NICHOLAS McLARTY

Chief Information Security Officer |
Cybersecurity & Technology Executive

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Executive Profile

Proven cybersecurity and technology executive with 15+ years of experience leading enterprise-scale information security programs, cyber operations, and risk management in higher education, research, and government. Trusted advisor to executives and business leaders on aligning cybersecurity strategy with organizational objectives. Oversees team recognized by the FBI Director for leading a nation-state investigation protecting defense contractors. Vision-driven leader of 'practical security,' balancing risk reduction with business enablement.

Executive Experience

Deputy Chief Information Security Officer

The Texas A&M University System — College Station, Texas | November 2019 - Present

- Provide executive leadership for cybersecurity strategy and operations across a $400M IT environment, managing a $6.1M enterprise cybersecurity budget.

- Restructured and expanded the Security Operations organization into a comprehensive cybersecurity service provider, now supporting 22 institutional CISOs and over 10 external public-sector organizations.

- Oversaw implementation of an enterprise-wide Managed Detection & Response (MDR) program, consolidating SOC and IR into a unified full-spectrum cyber operations team.

- Lead enterprise risk reduction initiatives using NIST RMF and CSF, with KPI-driven measurement of cyber risk mitigation at system scale.

- Managed enterprise agreements with Microsoft, Cisco Security, and Palo Alto, delivering cost-effective Tier 1 vendor relationships.

- Directed the cybersecurity work stream for acquisition of University of Houston — Victoria, ensuring seamless integration into the Texas A&M System's governance, risk, and compliance framework.

- Crisis leader: Directed incident response for a ransomware attack that crippled a university's infrastructure; coordinated technical recovery, business continuity, forensic investigation, and notification. Achieved full restoration for $10K versus millions in potential external IR costs.

Chief Information Security Officer

Texas A&M Transportation Institute — College Station, Texas | January 2012 - November 2019

- Built and matured the Institute's first comprehensive cybersecurity program, achieving the highest compliance posture in agency history against federal and state mandates.

- Partnered with business leaders to align cybersecurity risk management with research and operational objectives, ensuring minimal business disruption.

- Presented annually to executive leadership on enterprise risk, security initiatives, and mitigation strategies.

Senior Network Analyst

Texas A&M Transportation Institute — College Station, Texas | July 2009 - January 2012

- Designed and operated hybrid virtual/physical infrastructure hosting 100+ enterprise and research applications with 99.999% uptime.

- Implemented a multi-site software-defined network architecture to reduce risk exposure.

- Delivered enterprise IAM, applications, network, and VoIP services to 650+ users.

Security Forces Member & Combat Arms Program Manager

United States Air Force Reserve — San Antonio, Texas | September 2003 - November 2015

- Managed combat weapons training for 3,000+ airmen and led a team of 8 instructors.
- Oversaw security, accountability, and maintenance of $1.5M in armaments.
- Ensured compliance with classified information and national security handling protocols.

Recognition & Achievements

- FBI Director Recognition: Oversaw team leading cyber investigation resulting in the identification of nation-state actor infiltrating 20 defense contractors.
- Executive Presenter: Annual security briefings to Texas A&M System and Transportation Institute executive leadership.
- National Speaker: Keynote and panelist at AccessData Summit, EMC World, and Texas Association of College & University Auditors.

Education

M.Sc., Cybersecurity Studies – American Military University

B.A., Emergency & Disaster Management – American Military University

Certifications

- CISSP® & ISSMP® (ISC²)
- DHS Comprehensive Cyberterrorism Defense
- Qualified Federal Law Enforcement Officer – U.S. Department of Defense
- All-Hazards Type 3 Incident Commander – U.S. Air Force Auxiliary
- Project+ Certified Professional – CompTIA
- ITIL Foundation – AXELOS

Speaking Engagements (Selected)

- Texas Association of College & University Auditors – 'Beyond the Controls' (2022)
- AccessData User Summit – 'The Intersection of Incident Response & Forensic Investigations' (2016)
- EMC World – 'Deploying a Secure, Modern Collaboration Service for 200K Users' (2015)

Leadership Philosophy

Practical Security: Enable the business while applying a measured, risk-aligned security posture that sustains resilience and delivers organizational outcomes.