

Paul Connelly

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Broadly skilled executive and board member | Cybersecurity, technology, data, and AI strategy and governance trailblazer | Builder of leaders and culture

- Thirty-five years of experience as a senior leader at a Fortune 100 company, a big four public accounting firm, and the White House
- Two-time builder of cybersecurity and technology/data governance programs as the first Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) at HCA Healthcare (NYSE: HCA) and the White House
- Cybersecurity audit and consulting partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
- National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) Directorship Certified Independent Director on a private company board and a Not-for-Profit board
- Developer of people: Forty team members have been selected for CISO positions

Professional Experience

Professor of Practice

Belmont University, Massey College of Business, 2025 – present

Developer and instructor for undergraduate, graduate, and executive cybersecurity courses and degree/certificate programs in cybersecurity.

Independent Director, Board of Directors

Fortified Health Security, 2023 – present

Private equity backed company providing cybersecurity services to healthcare organizations.

Independent Director, Board of Directors

Dismas House, Nashville TN, 2018 – present

A Nashville not-for-profit providing housing, meals, training, and support for men returning from incarceration.

- Served on Finance, Development, and Executive Committees
- Board Member of the Year, 2019; Commitment to Service Award, 2022

Faculty Member

IANS Research (Institute for Applied Network Security), 2023 – present

Provide cybersecurity, data, privacy, and AI advisory services and mentoring CISOs and company leaders for a wide range of clients.

Advisory Board Member, 2023 - present

- Brighton Park Capital
- Nashville Chapter of the NACD

Chief Security Officer (CSO), 2018 – 2023

CISO, 2002 – 2018

HCA Healthcare, Nashville TN

Protected thirty-five million patients per year at 185 hospitals and 1800 clinics in the United States and United Kingdom, as well as the Sarah Cannon Cancer Research Institute, HealthTrust Purchasing Group, Parallon Business Performance Group, and Galen College of Nursing.

- Built the information security program, and responsibilities were expanded to include privacy, physical security, and data governance
- Company officer on the CEO's senior leadership team, serving on the Operating, Risk, Data Governance, DEI, and Employee Engagement committees

- Key role in initiatives for the digital transformation of patient care and business operations, a data science partnership with Google, and data/AI strategy and governance
- Responsible for \$325M annual spend, including a \$70M technology portfolio; 300 FTEs and 2,500 contract security officers
- Led response to cyber events and served on the enterprise emergency operations team overseeing response to physical security, natural disaster, pandemic, and mass casualty events
- Executive Alliance *Private Sector Security Executive of the Year for North America*, 2009, and Nashville Technology Council CISO of the Year, 2016

Partner, 1999 – 2002

Senior Manager, 1997 – 1999

PricewaterhouseCoopers, Washington DC

- Led information security, technology, crisis management, and governance audits and consulting in the Information Systems Risk Management practice of the Audit & Business Advisory Services group
- Built a practice of more than one hundred consultants covering the southeastern U.S.
- Clients included Alcoa, Bank of America, Capital One, Department of State, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Reserve, General Accounting Office, KPN Telecommunications (Netherlands), National Credit Unions Association, Social Security Administration, U.S. House of Representatives, and U.S. Postal Service

Chief Security Officer, 1992 – 1997

Information Security Officer, 1989 – 1992

White House Communications Agency

The White House, Washington DC

- Created the first Information Security program at the White House, responsible for protecting IT systems supporting the President, Vice President, National Security Council, White House Situation Room, Air Force One, Marine One, Camp David, and presidential travel sites
- First civilian Presidential Communications Officer - led advance teams supporting Presidential travel and provided direct support to the President while onsite. Led trips to thirty-two U.S. states and international summits in Halifax, Jerusalem, Madrid, Moscow, Ottawa, Rome, Vancouver, and Warsaw for Presidents Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton
- The senior civilian in this Department of Defense agency
- Awarded the Frank B. Rowlett Trophy (the federal government's top award for individual achievement in the information security field) and the Department of Defense Meritorious and Exceptional Civilian Service Awards, and was inducted into the White House Communications Agency Hall of Fame
- Top Secret clearance with Sensitive Compartmented Information and Presidential Support Duty access

Assigned to the White House, 1987-1989

Information Security Analyst Development Program, 1984 – 1987

National Security Agency, Fort Meade MD

- Selected by the Director of NSA for a two-year assignment to create the first information security program at the White House
- Three-year leadership development program graduate
- Top Secret clearance, Sensitive Compartmented Information access and full polygraph

Economist

St. Johns River Water Management District, Palatka FL, 1984

- Developed Economic Impact Statements for water utilization for state government

IT Systems Manager

Florida Farm Bureau Life Insurance, Gainesville FL, 1982 – 1984

- Manager of the Data Management team and data analysis support to the company actuary

Past Board Engagement

Technical Advisor to the Board of Directors and Network Operations Oversight Committee

Organ Procurement & Transplantation Network, 2022 – 2025

Support the board and a committee providing oversight to the network and technology use by the U.S. organ donation, matching, and transplantation system.

Advisor to the HCA Healthcare board of directors, 2002 - 2023

- Led quarterly cyber/physical security/privacy discussions with Audit & Compliance Committee and annual cybersecurity program review with full board

Advisor to HCA Healthcare joint venture boards of directors, 2002 - 2023

- Provided periodic cybersecurity training and program updates to Methodist Healthcare (San Antonio, TX), St. David's Healthcare (Austin, TX), and HCA UK (London, United Kingdom) boards

Independent Director - HCA Hope Fund Board of Directors, 2012 – 2018

- A 501(c)3 charity that provides emergency funds to company colleagues when significant hardships arise due to illness, injury, natural disasters, or other personal situations

Risk advisor to multiple company boards, 1997 – 2002

- Presented audit and consulting findings and recommendations to client boards as an Information Systems Risk Management partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers

Education

- Master of Agricultural Management and Resource Development, University of Florida
- Bachelor of Science, Food & Resource Economics, University of Florida
- National Security Studies program, U.S. Naval War College
- Directorship Certified, National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD)
- Certificate, AI Implications for Business Strategy, Sloan School of Management, MIT
- Certificate, ESG for Senior Leaders, The Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania
- Certificate, Directorship Essentials in Risk Oversight and Management, NACD
- Certificate, Director Proficiency: Financial Oversight, NACD
- Certificate, Cybersecurity Oversight for Directors, NACD
- Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), ISC2
- Information Systems Security Professional certification, National Security Agency
- Certified instructor, Model-Netics Management Essentials Program
- Class of 2018, Leadership Nashville