

Efrén López-Morales

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EDUCATION

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi	Ph.D. Computer Science, expected August 2025 <i>Currently A.B.D.; passed comprehensive exam in August 2024</i> Dissertation: “Securing Cyber-Physical Systems via Advanced Cyber Threat Intelligence Methods”
Arizona State University	2020 M.S., Computer Science Thesis: “HoneyPLC: A Next-generation Honeypot for Industrial Control Systems”
Autonomous University of Guadalajara (Mexico)	2012 B.S., Computer Networks

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi Computer Science Department (Corpus Christi, TX, USA)	08/2021 – current	Graduate Research Assistant Supervisor: Carlos Rubio-Medrano
CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security Holz Research Group (Saarbrücken, Germany)	02/2023 – 05/2023	Research Intern Supervisors: Ali Abbasi and Thorsten Holz
University of California, Santa Cruz Department of Computer Science and Engineering (Santa Cruz, CA, USA)	06/2022 – 07/2022	Visiting Scholar Supervisor: Alvaro A. Cardenas
Arizona State University Computer Science Department (Tempe, AZ, USA)	05/2019 – 05/2020	Graduate Research Assistant Supervisors: Adam Doupé, Ruoyu “Fish” Wang, Tiffany Bao, and Yan Shoshitaishvili

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi Computer Science Department (Corpus Christi, TX, USA)	07/2023 – 12/2023	Instructor of Record Firewalls and Intrusion Detection Systems
Arizona State University Computer Science Department (Tempe, AZ, USA)	08/2018 – 05/2019	Graduate Teaching Assistant Principles of Programming with Java Supervisor: Faye Navabi

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Cisco Systems, Inc. (Chicago, IL, USA)	05/2020 – 06/2021	Network Engineer Supervisor: Carlos Morales
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CONFERENCE PAPERS (REFEREED)

Papers with future venues are accepted to appear in them.

- “SoK: Security of Programmable Logic Controllers.” **Efrén López-Morales**, Ulysse Planta, Carlos Rubio-Medrano, Ali Abbasi, and Alvaro A. Cardenas. In *Proceedings of the 33rd USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX)*, Philadelphia, PA, USA, 2024.
- “The Imitation Game: Exploring Brand Impersonation Attacks on Social Media Platforms.” Bhupendra Acharya, Dario Lazzaro, **Efrén López-Morales**, Adam Oest, Muhammad Saad, Antonio Emanuele Cinà, Lea Schönherr, and Thorsten Holz. In *Proceedings of the 33rd USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX)*, Philadelphia, PA, USA, 2024.
- “HoneyPLC: A Next-Generation Honeypot for Industrial Control Systems.” **Efrén López-Morales**, Carlos Rubio-Medrano, Adam Doupé, Ruoyu Wang, Yan Shoshitaishvili, Tiffany Bao, and Gail-Joon Ahn. In *Proceedings of the 2020 ACM SIGSAC Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS)*, Virtual Event, USA, 2020.

WORKSHOP PAPERS (REFEREED)

- “By the Numbers: Towards Standard Evaluation Metrics for Programmable Logic Controllers’ Defenses.” **Efrén López-Morales**, Jacob Hopkins, Alvaro A. Cardenas, Ali Abbasi, and Carlos Rubio-Medrano. In *Proceedings of the 2nd International Workshop on Re-design Industrial Control Systems with Security at the ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (RICSS)*, Salt Lake City, UT, USA, 2024.
 Best Presentation Award
- “ICSNet: A Hybrid-Interaction Honeynet for Industrial Control Systems.” Luis Salazar, **Efrén López-Morales**, Juan Lozano, Carlos Rubio-Medrano, and Alvaro A. Cardenas. In *Proceedings of the 6th Workshop on CPS & IoT Security and Privacy at the ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CPSIoTSec)*, Salt Lake City, UT, USA, 2024.
 Best Paper Award

BOOK CHAPTERS

- “HoneyPLC: A Next-Generation Honeytrap for Industrial Control Systems.” **Efrén López-Morales**, Carlos Rubio-Medrano, Adam Doupé, Ruoyu Wang, Yan Shoshitaishvili, Tiffany Bao, and Gail-Joon Ahn. In *Bao, T., Tambe, M., Wang, C. (eds) Cyber Deception. Advances in Information Security, vol 89. Springer, Cham (Book Chapter)*, 2022.

