



Triton College

CONNECT

A newsletter from your community college.

Spring 2024



Celebrating Black History Month
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Triton College Celebrates 60 Years of Excellence



Triton College is celebrating its 60-year anniversary this year! This major milestone commemorates six decades of academic excellence and outstanding opportunities for our entire campus community.

The anniversary is being observed with a variety of activities and events, including the recovery of Triton's 30-year time capsule. The capsule was buried with memories and keepsakes, most of which will be on display at the Triton College Library.

Celebratory activities also include our very popular Car Show and Community Block Party, which brings together hundreds of car enthusiasts and families on campus.

Students, faculty and staff also will be recognized, along with our alums who have profoundly contributed to their chosen profession and

community. Display your Trojan pride by attending athletic events on campus, and reach for the stars at the Cernan Earth and Space Center. Learn more about our anniversary activities and view images that capture our 60 years together at triton.edu/60.

Founded in 1964, Triton has had an impressive resume of recognitions ranging from appearing in *Time* magazine as a 'cutting-edge institution' to winning athletic championships, from earning national recognition for educational programs to strengthening our communities' workforce.

"The journey of Triton College these past decades has been marked by extraordinary growth and an unwavering commitment to the success of our students," said Triton President Mary-Rita Moore. "We not only honor our rich history, but celebrate all those who are part of the Triton family today."

Triton's Neurodiversity Efforts Gaining National Recognition

Triton College's neurodiversity efforts and S.E.E.D. (Skill Enhancement and Employee Development) Certification Program are garnering national attention. The February/March 2024 edition of American Association of Community College's (AACC) *CC Journal* showcased Triton College and our very own Hilary Meyer, dean of Academic Success. The feature follows an exclusive article published this past fall in AACC's *CCDaily*.

Two-year colleges like Triton have increased efforts to welcome and support neurodiverse students. The Illinois General Assembly passed a resolution in 2023, urging colleges to adopt neurodiversity inclusion statements to recognize the strengths of neurodiverse students and employees and to better accommodate their needs. According to Meyer, embracing neurodiversity "is core to Triton's mission. This is how we're valuing the individual."

The topic of neurodiversity – a term used to describe the differences in the human brain in relation to a range of mental functions, such as sociability, learning and mood attention – "is really emerging into the mainstream and general awareness," said Meyer.

In the past couple of decades, there has been an explosion of diagnoses, such as ADHD, OCD and

autism with young people now reaching college and employment age, said Meyer. "We now have a new generation who are proud to share who they are and see it as a strength," she said, adding that the focus is about "changing our collective mindset and environment to embrace the variety of human experience, rather than asking individuals to adapt to a world that hasn't taken their needs into consideration."

Triton began its efforts during the development of the college's strategic planning in 2023 and identified the Library as a community learning hub.

"This is where we create spaces to empower people to belong," said Jodi E. Koslow Martin, Ph.D., vice president of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

"Triton College is committed to individuals who learn in different ways. We're open to all at any ability level," said Koslow Martin. "While the work involves resources, if not us, then who?"

To learn more, visit Triton's Center for Access and Accommodative Services (CAAS) at triton.edu/seed.



SEED Graduation

Rebecca Slywczuk is Triton College's First Social Media Influencer



Rebecca Slywczuk

If you've scrolled through Triton College's social media pages recently, you've probably spotted student Rebecca Slywczuk. Slywczuk is the college's first social media influencer, appearing on Instagram with entertaining and helpful content. Her Instagram reels (an Instagram feature that allows users to upload a short video) and posts have been a hit with both students and staff, with students dubbing her "Lady Trojan."

"I have such a passion for social media, so the fact that I have this opportunity makes me feel very grateful," she said.

Slywczuk grew up on the northwest side of Chicago and attended Resurrection High School. She graduated in May 2020. With high hopes of attending a large university, she went to Illinois State University (ISU) in Normal, Ill.

"I really wanted to go away to college and meet a lot of people at a big school," she explained. "However, I was really struggling. All my classes were remote and I was stuck in my dorm room. I wasn't having the opportunities that I had hoped would happen."

Slywczuk's mother, Susan, who passed away in 2022, had urged her daughter to return home and to go to a community college. Susan had graduated from Triton in 1983 with a degree in fashion merchandising and "always talked about Triton."

At Triton, so many doors opened for Slywczuk. Her bubbly personality also led her to Triton College's Marketing Department, where she has been hired to do social media content for the college from a student's perspective.

Black History Month Commemorated on Campus

Triton College celebrated Black History Month with a series of events and activities designed to commemorate the achievements, contributions and central role of African Americans in the United States. Held across campus in February, the events served to inspire the campus community to learn and share experiences.

The Triton College Library hosted a Black History Leadership Symposium, where students spoke on the value of leadership and acknowledged individuals who have encouraged and enriched their lives. Speakers included Jarrett Sean McClain, Imani Zeneé Portee, Deshaan Malyque Johnson, Angel Stackhouse, Danajah Ashanti Saffold and Joshua Bonds.

