Aaren Nichols

815-715-2673 | aaren.nichols@yahoo.com | linkedin.com/in/Aaren | Aaren-Nichols.com

Education

Southern New Hampshire University — Manchester, NH
Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity — *Aug. 2021 – Jan 2025*
GPA: 3.75 / 4.00 — President's list 2023-2025

Experience

Server Administrator — 2020 – 2023
Repulsion LTD and RustyNation LLC

- Administered and maintained a secure network of 6 game servers, ensuring stable operation for over 3,000 daily players.
- Actively monitored system performance, resolved technical issues, and ensured server stability and uptime.
- Coordinated with moderation teams to respond to incidents, distribute updates, and maintain operational communication.
- Identified and mitigated malicious activity using monitoring tools such as BattleMetrics and Arkan.

Independent IT Support Technician — 2021-Present
PlainField, IL

- Diagnosed and resolved hardware and software issues for personal computers, including POST failures, driver conflicts, and Windows boot errors.
- Performed troubleshooting and replacement of components including RAM, storage devices, GPUs, and power supplies.
- Installed and configured Windows operating systems, drivers, BIOS/UEFI settings, and essential software for multiple users.
- Assisted users with software installation, peripheral setup, Windows configuration, and general technical support.
- Tested completed systems for stability, functionality, and performance after deployment.

Projects

Personal Lab | SSH Configuration, Linux Administration, Remote Management

- Built a personal cybersecurity lab using Kali Linux on a Raspberry Pi, configuring the system and connecting remotely via SSH to a desktop to perform software installation, updates, and network testing.
- Documented system configurations and workflows, monitored system functionality and ensured reliability.

Home Desktop Build and Configuration | Windows, Hardware Troubleshooting, Driver Management

- Assembled and configured a custom desktop PC, including CPU, motherboard, RAM, storage, and peripherals, ensuring proper hardware compatibility and system stability.
- Installed Windows operating systems, drivers, and essential software; performed troubleshooting and validation testing to verify system functionality and reliability.

Secure Network Design | Cisco Packet Tracer, VPNs, Firewalls

- Designed and configured a secure network for a simulated hotel lobby using Cisco Packet Tracer.
- Involved implementing VLANs to segment traffic between workstations, servers, and a public guest Wi-Fi.
- The design was created to support up to 70 concurrent users in the lobby all on guest Wi-Fi, with DHCP and firewall rules configured to protect internal devices.

Technical Skills

IT Support and Operations: Windows 10/11 Installation, Configuration and Deployment, Windows System Imaging and Setup, Hardware Troubleshooting and Diagnostics, Software Installation and System Updates, Technical Support and Troubleshooting.
Hardware and Workstation Deployment: Desktop Assembly and Configuration, Component Installation, Peripheral Setup and Configuration, BIOS/UEFI Configuration, System Testing and Validation.
Networking and Infrastructure: Cisco Packet Tracer, TCP/IP, DNS, DHCP, Wireshark, Firewalls, VPNs, VLANs.
Systems and Tools: Windows OS, Microsoft 365, Linux, SSH Remote Management, Kali Linux, Ubuntu.
Scripting: Python, PowerShell, SQL.