



Monthly Newsletter

National Security Highlights



A Note from the President

*Tracy Gregorio,
President, Women in
Defense Greater
Hampton Roads*

Running a business is complicated. Growth, security, and brand are top priorities—and that means staying focused on everything from hiring and invoicing to execution. But we can never take our eye off the security of our companies.

Being excellent in defense means more than meeting the mission—it means protecting it. With new international maritime directives, tightening CMMC requirements, and high-profile breaches making headlines, cybersecurity isn't just an IT concern—it's a business essential.

As we reach the mid-year mark, it's the perfect time to reflect, reinforce, and reengage. Join us this summer for events that connect, challenge, and prepare you for what's ahead.

Let's keep showing what excellence really looks like—together.

*Warmly,
Tracy Gregorio*

As the U.S. recalibrates its national security priorities mid-2025, artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping cybersecurity. AI's ability to analyze vast datasets and detect anomalies in real time strengthens defenses against increasingly sophisticated cyberattacks. At the recent AI Expo for National Competitiveness, former NSC official Anne Neuberger emphasized that AI-powered tools are critical for identifying threats targeting critical infrastructure—such as the Chinese-backed telecom breach that evaded detection for months. Federal agencies and private firms are leveraging AI to enhance threat intelligence, reducing response times to incidents drastically, according to recent CISA reports.

Addressing Emerging Risks with Innovation

While AI boosts cyber resilience, it also introduces new risks. Adversaries are using AI to craft more advanced phishing campaigns and deepfake-driven disinformation, posing challenges to traditional defense systems. The 2025 Honeywell Cyber Threat Report notes a rise in AI-assisted attacks across sectors from finance to energy. A key priority is securing AI systems—particularly their training data—as compromised datasets can disrupt entire networks. This mid-year point provides an opportunity to strengthen safeguards through robust data governance. Updated NIST guidelines, expected by late 2025, aim to support secure and responsible AI implementation.

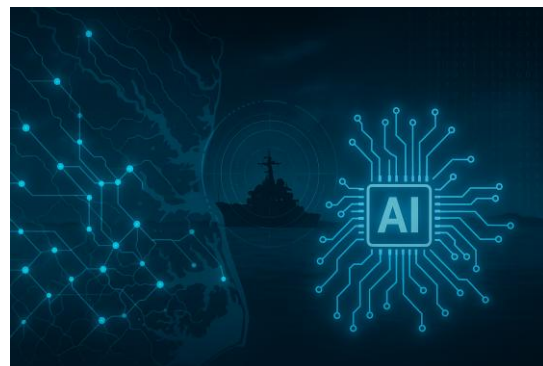
Building Resilience Through Collaboration

Collaboration remains essential. Public-private initiatives—such as CISA's heightened focus on AI in recent years—are fostering shared standards for AI-driven cybersecurity tools. These partnerships promote transparency, improve readiness, and help establish consistent practices across sectors.

Staying the Course on AI Investment

Maintaining momentum is important for long-term success. Discussions around future federal budgets include proposals that could affect cybersecurity efforts. Continued dialogue and planning

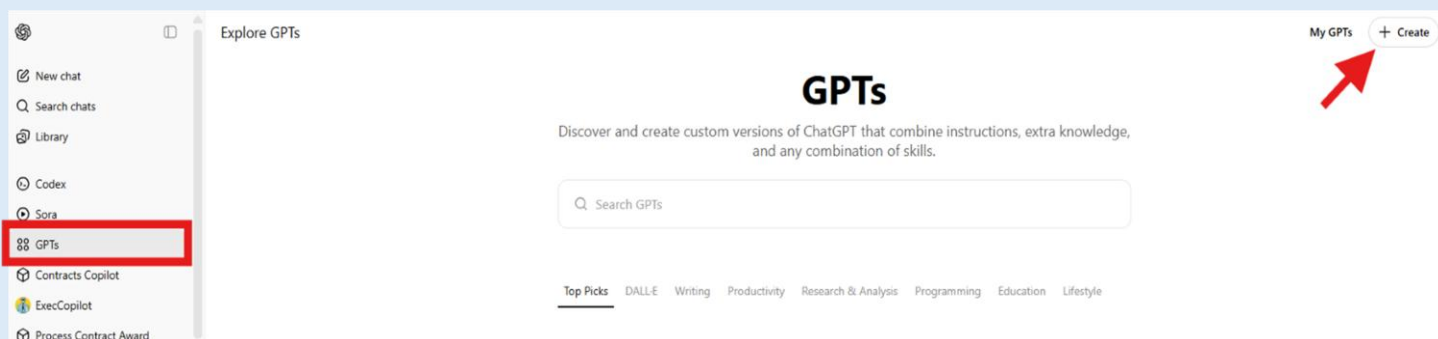
will be key to ensuring resources remain available to support innovation. As agencies and organizations shape their strategies for the second half of the year, reinforcing funding, cross-sector coordination, and secure AI adoption will help build a more resilient cyber landscape—one that responsibly embraces the opportunities AI presents while managing its evolving challenges.



