

# GEEK DYNASTY

## Rogers students dominate computer skills competitions

By Sean Flynn  
Staff writer

NEWPORT — Students in the Academy of Information Technology program at Rogers High School have had an impressive run of success in statewide competition when it comes to computer proficiency.

For the third straight year, Rogers students won the gold, silver and bronze medals in the SkillsUSA Technical Computer Applications contest held at Providence College. This year's winners were Jackson Baker, a junior who has won the gold medal two years in a row; Jenna Erausquin, a sophomore who won the silver; and Timothy Pratt, a sophomore who won the bronze.

Baker will travel to Kansas City, Mo., next month to compete in the national competition for the second time.

Monica Awde teaches the 40 to 45 students in the academy.

"I love what I do," she said. "I love learning new things and sharing them with the students. Being a geek is definitely a good thing."

Her passion for the studies is contagious.

"I liked computers but wasn't enthusiastic about them until I participated in the program," Baker said.

He and the other students created websites during their course work this school year, putting in all the detailed computer codes necessary for the graphics and many interactive functions. They created their own web pages, including



Jacqueline Marque | Staff photographer

Academy of Information Technology students at Rogers High School, from left, junior Jackson Baker, sophomore Timothy Pratt and sophomore Jenna Erausquin, earned gold, bronze and silver, respectively, in the statewide SkillsUSA Technical Computer Applications contest. Teacher Monica Awde, right, directs the program.

digital portfolios posted online at [www.newportaoit.org/studentportfolios.html](http://www.newportaoit.org/studentportfolios.html).

"I wasn't interested in computers at all until I took the course," Erausquin said.

"But she excelled in the mandatory freshman computer class," Awde said.

"My brother (Connor Pratt) took the AOIT courses and spoke highly of them," Pratt said. "I decided to follow in his footsteps."

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