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Triton College

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Triton College Alumnus Ivan Sanchez Feels Overwhelming “Gratitude” for Triton College



Ivan Sanchez

RIVER GROVE – Ivan Sanchez feels grateful for all the opportunities he received from Triton College, both in his career and beyond.

“Triton gave me so many connections,” he said. “The college helped me meet the right people and finish my degree. I received all the tools I needed to become successful.”

Growing up in Logan Square, Sanchez was influenced by his uncle, who was a paratrooper in the Mexican military. He said he enjoyed listening to his uncle's stories and felt inspired to also serve in the military.

Following in his uncle's footsteps, Sanchez joined the Marines after graduating from Kelvyn Park High School in 2009. During his five years with the Marines, he served as a helicopter mechanic. He fondly remembers traveling to Hawaii, Guam, Hong Kong, Jordan, Oman, Thailand and all over the United States during his years of service.

"Once I was honorably discharged, I knew I wanted to move back to the Chicago suburbs," he explained. "My sister was attending Triton College for nursing, so I decided to visit a Triton open house. That's when I met Antigone Sharris [chairperson of Engineering Technology at Triton College]. She believed that I could become an engineer."

Sanchez started taking Mechatronics classes at Triton in 2014. While attending Triton, he went to a job fair and met with GF Machining Solutions, LLC, a Swiss conglomerate based in Chicago. He started working for the company full time in 2016.

When Sanchez completed Triton, he transferred to Southern Illinois University (SIU), where students can earn their bachelor's degrees on the weekends via a satellite campus. For Sanchez, this was a perfect arrangement for him since he was a new parent and worked full time. He was able to complete his bachelor's degree in 2019. The combination of education and experience made it possible for Sanchez to be promoted to team lead and then to project management.

Today, Sanchez's responsibilities at GF Machining Solutions, LCC include scheduling, assisting with technician problems and working with computer numerical controls (CNC) machines.

"I still have time to figure out if I want to pursue a master's degree," he said. "For now, I hope to grow within this company."

Sanchez credits the great counseling from Sharris for helping him excel in the field of technology and to Triton College for presenting him with so many opportunities. He's also thankful for the Illinois Veterans Grant (IVG) and Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) for assisting him with his tuition.

Outside of work, Sanchez is a jiu jitsu instructor. He also likes to spend time with his 8-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter.

"Antigone and I still keep in touch to this day," he said. "Antigone, as well as Triton College, helped me get to where I am."

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ABOUT TRITON COLLEGE

Triton College is a two-year college dedicated to helping members of the 25 Western Cook County communities in our district and beyond to achieve educational, professional and personal success. Located in River Grove, Ill., Triton offers more than 120 degree and certificate programs on its 110-acre campus, featuring a comfortable, friendly and diverse atmosphere. Triton also holds classes at satellite locations and offers online learning opportunities. Triton's dedicated faculty and staff work to provide high quality, convenient and affordable educational opportunities to more than 14,000 students each year. Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Learn more at <http://www.triton.edu/>.