

From Under the Scope to Under the Hood

After receiving a biology degree from Louisiana State University, Taryn Parrino shifted gears and landed at JRi Shocks

MOORESVILLE, N.C., Oct. 26, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- When Taryn Parrino was growing up in Baton Rouge, La., a career in racing was not something she considered, making the 26 year-old's current role at [JRi Shocks](#), LLC a surprise even to her.

(Photo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20121026/LA01419>)

"I was always into [automotive](#), but the racing aspect came later," said Parrino. "There wasn't a lot of it where I grew up; the only thing that was big was drag racing."

With her one-year anniversary at JRi Shocks approaching, Parrino is continuing to learn every day on the job.

"Because we're a smaller company, employees have the opportunity to touch a lot of different aspects of the design, manufacturing, sales and shipping processes," said Parrino.

Parrino's job duties are very different from what she originally thought she would be doing, not within JRi Shocks, but because a few years ago Parrino had plans of becoming a biologist.

After high school, Parrino enrolled at Louisiana State University (LSU) where she pursued a degree in biology. It's hard to imagine a biologist trading in the lab coat for a racing suit, but that's exactly what happened – eventually.

It was during her time at LSU that Parrino really started thinking about an alternative career.

"What I liked most were my physics and math classes, and that's when I started leaning toward engineering," Parrino said. "It's the engineering and technology that drew me in and piqued my interest."

By the time Parrino graduated from LSU in 2010 with a biology degree in hand, a career in that field was an afterthought, and [NASCAR Technical Institute](#) (NASCAR Tech) was on the horizon.

"If you want a [job](#) in the industry, NASCAR Tech is where it's at," said Parrino, describing her reason for choosing NASCAR Tech.

Parrino headed to Mooresville, N.C. – known as "Race City, USA" – to start her new journey. While she was excited for the opportunity, those around her had a hard time understanding her reasoning.

"Everyone was like, 'that's pretty crazy,'" Parrino said. "I wasn't passionate about biology, though, and you only have so much time to figure out what you want to do."

Once on campus, Parrino was emerged in the racing culture that has made Mooresville, N.C. famous. Between the classroom and internships with a number of local race teams and companies, Parrino was a full-fledged racing junkie.

Instructors took note of her skills and work ethic, and when JRi Shocks inquired about possible candidates for a new position, Parrino was highly recommended for the job.

"NASCAR Tech played a huge role in getting hired by JRi," said Parrino. "NASCAR Tech has connections, and in racing everyone knows everybody, so I can only imagine how many people they have helped directly."

As NASCAR Tech [celebrates 10 years of starting careers](#), stories like Parrino's are becoming common.

Parrino believes it takes passion and an open mind to be successful. "My advice to people is to try and not pigeon-hole themselves and experience it all," said Parrino. "A lot of people say they will only do one thing, and if they don't get that chance, they will be crushed."

Parrino speaks from experience. "I didn't think I would be doing what I'm doing, but I realized I love it and I get to help so many people and make a difference in the company as it's growing. It means a lot."

About Universal Technical Institute, Inc.:

Headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona, Universal Technical Institute, Inc. (NYSE: UTI) is the leading provider of post-secondary education for students seeking careers as professional automotive, diesel, collision repair, motorcycle and marine technicians. With more than 160,000 graduates in its 47-year history, UTI offers

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