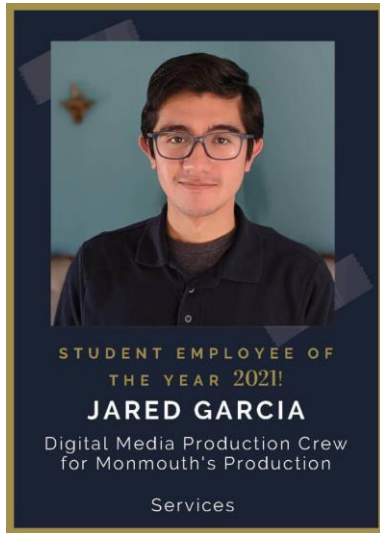


2021 - Monmouth University Student Employee of the Year & Northeast Association of Student Employment Administrators New Jersey's State Finalist Top 3 in the Region



Jared Garcia- Nominated by Erin Fleming, Production Services, Monmouth University

Jared Garcia is the Production Services employee of the year for 2021. When looking for examples to support this reasoning I only have to look back to yesterday. Jared was not hired to work for us that day, but seeing a need, he jumped in to help. A student and I were struggling in our attempt to move field equipment. Jared was walking by, saw us in a precarious position, and without hesitation began to help where it was most effective. He worked with us for 15 minutes and then excused himself to go to his next class. That is quintessential Jared, there when you need him, happy to lend a hand, willing to devote his personal time to assist his workmates. Jared is just a genuinely nice person.

I've been Jared's employer for four years and just recently learned that he is a black belt in martial arts. This is typical Jared, humble and far from braggadocios. It suddenly all made sense. He treats his job at Production Services and Monmouth University the same as he did his martial arts career. For Jared his approach to work is one of respect, responsibility to one's self and others, discipline, perseverance, and commitment. If I could, I would award him a black belt in production. He has made tremendous growth while training in his art.

Many younger communication students at Monmouth look up to him for guidance and technical advice on campus. No matter their age, gender, or technical level, Jared can be found during his lunch break or after class teaching others. He has tremendous patience and is willing to transfer his extensive creative knowledge to anyone. Outside of work he is often seen in the hallways answering a question, jumping behind a camera to help a student project, or lending an ear to a fellow student who is feeling down or overwhelmed. He is simply the go to guy in the Plangere building on campus. He is like an ancient sage, thoughtful, respectful, and wise.

A job at Production Services is not simple or straightforward. The skillset needed includes the usual suspects; professionalism, integrity and hard work, but it also requires a technical knowledge of camera, lighting, audio, and editing equipment. It asks students to represent Monmouth University well to communities outside our gates. Production crew members have to be open to new experiences and proficient at solving unexpected issues. Jared has for four years embodied all of this and so much more.

Critical thinking / Problem Solving

Jared often tackles tough situations by taking a teamwork approach. When we had a shoot in the marshes and equipment needed to move a mile down a dirt path. Jared organized the crew, devised a way to cart the equipment and made the journey less arduous for everyone.

The day before a shoot it is necessary to think about many factors; the location, lighting/audio, weather, crew. This involves a great deal of preplanning for possible glitches and roadblocks. Jared's knowledge of each piece of equipment and its capabilities and his understanding of his fellow crew members strengths and weaknesses, makes him invaluable for planning shoots. He can often be found on the internet looking up solutions to technical challenges. Problematic audio and video can often be corrected in post and Jared will search out a solution online or from his vast network of alumni contacts. During a shoot he keeps an eye on ever changing conditions and communicates the situation back to the director. These are skills that typically take a long time to learn. For some professional production people it takes a lifetime. Jared has accomplished this in four short years.

Oral/Written Communications

Jared is helpful when it comes to writing for video projects and using other individuals words in the form of interviews to create stories that convey clear messages. He can reach an audience on an emotive level. This is the art of digital storytelling. It seems to come naturally to Jared, but I can attest it has grown out of his years of hard work both in the classroom and at Production Services.

Teamwork/ Collaboration

The basis of video production is teamwork. You cannot have success without a crew, each member pulling their weight and working in unison. Jared is able to hold any position on the crew. He can move from camera to technical director to audio to editing without a pause. Crew members strive to work the "better gear" but Jared will often give up a more advanced technical position to help advance the skill set of a younger crewmember.

As the director of the department I can state that Jared is an excellent collaborator but it is emphasized when you speak to his fellow production team members. They even have a song they sing when he is nearby..."Everybody loves Jared!" He is the person that they text or call if they have a question and can't reach me. He will answer technical questions for others as best he can and is often found using his personal time nights and weekends to teach another student how to edit or how to use a complicated piece of equipment like the lighting board or a 4k camera. I respect him, but even more, the other students respect him. I believe he even makes shoots less daunting from a technical perspective just because he is present.

Digital Technology

Our department is devised entirely of digital technology. We have various cameras, sliders, jibs, lighting, audio, and editing machines. Jared can be relied on to operate every single one of them. We have a devise called the Ronin. This devise is used to run and shoot with a camera attached, the learning curve is steep. Jared stated that he wanted to become our expert on this devise. He spent weekends working with it on his own in an effort to increase his capabilities. He now has a skill that is coveted in the industry and will be able to land a job just because of this knowledge. He understands that the work he puts in now, will make him more useful, not only for his job at Production Services but also for his career path moving forward. He does not take this

opportunity for granted and uses the access he has to all of the digital technology to give the director, the client, and the University artifacts that are creative and professional in quality.

Global Intercultural Fluency

We often work on projects that involve an immersion in a different culture. Whether working with a NJ Senator or an individual who is currently homeless, Jared brings a sensitivity to the interaction. Jared worked on a project in Spain and communicated flawlessly with both interview subjects and clients in an effort to understand their message requirements. His warmth and professionalism immediately put a subject at ease in what could be a stressful experience for the individual, performing in front of the camera. Jared can make anyone enjoy the experience. He is polite, he listens, and leaves the subject feeling that their truth will be communicated. His gentle communication style is a natural gift in a normally gritty and loud industry. Jared will leave this job having worked internationally, as well as, with many distinct local cultures. Currently he is helping to shoot and edit a documentary about the Barnegat Bay. This involves the many cultures of the bay; sportspeople, fishing folks, boaters, sailors, environmentalists, scientists, politicians. He is helping to meet with these groups and tell their stories. He moves in an out of every setting as if he belongs. He listens and learns about their individual stories and then works with the team to devise the best approach to the design and delivery of the message.

Professionalism / Work Ethic

Although Jared excels in many ways, his professionalism and work ethic are the traits which make him stand apart of the rest of the crew. I'm impressed with Jared's ability to manage school, work, and home life. He is always transparent with scheduling issues. Jared is never late. Our shoots and edits are constantly changing. We could be capturing a sunrise at 7am or a moonrise at 7pm and Jared will be there. We've shot in the cold, rain, snow, on land and in the bay, in a kennel with 26 dogs, in a homeless shelter, in a forest. It really doesn't matter, Jared comes prepared and he never complains. It's very physical and sometimes mentally challenging. You are entering into people's lives and they may be very different from your own. Jared is there, batteries charged, mind on the message, camera in hand. There will be a large, possibly irreplaceable void at Production Services when Jared graduates.

Not only is he an indispensable member of our team, in his spare time he has managed to direct and edit his own feature film. We just received word that it has been selected for the Garden State Film festival as well as others. To put it simply Jared is a "**Phenom**". We will remember the name Jared Garcia, whether he is the Monmouth University Employee of the Year 2021 or picking up his Oscar years from now. He is also just a genuinely nice person.