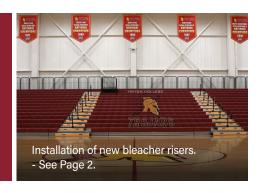


# CONNECT

A newsletter from your community college.

Winter 2025



### **Investing in Students, Building Legacy**



President Mary-Rita Moore

At Triton College, we are proud to help students reach their educational and career goals.

One of the most impactful ways to support student success is through scholarships, and our institution's board of trustees has long championed this commitment.

Each year, the board awards the Triton Trustees Honors Scholarship, along with a range of scholarships offered by the institution and the Triton College Foundation, to recognize academic achievement, career potential and community involvement – helping students focus on their studies while reducing financial stress.

As the largest scholarship offered by the college, the Triton Trustees Honors Scholarship provides an incredible opportunity for students to begin their college journey without the burden of student debt. This award offers high-achieving high school seniors – who either reside in-district or attend an in-district high school – two consecutive academic years of free tuition, making higher education both accessible and affordable. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 252 students received the Triton Trustees Honors Scholarship, totaling more than \$1.13 million in awards.

When you invest in a student's future, you are not only helping an individual – you are strengthening our community. To learn more about the Triton Trustees Honors Scholarship and other opportunities at Triton College, please visit **triton.edu/scholarships** and visit the Triton College Foundation at **triton.edu/foundation**.

Together, we can ensure that our students have every opportunity to achieve their dreams.

### **Making a Difference**



Create change in your community by supporting Triton College's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) through the Mats for the Homeless service project. From now through Dec. 17, 2025, volunteers can donate clean plastic grocery bags, which RSVP will transform into handmade mats to provide comfort and protection for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Donations can be dropped off at the Triton College Library (A Building) and the Welcome Desk (B Building). Volunteers are also needed to help collect materials, construct the mats and weave the bags into finished mats.

RSVP, a grant-funded program, pairs adults aged 55 and older with meaningful volunteer opportunities. Triton College has sponsored RSVP since 1983 through AmeriCorps Seniors. Learn about the RSVP at **triton.edu/rsvp**.

### **Triton First Community College to Join Common App**

As part of a groundbreaking partnership with the Illinois Community College Board, Triton College is among the first community colleges in the country to join the Common App, a platform that allows students to submit applications to more than 1,100 higher education institutions at once.

Used by more than 3 million applicants, teachers and counselors each year, the Common App streamlines the college application process, providing resources and guidance to make college more accessible for students around the world. Until now, none of the platform's members were community colleges that primarily confer associate degrees.

This means rising high school seniors applying for college or university admission in fall 2026 will be able to select Triton College as an option on the Common App.

This new partnership is part of Common App's Next Chapter initiative, which aims to increase access for low- and middle-income students by expanding the opportunities available for learners applying to higher education.

College applicants can still apply directly to Triton College at triton.edu, but for those using the Common App, Triton will soon be just a click away.



### **Students Shine at Design Competition**



Veronika Tsyvanenko's "Obsidian"



Katerina Trankina's "The Beast Inside"

Two students from Triton's Visual, Performing and Communication Arts (VIC) Department placed in Northeastern Illinois University's Art + Design Fall Fest Exhibition.

Veronika Tsyvanenko of Melrose Park received third place for her poster *Obsidian* in the 2025 NEIU Juried Graphic Design Poster Exhibition.

Katerina Trankina of River Grove also took third place with her photo *The Beast Inside* in the 2025 NEIU Studio Art Exhibition category. Both students received a certificate and a monetary gift.

"This honor felt very exciting," said Tsyvanenko.

The competition invited community college students statewide to submit up to three original works for the chance to be featured in the exhibit. In addition to Tsyvanenko and Trankina, 14 other Triton students had their artwork displayed.

"We're very proud as a department," said Jill LoBianco-Bartalis, VIC Department chair.

