

Keeping Pace with a High-Growth Field

The Virginia Employment Commission ranks the information technology field as one of the fastest-growing in the Commonwealth, with employment levels projected to double statewide within this current decade.

High school studies helped Dustin Grimes secure a place in this dynamic field. As a junior and senior at Herndon High School, Dustin took classes in word processing, accounting, and information systems.

“The courses I took in high school were a great start on the pathway to success,” Dustin says. “[They] helped me in the transition from high school to college by providing me with essential knowledge that I could apply to my college work, and later, in my professional career.”

Dustin’s professional career currently finds him as a network engineer with a DC-area software consulting company, but he’s still learning—he’s just a few months away from completing his studies at Strayer University.

DUSTIN GRIMES Network Engineer

High School: Herndon High School

CTE Programs Studied: Accounting, Word Processing, Information Systems

Additional Studies/Training: Strayer University (Business)

Network Engineer

Network engineers are directly involved in the configuration and support of a company’s computer network. Just as importantly, network engineers also play a key role in planning and implementing network security measures, helping to reduce an organization’s vulnerability to disruption.

Electives to take in high school

- Information Technology Fundamentals
- Database Design & Management
- Programming
- Information Systems
- Advanced Information Systems
- Network Administration

What to study after high school

Employers typically require a bachelor’s degree in computer science, computer engineering or a related field, and some may even require a master’s degree for advancement. In addition, personnel in this field must constantly keep up with developments in network technology. Consequently, network engineers tend to be involved in continual training and learning—including earning certifications in specific technologies from software companies.