

# Glassport native turns computer-repair hobby into local business

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At first glance, Nick Aquilante III looks too young to be running a business.

The 19-year-old from Glassport opened Aquilis, a computer sales and repair shop and multimedia design center in Glassport this spring, just one year after Aquilante graduated from South Allegheny High School.

But the Penn State Greater Allegheny Campus electrical engineering student has years of experience building computers and troubleshooting under his belt, because he got started early.

Aquilante began tearing apart computers when he was 12 to figure out how they worked. At 13, he repaired his mother's work computer one day when her employer's tech staff couldn't diagnose the problem. Later, his fellow members at Citizens Hose Co. No. 1 gave him the nickname "Compaq" after he put together a Web page for the station. A year ago, Aquilante custom built his first computer for a friend who was heavily into gaming.

"I'd fixed computers for friends and people in Glassport," said Aquilante, who began thinking about opening a shop two years ago.

During that time, he also began studying engineering at Penn State with an emphasis on consumer electronics and minoring in small business, all the while he was working jobs for big box retailers.

The dream to go into business for himself became a reality this spring when Aquilante's father, Nick Jr., suggested his son look into renting a shop at 842 Monongahela Ave. in a former front office for Reliance Hose Co. With lots of support getting the space ready for business from family, friends and Reliance, Aquilante opened his doors in April.

"It's a good location. We have lots of traffic coming by here and I've had tons of support from the community," he said.

On Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., the shop will host an open house. Specials that day will include \$100 off any custom-built computer, 20 percent off computer repairs, 50 percent off on personal computer tune-ups and \$50 discounts on virus and spyware removals.

Aquilante said anyone thinking of buying an off-the-rack computer should consider getting a custom-made computer instead. He said people often discover after they've bought a computer that it doesn't suit all their needs. Upgrading after the fact can be a costly proposition.

Graphic and video design are also shop specialties, including VHS analog to digital transfers.

For more information on services and shop hours, call the shop at 412-896-1540 or visit its Web site at [www.aquilis.com](http://www.aquilis.com).