



CCIE Empowers Career Path, Arizona

Student Impact Story: Mesa Community College

“I have a passion to learn as much as I can about ICT, because there is an entire ocean of material. I want to cross that ocean—be an explorer, discover new things. I like to access the newest technology to identify the best of the best.”



Dana Yanch came to the U.S. from Canada in 2007. He began to pursue a degree in network administration at Mesa Community College Business Industry Institute. This program includes Cisco® Networking Academy® courses.

“For anyone with an interest in technology, I recommend taking the first CCNA (Cisco Certified Networking Academy) Discovery course, which really helps in making a decision about pursuing this field. The curriculum is designed so that students can take in a vast amount of information without feeling overwhelmed, and many discover an instant connection with networking.”

At Mesa, students in Networking Academy courses have access to an extensive lab with the newest Cisco equipment. “I liked the hands-on practice the most. Theory and textbooks are good, but practice is best, particularly for building a clear understanding of complex ideas.” While completing his courses, Dana also worked part-time in the campus ICT department.

Dana has earned the following industry certifications:

- Cisco CCNA® in 2007
- Cisco CCNA Voice in 2008
- Cisco CCNP® in 2009
- Cisco CCIE® in 2009

He passed the prestigious CCIE (Cisco Certified Internetworking Expert) certification, including the 8-hour lab exam, on the first try (the average is three attempts). The CCIE certification is one of the highest paid and most sought after certifications in the ICT industry worldwide.

In 2010, Dana graduated from Mesa with an AAS degree in network systems administration. He posted a resume on LinkedIn, and was picked up right away by GoDaddy.com. While working in GoDaddy’s network operations, he was able to apply knowledge obtained in Networking Academy courses to diverse vendor environments.



Although the job was good, it was not aligned with Dana's goal to do corporate consulting. So Dana put his resume on Dice.com (a well known ICT employment site), and was contacted by Insight, a Cisco Gold Certified Partner and one of the largest consulting firms in Arizona. Dana had heard of Insight and was excited to get their call.

It also felt good to know that so far he had not had to apply for a job, but had been contacted by recruiters after posting his resume online. Dana went through three technical phone interviews, and then two lengthy in-person interviews. After almost a month, Insight made him an offer for the position of senior engineering consultant.

At Insight, Dana is the lead on many infrastructure routing, switching and security consulting projects. He just completed a project in New York for a leading defense systems manufacturer, and is now in Phoenix working on a project for a large education organization. Dana is redesigning and implementing

network technology at 270 of their campuses across the United States. With just eight months to complete the task, they are aiming for an aggressive rollout of 5 to 10 campuses per week.

"Once in the field, dealing with cutting-edge technologies, you learn that Cisco certifications are just the beginning—technology is always changing. I'm so happy to have a job that provides constant growth. I love that I'm always learning and keeping my brain fresh."

Dana connects regularly with mentors and ICT colleagues, both in person and online, to share problems and solutions. He believes it is very important to build and maintain connections like these, even as a student, for support and professional development. "Networking with students, faculty and professionals taps into a massive knowledge base."

When asked about how his career and life goals are integrating now, Dana had this to say: "There was no way I could get married

during preparation for the CCIE certification exam, or until I felt set and secure in my career. Now that I am with Insight, with better growth and earning opportunities, I can get married and support my wife as she goes through school."

Dana is quick to thank the Cisco Networking Academy faculty and technical staff for enabling his success. He also recommends one of his favorite authors, Ivan Pepelnjak, who writes detailed and informative books on networking for Cisco Press.

Dana recently discovered a new love: service provider technologies. He is working toward a CCIE Service Provider certification, hopefully to be completed about the end of 2012. He is also investigating obtaining a Cisco Wireless certification.

"I have a passion to learn as much as I can about ICT, because there is an entire ocean of material. I want to cross that ocean—be an explorer, discover new things. I like to access the newest technology to identify the best of the best. This industry keeps me on my toes."