Collin College

NISGTC NEWSLETTER
February/March 2015 Edition

NISGTC Starts MENTORING PROGRAM

New NISGTC Career Coach Tracy Clinton has gotten off to a fast start at Collin College. Within weeks of assuming her new position, she had an idea for a new Mentoring Program and was beginning the steps for implementation. "My first week here, my supervisor had me read through a huge booklet about the DOL Grant and its goals and initiatives. I recognized that it was very well-laid-out. It seemed that there were a number of services that would readily meet the students' needs," Tracy said. "Having worked at companies in the past that highly valued workplace mentoring, I thought this was another area of opportunity."

After hearing about the success of direct mentoring our own Dr. Ann Beheler experienced with Collin student, Chelsea Hall-Fitzgerald, Tracy brought her idea to leadership and other Career Coaches, who immediately expressed support. It wasn't long after that when Tracy and Career Coaches began finding possible mentors through networking at various IT events and exsisting employee connections. Then it was on to research and development of program details. "I read where mentorship programs that don't include some level of structure often become dull, mundane and unproductive, causing a lack of completion or commitment for both the mentor and mentee," Tracy said.

Following the announcement, there was an great response from the students from which we were able to select 7 for the program launch. Days before the kick-off, there was still much to be done. NISGTC team members got together to plan out the specifics. "It was so amazing to be surrounded by such wonderful colleagues who helped orchestrate details while I stayed engulfed in development and recruiting efforts," Tracy said.

The day of the event, 100% of the participants showed up, and you could see the excitement of everyone involved. Many students expressed hopes about bridging the gap between education and employment by getting real world experience and insight on how to move forward after college as well as gaining an edge in the IT world. Mentors all had their own reasons for volunteering. Jeff VanDrimmelen, Production Director of OskyBlue sums it up, "I had a great mentor growing up. I wanted to give back."

What is PERSONAL BRANDING?

Personal Branding for Job Seekers is the art of crafting and science of packaging your education, experience, interests, appearance, work ethic and integrity in a way that communicates exactly what you want employers to know about you. It's banking on the overlooked details that can make or break the choice between you and another candidate.

For example, one of our employment partners shared a story on how two students from the same college with the same classes and same references came to him for internship interviews a few months ago. With all other things equal, he chose the one who'd packaged himself better. That student has gone on to be hired full time at the company. It was all based on that one subtle, personal branding difference.

Personal branding gives you an edge over the competition. Because you take the time to develop your personal brand, hiring managers know that you place worth in values that are important to many companies, such as reputation, vision, cohesiveness and a polished presentation.

Personal branding takes a good thing and makes it great. You're the cake; personal branding is the icing. Come out to one of the Personal Branding Workshops March 23 at Spring Creek BB-118 or March 24 at Preston Ridge F-142, 6-8 p.m. Email Career Coach, Diana Sukut at dsukut@collin.edu for more info or to RSVP.

Student Spotlight

NISGTC TUTORS

One of NISGTC's most valuable and popular services is our IT-specific grant-funded tutors. Many colleges offer tutoring services, but sometimes do not have tutors specifically for IT courses. At Collin, we currently have seven tutors that specialize in A+, Linux+, Net+, jQuery, CCNA, HTML, iOS, CSS, firewalls, routing and more. Most of our tutors were once students at Collin themselves, with our newest to join the team, Ben Casey, having graduated from Collin with his Associate of Science only this past Spring.

It's been said that our tutors have a "fan following" and that our students credit the tutors as a key element in succeeding in a class or subject that might be difficult for them.

"My favorite thing is when an IT student shows up confused, not understanding the subject and worrying he'll fail, but then after, seeing a smile on his face and courage to finish his degree," Collin tutor, Akram Amen says.

As many of NISGTC's services wind down, the tutors are one thing we are hoping to continue. Whether you are just starting out or working to finish your degree, stop by the tutoring den. The earlier you begin regular visits with them the better.

"To get the best benefit from our tutoring, please don't wait until your exam time," Collin tutor Sepideh Kafaei says. "We are like family here, and we can study with you, or use the den to group-study and have us there to answer your questions or give you recommendations on your projects in case you need it."

In cases where there is a recurring theme in the types of questions tutors are being asked, some plan and hold Group Tutoring Sessions on a particular subject. The next is Programming and Debugging Techniques, led by Collin tutor Sung Powley, on Tuesday, March 17, 7-9 p.m. in H-122 at PRC.

Best Tech Jobs in AMERICA

Glassdoor, a job search site that annually identifies the 25 "best" jobs in America has recently released this year's list. Their identification system is based on a 5-point rating sysem that determines the weight of earning potential (average annual base salary), career opportunities and number of open job listings. What's interesting about this year's list is that 10 out of those top 25 were tech jobs. These positions are Sales Engineer, Mobile Developer, IT Project Manager, Network Engineer, QA Engineer, Solutions Architect, Data Scientist, Project Manager, Database Administrator and Software Engineer, each with a base salary range starting between $77,000 and $121,000.

adapted from InfoWorld.com

Technology-related careers continue to have unemployment rates lower than the national average and, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics, tech jobs are expected to grow 21.5 percent between now and 2022. It's easy to see that the demand for highly-skilled technology workers is exploding.

We're already seeing this trend locally at Collin College in these types of jobs, and more are being posted almost daily on our LinkedIn page and NISGTC website.

If you are just entering the tech market or looking to make a change, it would be a good idea to look at these and similar job descriptions to see what skillsets are in demand and apply the pursuit of those skills in your current education goals.

LinkedIn Profile
TOP TEN TIPS

1. Have an updated **PROFESSIONAL PHOTO**.

2. Create a **CATCHY HEADLINE** to promote your brand statement.

3. **SIMPLIFY** your public profile **URL**.

4. Add your **LINKEDIN URL** ON all of your **OTHER MARKETING PIECES** (business cards, resume, email signature, etc.).

5. Use **GOOD KEYWORDS** from other job descriptions in your industry to attract recruiters.

6. Add your **PROJECTS, ORGANIZATIONS** and **CERTIFICATIONS**.

7. **CONNECT** with people you know.

8. Request **RECOMMENDATIONS** from previous employers and coworkers.

9. Join **GROUPS** in areas of interest and regularly join in discussion.

10. Have some **PUBLIC PROFILE SETTINGS** so you can be found on Google.

VISIT LINKEDIN'S HELP CENTER FOR MORE IDEAS AT HELP.LINKEDIN.COM.

For more help with your LinkedIn profile and to have it reviewed, schedule an appointment with a Career Coach today.

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