

Emerging Cyber Gurus

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The latest news story From the IT Program

The principle of Duval High School, Mrs. Smith, congratulates the scholars for their accomplishments in the CTE program at the school.

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Ricky Chen, Mouhamadou Dieng, and Arkin Turay are three DuVal High School seniors and proud members of the school's Cybersecurity and Networking CTE program. Ricky explained that "joining the program in eleventh grade was one of the best decisions I have ever made, because it has opened doors for me that I never thought possible." Duval High School's IT/Cybersecurity academy plays a pivotal role in the introduction to and development of students' foundational knowledge in cybersecurity. The comprehensive curriculum, which includes hands-on experiences and exposure to real-world scenarios, cultivated their passion for the field and solidified their interest in pursuing a career in this ever-evolving and intriguing domain. Mr. Yavo's real-world expertise, coupled with his ability to make complex concepts accessible, only amplifies his students' love for cybersecurity.

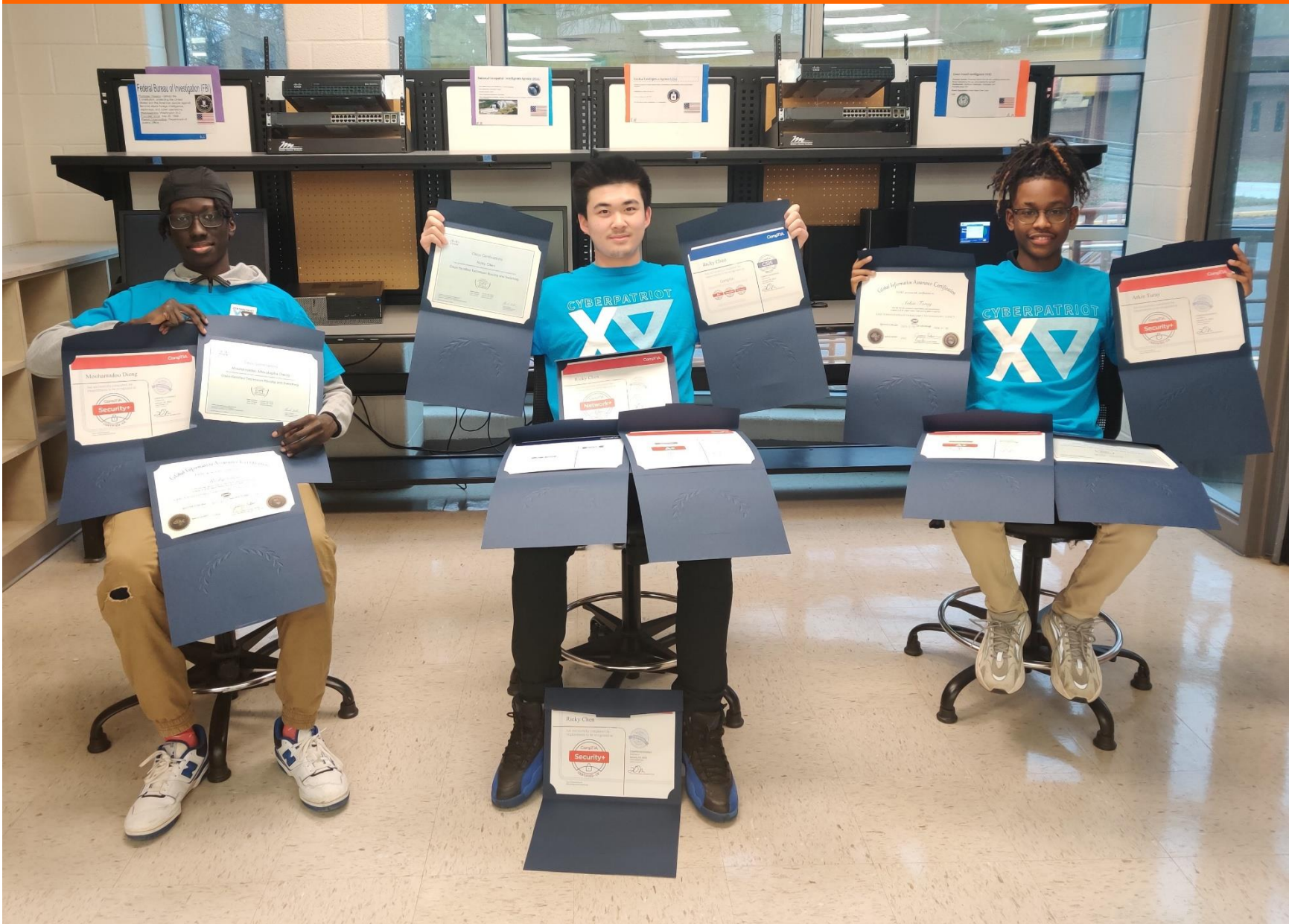
The Cisco Academy at Duval High School is an excellent opportunity for scholars interested in information technology (IT) to develop varied and immediately useful skills in a fast-paced environment. What some students think of as a computer hardware engineering class is actually a networking and cybersecurity course. For students with no prior knowledge of networking and cybersecurity, the course challenges what students think they know about IT. Through the academy, students learn a range of abilities from setting up a network with routers and switches to securing it. As computers are ever-evolving, there continue to be more opportunities and high-paying jobs. The program is serving as a launching pad for their journeys.



