Dhruv Kandula

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EDUCATION

University of California, Irvine   Irvine, CA
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science; GPA: 3.96   *Sep. 2023 – June 2027*

AWARDS

Collegiate Penetration Testing Competition (CPTC) 2026 Global Champion
National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (NCCDC) 2025 Champion
Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition

EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Student Researcher   Oct. 2024 – Aug. 2025
AS2Guard Lab, University of California, Irvine   *Irvine, CA*
- Built a Python-based drone security research platform to simulate and reproduce real-world cyberattacks in **ArduPilot SITL**, using **MAVLink telemetry** analysis to measure impact on flight stability and mission execution
- Applied **agentic AI** to amplify exploit severity and developed a **React + D3** visualization tool mapping chained vulnerabilities (**CWE/CAPEC**); presented at VehicleSec '25, winning **Best Demo Award**

Backend Software Engineer Intern   July 2024 – Sep. 2024
Slang Labs
- Developed a multi-platform documentation generation API using **Python and FastAPI**, automating content creation for Python, Android, Flutter, and Swift SDKs to enhace developer efficiency and user experience.
- Integrated a Large Language Model (**LLM**) observability solution into the backend infrastructure, enabling real-time monitoring of token usage and latency to enhance system reliability and cost management.

ACTIVITIES

Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition | *Linux Lead, National Champion*   Oct. 2023 – Apr. 2025
- **Led threat hunting and Linux** operations for UC Irvine's CCDC team, defending enterprise networks against professional red teams and **winning 1st place** out of 200+ universities nationwide.
- Hardened Linux servers, websites, databases, and **Docker/Kubernetes** deployments while implementing real-time monitoring with **Falco, Sysmon, Graylog, and Splunk.**
- Developed **Python, Bash, and Go** automation to enumerate, configure, patch, and firewall **30+** vulnerable systems in parallel, reducing remediation time by **90%.**

Collegiate Penetration Testing Competition | *Captain, Global Champion*   May. 2025 – Present
- **Founded and captained** UC Irvine's CPTC team, **winning 1st place** out 100+ university teams.
- **Led full black-box penetration tests** of simulated enterprise environments, including Linux, Windows, Active Directory, AWS, and web applications.
- Leveraged **agentic orchestration** tooling to automate and coordinate end-to-end penetration testing workflows.
- Produced a **120+** page comprehensive vulnerability report and presented findings to a simulated executive leadership team.

Cyber at UCI Club Vice President   May. 2025 – Present
- Designed and delivered hands-on technical workshops for **50+** students covering penetration testing, Docker container escapes, malware analysis, and video game security.
- Organized and led **red team engagements** for mock CCDC-style competitions, simulating realistic adversary behavior, persistence techniques, and attack chains to train defenders in incident response and threat hunting.
- Competed in Capture the Flag (**CTF**) competitions as the lead web exploitation specialist, ranked **45th** in the US.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages & Frameworks: Bash, C/C++, Go, HTML/CSS, Java, JavaScript, Python, SQL (MySQL, Postgres), NoSQL, FastAPI, Flask, Nodejs, React, TensorFlow, Keras
Technical Knowledge: Agentic AI, Application Security, AWS, Computer Networking, Databases, Deep Learning, Digital Forensics, Docker, Git, Incident Response, Infrastructure, Kubernetes, Linux, Machine Learning, Penetration Testing, Threat Hunting