



IT workforce training, UWF IT Academy the focus in February

Helping to meet the high demand for information technology professionals was the focus of February's meeting as we welcomed Nicole Gislason, Director of the University of West Florida's IT Academy. The Academy is responding to that growing need for quality professionals in the information technology sector by developing this important workforce program, including several classes and certification opportunities.

She began reminding those attending that IT remains one of the fastest growing industries, with new positions created annually, in virtually every sector of the labor market. This is supported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics who projects significant growth in the IT sector. As an example, computer systems design and related services growth from now until 2016 is projected to increase by 38.3 percent, translating into 489,000 new jobs in the US.

Nicole also correlated the high skill/high wage aspect of IT, showing statistics on IT

jobs in the Fort Walton Beach area. Wages range from \$39,530 for Computer Support Specialists to \$88,150 for Computer and Information Systems Managers, with a wide variety of IT specialties in between with salaries from the mid-\$50's to \$80,000 annually. Why all this projected growth? Nicole said there continues to be overwhelming reliance of information technology along with the continued importance of maintaining system and network security. Additionally, there is increased use of new technology and computer software to streamline the growing complexity of business transactions.

The UWF IT Academy started training military students in 2000. Back then, the Department of Defense requested Microsoft NT Server training as there were no other programs available. The University established an upper-level academic course for those who required college credit. They then expanded the training program with open enrollment classes beginning in Fort

Walton Beach in 2001 as a division of Continuing Education. Online course delivery began in 2006, and in 2007 coursework was delivered online only. In fact, student participation in the Fort Walton Beach area increased and out-paced Pensacola with combined enrollment of over 800 completers by August 2007. However, this year students will go back in the classroom for their instruction.

Courses currently available include Networking and Security, Digital Media and Web Design, and Engineering Skills. There are also high-demand certification courses available. For instance, the US military is the largest buyer of software in the world. Their primary server platform is Microsoft. As a result, the Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA) is the most requested industry certification and that training is available through the Academy. Additional certifications offered include MCSA Security+, Cisco CCENT, Cisco CCNA, A+, Linux LP1 Level 1, Network+, and Foren-

sic Computer Examiner. There is also a Help Desk Analyst certification, Microsoft Certified Application Specialist (MCAS), Radio Frequency (RFID) on the Web, Video Game Design and Development, and .NET Developer Training.

More about the MCSA course. Students spend 12 weeks in class with the next session beginning March 16, 2009. Students will implement, manage, and maintain a complex computing environment of medium to large sized organizations. Nicole says these jobs are important because the global workforce needs to remain connected.

The Cisco CCNA is a 10-week, 100 hour online course that includes both introduction to Cisco networking technologies and the interconnecting Cisco network devices (ICND) module. Instruction in IP, IGRP, serial, frame relay, IP RIP, VLANs, RIP, Ethernet, and access lists protocols is included in this course. The Forensic Computer Examiner course is

(Continued on page 2)

General Dynamics hosts March TeCMEN at Niceville facility

TeCMEN is once again on-the-road for its March meeting, visiting General Dynamics at its Niceville facility. Part of Ordnance and Tactical Systems (GD-OTS), they are the recognized industry leader in payload section design and payload ejection systems for air delivered munitions. They offer complete, modular

weapon payload systems to support a variety of weapons and platforms.

Their expansive array of capabilities and services include innovative engineering and design, advanced modeling; simulations; system integration and management, precision machining and forging,

as well as testing and evaluation.

GD-OTS designs and produces payload section and ejection systems for the Joint Standoff Weapon (JSOW). They also produce the BLU-122/B Penetrator, As the "business" end of the GBU-28 C/B weapon, it provides en-

hanced performance against hard and deeply buried targets. They also provide the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Navy with various configurations of similarly constructed 500-pound, 1000-pound and 2000-pound Mk 80 Series Bomb Bodies for both tactical and training applications.



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Reminders:

- The presentation from the February meeting is available at www.tecmen.org.
- The next TeCMEN meeting is Tuesday, March 10, 7:30 a.m., at the General Dynamics facility in Niceville.
- The April TeCMEN meeting will be held Tuesday, April 14, and will feature Leo Murphy, Director of the Okaloosa CHOICE Aviation Institute as guest speaker. He will be joined by Ron Garriga, Director of Academic Support, Emery-Riddle Aeronautical University. Start time will remain 7:30 a.m.

Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network (TeCMEN) is comprised of EDC-member companies promoting growth and advancement within Okaloosa's technology-based business community through the association, collaboration, and contract-teaming of its manufacturing, engineering, technology and defense industry clusters. Using a collaborative concept, these companies join together to compete for and complete both defense-contracting and other substantial business opportunities that are too expansive for a single business to undertake.

TeCMEN member companies represent every major manufacturing and engineering discipline required to support requirements of both the military missions and the civilian community including:

- *Aerospace & Aviation*
- *Information Technology*
- *Micro-Electronics*
- *Biometric Technology*
- *Precision Machining & Metal Fabrication*

Assisting in the EDC's commitment are Okaloosa's learning institutions Northwest Florida State College, the University of West Florida, and the University of Florida Research & Engineering Education Facility.



For more information on TeCMEN,
contact Jeff Fanto at jeff@florida-edc.org

UWF IT Academy — meeting the IT needs of area businesses

16-weeks/220 hours online. It includes three short online courses in Basic A+, Network+, and Security+. Currently there is a huge demand for certified, qualified forensic computer examiners. In fact, some trained examiners have started their own businesses, some work for large companies, while others work for law enforcement agencies.

The IT Academy also offers custom training. For example, in Engineering Skills, they teach material properties, engineering economics, engineering mechanics, electronics, digital systems, lightening theory, electric motors and voltage regulation.

With more than 100 IT professionals working between

Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach, UWF has one of the largest IT divisions in the region. In addition, the new LambdaRail connectivity will provide both Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach students with the greatest bandwidth of any university campus in the area. The Academy has a great history of being friendly to military students and also offers

student internships where available.

Students select UWF because it does offer a full-service campus. Advising is available to students who desire that level of faculty interaction. MCSA students earn academic credit and the certification as the current delivery provides college credit towards the Information Engineering Technology degree. Academy programs are academically accredited and enrollment is open and easy.

Businesses are encouraged to contact Nicole and tell her of your IT needs in 2010. She's also seeking internship opportunities too. She can be reached at Nicole@uwf.edu, or by calling 800-710-3233.

Coming events at the EDC

- "Vision of Progress" TV show for March features Destin Mayor Craig Barker as he talks about the "shovel-ready" projects that he and the City Council members have submitted for stimulus money consideration. He highlights the work that has been done with Destin's Town Center CRA projects and the City's work on revitalizing the Destin Harbor. This and several other initiatives are covered in the discussion with the Mayor, so please take the time and feel the passion. Tune into Cox Channel 6 Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m., Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. and Fridays at 10:30 a.m.
- The next iTen Wired Summit is scheduled for April 2, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Homewood Suites, 29474 North Main Street, Daphne AL. Register on line at www.itenwired.com.