

Racing against burnout

By Mayah Morrison

For Carson Burch, being young and ambitious has driven him to professional success. However, after finishing out a 75-day work spree in late September, his hard work finally hit him.

“This week I've truly felt burnt out,” Burch said.

Burch said the burnout had slowly built over the two years following his graduation from the University of Texas at Austin in 2023.

His degree in radio-television-film and a minor in business foundations have led him to become a motorsports admin at Circuit of the Americas after only a couple of years working in the industry.

Burch said he has always taken on responsibilities where he can, starting with his first internship at COTA. He was able to build up trust and ultimately work on MotoGP, NASCAR, Formula One, and other major events.

Burch said working in motorsports was an unexpected turn that came from a career fair at UT.

"I saw that COTA had popped up on the career fair and just tried," Burch said. "I mean, it was really purely just timing and, I guess, luck... if you want to say that."

Bryan Hammond, who was a general manager during Burch's internship, has helped him both professionally and personally.

“At the time he was looking for a mentor,” Hammond said. “I was more than willing to be that.”

From the start, Hammond said he loves seeing the ambition Burch holds and feels like he has a drive lost in many young adults his age.

“He’s hungry. He’s got that tenacity in him,” Hammond said.

“Not a lot of kids these days are coachable like that and that you would feel comfortable giving a project, you know, with a C-level executive or entertainer X, Y, Z, and they take it and completely smash it,” Hammond said.

Burch has made a remarkable name for himself.

“Many people want to work with him. He is trusted with high-ups,” Hammond said.

Although Burch found success in Austin, it was not always his initial plan.

“I was enrolled to go to OU with all my friends, and I knew from the start it wasn't what I wanted to do,” Burch said. “I took a gap year instead, and I unenrolled the day before move-in.”

Like many, Burch was able to [use his gap year as a stepping stone](#).

“I kept getting denied from the business school at UT,” Burch said. “I had a passion for movies. It was something my dad and I used to do all the time, just go to the theaters, and it was something that made me happy.”

Throughout the year, Burch decided to pick up a camera and capture content that would help him get into the RTF program at UT.

“If that's something that makes me very happy, he always preached to me to find a job that I would like at the end of the day. So I pivoted to RTF,” Burch said. “I thought that would be a good way to get into UT, which was my dream school.”

“He was adamant that he wanted to go to UT,” Kathryn Burch, his mother, said.

Burch said UT was always the dream however, the top programs it offers were not the only thing driving him there.

“Michael, his dad had toured the UT campus with Dabney, my oldest,” Kathryn Burch said. “I think just knowing that he went to that campus and... they all toured it together as a family... I think that meant a lot to him.”

Burch lost his father in the spring of his junior year of high school.

On top of this loss and a delayed college experience, Burch was [welcomed to campus with masks and online classes due to COVID-19.](#)

Burch said he was in a unique position that fall as he had rushed the Kappa Sigma fraternity and embraced an unconventional college life.

“It was kind of like we were outlaws. Like we could do whatever,” Burch said. “Not anything bad, but we could just do, like, fun things and be confined to our safe space in our house.”

From transitioning from the frat life to working nonstop, Kathryn Burch said she wants him to maintain a balance.

“I know he’s young and has a lot of energy but I just worry about burnout,” Kathryn Burch said. “You can only do so much.”

Hammond agrees.

“I have to remind him constantly, like don’t burn yourself out. You got to take care of you too,” Hammond said.

The opportunities that UT offered set Burch up for a path of success, but he must tame his ambition to prevent future burnout.

“I knew that I wouldn’t have this energy forever,” Burch said. “After two years of traveling week after week, catching, you know, 50 flights, it’s a lot. Uh, living out of a suitcase is not the best.”

After facing the realities of constant travel, Burch said he needed a change.

“Going forward, I positioned myself to take a new role with COTA,” Burch said. “I’ll be doing less contract work and more stable nine-to-five.”

Burch said he is an adventurous guy who looks toward his future with aspirations to get back to the fast-paced day-to-day at some point.

“When you’re down and you’re feeling burnt out, you look back at those pictures and look back at the really high moments. It always gives me fuel to keep going and to look forward to the next event,” Burch said.

As he continues his career and seeks excitement, Burch said he hopes to work with [upcoming NFL events abroad](#) when he’s ready to get back into the race against another burnout.

“What comes with being burnt out is often highs and lows. There’s tons of highs and tons of lows,” Burch said.