio was the first city in the nation to be designated a Center of Excellence by the Air Force Association's National CyberPatriot Program. After winning the national championship in 2010, the San Antonio area fields the highest number of registered CyberPatriot teams of any community in the United States.

To enhance and promote this talent and value, the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce's CyberSecurity San Antonio serves as the lead convener and brand manager for the regional cybersecurity ecosystem. A public-private partnership created in 2015, CyberSecurity San Antonio convenes, connects and brands a 350-member cybersecurity industry council to support enhanced innovation, collaboration, coordinated municipal security operations, and talent generation and alignment. I was excited to recently learn that San Antonio has the second-largest cybersecurity workforce in the nation behind only Washington, D.C.

Businesses in multiple sectors across San Antonio have responded to our state's and country's need for enhanced online privacy and have taken advantage of our growing workforce in the field.

None of this impressive story — of a city working together — has been by accident, and I reiterate my pride in San Antonio. From our military and schools to our local businesses and the good work of the San Antonio Chamber, we have a wonderful story to tell, and it is a story that we will all continue to write together.

***Charlie Amato is vice chairman of the Texas Business Leadership Council and chairman of SWBC in San Antonio.***