

Career Skills Training

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Continuing
Education



Information Technology
can advance your career!
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RENEE BELES

Renee Beles has worked in IT, security and enterprise resource planning (ERP) for more than a decade. Her most recent career move led her to higher education working as a PeopleSoft access control analyst.



Even though she has experience in networking, installations and technical incident resolution within the financial services, human resource and IT industries, she is advancing her career by studying cybersecurity and participating in the Department of Labor grant. Cybersecurity is a high-demand, challenging field of study, but Beles said, “While the courses are tough, I’m not intimidated by the amount of information. There are resources to help students pass the course and be successful through the grant program.”

One resource she found helpful was the Virtual Lab. Beles said, “The experience I received from working in virtual labs was wonderful, the environments were already setup, and all you had to do was connect, open your lab document and start working.”

MARY PATTON, CCNA

When Mary Patton, now vice president/senior messaging engineer for a global organization, began her search for technology career training, she landed in a Collin College continuing education course. That educational entre led her to the Convergence Technology credit degree program at the college. Patton’s education and experience includes VoIP, SharePoint, Lync, networking and other collaborative communications products.



With rapid technology changes, students must learn the latest in technology from industry experts. Both Patton’s continuing education instructors and college professors were invaluable sources of information who shared crucial industry knowledge.

“My case study courses presented real-world scenarios that required real solutions,” said Patton. “I then had to justify my solutions to local technology leaders. We worked with real routers and switches, even if they were remote. If I broke something, I had to figure out how to fix it and then continue with the work I had been performing.”

TAYLOR KNOBLOCK

Taylor Knoblock transitioned from working in retail to information technology (IT) through the coursework, virtual externship and mentoring he received at Collin College.



Knoblock’s most recent career move landed him at a healthcare IT corporation working as a network engineer. Knoblock said, “I manage client server environments, virtual environments, networking equipment and data backup and replication technology.” Knoblock chose to study network and data communications because “the job market always needs someone with networking knowledge to manage and maintain a company network.”

In addition to attending class, Knoblock participated in the Department of Labor grant which offers students access to virtual labs, mentors and career guidance. “These professionals are working at some of the largest and most successful technology firms in the country,” said Knoblock. “It was very reassuring to know that the skills we learned were the skills that they want in new employees.” His virtual externship mentor provided weekly insight on how to achieve success in real world projects by applying what he learned in the classroom.

The training leading to Knoblock’s new IT career presented another benefit—a significant pay increase resulting from his new job title.

CHIU FOONG, OCP DBA AND DEVELOPER

Chiu Foong knows that continuing one’s education is a good career investment. Foong is an engineer who needed to add to his IT job skills, specifically using Oracle products. Through Continuing Education classes at Collin College, he took courses that prepared him to gain certifications in SQL, PL/SQL, JAVA, Oracle APEX, Oracle Developer, Oracle DBA and EKC Program Technician. He has a stronger sense of job security and feels qualified for advancement with these certifications in hand.



Chiu, who earned perfect scores on two Oracle certification exams, shared his tried and true tips for securing a high score on certification exams: “Review your lecture notes after class, do the homework and practice material at the end of each chapter.”