Sullivan's IT Academy graduates in HOT demand

Sullivan IT Academy students and graduates continue to find great jobs and quick advancement in their careers. Several students have been promoted shortly after starting work for Information Technology companies. With careers ranging from customer support and help desk to senior networking engineering positions, students are enjoying high demand for the skills learned at Sullivan University.

Chana Cohn (left) recently started working as a contractor for New Age Technologies, assigned to the Server Management team at Kindred HealthCare. Chana, besides acquiring her MCSE Security on Windows 2000 certification, has also been working on their infrastructure. Mike is also a repeat Internet domains running on their hosts more than 800 servers at MaximumASP in Louisville which he has done for over 2 years.

James Wilkins was on the Help Desk at Charter Communications Provisioning Team in Louisville when he started classes at Sullivan. James recently accepted a position as Network Operations Center Technician at Xodiax's Data Center in Louisville. Charter is a Fortune 500 company and was recently promoted to their Communications Provisioning Team. D.J. Rose (left) and Matthew Means (right) were both working at Applebee's in Frankfort when they started their Microsoft program in Summer 2004, driving to Louisville three nights a week for classes. Their dedication has paid off: both Matt and D.J. now work in IT support roles at Toyota in Georgetown, KY.

Mike Schneider was recently hired as a Network Engineer at MaximumASP in Louisville which hosts more than 800 servers at Xodiax, with more than 40,000 Internet domain names running on their infrastructure. Mike is also a repeat student, having completed his Microsoft courses and enrolling in the Cisco program.

John Stone (left) worked at Hawley Cook bookstore in Louisville for many years. John was hired by Insight Cable on their Broadband support desk, and was recently accepted into their Communications Provisioning Team.

Steve Seng, Matt Cousins, Andrew Strong, Chris Mills, Tim Miller, and Jim King have all been hired by Charter Communications in Louisville. Charter is a Fortune 500 company, providing a full range of advanced broadband services to the home. Charter also supplies business-to-business data, video, and Internet protocol (IP) solutions.

Graduate students work with local printing company

Four Sullivan University graduate students have completed an advanced management class recently worked with a local printing company to tackle several issues facing the firm. The students were part of The COLLABORATIVE: Greater Louisville Business School Network for Urban Development, which is an innovative community development endeavor that partners business and education to provide small businesses with recommendations to help them meet specific goals. It involves graduate schools of business from the Greater Louisville area universities including Sullivan University, University of Louisville, Belknap University, Spalding University, and Indiana University Southeast.

Team received rave reviews

Team members Juan Reyes, Bob Wilkin, Christy Phelps and Mike King prepared a report for the business that included several recommendations including the development of an e-commerce website and even the possible relocation of the business. The owner, Carl Smith, commented, “This project was impressing with how quickly and thoroughly the class understood my particular business...accurately evaluating our situation and offering solid, helpful suggestions,” and “I had several specific opportunities that I wanted to investigate but just couldn’t find the time to research them. The class took those concerns and returned with an excellent analysis. My involvement was limited to a few hours to define my concerns and provide background information and I got an analysis that would have taken me weeks to do.”

Students enjoyed involvement

The students were also impressed with the experience. “Having the opportunity to gain ‘hands on’ experience was without a doubt the greatest benefits provided to me by the collaborative project,” stated Christy Phelps. “This project allowed me to apply many of the theories and the tools that I have studied throughout the course of the MBA program at Sullivan University.” She added, “I felt it was very empowering to be able to step out of my comfort zone and successfully analyze situations in an industry that I had little knowledge of prior to the MBA beginning of the quarter. I learned much about the challenges that this small business faces and feel that our team was able to recommend several potential strategies, tools, and solutions that will help this business to face these challenges. This is something that would not be possible to do in a purely academic setting.”

SULLIVAN UNIVERSITY HERALD

Tricia & Joe Brooks

Taking care of business!

Flexible scheduling and the short timeframe of our graduate programs have attracted a “couple” of Sullivan graduates. This Summer, Tricia ‘03 and Joe Brooks ’05 will both start Graduate School. Tricia says, “I will be pursuing my MBA to realize the full value of education in my chosen career path. I want to complete my CPA certification and the MBA program will allow me that opportunity”. Joe added, “I’m pursuing my EMBA to add a more in-depth education to my work experience. Though I have 20+ years of work experience, an MBA would add the value that companies look for when interviewing.”

He continued, “Education gets you in the door and experience moves you through the building.” Like other couples, Christopher and Ann Moms (See: The Herald, Winter 2005) and Sari and Teresa Lemmy (See: The Herald, Fall 2004) Tricia and Joe will be able to support each other through the rigors of graduate school. “With so much of our time being spent on our careers and our kids, it’s nice to have an opportunity to learn and be a common interest that doesn’t revolve around either of those things,” said Joe. At a recent event, the Brooks appreciate the flexibility and conveniences of Sullivan’s online program. “Working on my MBA while Joe completed his Bachelor’s degree wasn’t really a viable option for us,” Tricia said. “Sullivan’s MBA Program offers online classes, to make it possible for the two of us to work on our graduate studies at the same time.”

Learning acquisition through an IT Externship

As working adults, the Brooks are delighted how these changes have been accommodated to benefit their students, as well.

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Exterships and Computer Science program updates

Graduate culture is changing for many companies and new hires are often brought in as contract workers and/or temps, and internal promotions are filled from temp pools. Board members recommended that an externship program be available to Computer Science students.

New program coordinator

In a recent Advisory Board meeting, Rob Kelley was introduced as a new Computer Science instructor and Program Coordinator for the IT Externship Program. With the collective input of the Advisory Board members, an existing course that was not offered for several years - CSC 284 Computer Work Experience - was updated. The new course - CSC 484 IT Externship - was implemented this spring with two Information Technology students. As advantage of the externship opportunity. Students Bobbi Fuller and Stephanie Pearson have been working with Baptist Healthcare Systems since March 2005. “I see the Externship as an opportunity to get the needed experience that employers are looking for.”

I was pleased to see our IT faculty members and external curriculum advisors reach accord on changes to these degree programs... Such changes help ensure that a high-quality of technical education continues to be a priority at Sullivan.”

STEVE KENDRA, Computer Science Advisory Board Member

stated Ms. Fuller. Kelley has several additional externship opportunities with local businesses.

New project management course

Advisory Board members also recommended the development of a project management course for Information Technology bachelor’s degree students. This process consisted of a survey of resources and discussions with various business associates. The completed course description, objectives, and the learning outcomes were incorporated into a new course: CSC 420 Information Technology Project Management. This course has been added to the IT Core requirements for the bachelor’s program and will be offered in Winter 2006 for evening division IT students. In April 2005, all current Computer Science students were notified of the associate’s and bachelor’s degree program revisions. Student response to the program changes has been very positive. Current associate degree and bachelor’s degree students have been encouraged to take advantage of the course changes. All new students enrolling in any of the Computer Science degree programs will follow the revised program course requirements.

George V. Goldin, Computer Science instructor and Program Coordinator for IT Externships

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