



2025 CyberTech|X Recap Report



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The incredibly successful **CyberTech|X Accelerator**, now in its fifth year, was created to solidify Tampa Bay's status as a nationally recognized hub for cybersecurity innovation and talent, as well as to strengthen our region's cyber innovation cluster by bringing together key industry leaders from across Tampa Bay.

This year's cohort consisted of 14 cybersecurity startups from across the US and beyond, selected from nearly 100 applicants, many referred by Wave ecosystem and network members, including alumni companies. Details about the cohort and Advisory Council members can be found on the [CyberTech|X landing page](#), along with success stories from previous cohorts.

As a nonprofit 501(c)(3), Wave doesn't take any equity from participating companies. Thus, the CyberTech|X Accelerator is funded entirely by grants, sponsors and donors. Key funding was provided by the [US Economic Development Administration \(US EDA\)](#), with additional long-term support from [A-LIGN](#) and [EY](#), who have supported this program since the program's inception in 2021. Strategic partners included [Cyber Florida](#), [Bank of America](#), and [Thoropass](#), plus Wave welcomed [Potomac Law Group](#) as a new supporter in 2025, with representatives serving on both the Advisory Council and Mentor Network.

The highly-credentialed startups selected for the 2025 cohort participated in an intensive multi-week program that included dedicated mentors, one-on-one coaching with notable tech founders, sales and pitch coaching, and investor introductions, all in an environment designed to support high-scale growth. The companies also benefit from ongoing support through Tampa Bay Wave's connections and access to further accelerate their development.

To date, these companies have received over 500 hours of mentoring and other support, as well as invaluable exposure through press, social media, and Wave's signature events. Pitch Night, hosted at [USF CAMLS \(University of South Florida's Center for Advanced Medical Learning & Simulation\)](#), featured keynote speakers Col. (Ret.) Jarret Matthew and Corey White, along with presentations from two CyberTech|X alumni company founders.

On behalf of all of us at Tampa Bay Wave, we are incredibly grateful to our sponsors and partners for making the 2025 CyberTech|X Accelerator another success, and for helping to strengthen Tampa Bay's growing reputation for cybersecurity and innovation.



Linda Olson
CEO, Tampa Bay Wave

Thank you to our CyberTech|X Accelerator Sponsors

Tampa Bay Wave, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, expresses sincere gratitude to the generous sponsors of our 2025 CyberTech|X Accelerator. Their support is vital in enabling us to continue our mission of fostering cutting-edge startups and driving the growth of Florida's innovation economy!



A-LIGN

BANK OF AMERICA 



PLG
Potomac Law

Thoropass™



Petar Besalev

EVP Cybersecurity & Compliance Services

“A-LIGN is proud to be an inaugural sponsor of the CyberTech|X Accelerator and are honored to continue our support for five years, championing Tampa Bay Wave's mission to advance cybersecurity innovation.



A-LIGN

This long-standing partnership reflects our deep commitment to mentoring the next generation of cyber leaders and strengthening the broader cybersecurity ecosystem here in Tampa Bay.”

2025 CyberTech|X Alumni Spotlight



Henry LeGard
Co-Founder & CEO
Austin, TX

Verisoul.com, a cybersecurity startup co-founded by CEO Henry LeGard, participated in the 2025 CyberTech|X Accelerator to advance its AI-driven platform for detecting and preventing fake accounts.

During the program, Verisoul secured a \$3.25 million seed round led by BITKRAFT Ventures and expanded partnerships with over 15 enterprises across fintech, gaming, and e-commerce.

The company's all-in-one solution automates fraud detection, integrating seamlessly with businesses to verify real users in minutes. As Verisoul scales, it aims to set a new standard in digital identity verification, creating safer online ecosystems.



kriptos.io, a cybersecurity startup from Ecuador, joined the 2025 CyberTech|X Accelerator to advance its mission of protecting sensitive data through AI-powered classification.

Co-founded by CEO Christian Torres, Kriptos uses machine learning to automatically analyze, classify, and label documents based on sensitivity—helping organizations prevent data leaks and ensure compliance.

Backed by over \$6.8 million in funding and investors like SixThirty Cyber, the company has expanded into the U.S. and deepened integrations with cybersecurity tools such as DLP systems, playing a key role in helping enterprises control their unstructured data.



