



## Maine Student and Graduate Profile

Shortly after Eddie Riddle graduated from high school, he found himself on a fast-track to a career in information technology (IT). Pursuing independent study courses in high school, Eddie was able to earn five technical certifications including CompTIA's A+, Network+, Server+, i-Net+ and ProSoft's CIW Associate. "I have an overwhelming will to learn and am always working to learn more," says Eddie.

Following graduation from high school in 2006, Eddie enrolled in the Cisco® Networking Academy® at York County Community College (YCCC) and less than one year later he landed a job as a junior systems administrator with an IT consulting firm. Just seven months after that, he was promoted to IT Administrator.

By 2006, Eddie had completed the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA®) coursework and received yet another promotion, this time to Engineering Consultant. Eddie attributes his career success in great part to the Networking Academy: "The Networking Academy helped me a lot. It's so much more than switching and routing. It's a great foundation to build on."

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### **Eddie Riddle**

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Another factor that contributed to Eddie's success was the blended distance learning option that was offered by YCCC. The blended distance learning model allows students to do much of their work outside of the classroom with some of the class lectures delivered through video streaming or other technologies. "It was perfect for me since my work schedule required a lot of travel. The online labs and simulations were wonderful and then I scheduled time to be on campus for other hands-on labs. I got a more personalized environment and all the interaction I needed," says Eddie.

Eddie feels that much of his success can also be attributed to the fact that the high school he attended offered IT courses. He developed an interest in technology early on and was fortunate to have the support of both his parents and his teacher in pursuing IT and networking as a career and being able to leverage the educational pathway from high school directly into YCCC where he could continue his learning and skill development. Eddie is also very grateful to his academy instructor, James Vogt. "He went above and beyond a normal classroom teacher and helped and inspired me," says Eddie.

When asked what advice he would give to those considering the Networking Academy as part of their education and career development Eddie responded, "Develop the will to learn. Technology is always changing and you need to learn on the job all the time. In technology, you can say 'I don't know, but I'll find out.' Then go do it."

Eddie is currently an engineering consultant at Foedus, an IT consulting firm. He also applies his technology skills to refurbish and troubleshoot computers for Grahamastics Connections, which donates laptops and Internet access to children and young adults with terminal illnesses for use at home or while in the hospital. Eddie has been on the board of directors of Grahamastics Connections since high school and says "It's a worthwhile cause I'm happy to support."

Eddie is a "sports fanatic" and plays basketball, volleyball, football, and soccer on a regular basis. He's translated that passion into service. Once a week, Eddie and a few of his friends rent a school gym and sponsor a weekly volleyball game for senior citizens to keep them physically active.

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For information on the Networking Academy at York County Community College, go to:

<http://www.yccc.edu/catalog/certificate.html>



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