

An avid ultra-runner, Jeremy Miller competes during the Moab 240 Endurance Run, a 240-mile event held in Moab, Utah, in October 2017.



# LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST CYBER HACKERS

A VFW member from Indiana used tactics learned in the Army Special Forces to create a cyber security company focused on combating an ongoing cyberwar.

**BY ISMAEL RODRIGUEZ JR.**

**J**eremy Miller lives to shatter preconceived barriers, basking in the enlightenment waiting on the other end of them. As a former Green Beret, it comes with the territory.

With an insatiable thirst for clawing at his limitations, he followed a final

tour of duty in Afghanistan with the Army National Guard in 2010 by taking up ultra running.

The Westfield, Ind., native began training as a marathoner, but 26 miles turned into more than 200 miles per race, requiring two hip surgeries to keep up with the rampant mind of a

go-getter with a 52-year-old body.

“I like to push the envelope,” said Miller, CEO of Lionfish Cyber Security and a member of VFW Post 10003 in Westfield. “I truly believe that if you’re not really pushing yourself, then you’re not really living.”

Through his ultra-running adventures, including more than 15 completed races since his debut in 2013, a proposition was introduced to Miller that included another one of his passions — protecting his fellow men.

For a self-proclaimed serial entre-



Lionfish Cyber Security CEO and founder Jeremy Miller, right, while with the Army's 5th Special Forces, meets then-President Bill Clinton, left, in 1994 during Miller's deployment to Kuwait.

preneur with three longtime businesses spanning across the real estate, investment and application development sectors, the business pitch had Miller's attention.

"I was doing all these crazy runs, and a couple of years ago, a friend of mine from that world came up to me and said we should start a school to teach cyber security," Miller said. "I liked the idea, but I told him if we were to do this, I didn't want it to just affect a couple of people. I wanted it to affect the entire country."

A former 18E with the Army's 5th Special Forces Group (1993-1996) and the Army Reserve's 20th Special Forces Group (2008-2010), Miller merged his business acumen and communication specialist background in cryptology and Morse code to create Lionfish Cyber Security in 2018.

The company, named after one of the most invasive, disruptive and venomous species of fish roaming the U.S. coasts today, was originally established to teach a legion of cyber security specialists how to fight hackers.

But Miller's vision reached further outside the proverbial box, aiming to find innovative ways to combat the ongoing cyberwar against a growing web of online hackers disrupting businesses on a global scale.

"We had gone down that path of becoming a certification school, got accredited in Indiana and everything," Miller said. "But that was just the first

piece of the puzzle. Our next step was to become an MSSP, which is a cyber security company that helps protect other companies."

In becoming a managed security service provider (MSSP) and outsourcing their talents to small businesses in need of cyber security help, Miller came to grips with the unanswered problem facing the industry today.

"We pulled together all the different pieces that we needed, spent a lot of money and built some technology to even further that, but it takes even more than that to get the job done," Miller said. "There are over 500,000 cyber jobs that are unfulfilled, and the schools are pumping out people to do these cyber jobs, but the gap still gets bigger."

In finding a destination for Lionfish Cyber Security, Miller opened up two avenues that could potentially lead him to the industry's sought-after answer for fighting hackers.

The first avenue had already been incorporated during the initial brainstorming session that led to the founding of Lionfish, a strategy Miller and several others in the company had learned as Green Berets.

Applying the "by-with-through" strategy coined by Army Special Forces, Miller hoped to extend Lionfish Cyber Security's seasoned personnel to the more than 30 million small businesses in the country. In doing so, Lionfish's experts could train in-house employees on combating hackers and remaining ready for attacks.

"The shortage of cyber security jobs is a real problem, and nobody that I'm aware of has been able to solve this problem," Miller said. "Out of the 25 to 30 million small businesses in the country, at least 85 percent of them are not secured. That's why I believe our 'by-with-and-through' model, as well as our platform, can help solve that big problem in a scalable way."

Miller also has pursued the avenue of an apprenticeship program through the DoD, which he added provides roughly 1 percent of all cyber security protection for the country in 2021.

The apprenticeship program, Miller notes, will hopefully entice other veterans to join Lionfish Cyber Security, allowing them to hone their cyber security credentials before being sent to protect companies across the country.

Citing that China's People's Liberation Army includes a force of more than 100,000 computer hackers, Miller fears that the U.S. is getting outnumbered in fighting a growing cyberwar against an array of enemies.

"And that's just China," Miller said. "That's not accounting for Russia, Iran and all the other enemies that want to harm us. The men and women who are stepping up on the line to work for the military are in the fight daily with hackers, both domestic and foreign. I want to help spread the word on getting people to help join the fight against these hackers."

Miller hopes that in the coming years, Lionfish Cyber Security's growing platform, apprenticeships program and "by-with-through" strategy can bring a comfortable level of cyber control other business owners can rely on.

"There's no antidote for cyber attacks," Miller said. "It comes down to staying prepared to defend yourself. What I hope to offer long-term is a way to help businesses by training their people to be our eyes and ears while implementing all our security strategies to keep them cyber-resilient." ★

EMAIL [irodriguez@vfw.org](mailto:irodriguez@vfw.org)