Christian Torres
Co-founder & CEO
Miami, FL

CyberTech|X Alumni Spotlight



Nick Ascoli
Co-founder & CEO
Westchester, PA
2021 CyberTech|X



Foretrace, a 2021 CyberTech|X alum, was acquired in March 2024 by Flare, a global leader in Threat Exposure Management. Known for its innovative Total Recon™ detection engine, Foretrace brings advanced AI capabilities and a skilled team to Flare’s platform, enabling a unified solution for cyber threat intelligence, attack surface management, and digital risk protection.

The acquisition marks a major step in setting new standards in the threat exposure market, as both companies work together to deliver greater value to customers.



OUTPOST SECURITY

Outpost Security, a 2021 CyberTech|X alum, was acquired by Cyderes in December 2024 to enhance its managed security offerings.

Known for its Risk-Based Alerting (RBA) technology, Outpost helped reduce alert fatigue and streamline threat detection. The company’s innovative approach gained traction among enterprise clients seeking smarter, more efficient SOC operations.

Its success and acquisition underscore the value of early-stage support from programs like CyberTech|X in accelerating impactful cybersecurity solutions.



Will Robus
Co-Founder & CEO
Madison, WI
2021 CyberTech|X

CyberTech|X Advisory Council



Farshad Abbasi



Andrew Adams



Hassan Ali



Petar Besalev



Mai Ensmann



Ernie Ferrarresso



Mike Fraser



Victor Gamarra



Jennifer Graham



John Graham



Lee Gray



Mina Khalil



Erich Kron



Chuck Lobsenz



Asim Murad



Cathy Ryan
Reneer



Rolando Torres



Corey White



Larry Whiteside



Andy Wilson



Advisory Council + Mentor Network

Participating companies tapped into a network of 230+ volunteer mentors passionate about supporting early-stage startups. Some offer expertise in areas like HR, go-to-market strategies, or trademark law, while others provide ongoing CEO coaching. The founders also engaged with the CyberTech|X Advisory Council, made up of cybertech expert representatives from Wave's Mentor Network, as well as cybersecurity industry leaders from the program's funding partners and other local institutions.

Various programming is designed to facilitate mentor introductions and relationship building between the startups and mentors. On average each participating startup gained 20–30 direct connections and received 100+ hours of hands-on guidance.



Investor Network + Demo Day

Participating companies had access to a network of over 600 investors from across the US, including several in Florida where Wave has established strong strategic relationships such as Florida Funders, DeepWork Capital, Tampa Bay Ventures, TopMark Partners, and the Florida Opportunity Fund. The Investor team actively extends its network to develop pipelines in key cities such as Atlanta, Austin, New York City, and San Francisco.

Tampa Bay Wave dedicates substantial time to counsel and coach startups on investor readiness, as well as SBIR/STTR preparation to unlock significant sources of non-dilutive capital for startups.

Wave startups recently surpassed **\$1 Billion in investor capital raised**, placing us in the top five accelerators. This is a remarkable achievement for a non-profit accelerator program.

INVESTOR READINESS & DEMO DAY SPONSORS



Recruitment & Selection

The CyberTech|X Accelerator's year-round recruitment efforts attracted top cybersecurity startups looking to scale with the right support. Tampa Bay Wave's reputation as a "best-in-class" accelerator, combined with its extensive Mentor, Investor, and alumni networks, continues to help the program attract top-level founders seeking strategic connections, expert guidance, and the resources needed for long-term success in the rapidly evolving cybersecurity landscape.

This cohort is another true example of the exceptional talent we are attracting. The founders in this group brings impressive backgrounds from global brands such as **SAP, Oracle, TiVo, Cisco, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, L3Harris, Bain & Company, LinkedIn, eBay, PayPal, Intel, EY, Meta, KPMG, McLaren Automotive, Citrix, Rockwell International, TransUnion, Capital One, DuPont, CA Technologies, PwC, InfoTech, ZeroFox, Akamai, Guidepoint Security, RIM, Deepwatch, Barracuda, the U.S. Air Force, and the U.S. Department of State.**

Additionally, with degrees from top institutions like **MIT, University of Florida, Florida State University, University of Michigan, University of Texas at Austin, Georgia Tech, the University of Virginia, University of Kansas, UC Berkeley, Texas A&M, Pepperdine, and Johns Hopkins,** and accelerator experience from **Google, Barclays, and Techstars,** this cohort exemplifies the elite caliber of talent advancing through Tampa Bay Wave's programs.



