

More Than Seat Time: Building a Future Where Every Young Driver Belongs

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As the first African American driver in the Carrera Cup North America History, I can attest that young racers from underrepresented and underserved communities need more than just technical coaching—they require environments that recognize their unique challenges. One of the biggest hurdles is the pressure to be perfect when you're often the only one who looks like you on the grid. This emotional burden can stifle talent. What they need is safe space to fail, to learn, and to grow—without fear of judgment. I know for me it took working at multiple race tracks and schools in order to get the time, resources, and space to fail and learn.

Practical Tools for Early Access

We must invest in high-quality training tools, like simulators, and high-quality coaching, which can significantly reduce barriers for young drivers. When thoughtfully designed, these tools can equip kids with the experience and confidence they need even before they hit the physical track. Structured access to training—cognitive, emotional, and physical—at an early age can truly level the playing field, ensuring that every aspiring driver gets a fair shot.

Social Belonging and Culture of Trust

A sense of belonging is crucial in this industry. A lot of people forget that this is a Team sport! Many talented kids find themselves quietly pushed out simply because they don't feel they belong. From racial to socioeconomic differences, racing presents a high barrier of entry not only financially, but also in terms of industry specific knowledge, experience, and access. It's essential to create safe environments, both culturally and interpersonally. Whether through proactive mentorship, fostering a strong team culture, or creating peer communities, and also engaging in collaborative activities. Making everyone feel welcome is just as vital as technical skill development.

What Actually Works

My mindset is not barriers, but solutions that genuinely work. We need programs that blend long-term support with tangible performance pathways. We need spaces that offer seat time and hands on experience with race cars in a safe and comprehensive manner. Mentorship should evolve beyond simple advice—it's about building authentic, meaningful relationships. It's critical for these young drivers to see others like themselves in their environments, reinforcing that they're not alone, and they truly belong. It also gives the few minority drivers like myself a sense of purpose to help grow the next generation, thus creating the community we needed all along.

Closing Thought

This conversation transcends merely “helping” people—it's about redefining excellence in motorsport itself. When systems allow diverse stories to thrive, we're not lowering the bar; we're raising the standard for everyone. By embracing this diversity, we pave the way for a brighter and more inclusive future in racing. Together, we can make history and reshape the trajectory of motorsport for generations to come