"Black History Month was first a week and then it became a month," said Shekinah Lawrence, a Triton librarian. "In my opinion, Black History Month should be celebrated every day."

Soulful Heritage, which featured games, prizes and authentic soul food, was a student-only gathering. Sponsored by the Office of Student Life, Black Student Union (B.S.U.), and TRIUMPH and SURGE, Soulful Heritage also presented students with Black History Month trivia.

The entire Triton community had the opportunity to enjoy performances by the Roosevelt Middle School band from Bellwood for the college's final Black History Month festivity. In addition to music, the 35-member student band shared facts about notable African Americans. The performance was sponsored by the Triton College Heritage Committee and the Professional Development Center.



Jarrett McClain, Imani Z. Portee, Deshaan Johnson, Angel Stackhouse, Danajah Safford and Joshua Bonds

Respiratory Care Program Coming to Campus this Fall

If you're looking for a thrilling, sought-after career in saving lives and helping those in need, Triton College's Respiratory Care Program is for you! The program will excitedly begin on Triton's campus in the fall of 2024.

"Respiratory therapists are so in demand, that students who graduate from our program and pass the board exam could get a job in any hospital," said Dr. Peter Jaswilko, Triton's Allied Health chairperson.

Respiratory therapists have a variety of responsibilities, according to Dr. Jaswilko, such as performing diagnostic testing, assessing and diagnosing patients of all ages, administering pulmonary medications, managing ventilators, drawing blood, and assisting newborns and their mothers during high-risk deliveries. They also can treat asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), help patients with effective breathing and assist with rehabilitation from chronic respiratory conditions, among many other roles.

Those with a degree in respiratory care from Triton College can work in an emergency room, critical care unit, neonatal intensive care unit, rehabilitation center, skilled nursing facility, doctor's office, home care, in-flight transportation and more.

The beginning salary for a respiratory therapist is \$30-\$40 per hour. Since 2021, the job growth has risen 14%.

Triton's Respiratory Care Program has state-of-the-art equipment, including ventilators, diagnostic (PFT) machines, and low and high-fidelity simulators. The new laboratory has been designed to replicate an authentic hospital setting. It features four intensive care beds, an oscillator, neonatal warmer, advanced cardiac life support resuscitation equipment and more.

"Students can practice their skills before their clinical experiences," said Dr. Jaswilko.

Triton College is currently pursuing accreditation for the Respiratory Care Program through the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).



Respiratory Care Program

Trinity Barnes Highlights Triton's Women's Basketball 50th Anniversary Season



Trinity Barnes

The Triton College women's basketball team has had a very impressive season, with player Trinity Barnes (guard) breaking Triton College's 43-year scoring record, surpassing 1,033 points in February.

Barnes has averaged 21.1 points per game this season. She is ranked fourth in the nation in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division I and she is the fourth Triton women's basketball player in the program's 50-year history to eclipse the 1,000-career-point total. Micki McEvoy held the previous career record with 1,033 points scored from 1979-1981.

The Trojans 22-7 regular season record led them to the regionals.

Along with Trinity's success, the team also reached an impressive milestone.

The women's basketball team is celebrating its 50-year anniversary this year.

In a special anniversary celebration, Triton welcomed back women's basketball alumnae.

"It was an amazing experience to be a part of the first women's basketball team at Triton College," said Virginia Hodges, a member of the college's inaugural women's team. She played from 1974-1975. In addition to Hodges, alumnae from the past 50 years came to campus to recognize the milestone.

The anniversary marks a significant event for Triton, considering Title IX was passed in 1972, allowing congressional law to give financial support to women's sports. The first Triton College women's basketball team was founded in 1974.

Trojans Triumph as They Charge into National Competitions



Amar Augillard



2023-2024 Triton College Men's Wrestling Team



The Trojans men's basketball team concluded their regular season playing as well as anyone in the country. At one point towards the end of their season, the 27-2 Trojans ranked No. 3 in the NJCAA Division I, having won nine games in a row. Now in the regionals, Coach Brian Burns' plan is to "keep our ball movement crisp."

The Trojans wrestling team captured the Great Lakes District Championship for a second consecutive season. Head coach Tim Duggan was named Great Lakes District Coach of the Year.

In addition to capturing the title, the Trojans qualified all 10 of their wrestlers in all 10 weight classes competing into the NJCAA Wrestling Championships

held March 1-2 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. "It's hard to repeat to win any championship," said Duggan. "It was a complete team effort and our guys knew what they had to do."

Anthony Schickel and Ghee Rachal earned All-American status at the NJCAA Wrestling Championship.



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Triton College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org), an institutional accreditor recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation to accredit degree-granting colleges and universities.



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Sunday, April 28, 2024 - 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Triton College West Campus

Wish Triton College a happy anniversary at our Community Block Party and participate in one of Triton's most popular events — the Car Show!

Check out dozens of classic cars and big rigs, then take a tour of Triton's incredible Automotive Technology facilities.

For more information, go to triton.edu/carshow.

In case of inclement weather, alternate date will be May 5, 2024.