



Whether learning new skills or upgrading existing ones, WITC offers a variety of short-term certificates and specialty courses. In many situations certificates can be completed in less than a year, or students may choose to use the credits to pursue a diploma or associate degree at WITC.

“Certificates are a great way to get started,” says Christy Roshell, a career specialist at WITC’s Rice Lake campus. “Most certificates lead into full programs. They are also great if you are working and want to add on a certain skill.”

Being able to fit school into a hectic lifestyle appealed to Maia Karpenske. After receiving a WITC catalog, she enrolled in courses for a medical transcription certificate at WITC’s New Richmond campus.

“I liked the fact that I could do things online and at my own pace,” says Karpenske. “My son was about 2 years old when I went back to school for the transcription certificate. I don’t think I could have done it if it weren’t for that.”

Once on WITC’s New Richmond campus, Karpenske spoke with medical administrative specialist instructor Cindy Rosburg, who helped guide her through the options for certificates.

“When I met Cindy to go over the course syllabus, what [classes] to sign up for and when, she was very honest with me and actually stopped me from biting off more than I could chew,” says Karpenske. “She knew I was a mom working full time. I was so glad I listened to her and took the classes in the way she recommended.”

Through the medical transcription certificate, students learn how to produce accurate documents using machine transcription and also learn medical terminology and the basics of anatomy and physiology. These skills help increase marketability and efficiency in the quickly growing field of medical transcription.

“I feel my transcription certificate prepared me well for the real thing,” says Karpenske. “In fact, I have encountered many people who have spent thousands of dollars on schools that did not prepare them well, and it made it difficult [for them] to perform well on the job and to obtain employment.”

After completing the medical transcription certificate requirements, Karpenske quickly found employment as the transcription supervisor at St. Paul Radiology, a private medical practice which serves St. Paul, Minn., the surrounding communities and the upper Midwest region.

After four years with St. Paul Radiology, another position opened within the company. Again, Karpenske looked to WITC to provide her with the training she needed with its medical coding specialist certificate.

“Maia was an excellent student in both the medical transcription and medical coding specialist certificate programs here at WITC-New Richmond,” says Rosburg. “Maia was the kind of student who asked good questions and really wanted to understand how what she was learning in the classroom would apply to the real world.”

WITC’s medical coding specialist certificate prepares students in medical terminology, anatomy, written and oral communi-

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WITC-Rice Lake career specialist Christy Roshell explains certificate options to Elizabeth Goebel, a student in the administrative professional program.

cations and basic computer skills to better analyze health records and assign codes for diseases and procedures. The certificate also assists when extracting key information from health records for reimbursement, statistics and research purposes.

With that knowledge, Karpenske accepted the position at St. Paul Radiology as the Supervisor for the Transcription, Coding and Data entry department. She has been with St. Paul Radiology for nearly 10 years.

“It never occurred to me I would end up this far in my career,” says Karpenske. “I am a very faith-filled woman, so I do believe

many of the circumstances that led to the development of my career were orchestrated by God’s hand. However, the skills needed to be there in order for me to perform the tasks of my career in the first place.”

“Maia continues to support WITC and recruits students from our college for employment at St. Paul Radiology,” says Rosburg. “She also works with externs from our medical administrative specialist program. This has helped our students gain hands-on experience in the medical field.”

From improving an existing resume to being the first step toward a career, a certifi-

cate can allow individuals to stay competitive in an ever-changing job market.

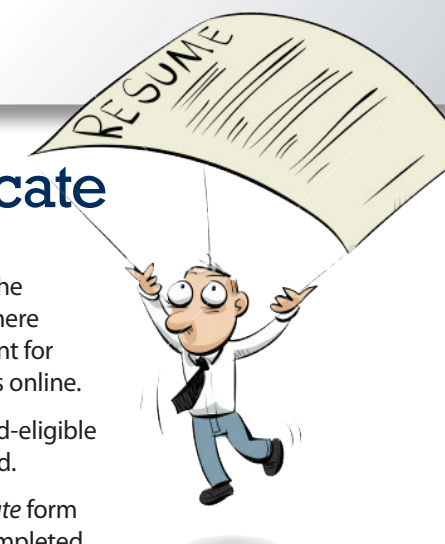
“I earned both of my certificates while trying to be a mother to my children,” says Karpenske. “My son was 2 when I worked for the transcription certificate and then my daughter was also about 2 when I was working toward my coding certificate. I have a wonderful and supportive husband, but it still wasn’t easy. People were very supportive in helping me succeed and guiding me through how many courses I should take at once. It turned out well for me.” ■

Raising Your Resume with a Certificate

To get started on the path toward a certificate, students must complete a *Technical College Application for Admission* indicating the certificate they wish to work toward and submit it to the student services office. There are no application fees collected for declaring a certificate and there is no need to take an assessment. However, some individual courses may require an assessment for placement. The current course requirements for a certificate are found in the catalog as well as online.

Stand-alone certificates are not eligible for financial aid, but, students enrolled in a financial aid-eligible program with the same courses required for a certificate may be eligible to receive financial aid.

After the courses have been completed, students will need to complete a free *Intent to Graduate* form and turn it in to the student services office to receive their certificate. This is the same form completed by degree-seeking students when they complete their degree coursework.



Select certificate courses are also offered at the WITC-Hayward and WITC-Ladysmith outreach centers. Visit witic.edu/certificate for more information.