42%

Applications
Outside of FL



17%

Applications
Outside of US



15

Companies
Selected

Taylor Johnston

Chief Operations Officer
USF Institute of Applied Engineering, Inc

"Partnering with Tampa Bay Wave's CyberTech|X Accelerator has been a tremendous opportunity for the University of South Florida, the Institute of Applied Engineering and the new Bellini College of Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity and Computing," said Taylor Johnston, COO of the USF Institute of Applied Engineering.

This program exemplifies the power of collaboration between academia, government, and industry. By providing mentorship and technical expertise to these high-potential startups, we're not only advancing cybersecurity innovation, but also helping shape the future of this critical field.

The success of the program reflects the strength of our shared commitment to building a vibrant, secure tech ecosystem right here in Tampa Bay."



USFBellini

College of Artificial Intelligence,
Cybersecurity and Computing

2025 Cohort Companies



*I'm incredibly grateful for all the support and guidance throughout this program—it's been an amazing experience. Tampa's cybersecurity community is the most **connected and collaborative** I've seen, and the work you do to unite founders, mentors, and partners is truly inspiring. I look forward to staying in touch and finding ways to collaborate in the future. Thank you again!*

Christian Torres
Co-Founder & CEO

ApiaryX (Jacksonville, FL)

ApiaryX empowers families with AI-driven cybersecurity, gamified education, and real-time guidance to navigate the digital world safely.

Founder(s): [Catherine Karow](#)

Website: apiaryx.app

breacher.ai (Orlando, FL)

Deepfake Red Teaming and Awareness Training. Defend with Knowledge

Founder(s): [Jason Thatcher](#)

Website: breacher.ai

Clox (San Francisco, CA)

Clox is an AI platforms which detects fraudulent documents, extracts information, insights and enables workflows.

Founders(s): [Praveen Mamidi](#)

Website: clox.ai

Cyntegra (London, UK)

Cyntegra's patented technology helps you avoid catastrophic disruption and costs from ransomware and advanced cyber attacks by ensuring you can recover critical systems functionality in minutes.

Founders(s): [Giles Watkins](#), [Maria Vachino](#)

Website: cyntegra.com

2025 Cohort Companies

Fairo (Newton, MA)

Fairo is an expert responsible AI consultant delivered as a SaaS platform. With Fairo, you get all the value you would get from a top consultant without having to hire one.

Founder(s): [George Chamoun](#)

Website: fairo.ai

Guardare Inc (Clearwater, FL)

Guardare uses advanced AI trained on trusted frameworks like NIST and ISO and data sets like MITRE ATT@CK, to help organizations with limited resources tackle cybersecurity challenges, making security tasks easier and reducing risks.

Founder(s): [Dane Fiori](#), [Lars Letonoff](#)

Website: guardare.com

HACKERverse.ai (Chicago, IL)

HACKERverse makes it radically simple to buy, sell, and evaluate enterprise cybersecurity software.

Founders(s): [Mariana Padilla](#)

Website: hackerverse.co

Kriptos (Miramar, FL)

Kriptos, an AI-powered cybersecurity platform, provides enterprises in 12+ countries with full data visibility, real-time insights, and risk management to prevent data leakage, enhance compliance, and support governance.

Founders(s): [Christian Torres](#), [Alfonso Villalba Almeida](#)

Website: kriptos.io

LockDown Labs (Tampa, FL)

LockDown Labs offers an AI platform that bridges the gap between security and development teams to address application security flaws in open-source and third-party libraries.

Founders(s): [Zachary Perdomo](#), [Ali Naqvi](#)

Website: lockdownlabs.io

2025 Cohort Companies

Mendara, Inc. (Tampa, FL)

Mendara builds custom AI solutions, enabling a new standard for secure and trustworthy AI.

Founders(s): [Shoaib Shaikh](#), [Alyssa Kennedy](#)

Website: mendara.ai

Opsbeacon (Newyork, NY)

Opsbeacon is building an AI SOC Analyst, transforming security operations through AI-powered automation, replacing complex workflows with simple conversations.

Founder(s): [Cihan Sahin](#), [Charles Randall](#)

Website: opsbeacon.com

Smart Eye Technology (Bentonville, AR)

Smart Eye Technology secures sensitive information and digital environments with continuous facial recognition, eye-tracking, and multi-biometric verification to prevent unauthorized access, data breaches, and insider threats.

