MiC News

Launch your career! Applications for our Registered Apprenticeship Program open July 1st - 15th. Mark your calendars and apply!

MiC TALENT SOLUTIONS

WANT A CYBERSECURITY CAREER?

Coming Soon

Ever Thought About Becoming An Apprentice?

**Applications Will Open
July 1st-15th, 2025**

SIARRA GUILLORY

What initially drew you to cybersecurity, and how did you decide to pursue an apprenticeship in this field?

I have been working in the tech space for almost 7 years now. I was initially affected by a layoff at a DoD SaaS company while working as a UX Engineer. Shortly thereafter, I was able to become a contract Prompt Engineer for an AI chatbot learning project. During this time, I went under grueling rounds of interviews to no avail; I connected with Ms. Mary a few months later. I began volunteering for her, because I loved her mission and wanted to support it. After working under her guidance, she encouraged me to look into cybersecurity and challenged me for growth. Why not me? Why not give it a shot? These are the things that kept surfacing to my mind and so... here I am! Lol.

How did you prepare for the apprenticeship program? Did you pursue any specific certifications, courses, or self-study beforehand?

I have a certification as a MERN full stack developer and a bachelors degree from previous endeavors; most of my exposure was direct experience. I did my own independent research on the information security, but my employment experience was working in agile team environments involving multiple collaborators. We would implement projects in sprints, ensuring that each update in the pipeline was up to par for clients. I would also collaborate with our DevSecOps department

for ensuring certain designs met with their requirements for information security supporting the warfighter's mission.

Can you describe your apprenticeship experience so far? What kinds of tasks or projects have you been involved in?

It has been an incredible journey. One of perseverance, self reflection, learning the importance of community and support and learning to become a better receiver. I've touched on a number of projects at my time here at MiC, and I look forward to completing more. I recently graduated from the Builder's Program concurrent with the RAP program; I highly recommend for any still considering.

What has been the most challenging part of your apprenticeship so far, and how did you overcome it?

The most challenging part of this journey so far is unlearning old habits rooted in survival. Things we don't realize we do because they have been instilled into us early on? That has been pretty tough, but it's much easier when you realize that it's worth the added effort once you feel you're on the other side.

Any tips you'd like to share with our readers?

My tip is to go for a morning walk as soon as you wake up. *(Yes, even for my fellow night owls).* There's something about getting fresh air and sunlight as soon as we rise that seems to set a good tone for your day. Lol, and make sure you implement your daily rituals right after.
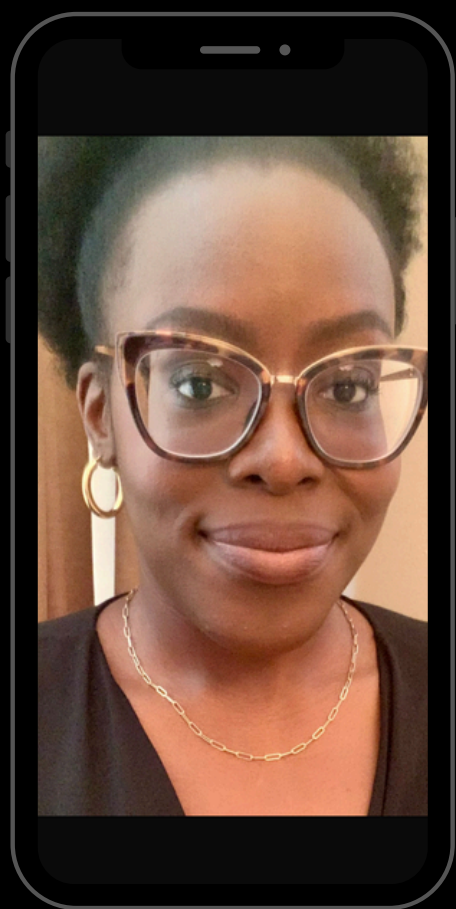
Fun fact you'd like to share?

As long as you never give up, you'll always get better. In anything.

Beyond the Mirror: The Power of Strategic Self-Reflection

by Izzy Mitchell

The ancient Greek aphorism, "Know Thyself," carved into the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, has echoed through the centuries, and served as a foundational principle in my life. Its meaning evolved when I first ventured into cybersecurity and learned the phrase, "Know Thy System". You can't secure that which you don't understand. This fundamental concept, rooted in self- knowledge, still resonates deeply in my professional journey today.

Going beyond understanding systems, the original quote, "Know Thyself," is about understanding yourself at your core, independent of life's ever-changing circumstances. Some fortunate people seem to possess this innate self-awareness, an unshakable truth of who they are that guides them through life's challenges. For others, like me, it's a skill that demands dedicated self-reflection. I genuinely believe self-reflection and our ability to take action are two of the most powerful tools we have for navigating not just our careers, but our entire lives. As I continue to cultivate this skill, particularly within the dynamic world of cybersecurity, I'm increasingly aware of its profound impact on three key areas: personal health and wellness, career navigation, and independent learning.