### **Triton Student Races Toward NASCAR Dreams**



Adam Garza

This fall, Triton College student and esports racer Adam Garza represented the Triton Trojans in the eNASCAR College iRacing Series, facing off against the iRacing platform's top drivers at the collegiate level for the chance to win scholarship money.

Garza has always dreamed of becoming a professional NASCAR driver. To help make that dream a reality, Garza took up simulation racing about a year and a half ago – an esport where he sits behind the wheel of a virtual race car 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.

Through iRacing, Garza has raced against some of NASCAR's top names, including Rajah Caruth and William Byron.

A mass communication and multimedia student, Garza is using what he's learned to promote himself and gain traction in the racing world – and he has no plans of slowing down.

### **A Brighter View of the Universe**



The wonders of the universe are shining brighter than ever at Triton College's Cernan Earth and Space Center, thanks to the installation of a new laser phosphor projector.

Cernan Center Director Kris McCall said the projected image is clearer and more colorful than before, and the rendition of the night sky is stunning. "Visitors who have attended a show at the Planetarium before will notice a difference," she said.

"We're continuing to up our game the same way we keep increasing the variety of our program offerings," McCall said. "Our catalog of available shows has continued to grow over 10 years and this is just a new tool."

Open to the public, the Cernan Center supports Triton's educational curriculum and provides programming for area schools, community groups and families.

For programming information, visit **triton.edu/cernan**.

# **New Season, New Seats at Jorndt Athletic Complex**



Triton College's Jorndt Athletic Complex Gymnasium, home of the Trojans, has a fresh new look this fall with the installation of new bleacher risers.

This is the first major upgrade to the gym's seating since it opened in 1981. The old wooden bleachers have been replaced with a modern, accessible design featuring 14 rows of red seating on each side, accented with Troy the Trojan's golden helm. The bleachers extend and retract by remote control and can now accommodate more than 1,400 fans, offering a more comfortable and convenient game-day experience.

The seating upgrade is part of a series of recent gym improvements, including a refinished hardwood floor, new scoreboards and shot clocks, baseline padding, a scorer's table and an enhanced sound system.

"We're so happy with the way they turned out and we're excited for this renovation to be complete," said A.J. Blahut, Athletics director.

The gymnasium, home to Triton's men's and women's basketball, volleyball and wrestling teams, is located in the R Building on the east side of campus.

Learn more about Triton athletics at tritonathletics.com.

### **From Firefighter to Educator**



Vince Pesavento

After a 25-year career as a firefighter-paramedic, Vince Pesavento now leads Triton College's Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) Program, preparing students for rewarding careers in emergency care. "It allows you to give back to your community by helping people who need you most," he said.

Triton's 16-week EMT certificate program blends classroom learning with hands-on training in patient care,

transportation and assessment. Students learn from instructors who actively work as paramedics in the field, bringing real-world experiences into the classroom.

Graduates are prepared for state licensure and entry into a growing industry, with EMT and paramedic jobs projected to increase by 5% through 2034. Enroll today to begin a meaningful career helping others and saving lives. Visit **triton.edu**.

#### **Discovering Your Strengths**



Interested in a new career? Ever wonder what kind of job best suits your talents and strengths? Triton College's Career Services offers a free online tool designed to match individuals with careers that align with their interests, values and preferences.

The SuperStrong® Assessment helps participants identify occupations that reflect their strengths, explore majors and educational pathways, and connect directly with the college's degree and certificate programs tailored to their results.

The tool is available to everyone – students, alumni and community members – and it's never too early or too late to begin clarifying a career direction. Research shows that identifying a clear career path early supports program completion, retention and personal satisfaction.

For more information, contact careerservices@triton.edu.

### Partnership Strengthens Workforce Development



Emil Cairo

For more than 45 years, Triton College has partnered with Jewel-Osco to help recruit, train and develop talented employees who support the grocery chain's long-standing commitment to quality and service.

