

## Geek

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“I teach certain skills, give the students parameters, and they all do their own thing,” Awde said. “When they solve problems in their own way, that’s what I love best.”

Baker has not decided where he wants to study at the university level, but said he plans to major in computer science and become a software engineer.

“Ms. Awde suggested I continue with HTML code (the language of the Internet) as a sophomore,” he said. Since then, he also has learned Java script and C++ codes.

“I feel strongly about coding in general, creating something from nothing,” Baker said.

Erausquin said she plans to study forensics and cybersecurity, perhaps at the University of Rhode Island.

“They have a great program in the field,” Awde said.

“I’ll continue in this

program in high school, but I haven’t figured out the career field yet,” Pratt said.

The streak of gold medal wins for Rogers High School started with Cody Mello, who is currently studying computer science at Brown University. It continued with Tiphannie Fuentes, who now is studying computational linguistics at Harvard University, and was extended by Fiona Heaney, who won gold two years in a row and is studying computer science at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

The Academy of Information Technology is a three-year course of study offered through the Newport Area Career and Technical Center at Rogers. Students are trained in different facets of computer technology and complete several academically sound research assignments regarding emerging technologies, operating systems, digital forensics and cybersecurity, Awde said.

Students are required to

write research papers and to make visual and oral presentations of their findings. They take apart computers, put them back together and work with a wide variety of computer peripherals that are connected to a host computer, Awde explained.

“They build and test CAT 5 (Ethernet) cables, and work with a wide array of software applications, including multimedia software such as Camtasia screen casting software,” she said. Using that software, students create video tutorials demonstrating the skills they learned in class.

Some students have begun developing apps for iPhones or Android phones, Awde said. In the near future, seniors in the program will be given the opportunity to take AP computer science, she said.

Every career and technical program in the state must lead to a certification. Newport’s AOIT students earn Internet and Computing Core

Certification. Since 2011, 100 percent of the students enrolled in the program have earned the certification, Awde said.

The academy’s curriculum includes field trips to places such as to the War Gaming Department at the Naval War College, URI’s Digital Forensics and Cyber Security Program, Grrl Tech — Girls Reaching Remarkable Levels, a URI technology symposium for young women, and the information systems department at CVS headquarters in Woonsocket.

During the two years that The National Center for Women & Information Technology, based in Boulder, Colo., has been presenting awards to female computing students and educators for the past two years. Two Rogers students have been honored — Heaney in 2013, and Hannah Deen this year. The center honored Awde as a teacher last year.

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