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Internship Reflection #1

During my time in the COVA CCI internship at ODU, I have gained many important insights into both the technical and collaborative sides of cybersecurity. One of the first concepts we studied was the NIST framework, which outlines how organizations can, protect, detect, respond to, and recover from cyber threats. Learning this gave me a structured way to think about cybersecurity challenges and how solutions must be adapted to fit different environments.

Beyond technical knowledge, we also worked with Professor Baaki to focus on empathy and mind think. This helped me recognize the importance of understanding other people perspectives when problem solving as a group. One approach we practiced was the "Yes, and" technique, where instead of rejecting a peer's idea, you acknowledge it and build upon it with your own. This kept discussions positive and made collaboration much more effective.

We also applied these ideas in team projects, where each group got a scenario. My group had a small animal shelter volunteer organization, and we had to think about what cybersecurity protections would make sense for them. This exercise showed me how cybersecurity solutions are not one-size-fits-all; instead, they must align with the size, goals, and resources of each organization.

Overall, I feel like this internship so far has strengthened my understanding of cybersecurity by connecting frameworks like NIST with practical teamwork strategies. I have learned that success in cybersecurity depends not only on technical knowledge but also on collaboration, empathy, and the ability to build on other people's ideas.