



BREAKING INTO COMPUTER SCIENCE WITH THE HELP OF ACA

GET CERTIFIED AND GET NOTICED — REAL-WORLD GRAPHIC DESIGN SKILLS LEAD TO SUCCESS

My certifications helped me land the job because I was one of the few applicants who actually had design experience.

Breaking Into Computer Science

Say the words Creative Cloud, and most people think of graphic design. But the world of design is forever expanding. Just ask Eliot Chang, a 2018 ACA US National Champion and current University of Southern California student, who has used his Adobe skills to branch into the world of computer science. Eliot told us a little about his story, and how he used his Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign skills to break into the world of user interface design. Read the full interview below.

The ACA Trifecta

Certiport: Eliot, thanks so much for connecting with us to share your story.

Eliot: Of course! I'm excited to tell other students about my certification story.

Certiport: First question for you, which Adobe Certified Associate certifications have you earned?

Eliot: I have earned the Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign certifications.

Certiport: Wow, you've earned the whole trifecta!

Eliot: I didn't earn them all at once. It was definitely a process. Photoshop was my first,

because I was interested in web design. The more I pursued web design, the more I needed to learn. I wanted to make mock-ups, so I picked up Illustrator as well.



Adobe Certified Associate
World Championship

Freelance in High School

Certiport: When did your whole journey start?

Eliot: My journey with ACA started when I was still in high school. I was a member of the Business Professionals of



America club, and I went to compete in their national competition. I was part of the graphic design promotion and website development team. They happened to be offering Certiport

certifications at the event, so I decided to take the ACA certification. During the rest of my junior year of high school, I used Photoshop when I wanted to learn to make mockups for websites and apps. I was actually able to get clients and work as a freelance developer while I was still in high school, getting ready to apply for college.

USC and CS

Certiport: What and where are you studying now?

Eliot: I'm a computer science major at the University of Southern California.

Certiport: That's awesome! We don't usually hear of people pursuing computer science after they get an ACA certification.

Eliot: Totally! But I actually realized that a lot of what I did with Photoshop, especially with designing interfaces and user experience, translated well when I applied for summer internships and job opportunities.

Fokcus to Succeed

Certiport: Tell us more about your summer job.

Eliot: I'm actually working as a UI/UX engineer for a start-up called Fokcus. The founder is one of the same guys who created Netzero back in 2001. My certifications helped me land the job because I was one of the few applicants who actually had design experience. I'm learning so much from them as well, since I'm the only undergrad student on the team. Everyone else is pursuing advanced degrees or already has one. My ACA certifications are helping me hold my own

though. On the side, I also create mobile games, which is a market where the design of the game is weighted far more heavily than the game idea itself. Since I wanted to break into the market, I learned a little about Unity and combined it with my experience in Photoshop and making mockups. I was also able to recruit other developers to create a game development company with me. We are actually reaching out right now to several game publishing studios for our first game.

Consider the User

Certiport: That's fantastic! You have so much going on right now. What do you like most about the work you do?

Eliot: My favorite part about being a UI/UX developer is being able to think about what parts of the product need to be carefully designed and tailored for the user, and then being able to use my technical abilities to make it come to life.

.....
My favorite part about being a UI/UX developer is being able to think about what parts of the product need to be carefully designed and tailored for the user
- Eliot Chang -
.....

Certify. Create. Compete.

Certiport: Well we certainly know that you have technical abilities, since you were one of the top three students in the 2018 ACA US National Championship. What was your favorite part of the competition?

Eliot: My favorite memory from the competition was definitely meeting all the other competitors from all around the world!

Expand Your Skills

Certiport: That's always our favorite part too; it's easy to learn so much from all the amazing competitors. What advice would you give to other students and competitors?

Eliot: The advice I'd give to other students is to come up with a project and just do it! Even if you don't know how to use a program, if you have a project in mind it makes picking up a new skill a lot more enjoyable and interactive. You never know where those new skills will take you.



Get Involved

Do your students have the passion and capabilities to change the world? Give them an outlet to share their amazing talents! Learn more about the ACA World Championship at www.acachampionship.com.