"Triton College has provided nationally recognized professors and instructors for our Loss Prevention Academy, one of the highest-rated retail security training programs in Illinois," said Emil Cairo,

Jewel-Osco Loss Prevention director. "Our collaboration with Triton's Continuing Education and Corporate Partnerships, and Academic Outreach Department has been instrumental in ensuring our personnel are among the best trained in the industry."

Triton students and alumni often join the Jewel-Osco team through career fairs, preemployment programs and apprenticeships. "Career fairs are a strategic way to bring stakeholders together," said Lorena Gasca, Triton's Career Services director. "Employers connect with a talented pool of students, alumni and community members. Our goal is to become the trusted source of talent for area companies." Visit **triton.edu/careerservices**.

Jewel-Osco values this long-standing relationship. "We consider ourselves extremely lucky to have such a dedicated and professional partner in Triton College," Cairo said. "We look forward to growing our relationship in the future."

## **Triton Adds Women's Flag Football to Athletic Lineup**



Triton College is excited to announce the addition of women's flag football to its athletics lineup, with competition beginning in spring 2026. Supported by a grant from the NJCAA Foundation, NFL FLAG and Reigning Champs Experiences, the new program reflects Triton's commitment to student engagement and strategic athletic growth.

"This investment supports our community's passion for Trojan athletics and the growing nationwide interest in women's flag football," said President Moore.

The sport is rapidly growing, with more than 65 colleges sponsoring teams and its debut set for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.





There's a place for you.



NONPROFIT ORG. ECRWSS U.S. POSTAGE PAID CAROL STREAM, IL PERMIT NO. 1957

2000 Fifth Ave. • River Grove, IL 60171 triton.edu • (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3130

Triton College is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution.

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.







ECRWSS
Postal Customer

BOARD OF TRUSTEES Mark R. Stephens, Chairman; Diane Viverito, Vice Chairwoman; Tracy Jennings, Secretary; Luke Casson; Glover Johnson; Elizabeth Potter; Richard B. Regan; Jarrell T. David, Student Trustee PRESIDENT Mary-Rita Moore

#### Inquiries regarding compliance with state and federal non-discrimination regulations may be directed to:

Triton College reaffirms its commitment to affirmative action and equal employment for all qualified persons without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, age, or any other basis which is protected by law except where such characteristics are bonafide occupational requirements.

EMPLOYEES
Joe Klinger
AVP, Human Resources
Title IX Coordinator
Triton College
2000 Fifth Ave.
River Grove, IL 60171
(708) 456-0300, Ext. 3743
joeklinger@triton.edu

STUDENTS
Julia Willis
Dean of Students
Deputy Title IX Coordinator
Triton College
2000 Fifth Ave.
River Grove, IL 60171
(708) 456-0300, Ext. 3865
juliawillis@triton.edu

SECTION 504
Dominique Dial
Director, Center for Access
and Accommodative Services
Triton College
2000 Fifth Ave.
River Grove, IL 60171
(708) 456-0300, Ext. 3854
dominiquedial@triton.edu



Registration for the spring semester is now open! Discover your path to success with 120 degree and certificate programs across seven academic pathways, offering opportunities to match your interests and career aspirations. Whether you're preparing for a high-demand career, planning to transfer to a four-year university or pursuing lifelong learning, Triton's dedicated advisors will work with you to create a personalized academic plan.

#### Consider ...

- Automotive and Engineering Technology: Gain the skills to stay ahead in emerging technology, like electric vehicle charging and maintenance.
- Business Management: Learn how to improve efficiency, control costs and solve problems to help your company succeed.
- Culinary Arts: Turn your passion for cooking and baking into a career through Triton's Hospitality Industry Administration Program.
- **Graphic Design:** Develop your creative skills for a career in advertising, marketing or broadcast with an Associate in Applied Science degree.

Explore these opportunities and more at triton.edu/spring.



