



FYI FROM DPI

NOVEMBER 2014

CTE Guides Students to Career Success



As a junior at Green Hope High School, Nina Joseph (pictured left, center) took a Career and Technical Education (CTE) course in Microsoft Excel and Access offered through the statewide [NC Microsoft IT Academy](#) to fill an empty spot in her schedule. Little did she know that this particular class would soon change her life.

Over the next two years, Nina fell in love with Microsoft programs and earned her Master Certification in Microsoft Office 2010 and 2007. As a high school junior, she traveled to the worldwide Microsoft Excel 2010 competition in Washington D.C. and earned a bronze medal, beating out tens of thousands of students from other states and countries. As a senior, she placed second in the nation in Microsoft PowerPoint 2010.

As a result of her professional certifications and accomplishments, she has received multiple job offers, made many business connections and eventually landed a job working as a consultant at Triangle Education Assessments.

Before taking the Microsoft IT Academy courses, Nina was not sure what she wanted to study in college. These classes helped her discover a passion for computer programming and mathematics. Nina now attends UNC-Chapel Hill. She has narrowed down her choices of majors to math or computer science, she already has earned industry-recognized credentials and is now planning for a career in business technology.

Established in 2010 through a partnership between DPI and Microsoft, North Carolina's first-in-the-nation Microsoft IT Academy offers digital access to instructional curriculum, CTE course credit and certifications at little or no cost to students and teachers in every public high school across the state.

In just over four years, tens of thousands of students like Nina, as well as teachers, have earned 153,919 certifications through the program. To learn more, visit DPI's [Microsoft IT Academy](#) website or watch the brief [video](#).



North Carolina's Microsoft IT Academy represents just one of many innovations by DPI's CTE staff. Other accomplishments include:

- Implementing the [NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities](#) initiative to recognize counties that are doing outstanding work to prepare their labor pool;
- Partnering with the NC Department of Commerce and NC Community College System in the NC Works Career Pathways initiative to increase the state's talent pipeline, build competency-based credentials, and offer work-based learning opportunities in critical career cluster areas;
- Developing [NC's CTE standards](#) based on input from business and industry and aligned to industry-validated credentials;
- Engaging 3,000 CTE educators at an annual statewide professional development conference; and
- Supporting teachers and students who lead CTE organizations that involve more than 50,000 students in CTE advocacy, competitions and related activities each year.

To view numbers of total CTE credentials earned last year by NC students, per school district, see the [2013-14 CTE Credentials Report](#).



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