

Determined dad tops UK in computing competition

A father-of-two, who sacrificed time with his family to follow a passion for computers at university, has ranked highest in the UK in a renowned computing competition.

Omer Chocan, who has just completed his second year studying BSc (Hons) Computer Networks and Security at Staffordshire University, was the only person in Britain to make it into the final 20 of the Netriders competition - a contest run by technology giant Cisco, which seeks out the top computer networkers in the world.

The 35-year-old from Huddersfield, who worked in security before pursuing his studies, lives in Stoke during the week and travels back home to family and a part-time job on weekends.

"I didn't find my job very challenging and felt that I had the potential to do something else. I've always had an interest in computers and after doing some research into courses, Staffs uni seemed like a great place to study," explained Omer.

"It's been really tough being away from my family, especially having young children. A lot of credit goes to my wife, she's been incredibly supportive."

Omer placed 8th overall in the Europe, Russian Federation, CIS competition and has been invited to apply for a work placement with Cisco.

"I was in shock that I ranked highest in the UK. The grounding that the modules on the course gave me was a big help."

"I think the sacrifices I've made to come to university have been worth it. I've really enjoyed the course and it's given me some great opportunities."

Omer's success is set to continue and he will be taking up an internship in Dublin next year, working as a network engineer for Amazon.

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