What Exactly is Self-Reflection?

The American Psychological Association defines self-reflection as, the "examination, contemplation, and analysis of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions." When practiced consistently, this exercise becomes a form of internal dialogue. It helps us understand why we act the way we do and even guides how we interact with the world around us. It's a cornerstone of self-development.

Fueling Your Personal Health and Wellness

For my physical and mental well-being, self-reflection has proven to be an incredibly powerful proactive tool. It's not just something I do at the end of the day to review decisions. Instead, I use it as a "pulse check" before my day even begins, acknowledging my current state. This check-in allows me to anticipate areas where I might face resistance and adjust my routine accordingly, better equipping me to handle challenges as they arise.

As a recovering perfectionist and people-pleaser, self-reflection has also been critical in helping me navigate load balancing in my life. When new opportunities surface, I don't just jump into them blindly, and I do more than weigh the pros and cons in that specific area of my life. Now, I genuinely consider how I'll be able to show up. One of my core personal values is excellence in everything I do. While perfection might be elusive, if I know I've given my best, I am able to find peace in what I've contributed. If I recognize that I can't approach an opportunity with that spirit of excellence, I've learned to acknowledge it's not the right time for me. This ability to look inward allows me to be more consistently present and reliable for those who depend on me.

Navigating Your Career with Clarity

When it comes to career navigation, self-reflection offers a multitude of applications. If you're stepping into a new role, it's integral for advocating for your needs to ensure success. The insights you gain can be shared with your mentor or manager to help chart the best career roadmap for you. It's also an invaluable tool for tracking your team contributions and career accomplishments. When it's time to consider a new role, understanding not just what you did, but how it contributed to the company's broader goals, becomes critical.

Consistent self-reflection, coupled with meaningful conversations gleaned from that knowledge, makes your career story much easier to tell. But self-reflection isn't solely about climbing the corporate ladder. There are times when we might consider transitioning from a role because the team culture isn't a good fit.

Reflecting not just on the team dynamics that led to this decision, but also on your reactions to those dynamics, will be crucial for navigating similar situations in the future. Very few jobs are completed in isolation, so being aware of your triggers and developing strategies for managing challenging dynamics and personalities is incredibly important.

Mastering Self-Directed Learning

Embarking on a career in cybersecurity means committing to being a lifelong learner. And as we know, much of what we learn can't be taught in a traditional classroom. In this field, we constantly go between the roles of professional and student. Self-reflection provides a vital opportunity to assess our learning. It allows us to determine if we're forming a deep understanding of a concept or simply "checking boxes" to move on.

Armed with that knowledge, we can adjust our approach. Perhaps you identify a subject that genuinely sparks your curiosity; you can then decide to pursue further study or projects in that specific area. Or maybe you realize that certain material just isn't sticking. Self-reflection empowers you to supplement with additional resources or reach out to your network to connect with someone who specializes in that topic.

Final Thoughts

Self-reflection is a powerful tool capable of transforming how you approach your relationships, your wellness journey, and your career. It demands a commitment not only to being honest with yourself but also to taking action based on those insights to navigate the world as your best self. For some, this process feels as natural as breathing. For others, it may involve deep work to reach a place where you can accept what you discover and take the necessary steps forward. Many resources are available online, and depending on where you are in your journey, external guidance from a counselor or therapist might be more appropriate. Regardless, proactively embracing self-reflection is transformative, and the key to knowing thyself.

MiC Announcements

Congratulations January 2025
MiC LEAD Communictors™ Graduates!

CONGRATULATIONS!

We want to congratulate and highlight the January 2025 Class of the MiC LEAD Communicators™ Course!

Completed June 21st, 2025

This program was 6 months long and had an enrollment of 5 leaders. The MiC LEAD Communicators™ course is designed for those looking to move from individual contributor to people leader. If you are looking to improve as a leader this course is for you!

We would like to congratulate the January 2025 MiC LEAD Communications class!

- Janice Bailey
- Olusayo Emmanuel
- Kia Gourdine-Floris
- Suetena Loia Faatuuala
- Elvis Onya

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COMING SOON

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July 1st-15th, 2025

Registered Apprenticeship Program

Save the date! Application will open July 1st – 15th, 2025.

Learn more here.

MiC LEAD Aspirers™
Coming up on:
June 27, 2025

MiC Drop Prep™ Sessions
Coming up on:
July 01, 2025

Don't Miss Out on Job Opportunities!
We're regularly sending out emails with new job openings. Be sure to check your inbox daily for these updates!