

## History of the IT Academy

The IT Academy at Fairmont Heights High School (FHHS) was founded in the fall of 2011. It was the brainchild of Prince George's County Public Schools' CIO, Wesley Watts, who wanted to provide students with a different kind of learning experience. Through collaboration with Nakia Nicholson, then the Principal of FHHS, Watts was able to fulfill his vision in the historic high school.

In the summer of 2011, the school would renovate two rooms in order to initially house the program. One room would serve as the main classroom, while the other would be used to host the operations of a Technology Distribution Center (TDC). The TDC houses five full-time technicians, dedicated to the preparation and deployment of technology throughout PGCPSS and its schools. In addition to supporting the county's teachers and administrators, technicians in the TDC assist IT Academy instructors and students with the completion of classroom assignments and projects during and after school.

Under the leadership of current Principal, Torrie Walker, the IT Academy continues to flourish. It was recently one of three academies to receive a portion of the \$7 million Youth CareerConnect that was awarded to the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation by President Obama. The funding will be used to help the IT Academy expand its impact on students by providing services that better prepare them for certifications, college, and career.

## Course Selection

The IT Academy provides students with an aggressive and rigorous course of study leading to the pursuit of multiple professional certifications. All students begin their IT Academy experience with Computer Repair and Operating Systems, a course that utilizes the Cisco IT Essentials curriculum. During the final quarter of their freshmen year, students choose one of two pathways of study: Systems/Network Engineering or Programming. Their course options are detailed in the chart below. Courses are bolded and certifications are italicized.

Year	Computer Science	Network Engineering
Freshman	<b>Computer Repair and Operating Systems</b> CompTIA A+ Certification	
Sophomore	<b>Web Development</b> CIW Advanced HTML & CSS Specialist & CIW JavaScript Specialist Certifications	<b>CCNA: Routing and Switching I</b>
Junior	<b>AP Computer Science A</b>	<b>CCNA: Routing and Switching II</b> CCENT Certification
Senior	<b>Android Application Development</b>	<b>CyberSecurity</b> CompTIA Security+ Certification