



SUCCESS STORY

C I S C O A C K N O W L E D G E S S U C C E S S A N D A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S

Cisco Systems, Inc.
170 West Tasman Drive
San Jose, CA
95134-1706

Carmen Nainer Forges a Path for Romanian Women in IT

In October 2001, Carmen Nainer passed the Cisco Certified Networking Associate (CCNA™) exam and launched her career in Romania as an IT professional. Just two years before, Carmen's mother worried that she would leave Romania like her brother to find work in Canada or the United States. The Cisco Networking Academy Program gave Carmen the skills and opportunity she needed to find rewarding work in her home country.

In addition to her personal triumph, Carmen is a pioneer and role model for other women. She began as a student in June 2000 with two other women who soon dropped out of the program, making her the only woman to graduate in her class. She admits that the program challenged her, but her will and dedication helped her work side-by-side with her male colleagues to overcome all obstacles.

Carmen, now 32, was the first woman in Bucharest to complete her CCNA and became the first female instructor for the "Centrul de Studii IDD" Regional Academy in 2002. Her professor, Bogdan Logofatu, describes her as "hard working, very responsible, and possessing a great team spirit."

The Gender Gap

According to Professor Bogdan Logofatu, only 25 percent of the 300 students in the Local Academy CREDIS Bucurest are women. This number signifies advancement for women in the IT field. Based on recent research from an IDC study, commissioned by Cisco Systems, the female participation rate in the Romanian networking labor market was 10.9 percent in 2001.

And Romania is not alone. Worldwide, more men than women pursue engineering, math, and science degrees, and men dominate the lucrative IT careers while women pursue lower-paying desktop publishing and design technology professions. The IDC study estimates a shortfall of 80,000 networking professions by 2004 in Central and Eastern Europe.

In April 2000, Cisco Systems teamed with the Cisco Learning Institute (CLI) and established the Gender Initiative, a project to increase women's access to IT training and career opportunities. The Cisco Networking Academy Program presents an excellent opportunity to help narrow the gender gap and increase





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female participation in the Internet economy. The Networking Academy program is a comprehensive eight course program designed to teach students Internet technology skills and address the serious shortage of networking skilled professionals worldwide. To grow the number of skilled workers for high-wage jobs, many Academies have targeted recruiting groups such as women who are under-represented in the IT field.

Strategies To Make a Difference

Carmen became an Academy instructor because she finds computing and networking technology eye-opening and also because she enjoys sharing what she knows with others. This combination makes her an ideal instructor for all students, and a role model for women.

Carmen takes special care to encourage her female students in the hands-on labs to keep trying, because they will eventually get it. Professor Logofatu believes that having Carmen as an instructor and role model will encourage more women to stick with the program.

A Bright Future

Carmen Nainer plans to continue her Cisco certification, pursuing both CCNP and CCIE. As an instructor, she would like to help more students, especially women, work toward their CCNA and CCNP. Eventually, she would like to have her own network consulting firm. If Carmen's mother gets her wish, Carmen will become an entrepreneur in her home country.

"In my opinion, women have more courage than men," she said. "So I encourage them to demonstrate the same qualities in this program, and after finishing the courses, not to let men discourage them in their jobs."

<http://www.cisco.com/edu>

<http://gender.ciscolearning.org>



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