

WCTC grows cybersecurity programs

Programs recognized as new degree track anticipates future demand

By Lauren Anderson
Freeman Staff

WAUKESHA — Waukesha County Technical College just joined elite company in the cyber defense education world.

The college was recently recognized by the National Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security for its cybersecurity education — the first college in the state to be designated a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance/Cyber Defense Education.

The designation, called CAE2Y, reflects the college's efforts to prepare students to enter a growing job market and amid continual cybersecurity concerns in an increasingly digital world.

IT instructor Mike Boerschinger said he is expecting growth in the number of students pursuing cybersecurity programs, as the college has launched a new cybersecurity degree.

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“We anticipate the cybersecurity degree to grow immensely,” he said.

Until now, WCTC has offered cybersecurity as a certificate and an emphasis within the college's networking degree. The degree adds another option for students looking to go into the field.

“So we have three different paths to get there now,” Boerschinger said.

Homer Buckingham is poised to graduate this spring from WCTC's network specialist program.

Buckingham retired in 2014 after 25 years in the military, where he worked in IT, and soon after decided to pursue his associate's degree. He said the job outlook in the field is positive.

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“There are hundreds of jobs on lists for IT — you can go into security, networking, servers,” he said. “I’ve got my pick because I got all of that training here.”

Alex Fuehrer is also planning on graduating in May from WCTC’s computer support program. He said he’s been around computers his whole life, so studying them was a natural fit.

Fuehrer’s favorite WCTC course was focused on emerging technologies, where, he said, he learned about where technology is headed and what to expect in the future.

While both he and Buckingham plan on going directly into the workforce after graduation, Boerschinger said an advantage of WCTC is it partners with many universities for 2+2 programs, through



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WCTC’s IT Student Center is a central space where students work.

which students can earn their associate’s degree at the college and their bachelor’s degree at the university.

With its recent designation by the NSA and Department of Homeland Security, Boerschinger said, the college will part-

ner with even more universities outside of Wisconsin.

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