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14-year-old certificate winner shares benefits of his experience

A year ago *WE Compute* ran a story about a 15-year-old boy who became one of the youngest people in North America to hold an A+ technical license. Reader David Tan Nguyen decided to go him one better and win certification at age 14.

He accomplished this last fall — but he didn't stop there, according to an account he sent us earlier this year. Here's his letter, including advice for students.

Dear *WE Compute*:

During the months of October through December (1998), I found some time in my busy schedule to study for something beyond my regular studies. I used my spare time to study for the Microsoft Certified Professional certificate on Microsoft's Windows 95 exam.

I studied vigorously for this exam. Do not assume the exam is generous. From my experience, the exam was complex and very overwhelming. I could not have done it without reading

authors' comments in a wide range of study materials and asking other candidates who have taken these exams for advice. I found these resources very helpful.

However, I recommend registering for a class or some kind of hands-on education to help get a full understanding of the jargon used in the exam's criteria. (Having a Windows computer without any networking capabilities was hard enough.)

These classes do cost a hefty amount. However, I strongly stress that anybody wanting a certification should get at least some experience one way or another. I found it surprisingly difficult without these invaluable benefits.

Fortunately, I passed, a little above the requirement to advance.

I hope my experience — I'm a 14-year-old — helps others obtain any type of certification.

David Tan Nguyen, Grade 9 student

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