



NYIT gets cybersecurity center in Port Washington

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Nassau County's Industrial Development Agency Tuesday night, June 30, 2015, authorized the New York Institute of Technology to open the cybersecurity center in Port Washington. This is the location at 2 Seaview Blvd. on June 30. Photo Credit: Danielle Finkelstein

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Nassau County is to be home to a cybersecurity research center that will prepare college students for careers and produce inventions that can be turned into products, officials said.

The county's Industrial Development Agency on Tuesday night authorized the New York Institute of Technology to open the cybersecurity center in Port Washington.

The center will be housed in 10,000 square feet of space that has been provided free of charge by commercial real estate developer Steel Equities. The arrangement was negotiated by the IDA, which has backed a number of Steel Equities' projects with lucrative tax breaks.

"The potential here is really significant to spur the growth of cybersecurity companies and bring more high-paying jobs to Nassau," said IDA executive director Joseph J. Kearney.

He also said NYIT was selected to run the center after responding to a county proposal; only one response was received.

NYIT chief of staff Peter C. Kinney III said the school wants the National Security Agency to designate the local facility as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance/Cyber Defense.

"We already have a relationship with the NSA, and we hope eventually to do research that is classified," he said to the IDA board. "Our faculty and students will be doing research for the federal government, IBM, Cisco and other companies."

NYIT engineering school dean Nada Marie Anid said the NSA designation could be received this month.

She also said the research center would complement the work of the school's Entrepreneurship and Technology Innovation Center, located on NYIT's Old Westbury campus.

The cybersecurity center is the latest incarnation of an IDA initiative begun in 2011, when it awarded tax breaks to Bethpage-based Steel Equities for the refurbishment of the former Pall Corp. headquarters in East Hills.

Developers Joseph Lostritto Jr. and his brother, Glenn, agreed at the time to donate 10,000 square feet in the building for a business incubator focused on homeland security. NYIT was seen as a likely operator of the proposed incubator.

The old Pall headquarters filled up quickly and the IDA agreed to the Lostrittos' suggestion to use space in another of their buildings, 2 Seaview Blvd. in Port Washington.

The idea also was a key platform in Nassau County Edward Mangano's re-election campaign. He hailed the project Tuesday, saying, "Cybersecurity is a national concern, and this research facility will allow NYIT students and faculty to work on government-sanctioned projects in a secure facility."