AI Tip of the Month

ChatGPT Agents are custom-built versions of ChatGPT designed to perform specialized tasks or support targeted workflows. Unlike the regular ChatGPT, which responds to each prompt without prior context, Agents can be programmed with specific instructions, knowledge, and behaviors. This allows them to act more like a dedicated virtual assistant or domain expert, tailored to your particular needs.

For business owners, Agents can be trained with your company's knowledge base, your personal communication style, and the basic assumptions or starting points that shape your work. Thousands of pre-built Agents—created by other users—are also available to explore and customize, covering areas like project management, marketing, legal reviews, and more. With the right Agent, you can save time and produce more consistent, high-quality work that reflects your business priorities.



Try this prompt...

You are my AI co-pilot for [business or project name]. We provide [services], and our typical clients are [audience]. Your job is to assist with [tasks like writing, reviewing, analyzing]. Based on this, ask me three questions to tailor your support.

Heard at the Congressional Water Cooler...

The month of June is shaping up to be one of the more hectic congressional summer months in recent memory. The House of Representatives was able to approve its reconciliation measure, along party lines, prior to the planned Memorial Day recess week. Now, the main action turns to the Senate, which has an ambitious Fourth of July goal to finalize the product and send it back to the House.

One policy item to note is that the reconciliation measure is also the current vehicle to raise the nation's debt limit. The Treasury Department is forecasting that the limit could be reached as soon as August. Therefore, in addition to needing to complete the reconciliation measure prior to the end of September when the special provisions/instructions expire, there is a concerted effort to get this package signed into law well in advance of a debt limit scare.

In addition to reconciliation, the House is beginning the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Appropriations process in earnest and has announced an aggressive markup schedule. Currently, the Defense Subcommittee bill is slated to be considered on Friday, June 13, with the goal to have all 12 appropriations measures approved by the House Appropriations Committee before the planned August recess.

While the FY26 Appropriations process is moving swiftly, the House Armed Services Committee is waiting to begin consideration of the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) until a final disposition (or at least a clearer picture) of the reconciliation process is known given defense funding currently included in the measure. That said, posture hearings will continue as more FY26 budget materials are provided to supplement the administration's previously released "skinny budget."

Lastly, towards the end of May, President Trump announced that he selected the final design for the U.S. Space Force's Golden Dome initiative, intended to protect the U.S. homeland with an integrated missile defense shield. While the reconciliation measure includes \$25 billion to support this effort, the Trump administration is also seeking dedicated funding in the FY26 appropriations process.



For more Women in Defense Greater Hampton Roads news and information, select the following icons.



Local Events

WID Hampton Roads

WIDGHR Lunch & Learn: Building Your Pipeline and Avoiding HR Pitfalls July 24th, 2025



This session will cover how to develop a successful government contracting pipeline with practical strategies from industry expert Brian Long. You'll also hear from Maegan Barnes on the most common HR compliance missteps and how to avoid them. [Register here.](#)

WIDGHR Lunch & Learn: CMMC and Financial Strategy for GovCons August 12th, 2025

This final session of the summer series explores current CMMC topics impacting government contractors with insights from Koren Wise. Jacob Barclay will also share financial strategies and fractional CFO solutions tailored to help small business GovCons grow. [Register here.](#)

Maritime IT Summit 2025 August 12-14th, 2025

Hosted by AFCEA Hampton Roads and DoN CIO East, this hybrid summit explores naval IT priorities and innovation in the maritime domain. Virtual attendance will be available via Teams. [Event Info](#)



Featured Member Spotlight



Dorothy Askew
CEO

The Askew Group LLC

Dorothy Askew is the CEO of The Askew Group LLC, a commercial cleaning and service company known for delivering high-quality, solution-focused support across a variety of industries. Dorothy, an Air Force veteran, and entrepreneur at heart, launched the business in 2007 after identifying a growing demand for specialized facilities and construction services. She has grown the company into a leading supplier of commercial cleaning services that is focused on both technical excellence and workforce development.

A WIDGHR member since 2015, Dorothy currently serves as Membership Chair after previously serving as Vice President and Program Director. She values WIDGHR's collaborative and inclusive culture —where women and men, business owners, and government professionals come together to share insights, support one another, and foster personal and professional growth.

If you would like to learn more about The Askew Group or explore ways to get more involved with WIDGHR, [reach out to Dorothy](#)— she is always happy to connect with members and help them get engaged.