

Collin College

NISGTC NEWSLETTER

Fall 2015 - Special FINAL Edition

Sustained SERVICES

Though the grant is ending on September 30, students can still access the following services through Collin College:

VIRTUAL LABS

The NetLab Support Team will manage the labs.

CAREER SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

Available through the Counseling and Career Services Department which can be reached at PersonalCounseling@collin.edu.

CO-OP AND INTERNSHIP

www.collin.edu/studentresources/career/internships

ACADEMIC ADVISING

www.collin.edu/gettingstarted/advising

THANK YOU

to all the staff, tutors and Collin faculty for making this grant so successful!

The NISGTC Journey:



A LOOK BACK WITH DR. ANN BEHELER

In early 2011, the National Information, Security, and Geospatial Technologies Consortium (NISGTC) was a dream. The proposal's focus was on four information technology (IT) specialty areas: networking and data communications, cybersecurity,

programming, and geospatial technologies. At the end of four years, consortium colleges have achieved far more than thought possible.

As I reflect on the work of the last four years, several key initiatives surface that have made a difference across all colleges. National Business and Industry Leadership Teams co-lead all our work. This fact has helped to ensure that our curriculum produces workforce-ready completers and has improved relationships in general with business in our areas.

Major equipment was purchased for our virtual laboratories, and we created new virtual laboratory exercises that align with our curriculum.

Implementing these labs has significantly helped our working students who needed more laboratory practice than their schedules allowed. With the virtual labs, students can complete their labs any time any place with internet access just as though they were in the room with the equipment.

We developed and implemented online curriculum to address the gaps that existed once we analyzed the knowledge, skills, and abilities our BILT teams wanted us to ensure completers would possess. We further implemented open source online curriculum to assist students with the high cost of textbooks in high-demand courses. Prior to this work, it was common for students to pay for more for the textbook for an IT class that they paid for the tuition.

Perhaps most important, though, all partner colleges had the funds to employ Career Coaches to work intensely with students to encourage them, to keep them in their programs, and to ultimately help them find employment. At Collin College, for example, Institutional Research determined that grant participants that used the services of Career Coaches and Tutors were about twice as likely to be retained from semester to semester as those who did not, statistics that were convincing to retain three Career Coach positions on Collin money after the grant ends on 09/30/15

Thanks from our STUDENTS

"I just want to say thanks for all the time and dedication everyone spent with people like me. I learned many things during this interesting program."
- ED ACEVES

"[I'm] so very grateful for your work on the behalf of the students at Collin College. How would students go about convincing the powers that be in to keeping the majority of the DOL grant team around?"
- JOSHUA WIMS

"I want to thank you all for your help and encouragement during my job search. You

were instrumental in the improvement of my outlook."
- GAIL STAFFORD

"Using the resume you folks helped me with I got a phone interview... from there, I was brought in for a face to face interview and I was given the offer the following day. I want to thank you and your staff for all the help and support you have provided. It has been a wonderful experience."
- SCOTT MCINTYRE

"Thank you all for your help this semester. I would not have done well without you, seriously."
- ANGELIQUE CHAN

Student Spotlight

Many students knew Nigel Smith as the friendly Cisco CCNP Lab Assistant in Heritage Hall, yet only a few of Nigel's peers were aware of his impressive professional background. Before entering Collin College to embark on a career change to IT Network



Engineering, Nigel earned two Bachelor of Science degrees and a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from Syracuse University in addition to serving as Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps and establishing over twenty years of experience as a Test Engineer in the Semiconductor Industry.

During his first semester at Collin, Nigel joined the NISGTC program and immediately started utilizing the resources and services.

"NISGTC provided the general advice, guidance and was part of my support

The Impact of Collin College's

Before the NISGTC grant, most colleges still had career advisors or career centers but their responsibilities were on the entire college or university, making the ratio of advisors to students far too large. So it was written into the NISGTC grant, that there would be dedicated IT specific career advisors, known to various NISGTC partners as career navigators, student success teams, or in Collin College's case, career coaches.

These coaches led workshops and gave one-on-one advising to IT students in resume writing, LinkedIn, interviewing, etc. as well as developed relationships with IT companies to hold hiring events, job fairs, mock interviews and work directly with businesses to give them qualified candidates to open job postings on behalf of the students.

NIGEL SMITH

system," Nigel said of his experience. "Once I was ready to begin the job search process, they helped to prepare me with all the pre-requisites: resume writing, LinkedIn updates and interview preparation." Among Nigel's experiences with NISGTC, his favorite was when he received an exclusive invitation to participate in an onsite interview with the technical manager of a prospective employer. Nigel advises new IT students to get an internship, co-op or part-time experience in their career path as early as possible. He believes this is an excellent means of solidifying knowledge and a critical component for achieving a first job.

Nigel graduated Magna Cum Laude with an AAS degree in Cisco Networking Technology in May 2014 and holds several Cisco and CompTIA certifications. He is now employed by State Farm as a Technical Security Analyst.

Outside of school and work, Nigel and his wife of twenty-seven years, Maggie, enjoy keeping up with their five grown children and seven grandkids.



As a thank you to the business partners and BILT leaders that made our success possible, NISGTC staff held an Employer Appreciation event on September 21, 2015.

Student Success BY THE NUMBERS

1,400

Collin College grant participants.

29

TAA eligible participants.

148

participants that were military veterans.

102

veterans that went through the free fast-track VIP program.

1,154

participants who utilized the career coaches.

65

workshops offered by career coaches.

470

attendees to the career coach workshops.

220

students who accessed the tutoring services.

9

group tutoring sessions.

1,561

one-on-one tutoring appointments since January 2014.

CAREER COACHES

Many students attribute their success to the personal attention from the career coaches. "The best part of being a career coach has been helping the students boost their confidence," Career Coach Tracy Clinton said of her experience. "It's been a pleasure to serve them."

Career Coach Diane Ganze said she "LOVED working with the students." And statistics do show a significant increase in retention and completers when comparing grant participants who utilized the grant services, such as the IT specific career coaches and those that did not, so Collin College plans to sustain some career coaches in the future. "Having a part in helping students gain employment with incredible employers is so satisfying and you can be proud that you made a difference," Career Coach Susie Davisson said.



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