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## Microsoft Deal May Benefit DMACC

### School May Establish Partnerships With Software Giant



Microsoft's decision to open a \$500 million data center in West Des Moines could mean big opportunities for students at Des Moines Area Community College.

The center will sit on 42 acres of land southwest of Booneville Road near Xavier Road, just two miles from the DMACC Tech Campus.

The school's strong reputation for excellence in telecommunications technology makes it an attractive neighbor for Microsoft. West Campus Provost Dr. Tony Paustian is eager to partner with the software giant.

"DMACC will sit down with Microsoft and will try to help them identify what curriculum we can have and put together to meet their skill set needs," Paustian said.

Microsoft products are already on every computer at every desk in every classroom at the school. It hopes the software giant will give them a big boost in recruiting.

"I'm hoping having Microsoft here will open (people's) eyes to say, 'Wow! As a career opportunity, this is something I can do'" Paustian said.

"I think it's awesome because I was worried about the job market," said DMACC Matthew Fries. "Everyone says it's bleak, so I'm happy for this. Plus, it's a field I want to do."

DMACC set up shop in West Des Moines 8 years ago in an empty field, but not much has followed since then. The school sees that changing.

"Typically, nationwide, when (Microsoft) comes into an area, the IT companies follow," said Paustian.

The DMACC West Campus offers an Associate's degree in telecommunications. School officials said that would be the right background for a job at the new Microsoft data center.

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