The latest news

COMPETITIONS

The three young men competed in the Cyber Patriot competition, and the team was the first in DuVal's history to place at the platinum level. Arkin won first place in Maryland for the National Cyber Scholarship Foundation competition (within the top 30 of 45,000 high school and college competitors nationally) and first place in the nation for the CyberStart America Coding Week Invitational. We were in the top 20 percentile of teams in the country. In our competitions, we had to work as a team to secure and remove malware from different Virtual Machines. There were different tasks to be done and we would be awarded points for completing them and penalties for mistakes made. We did great in the first and second rounds. On the other hand, it started to decline in performance for the third round (Eliminations).



The dynamic trio and achievements: Mouhamadou Dieng (on the left), Ricky Chen (in the middle), and Arkin Turay (to the right)

Reflections

As their senior year is coming to an end, each of the young men have earned three or more certifications including Cisco Certified Technician (CCT), Security+, and GFACT. The three scholars are looking toward their bright futures they first began cultivating in the classroom.

Mouhamadou explains, “thanks to the program and what I’ve gained from it, this upcoming summer, I will be interning at a 3 letter intelligence agency as a paid cybersecurity engineer and obtaining TS/SCI clearance at 17 years old.”

Ricky emphasizes the support and network he has built throughout the 2 years in the program. He was able to connect and learn from others in the industry. Most importantly, his peers that empower and pushed each other to achieve greater things. Also, he would be taking part in a CTI and internship program for the upcoming summer.

Certifications

With the ever-evolving field of technology, these Seniors at Duval High School have built a strong foundation for their future through obtaining numerous reputable certifications.

As the leaders of the school’s CyberPatriot Club, the dynamic trio achieved great accomplishments with the support of former NSA Cybersecurity Engineer Brian Prather (back left) and Cybersecurity/IT Program Instructor Gerard Yavo (back right).

- Ricky Chen:

 - CompTIA A+
 - CompTIA Network+
 - CompTIA Security+
 - CompTIA CIOS
 - CompTIA CSIS
 - Cisco Certified Technician
 - GFACT
- Mouhamadou Dieng:

 - Cisco Certified Technician
 - CompTIA Security+
 - GFACT
- Arkin Turay:

 - Cisco Certified Technician
 - CompTIA A+
 - CompTIA Security+
 - GFACT

Arkin says that his aspiration is to delve into the realm of cybersecurity independent contracting and eventually establish his own cybersecurity contracting enterprise. “The flexibility and autonomy offered by independent contracting, along with the opportunity to serve a multitude of clients, appeals to me greatly. The prospect of building my own business, where I can bring my unique perspective and innovative solutions to the table, is exciting. I am confident that my comprehensive knowledge and hands-on experience, acquired through the IT/Cybersecurity program at DuVal High School and beyond, will be instrumental in realizing this goal.”