Executive Summary

Customer

Richland College

Challenge

Richland College participated in a pilot program with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to prepare veterans for jobs at AWS. As part of the program, the college needed to deliver curriculum and labs for a 13-week course that would prepare learners to pass CompTIA's Linux+ Powered by LPI certification.

Objectives

•Take students with zero Linux knowledge and prepare them to pass the Linux+ Powered by LPI certification after just 13 weeks

•Find a solution that could be implemented quickly and cost-effectively to fit the timing and budget constraints of the program

•Minimize the time required to setup and manage Linux labs, since the college lacked resources for a dedicated computer lab for the program

Technology Solution

NDG Linux I and NDG Linux II courses delivered through the Cisco Networking Academy.

Results

Using NDG's Linux I and Linux II courses, Richland College was able to quickly design a training program to prepare veterans for the Linux+ certification. After the 13-week course, all fifteen of the students passed the certification exam and were able to continue on to the AWS apprenticeship program.

Richland College
DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Preparing Students for the Linux+ Certification at Richland College

The Challenge

Richland College has been a leader in information technology (IT) training in Dallas County, Texas, since the 1990s. A member of the Cisco Networking Academy, the college provides a broad range of courses to help students obtain the hands-on training and professional certifications they need to be successful in today's workforce.

In 2017, Amazon partnered with Richland College to offer a 13-week certification program designed to give veterans critical cloud computing skills. After successfully completing the program, participants would join Amazon for a year-long apprenticeship program to get on-the-job experience, at the end of which they would be given the opportunity to interview for a full-time job at Amazon Web Services.

Richland College faced a key challenge in building its certification program: although the college offered many different IT training courses, it did not have a course that would prepare students to obtain the CompTIA Linux+ Powered by LPI certification required by Amazon. Richland College needed to quickly develop curriculum and labs that would enable students with zero Linux knowledge to pass the Linux+ certification exam after just 13 weeks.

Learning Linux Through the Cisco Networking Academy

Richland College hired Juli Hart, an experienced IT consultant, to design and deliver the certification program. The college did not have the time or budget to develop its own curriculum and labs, so Hart researched existing training solutions. She looked at multiple books and online training options, but struggled to find anything that met the programs requirements.

Program director Rod Lamb recommended that Hart consider NDG's Linux courses in the Cisco Networking Academy. NDG offers three Linux courses: Linux Essentials, Linux I, and Linux II. The latter two courses are designed to give learners the hands-on Linux training and system administration skills needed to pass the Linux Professional Institute's LPIC-1 or CompTIA Linux+ Powered by LPI certification exams.

NDG's Linux courses include a live Linux virtual machine alongside the course materials, so students can immediately start entering commands and learn by doing. This is a great benefit for instructors, since they do not need to spend time setting up virtual machines or developing Linux labs.

"NDG's courses were a great fit for us," explains Hart. "It was great having online content. It made it so much easier for me than trying to come up with virtual machines and lesson plans and everything else on the fly. Since it's available online, you don't have to have a dedicated lab for everyone at certain hours of the day. Any laptop on anybody can run this product, and it doesn't require any hardware in the classroom for hooking up stuff."

NDG's courses also provide some great benefits to learners. Thanks to the live Linux environment, students are able to immediately begin practicing commands in the window beside the course content, and learn by doing. Plus, since the courses are online, students can complete the labs from anywhere they have an internet connection—without the added time or expense of setting up their own Linux machines.

A New Class of Linux Heroes

With the help of NDG's Linux courses, all fifteen of the program's participants successfully passed the CompTIA Linux+ Powered by LPI certification exam. The learners reported that the unique combination of course content with a live learning environment gave them the confidence and experience they needed to be successful.

"Using NDG's courses made it easy to learn Linux. I liked having the ability to log into the labs and follow the instructions and get a better understanding of how Linux really works. It really helped boost my IT career. And I'd definitely recommend it to other people looking to get into the IT field."
Charles Johnson, Richland College Student

"The wonderful thing about the labs is you can do them as many times as you need to. If you don't understand something, you just go over it again until it's cemented in your brain."
Julio Guardiola, Richland College Student

"The practical application in NDG's labs gave me a great understanding of Linux. When I started taking the exam and looking at the questions, I knew I had already passed the test. I just didn't know what my score was."
Gabriel Maxwell, Richland College Student

"I liked the labs. I liked being able to go through step by step, and then if there was something I didn't understand, I could go back to the lab. It's one thing to read about a command—it's another to see and understand how a command works. It really helps you learn it."
Wynter Metoyer, Richland College Student

"NDG's labs were really user friendly. I found them very easy for someone like me who didn't have any experience dealing with Linux at the command level. The labs give you a good foundation that you can build from, whether you want to get a certification or just pick up some valuable skills."
Joe Rivera, Richland College Student

"This is an amazing format. It allows me to go back over the material that I don't know as many times as I need to, and also move forward as quickly as I want to with the information that I do comprehend."
Matt Lewis, Richland College Student

"Initially, when I started learning Linux, there was some apprehension there. But once you get into it, the courses take you along slowly so you can begin getting into the command line and building confidence."
Nicole Moss, Richland College Student

Learn More

NDG Online is a platform for online learning aimed at developing IT professionals. Offering a live Linux virtual machine alongside course materials, our Linux courses give you the easiest and most effective way to learn essential command line and system administrator skills. Take command of your career and start learning Linux today at www.netdevgroup.com/Linux.

For more than 40 years, Richland College has focused on teaching, learning and community building. Richland helps students build their future through courses that can be applied to the first two years of a baccalaureate degree, as well as one- or two-year certificates in a number of career fields. www.richlandcollege.edu

Cisco Networking Academy, a Cisco Corporate Social Responsibility program, is an IT skills and career-building program available to learning institutions and individuals worldwide. To learn more about the Cisco Networking Academy, visit www.netacad.com.