



Triton College

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Triton College Student Races Toward NASCAR Dreams



At Triton College, Adam Garza studies Mass Communication and Multimedia. But outside of his studies, Garza competes in virtual stock car racing, going up against some of the best drivers in the esports.

RIVER GROVE, III. — This week, Triton College student and esports racer Adam Garza of Forest Park represented Triton College in the eNASCAR College iRacing Series. After a thrilling second-place finish, he's advancing to the second round of the tournament.

Bearing Triton's logo and signature red and gold on his virtual racer, Garza, 20, is competing with other students across the U.S. and Canada in a series of simulation races for a chance to earn scholarship money.

“To be able to represent a school that I go to and care about is pretty important to me,” he said. “It’s about representing the people and what they’re putting into you. I’m going to try and perform the best that I can for Triton College and hopefully put that logo and those colors in the wind out front. That’s the least I can do after what Triton’s done for me.”

iRacing is NASCAR’s official simulation racing partner, a tool Garza said is used by professional drivers to stay sharp, practice race craft and get a feel for different tracks. Through iRacing, he’s had the chance to race against some of NASCAR’s top names, including Rajah Caruth and William Byron.

Garza’s first race in the college series was Wednesday, Sept. 17.

Garza has always harbored big dreams of becoming a professional NASCAR driver. Having his own name and number printed on his racer, experiencing the thrill of hearing the engine roar, feeling the rush of anxiety and adrenaline as the green flag waves, and the elation of placing first are all part of the dream that once felt far out of reach for Garza.

To help turn that dream into reality, about a year and a half ago, Garza took up simulation racing — an esport in which he sits behind the wheel of a virtual racecar and races toward the finish line against other sim racers around the world. He also put the pedal to the metal last year by enrolling at Triton College, which he said has equipped him with professional tools and a flexible schedule that allows him to pursue his career goals.

At Triton, Garza studies Mass Communication and Multimedia, a program that offers students a deep understanding of the growing importance, power and influence of media worldwide. As he gained traction in the sim racing world, Garza said he was looking for career paths that aligned with his passion. When he saw what Triton had to offer, he said it was a “no-brainer.”

“If I’m going to chase this dream, I needed something that would help me be more professional in what I’m doing.”

Garza has always loved watching NASCAR, but it was more of a hobby than a career aspiration. But since he started simulation racing, Garza has climbed the ranks to become one of the top 30 racers on the iRacing platform worldwide — out of roughly 185,000, he said.

Garza said he’s using what he’s learned at Triton to promote himself in the racing world, with hopes of growing his career. Communications courses have helped him build confidence in networking and using social media to grow a following.

His ultimate goal is to become a professional race car driver. But if that doesn’t work out, he hopes to use his degree to land a public relations or communications role in motorsports.

“Studying through this degree has helped me be able to represent the true me — helping me communicate with people and be a presentable face for the media — because that’s also a big part of the sport too,” he said. “I think one of the biggest takeaways from my journey at Triton so far has been learning how to be classy and professional in front of large groups and audiences.”

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ABOUT TRITON COLLEGE

Triton College is an institution of higher education dedicated to student success. Triton offers more than 120 degree and certificate programs designed for students to realize their career aspirations and effectively compete in a global economy. The college campus spans 110 acres in River Grove, Illinois, holds classes at satellite locations and offers online learning opportunities. Triton's exemplary faculty and staff work to provide high-quality, convenient and affordable educational opportunities to more than 10,000 students each year. Triton College is a member of The Community Colleges of Illinois and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Learn more at triton.edu.