



Arizona Student and Graduate Profile

Randy Kessler began his career path in a local grocery store at the age of 15. More than 20 years later, his interest in computers led to his enrollment in the Cisco® Networking Academy® at Gateway Community College in Phoenix, Arizona. Thanks to the skills he learned and the Cisco Career Connection job board, Randy has found his ideal job in computer networking. “It was the exposure and experience that I obtained from the Networking Academy that enabled me to successfully interview and obtain employment in the networking field. I was able to discuss networking and give examples from the Networking Academy that put me ahead of the competition in the interviewing process.”

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Randy decided to pursue a bachelor’s degree later in life with the encouragement of his family and friends. He enrolled in DeVry University and joined a peer support group. The group worked on projects together and attended the same classes. For their senior project, Randy’s team approached local businesses to set up remote access for their networks. Afterward, the university’s administrators asked the group to replicate their project for the university using Cisco router configurations that would allow students to work remotely using Cisco equipment.

After graduating from DeVry with a degree in network and communication management, Randy wanted to add certification to his credentials and researched various certification programs. He decided that the Networking Academy offered the best preparation for certification by providing students with hands-on lab experience using the same equipment that is used in the workplace. Based on this information, Randy and two of his peers enrolled in Networking Academy courses. “I found the hands-on experience was the key to the program.”

With his degree and Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA®) certification in hand, Randy took advantage of the Cisco Career Connection job board and now works with a networking company, installing and maintaining networks across the state of Arizona. “I am really enjoying the job,” he says, “and it’s exactly what I envisioned myself doing. The amount of experience I’ve obtained in a couple months as a team member of a Cisco Gold Certified Partner is invaluable. I am thankful for all the tools and information available through the Cisco site, in addition to the support available to engineers in the field.”

For more information on the Networking Academy at Gateway Community College <http://www.gatewaycc.edu/>



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