

# Northstar Basic Computer Skills testing now available in Worthington

Adults who are unsure about their basic computer skills now have a way to easily assess what they know, pinpoint what they need to learn and earn a certificate that shows employers what they know.

The Northstar Basic Computer Skills Certificate program, offered through a partnership between Nobles County Library and Worthington Adult Basic Education is aimed at helping adults acquire the skills they need in today's workplace.

"People without basic computer know-how are at a disadvantage when it comes to finding a job because employers expect basic computer skills for most jobs, including many entry-level positions," said Nobles County Library director Julie Wellnitz. "We are participating in the Northstar program because it will help our clients have a better chance at getting jobs and getting ahead."

The free self-guided set of assessments consists of six modules: Basic Computer Skills, Internet, Email, Word Processing (Word), Windows OS and Mac OS. Spanish-language and close-captioned versions are available.

Anyone can access the modules and take the tests online at [www.digitalliteracyassessment.org](http://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org). At the end of each test, the user receives a page of results, which lists the skills that have been mastered and the areas that need improvement.

"The modules are based on a set of basic computer competency benchmarks developed by a community-wide group of literacy providers, business representatives and local nonprofit agencies," said Marty Olsen, program manager for Worthington Adult Basic Education "These standards help ensure that area computer classes are teaching adult learners the exact skills they need to succeed in the workplace."

To earn a certificate in one or more of the modules, adults must take the tests in a supervised setting at an approved sponsoring site. Nobles County Library joins Worthington Adult Basic Education as one of the community organizations using the standards as part of its programming and offering the certificates. In addition, the Nobles County Library and Worthington Adult Basic Education are also partnering to offer free computer classes that are aligned with the six modules so that people can work towards earning the certificates.

"Earning a certificate not only shows employers that the applicant knows the basic skills in that area, but it can also boost the confidence of the job-seeker and enhance his or her resume," said Julie Wellnitz

Karen Berg, a career and business specialist with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions in St. Paul, MN, said the Northstar program is a valuable tool for greater workforce readiness.

"With it, job seekers will find greater opportunities for better jobs with higher pay while the business community benefits from a prepared workforce," Berg said.

To learn more, contact Worthington ABE at (507) 372-1239 or Nobles County Library at (507) 295-5340.