



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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VITA CHIEF INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICER MIKE WATSON HONORED BY SYMANTEC – Wins Cybersecurity Award –

RICHMOND – Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) Chief Information Security Officer Michael Watson has received an award from Symantec Corporation for government cybersecurity leaders in the state/local/regional category.

The award recognizes an individual who exemplifies “excellence in government cybersecurity through programs and actions that protect critical national and global data and systems.” The award was presented at Symantec’s government symposium, held in partnership with General Dynamics and HP, last week.

In announcing the award, Symantec said, “Watson is charged with defending and protecting the Commonwealth’s IT systems and data. His overhaul of Virginia’s security infrastructure led to a significant decrease in the number of effective attacks on Commonwealth systems. The Cyber Awards recognize Watson for raising the awareness and improving cybersecurity within Virginia systems.”

Watson was named to his current position in 2012 after serving in an acting position for more than a year. He has used his extensive knowledge of state government IT and security to find new ways to defend commonwealth information technology (IT) systems and citizen data, and develop and enforce policies that uphold the cybersecurity of state agencies.

Commonwealth Chief Information Officer Sam Nixon said, “I am very proud of the work Michael Watson has done to enhance security practices in state government. Cybersecurity and the defense of state and citizen data are of utmost the importance to our state and nation, and Mike’s knowledge and commitment have helped make Virginia’s IT infrastructure more resilient and secure. We are very fortunate to have him in this role.”

Watson previously served as senior manager of IT risk management at VITA. He has more than 15 years of experience in IT security. He holds a graduate degree in telecommunications with a focus

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on security and management from the University of Pennsylvania. He has an undergraduate degree in computer science from James Madison University and is a certified information systems security professional, incident handler, intrusion analyst and information systems auditor.

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About the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA)

VITA is the Commonwealth's consolidated technology services and solutions provider responsible for the state's technology infrastructure, governance, security and oversight of major IT projects, and procurement of technology-related goods and services on behalf of state and local governments. www.vita.virginia.gov

Photo credit: Symantec Corporation

Cheri McGuire, Vice President of Global Government Affairs and Cybersecurity Policy, Symantec, is on the left; Michael Watson, Chief Information Security Officer, VITA, is in the middle; Steve Bennett, President and CEO, Symantec, is on the right.