Founder(s): [Dexter Caffey](#)

Website: getsmarteye.com

Trust Player Zero (Philadelphia, PA)

GZT is an AI-powered platform that centralizes cybersecurity policies, scores risk levels, creates recommendations and automates policies implementation across enterprise systems.

Founders(s): [Erin Christ](#), [Ronald Hurry](#)

Website: gamingzerotrust.com

Undaunted Development (Arlington, VA)

Undaunted Development makes working with code faster and more intuitive by building interactive visual tools for cybersecurity professionals and developers of all skill levels.

Founders(s): [Mark Griffin](#)

Website: undaunted.dev

Verisoul (Austin, TX)

Verisoul helps security teams detect fake accounts, bots, and fraudsters in real-time.

Founders(s): [Henry LeGard](#), [Raine Scott](#), [Niel Ketkar](#)

Website: verisoul.ai

Programming

The 2025 CyberTech|X cohort companies had access to **over 500 hours of mentoring and support, including 70 workshops and training sessions** featuring an impressive lineup of expert speakers. Founders also benefited from numerous one-on-one coaching with our Mentor Network over 230 professionals.

Featured Speakers

- **Government/Military**

- David Wilkinson (SBIR/STTR expert)
- USF Institute of Applied Engineering
- NCRGC

- **Venture Capital**

- Raymond James
- Dreamit Ventures
- Tampa Bay Ventures
- Channel Angels

- **Industry Experts**

- Omni Public
- FounderSuite
- Rocket Proforma
- JP Morgan Chase
- Thoropass
- Silicon Valley Bank
- PWC
- SeaHill Consulting Group
- A-Lign
- Potomac Law
- Curql

- **Founders/Alumni**

- Outpost Security
- Cyvatar
- Karambit
- Mappa
- Hook Security
- Peerfit
- Harness
- Guardian SAT
- Foretrace

- **Founders/Alumni**

- SBIR Funding, Process, and Hacks
- Exploring the US Government as a Customer
- State of Venture Capital
- Financial Projections and Modeling Best Practices
- Alternative Funding Sources (Family Office, Venture Debt, RBF, Crowdfunding)
- Building with an Exit in Mind
- Tax-Advantaged Strategies
- Enterprise Sales Strategies & Hacks
- Enterprise Marketing Strategies
- HR Best Practices
- Professional Business Presentations
- Growth Strategies and Scaling Up



Ernie Ferraresso

Senior Director, Cyber Florida

"We are proud to collaborate with Tampa Bay Wave on the CyberTech|X Accelerator, a partnership that exemplifies the synergy between public institutions and the private sector in advancing cybersecurity innovation and economic resilience."

By combining Cyber Florida's expertise with Wave's dynamic programming, we are enhancing the support ecosystem for emerging cybersecurity startups, fostering innovation, and contributing to the development of a robust cyber workforce in Florida."



Curriculum Days



Alumni Panel with Guardian Sat, Harness, and Founder/Former CEO of Peerfit



Session Scenes at Tampa Bay Wave Office



Cohort Event at Top Golf



Cohort Dinner at Spartacos



Cohort visited by Tampa Bay pirates (

Tampa Bay Wave's Sponsor & Partner Community

Federal Support



Economic Development Partners



Pillars of Innovation



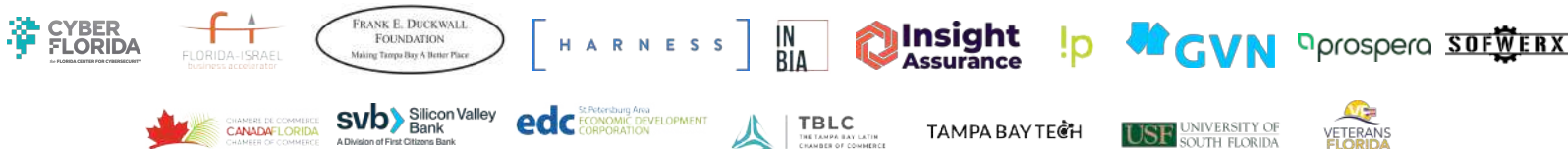
Tidal Wave Sponsors



Corporate Friends of Wave



Partners



Signature Events

Tampa Bay Wave opens every program with a Welcome Reception, and culminates with a Community Pitch Night. Both events serve to engage the wider Tampa Bay community and development partners.



