Program Best Practices > Intelligence & Analysis >

SEC's Business Intelligence and Innovation Lab Now Open

Risk-focused, actionable analysis will help corporate security see around corners.

On October 23, SEC staff, Tier 1 Security Leaders, subject matter experts and Solution Innovation Partners gathered with students, faculty, and administration from Mercyhurst University and its School of Intelligence, Computing, & Global Politics to celebrate the grand opening of a first-of-its-kind facility: the SEC's Business Intelligence and Innovation Laboratory (BI^2 Lab) at Mercyhurst.

The lab opening ribbon cutting ceremony.

SEC Managing Director Bob Hayes stood with Kathleen Getz, President of Mercyhurst University, to cut the ribbon on the facility, signaling that the BI^2 Lab is officially operational.

"This is an incredible opportunity. There is nothing like this anywhere else in the world," Hayes said in his opening comments. "Twenty years ago, we founded the SEC on eight blue ocean strategies. The most important one was that everybody has to win. Here (with the BI^2 Lab), the university wins, the students win, corporations win, the industry wins, our clients win, and the SEC wins by being a part of this."

An Initiative Four Years in the Making

The BI^2 Lab is the result of four years of conceptualization, negotiation, and collaboration between the SEC and Mercyhurst. The two organizations have a longstanding partnership that accelerated in 2020, connecting the SEC's broad community of corporate security leaders with Mercyhurst's Intelligence students and faculty to coordinate research projects and data analysis internship opportunities. The lab will extend these capabilities.

Elizabeth Brisson and Bob Hayes of the SEC.

President Getz, John Olszowka, Ph.D., Mercyhurst Associate Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, and Brian Fuller Jr., Director of Operations of Mercyhurst's School of Intelligence Studies, Computing, and Global Politics, and Director of the Center for Intelligence Research Analysis and Training (CIRAT), have been instrumental in bringing the BI^2 Lab concept to fruition.

"Not only does this partnership yield optimum corporate intel experience for students, but it further enhances the SEC's ability to provide private-sector security leaders with real-time and predictive information to help them make more informed business decisions," said Fuller.

People viewing the large array of tools available at the lab.

Intelligence-Driven, Actionable Analysis

The BI^2 Lab, located within the CIRAT, will create and leverage intelligence-driven security risk research and tools to assist corporate security leaders in identifying and communicating information that is relevant to private-sector business.

Attendees of the lab opening learning about the value the lab is capable of bringing to the industry.

The lab has been generously outfitted with new technology funded by Dell Technologies, Organon, and the SEC, and at the grand opening ceremony, Brady Roberts, COO of Emergent Risk International (an SEC Solution Innovation Partner) announced ERI's donation of licenses for

their Emergent Risk Situation Room product as well. After a tour of the Mercyhurst campus, attendees were able to view and presentations and demonstrations of the BI² lab's products and capabilities.

"We hope every product that comes out of this lab will be able to answer four questions for our clients," said Hayes. "First, Why? Why should I read this? Why is it important? Why should I act on it? Next, What? What should I do about it? What are the options? Then, How do I do that? And then, How much? How much time, energy and diversion from our original mission will it take?"

Helping Companies Stay Ahead of the Curve

Business and Competitive Intelligence and National Security Intelligence student analysts lead and staff the lab, and an SEC Issues & Innovations Guidance Council comprising SEC subject matter experts, security practitioner leaders, staff, and the Director of the CIRAT directs analysts to focus on emerging risks that have business impact.

Dan Sauvageau, SEC Emeritus Faculty and former CSO of Fidelity Investments, was one of several SEC leaders to attend the grand opening. Sauvageau has worked with Mercyhurst students and leaders on CIRAT projects throughout the partnership. "The work they do is unparalleled," he said. "They are translating (intelligence analysis) into value to the private sector, to security leaders and business leaders that go into the boardrooms of Fortune 500 companies. It will help companies stay ahead of the curve. I'm very excited to see what will become of the work they do here."

Get Involved

What unique problems can the BI² Lab help you solve? If you have questions or ideas, or if you'd like to discuss a potential project, contact the SEC today.

2023 BI² Lab Student Leaders and Analysts

- Hailey Steidle: Senior Business and Competitive Intelligence/National Security Intelligence, BI² Lab Director and Team Lead
- Jay Dalmaso: Graduate Student Assistant, Intelligence Studies, Assistant BI² Lab Director
- Holly O'Donald: Graduate Student Assistant, Intelligence Studies
- Meghna Rijal: Graduate Student, M.S. Applied Intelligence
- Nicolas Stow: Senior, National Security Intelligence
- Brooklyn Warren: Junior, Business and Competitive Intelligence
- Blaise Leiss II: Junior, National Security Intelligence
- Jeremi Phoenix-Lefebrve: Junior, Business and Competitive Intelligence
- Brady Grove: Junior, National Security Intelligence
- Emily Reid: Freshman, Intelligence, minoring in Arabic and Spanish

For background on the value of open source intelligence in private-sector security:
[Intelligence Analysis in the Private Sector: Growth, Challenges, and Applications](#)

For videos from the grand opening:
[YouTube: Grand Opening of the SEC's BI^2 Lab at Mercyhurst University](#)

[YouTube: Dan Sauvageau speaks at grand opening of the SEC's BI^2 Lab at Mercyhurst University](#)

For news coverage of the grand opening:
[Erie News Now: Mercyhurst University Opens Business Intelligence Lab](#)

[YourErie.com: New Security Lab Coming to Mercyhurst University](#)

Visit the Security Executive Council web site to view more resources in the [Program Best Practices : Intelligence & Analysis](#) series.

About the Security Executive Council

The SEC is the leading research and advisory firm focused on corporate security risk mitigation solutions. Having worked with hundreds of companies and organizations we have witnessed the proven practices that produce the most positive transformation. Our subject matter experts have deep expertise in all aspects of security risk mitigation strategy; they collaborate with security leaders to transform security programs into more capable and valued centers of excellence. Watch our [3-minute video](#) to learn more.

Contact us at: contact@secleader.com
Website: https://www.securityexecutivecouncil.com/