

By: Tucker Leck

As a Wichita State University student, John Garcia, is working hard for both the university and the tech program to obtain two different certifications; a Bachelor of Science in Homeland Security, and a certification of EMT completion.

The first semester of college for him has been completing general education courses, so he can't tell much about the program itself, but he is certainly looking forward to it. However, an exciting opportunity came to him at the open gym. "I started going to the open gym for cheer and I ended up joining the cheer team with no experience and in the past 2 months or so I went from knowing nothing about a cheer to being on ESPN live with my different stunt groups," Garcia mentioned. For him, the college has given him the drive to do the best at whatever, no matter what. "You will meet so many people, that you will make friends," he commented.

While his memories have all been exciting, he recalls his favorite, "My best experience so far was doing my favorite stunt with a stunt group at my first men's basketball game in front of hundreds of people." This is certainly an exciting opportunity, and Garcia is treasuring each moment.

At Wichita State, while most of his classes are in the general education category, he's taking more interesting courses as well, "My favorite class has definitely been my Introduction to Homeland Security class," Garcia said. This class gave Garcia a new perspective on how he looks at conflicts that happen in his everyday life. It helped him understand that there are, "Two sides of a story and that you need to learn both of them before you can solve anything."

"Get out there and be active," that is Garcia's biggest piece of advice. He's certainly not the type to sit around, and so in turn, he took his will to stay active as a motivator to join the cheer team. Since, he has been the recipient of a scholarship to have fun with the people he enjoys being around. "Don't be afraid to be you because every college has something for you, but you have to look for it," that is Garcia's advice for all seniors and every student in education.

The Promise Scholarship has been a sense of relief for Garcia, and compared to others, he only has to pay for a small fraction of college out of pocket. "I am thankful to have the Promise Scholarship, plus it pushes me to get good grades," Garcia said.

Garcia's initial goal is to become an EMT and then later a paramedic. If that doesn't come to fruition, he hopes to use his Homeland Security Degree to work for the government in Counter-Terrorism. Whatever avenue Garcia chooses, there is no doubt that he will give it his all. From his achievements in high school to college life, Garcia is making a difference.