CONFERENCE POSTERS AND ABSTRACTS

- “Securing Cyber-Physical Systems via Advanced Cyber Threat Intelligence Methods.” **Efrén López-Morales**. In *Proceedings of the 1st Doctoral Symposium at the ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (Extended Abstract)*, Salt Lake City, UT, USA, 2024.
- “Exploiting and Securing Programmable Logic Controllers.” **Efrén López-Morales**, and Carlos Rubio-Medrano. In *Proceedings of the 2022 Spring Student Research Symposium (Poster)*, Corpus Christi, TX, USA, 2022.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS) Rising Star, CPS Virtual Organization (Founded by NSF), Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 2025.
- Student Travel Grant, P2P Symposium: Pathways to the Profession, Texas A&M University System, 2025.
- CAHSI Student Scholar (2024-2025 Cohort), Computing Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Institutions, 2024.
- Scholar Achievement in Graduate Education (SAGE) Fellowship, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2021-2023.
- Graduate Fellowship Program, Mexican National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT), 2021-2025.
- 1st Place Winner in 3-Minute Thesis Competition (3MT), Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2022.
- 2nd Place Winner in 3-Minute Thesis Competition (3MT), Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2024.
- Student Travel Grant, ACM CCS’24 Doctoral Symposium (CCS), 2024.
- SHPE Ph.D. Scholarship, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, 2024.
- ISC2 Graduate Scholarship, Center for Cyber Safety and Education, 2024.
- UNCF Lam Research Scholarship, United Negro College Fund, 2023.
- Student Travel Grant, Annual Computer Security Applications Conference (ACSAC), 2023.
- Google Conference Scholarship, Google, 2023.
- Student Travel Grant, IEEE Secure Development Conference (SecDev), 2023.
- Student Travel Grant, Great Minds in STEM Conference, 2023.
- Student Travel Grant, 43rd IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (Oakland), 2022.
- iMentor Workshop Mentee, ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS), 2021.
- Outstanding Mentor Award, Arizona State University, 2020.

PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

- By the Numbers: Towards Standard Evaluation Metrics for Programmable Logic Controllers' Defenses.
2nd International Workshop on Re-design Industrial Control Systems with Security (RICSS), Salt Lake City, UT, USA, 2024.
- SoK: Security of Programmable Logic Controllers.
Technical Sessions, Hardware Security V: Embedded, 33rd USENIX Security Symposium, Philadelphia, PA, USA, 2024.
- Design and Implementation of a Satellite Honeypot.
1st Internet of Space Things (IoST) Workshop, University of Chile, Online, 2024.
- It's a Trap! Securing Satellites using Cyber Deception.
3MT Thesis Competition, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2024.
- Design of a Satellite Honeypot.
Poster Presentation, CySat - Cybersecurity for Space Conference, Paris, France, 2023.
- Exploiting and Securing Programmable Logic Controllers.
Computing Poster Competition, Great Minds in STEM Conference, Pasadena, CA, USA, 2022.
- Exploiting and Securing Programmable Logic Controllers.
Student Research Symposium Poster Presentation, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2022.
- Exploiting and Securing Programmable Logic Controllers.
3MT Thesis Competition, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2022.
- Cybersecurity: Skills and Opportunities.
Invited Talk, Universidad de la Sierra Juárez, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2022.
- Exploiting and Securing Programmable Logic Controllers.
Lightning Talks Competition, 17th Texas A&M University System Pathways Student Research Symposium, College Station, TX, USA, 2022.
- HoneyPLC: A Next-generation Honeypot for Industrial Control Systems.
Graduate Computing Poster Competition, Great Minds in STEM Conference, (Online) 2021.
- HoneyPLC: A Next-generation Honeypot for Industrial Control Systems.
Technical Sessions, 1E: Cyber-Physical Systems, ACM SIGSAC Conference on Computer and Communications Security, CCS, (Online), 2020.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- External Reviewer, ACM Conference on Data and Application Security and Privacy (CODASPY), 2025.
- Reviewer, IEEE Transactions on Dependable and Secure Computing, 2023.

OTHER SERVICE

- Robotics Competition Judge, FIRST-in-Texas Central Semi-Area Championship Veterans Memorial High School, Corpus Christi, TX, 2025.
- Science Fair Judge, Coastal Bend Regional Science Fair, Corpus Christi, TX, 2025.
- Science Fair Judge, Coastal Bend Regional Science Fair, Corpus Christi, TX, 2024.
- Senior Capstone Project Advisor, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2023.
- Mentor, MentorSHPE Program, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), 2022-2024
- Graduate Student Representative to the College of Engineering, 2021–2024.

STUDENT MENTORING

- Samuel Zhang, Summer Internship at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 2024.
Current Position: Undergraduate Student at Carnegie Mellon University.
- Mckayla Gutierrez, MentorSHPE Program mentee at Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), 2024.
- Roy Amador, MentorSHPE Program mentee at Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), 2023.
Current Position: Graduate Student at San Jose State University.
- Cecilia Villegas, MentorSHPE Program mentee at Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), 2022.
Current Position: Graduate Student at New York University.

DATASETS AND TOOLS

- CubeSat Space Protocol (CSP) Wireshark Dissector, 2024.
<https://github.com/efrenlopezm/csp-dissector>
- Systematic PLC Security Literature Review Dataset, Available on GitHub, 2024.
<https://github.com/efrenlopezm/plc-sok-dataset>
- ICS² Matrix, ICS Threat Taxonomy, Available on Github, 2024.
<https://github.com/efrenlopezm/ics2matrix>
- HoneyPLC, Available on GitHub, 2020.
<https://github.com/sefcom/honeyplc>

MISCELLANY

- Languages: English (Fluent), Spanish (Native), Portuguese (Fluent), German (Beginner).
- Professional memberships: IEEE, SHPE.