

Colleges collaborate on pathway to computer-related degrees

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) and the College of Our Lady of the Elms in Chicopee are partnering to offer accelerated online degree completion programs in Computer Science and Computer Information Technology and Security.

In a ceremony on April 4, John B. Cook, Ph.D., president of STCC, and Harry Dumay, Ph.D., MBA, president of Elms College, formally signed an agreement that eases the coursework transfer between the two colleges for students seeking degrees in the computer-focused programs.

The bachelor degree programs are completely online and accelerated, which means students can earn their degree in 14 months after obtaining an associate degree from STCC. They will need to earn an associate degree with at least 60 credits, which typically takes two years. A total of 120 credits is needed for the bachelor's degree.

STCC and Elms have been partners in two of the pathways since 2016. The colleges have updated those agreements and created two new pathways to a bachelor's degree in from Elms in Computer Science or Computer Information Technology and Security.

The four pathway options are: Associate degree in Computer and IT Security from STCC and bachelor's degree in Computer Information Technology and Security from Elms; Associate degree in Programmer at STCC and bachelor's degree in Computer Science at Elms; Associate degree in Computer Systems Engineering Technology from STCC and a bachelor's



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Elms College President Harry Dumay, Ph.D., MBA, left and STCC College President John B. Cook, Ph.D., shake hands during ceremony.

degree in Computer Science or Computer Information Technology and Security from Elms; and Associate degree in Engineering and Science Transfer-Computer Science Transfer option from STCC and a bachelor's degree in Computer Science OR Computer Information Technology and Security from Elms.

Students who pursue a bachelor's degree in Computer Science at Elms will develop technical knowledge and creative thinking skills to design smarter software. They will learn how to code and also discover how to ask questions about how to improve the user experi-

ence of new technologies, apps, games, websites and more.

Students who graduate with a bachelor's degree from Elms in Computer Information Technology and Security will be prepared for careers as IT technicians, system administrators, network administrators and cyber security specialists.

Both fields are expected to experience growth over the next several years. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics predicts employment of software developers will grow 24 percent from 2016-2021.

According to the BLS, computer

and information technology occupations should expect a 13 percent growth from 2016-2026.

"We are thankful for the opportunity to enter into a partnership with Elms College on these pathways to technical careers," Cook said. "Students enrolled in these online programs have an affordable and convenient way to develop computer information technology and computer science-related skills and earn a bachelor's degree."

"Computer information technology and computer science are rapidly expanding fields with many employment opportunities for our region," Dumay said. "We are pleased to extend our partnership with Springfield Technical Community College beyond social work to put a new field of bachelor's degrees and rewarding careers within reach for local students."

Other details of the memorandum of understanding signed by the college presidents include: Elms and STCC agreed to continue a degree completion program in Social Work for the next five years. The original agreement was signed in 2011. Elms will offer conditional acceptance to its degree completion programs in Social Work, Computer Information Technology and Security, and Computer Science for STCC degree candidates in selected associate degree fields. Elms will guarantee seamless admission into Elms bachelor's degree programs in Social Work, Computer Information Technology and Security, and Computer Science for STCC graduates in selected programs who have maintained a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5.