Linda Olson
CEO,
Tampa Bay Wave



Max Echeverria, CEO of Eskuad



Partners David Desalle and Charles Lobsenz from Potomac Law Group, a Sponsor of the program



Wave Board Member Elizabeth Urbanski, represents Bank of America's partnership with the CyberTech|X program

Signature Events – Pitch Night



2025 CyberTech|X

PITCH NIGHT

FEBRUARY 25, 2025 | 5:30PM-8:00PM

CENTER FOR ADVANCED MEDICAL LEARNING & SIMULATION (CAMLS)

With Featured Speakers:



Colonel (Ret) Jarret Mathews

US Army Special Forces
Founder/Operator Phase Zero Consulting
Strategic Advisor for SOCOM's S&T Doctorate



Corey White

CEO/Founder
Cyvatar

Key Speakers



Colonel (Ret) Jarret Mathews
US Army Special Forces
Founder Phase Zero Consulting



Chris Rohe
CEO of GuardianSat



Corey White
CEO of Cyvatar



A crowd of 100+ guests enjoyed powerful presentations from our cybertech founders and featured expert speakers!

Wave Staff



Linda Olson
CEO & Founder



Dr. Richard Munassi
Accelerator Managing
Director



Demelza Genest
Chief Operations Officer



Dee Garcia
Director of Development
& Strategic Partnerships



Amit Agrawal
Director, Investor
Relations & Platforms



Jonathan Truong
Sr. Mgr, National Programs
and Partnerships



Mariah Ramos
Manager, Accelerator
Ops & Mentor Relations



Jennifer Ptack
Manager, Strategic
Branding & Events



Michael "Mike" Lynn
Manager, Venture
Center Operations



Prat Reddy
Accelerator Associate



Matt Ymiolek
Investor Relations
Associate



Greg Pierce
Accelerator Associate



Laura Davenport
Marketing Associate



David Wilkinson
SBIR/STTR Consultant

Wave's Board of Directors



Santo Cannone
Board Chair



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Alfred Goldberg
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Madeline Dent
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Marcus Adolfssohn



Kathy Chiu



Taylor Johnston



Lew Jolly



Amanda Milligan



Brian Model



Jack Murray IV



Shane Needham



Nick Outman



Penny Parks



Miraj Patel



Lance Raab



Cathy Ryan Reneer



Inga Schmitzer



Kathleen Shanahan



Andrew Smith



Elizabeth Urbanski



Lauren Weiner



Aaron White

ECONOMIC IMPACT

BUILDING FLORIDA'S TECH ECOSYSTEM

SINCE OUR PROGRAMS LAUNCHED IN 2013



600+

STARTUPS SUPPORTED



1.1B+

CAPITAL RAISED



6,300+

NEW JOBS CREATED



22

EXITS

ACCELERATING FLORIDA'S INNOVATION ECONOMY

- AI
- DefenseTech
- MedTech
- FinTech
- EdTech
- CyberTech
- IoT
- SaaS
- eCommerce
- Hospitality
- HealthTech
- MarTech
- CleanTech
- BlueTech
- InsureTech

BUILDING BETTER FOUNDERS



STARTUP FOUNDERS FROM
30 COUNTRIES SHOWCASED TAMPA
AS AN INNOVATION HUB



22 COMPANIES RELOCATED
TO TAMPA BAY

ANNUAL REGIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACT



1,248

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



1,300

HOTEL ROOMS



450

FLIGHTS THROUGH TPA



500

MENTORING HOURS

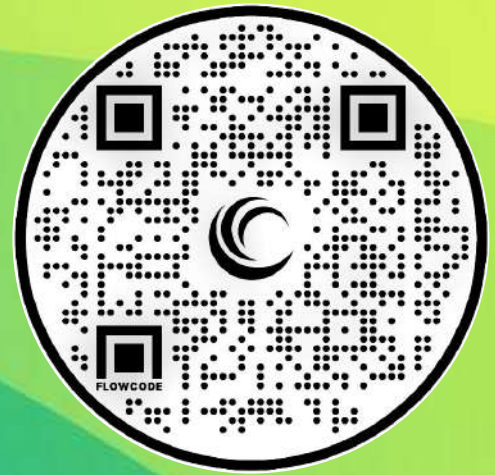


2,500+

TRAINING HOURS

THANK YOU!

For questions, please reach out to:
Linda Olson,
CEO, Tampa Bay Wave
linda@tampabaywave.org



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LEARN MORE

