



New Mexico Student and Graduate Profile

From the age of 16, Chris Perkins of Albuquerque has lived on his own, working to support himself and attending school. After eight years working a variety of jobs, from security at a local nightclub to assisting a metal fabricator/welder, Chris found his place in the information technology (IT) world through the Cisco® Networking Academy®. As a result of changing majors and enrolling in the Networking Academy, Chris earned an internship with a high-tech company and turned that experience into an employment offer. Chris feels he has found an industry and company in which he can thrive. He has earned a Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA®) and Cisco Certified Security Professional (CCSP®) certifications and plans to pursuing additional Cisco certifications down the road.

Chris discovered his interest in IT while fulfilling requirements for a business administration major at Central New Mexico Community College (CNM). While enrolled in some required computer courses he discovered, “The classes were fun and interesting, and I realized through that experience that the IT industry was right for me.” He switched to a networking technology major and in 2005 began taking Networking Academy classes. Chris explains that through the networking arena, “I could finally do something that challenged and inspired me.”

“I feel the Networking Academy provides students with a great foundation in networking and helps them start a career in IT. I feel I now have a competitive edge and I know that with Cisco's continued growth and the excellent professional environment INX provides, I will always have a place in the IT industry.”

Chris’ favorites Networking Academy components were the instructors and the content. “The instructors were helpful, knowledgeable, and inspirational,” and even though the rigorous classes challenged him academically, he was driven to continue. Every class was so helpful and fun that he wished CNM had offered more Networking Academy classes. “It was over too quickly!” laughs Chris.

While Chris was enrolled in the Networking Academy, he was offered an internship with INX, Inc., a Cisco Gold Certified Partner that provides a suite of technology solutions that support the entire life-cycle of IP communications. In addition to learning a lot in his internship, Chris caught the attention of INX. After graduating in August 2006 with an associate of applied science degree in network technology and his CCNA certification, Chris was offered a full-time job as a consulting engineer.

Working at INX has also been a great opportunity for Chris to grow and learn in the IT world. He can choose his area of expertise, take classes and certification exams, practice his knowledge in the workplace, and thrive as a productive subject matter expert in the area of Networking Security. Since graduating, Chris has earned his Cisco Certified Security Professional (CCSP®) certification and intends to pursue additional certifications including the Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP®) and Cisco Certified Internet Expert (CCIE®).



Looking back, Chris says, “I feel that the Networking Academy provides students with a great foundation in networking and helps them start a career in IT. I feel I now have a competitive edge and I know that with Cisco's continued growth and the excellent professional environment INX provides, I will always have a place in the IT industry.”

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To learn more about the Networking Academy at Central New Mexico Community College, visit:

<http://www.cnm.edu/depts/bit/index.php>



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