

FIVE GUYS GAMES 2019 - SEMIFINALIST INTERVIEWS

Every two years, Five Guys Crew Members throughout the United States compete in the Five Guys Games to put their master kitchen skills to the test during timed events. The champion of the 2019 Games will be awarded \$50,000, with lesser monetary prizes for those who place second through eighth. Two of Encore Restaurants' employees have made it to Round 3, where the remaining 25 contestants will battle each other in the semifinal in order to reach the championship round. Get to know Encore's two contenders: Riki Garcia and David Greer, both of whom call Fresno, California their hometown.

RIKI GARCIA



Q. Tell us how you came to work for Five Guys in the first place – how did it all begin?

A. My story with Encore/Five Guys began January 28, 2015 in Fresno, California. Although I was nervous for the open interviews that were being held by the present-day Director of Operations Matt Reid, I can vividly recall his excitement when he explained that Encore was hoping to expand, thus creating opportunity for anyone who was willing to put forth the hard work. Four years later, Matt's words continue to carry the same weight that they did all that time ago. Starting as an ordinary Crew Member, I worked quickly to get promoted to a Shift Leader within my first 45 days. Four short months later I received a phone call from Matt revealing that I was immediately being promoted to General Manager. I can clearly remember exactly where I was when his call came in! Extremely excited, once again nervous and anxious to call my family and let them know, I had no idea how it would all play out! I was and still am very grateful for the patience Encore and Matt had for my personal development as well as my professional development while I was learning to understand the business. Encore has shown me that it's okay to make a few mistakes (minor ones, of course) if it means learning by trial and error. I have learned to forget the mistakes but remember the lessons.

Q. What has it been like to actively participate in the company's expansion?

A. At the time of my promotion to GM (General Manager), there were only eight stores that were owned by Encore. It is beyond cool to attend Encore's GM Conferences now and see over 20 GMs in

California alone, and more than 50 throughout four different states! Throughout my three and a half years as a GM, I have hired and promoted three current GMs in Fresno, hired and trained a current Area Manager, and have promoted more than 20 Crew Members to Shift Managers with roughly around 13 of them actively working throughout the Fresno region. Itching for more opportunities, Matt, Dale, and the Encore family have allowed me to assist in the grand opening of three Oklahoma stores. I have also retrained existing GMs as well as training new managers in Oklahoma and in Sacramento. Training is something that I have come to love, and I look forward to future opportunities that come our way!

Q. How did you feel when you found out you were a semifinalist for the Five Guys Games?

A. I was told that 40,000 employees competed this year, and I now find myself in the top 25! After advancing, I felt so much love from both Encore and Five Guys. I received so many phone calls and incoming texts that I had to recharge my phone halfway through my trip back home. Simply put, it is my duty to represent all my Encore family throughout this competition, so they can see that anything is in fact possible! Though only time will tell how far I can advance in the Five Guys Games and what type of opportunities await me, I hope my experience will encourage my Encore family to believe that the sky is the limit for them as well. The future is bright for us all!

Q. Where do you get your motivation and enthusiasm from? What keeps you excited about the work that you do?

A. Undoubtedly the cheesiest line I have in my arsenal is this, "If your mind can conceive it, and your heart can believe it, then you can achieve it." This to me means that anything is possible if you want it bad enough and put the effort forth for it. If you want some, go get some!

Q. What do you do for fun when you aren't cutting potatoes at the speed of light?

A. During my off time, I've become addicted to golf.

I have found myself on a course once a week for the better part of six months now, and if there is a tree out there, I will find it! My game is improving, but I cannot wait for the day I can break 100. Last season I finally won my first Fantasy Football Championship (Los Angeles Rams fan). I also am a San Francisco Giants fan. I live on the edge; I hit on a 17 on blackjack (unless the dealer is showing a 5 or 6 of course). Family is also very important to me – there may not be anything better than a nice BBQ with all of my family!

DAVID GREER



Q. When did you first begin working for Five Guys, and what made you want to apply?

A. I started working for Five Guys in January 2017, at the location in Clovis, California. I was hired on as a red shirt (Crew Member), and within two months I successfully passed my test to become what was then a gray shirt (Shift Supervisor). I had always been a fan of the Five Guys environment and food, particularly the way that the staff interacted with the customers. I thought I would fit in very well but had no idea exactly how much I would enjoy my crew once I moved to the Fashion Fair location. I struggled in the beginning with being a new manager, but with time and practice I have become a very strong manager, and am looking forward to moving up someday as a GM.

Q. Have you been training or practicing at all for this competition? What do you think it is that makes you so efficient and fast?

A. I practice for the games every chance I get. I think I am efficient because I am very passionate about my job, take a lot of pride in my overall performance, and I like to be the best. I am the first person from my store to compete in the Five Guys Games, so originally I didn't know what to expect. I was nervous when I first competed in regionals, but now I have a better idea of how to practice. I time myself daily while I prep cheese and potatoes, and constantly put myself on the buns station to prepare for the QC (quality control) race. Now that I'm aware of how to properly practice, my

times have been improving drastically.

Q. How did you feel when you found out you were a semifinalist in the Five Guys Games?

A. I was STOKED! I had finished fifth in my region, but another competitor missed the games due to his flight being canceled. So for the past three weeks I've been practicing, although at the time I was still unsure if I would even be able to compete in the semi-finals. My whole store has been rooting me on and my family and friends have been building me up daily, telling me that I had better win the \$50,000. I've been extremely nervous but am excited to be able to meet new people within the company, travel to new places, and learn more about Five Guys.

Q. What sort of growth have you seen in yourself since you started this job?

A. I am growing every day as a manager and I am learning what it takes to be a go-to employee! I am training to be a GM and I am taking in all the knowledge I can in order to get myself where I want to be. When I was hired on as a red shirt, it was during a time in my life where I was struggling a lot personally. The managers and customers I met at Five Guys truly helped bring me out of my shell and helped me to start looking forward to my future. Instead of simply showing up to work, flipping some patties, and going home, I began to strive to influence my team in positive ways. As I learned more, I was better able to help my team, which felt amazing. I think very highly of my Area Manager, as well as my past and current GMs. I look up to the leaders I've had – they are the biggest reasons why I enjoy my job so much and continue to move forward with the company.

Q. What do you enjoy doing when you have a day off?

A. On my days off I love taking my dog and my daughter to the park or the lake. My whole family is very big on spending time together, and I believe being outside in nature is the easiest way to connect without distraction. I go up to Millerton Lake, Shaver Lake, and Pine Flat most often, but it depends on how the weather is. Sometimes it's hard to forget about work, even when I have a day off or I'm not there, but the easiest way to erase all stress and anxiety is to sit under the sky and breathe the fresh air. My daughter absolutely loves playing in the dirt, chasing the puppy around the campsite, and eating our special camping food. Everything I do is for my family!



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