



Members of the William Mitchell High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps team participate in the CyberPatriot competition on Oct. 23 at Mitchell High School in Colorado Springs, Colo.

# CREATING A SPARK

## the Future of Cyber Defense

Cybersecurity has become a top national concern and finding the right people to protect the U.S. against cyber attacks is key. In an effort to promote interest in this field for up and coming students, the Air Force Association created the National High School Defense Competition known as CyberPatriot. According to the association, the purpose of the competition is to “excite, educate, and motivate the next generation of cyber defenders and other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) graduates our nation needs.”

Recently, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command got involved with the competition as Capt. John (Jack) F. Bierce from the command’s G3 Future Operations Branch attended the event to provide support and encouragement to the William Mitchell High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps team.

Round one of the competition occurred on Oct. 23 at William Mitchell High School’s JROTC building in Colorado Springs, Colo. Lt. Col. Keith Woodfork (JROTC instructor) and Corey Hodges (Computer Science Coach) mentored the Mitchell team in preparation for the event, but once the timer began, the five JROTC cadets were on their own. The team had to compete with no advice or support from their coach.

“The cadets performed well, relying on their team captain to organize them and research things they didn’t fully understand,” said Bierce.

The competition lasted for six hours and in the end, the Mitchell team was one of 34 teams across the nation to skip over round two and automatically advance to round three, scheduled for Nov. 6, 2010.



Corey Hodges, William Mitchell High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Computer Science Coach goes over some last minute details with the team prior to the competition as Capt. John (Jack) F. Bierce observes.