

**Welcome!**

**Welcome to the 2018 Codebreaker Challenge!**



To get started, [register](#) for an account using your email address. Then, visit the [Challenge](#) page.

## Overview

The 2018 Codebreaker Challenge consists of a series of tasks that are worth a varying amount of points based upon their difficulty. In previous years, tasks had to be solved in order to unlock the next task and rankings were based upon the quantity of solvers that progressed the furthest from each school. This way of ranking heavily weighted progression above participation and did not allow for skipping ahead if a particular task became a stumbling block. So to address these issues, ALL tasks will be available immediately upon registration and can be solved in any order. The point value associated with each task is based on relative difficulty and schools will be ranked according to total number of points accumulated by their students. It is still recommended to solve tasks in order since the tasks flow with the storyline, but that is no longer a requirement.

## Background

DISCLAIMER - The following is a FICTITIOUS story meant for providing realistic context for the Codebreaker Challenge and is not tied in any way to actual events.

A new strain of ransomware has managed to penetrate several critical government networks and NSA has been called upon to assist in remediating the infection to prevent massive data losses. For each infected machine, an encrypted copy of the key needed to decrypt the ransomed files has been stored in a smart contract on the Ethereum blockchain\* and is set to only be unlocked upon receipt of the ransom payment. Your mission is to ultimately (1) find a way to unlock the ransomware without giving in to the attacker's demands and (2) figure out a way to recover all of the funds already paid by other victims. Are YOU up to the challenge?

\* - for the purposes of this challenge, a private blockchain has been created with no real monetary value associated with the Ether. See <http://www.ethdocs.org/en/latest/> for more information about Ethereum.

The Codebreaker Challenge was developed by the National Security Agency. Check us out at [nsa.gov](https://www.nsa.gov).

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