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**New Associate Degrees**  
Mark Pivotal Moment

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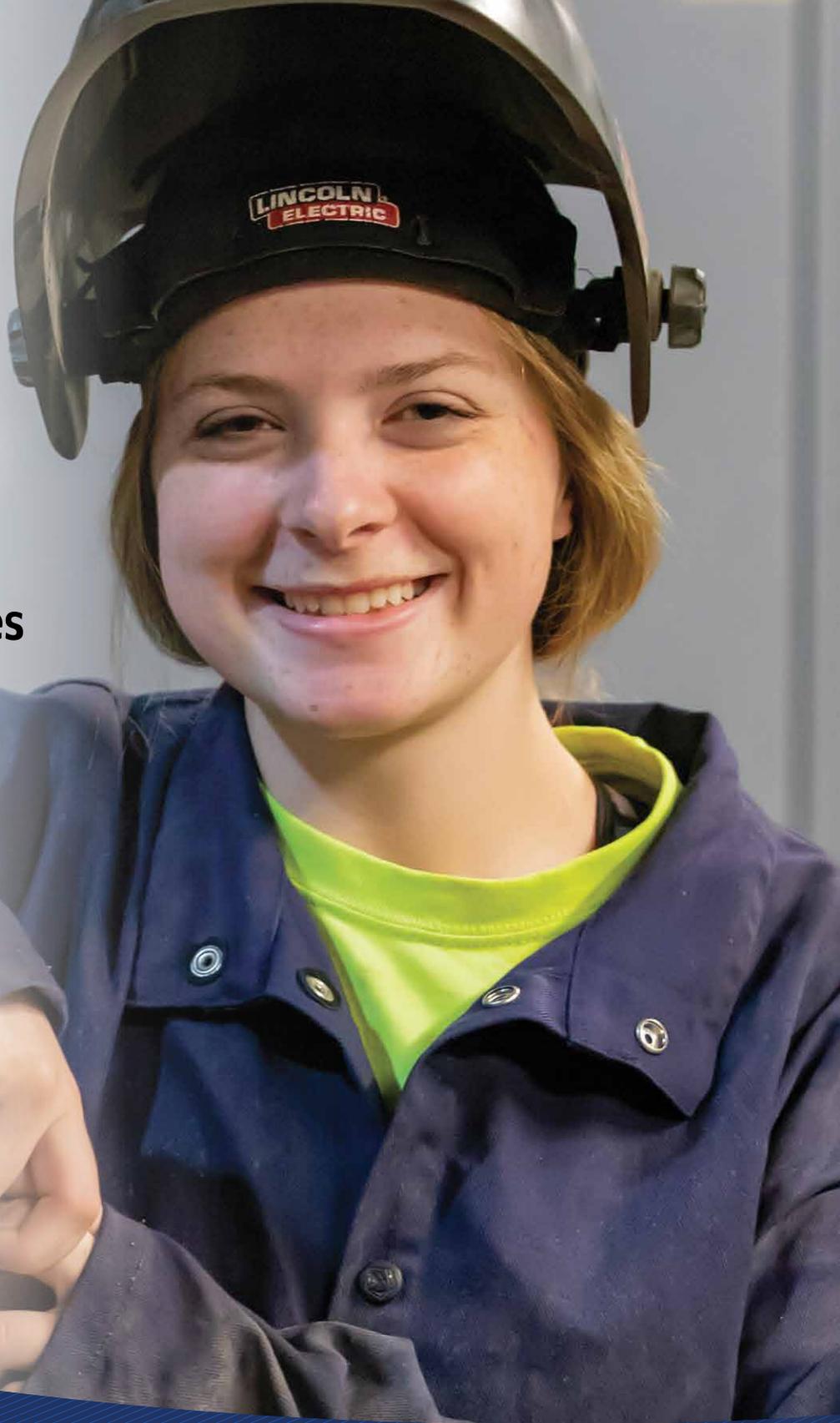
**Amazon Partners**  
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**BTC Alum Finds**  
Fit At Prent



**BLACKHAWK**  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

**A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR WOMEN IN WELDING**  
Clinton HS Grad Blazes Her Own Path





**BLACKHAWK**  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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# WELCOME!

Blackhawk Technical College concluded another successful academic year on May 14 with the celebration of our graduates – graduates desperately needed by our workforce partners. With near historic lows in unemployment rates, companies are challenged to find the skilled talent they need for success. This puts our work at Blackhawk front and center for our collective economic well-being.

Through collaborative efforts like the Stateline Manufacturing Alliance (SMA) and partnerships with our 2022 Technical Education Champion, Scot Forge, and our 2022 Futuremaker Award winner, Frito-Lay, Blackhawk is dedicated to significantly growing the talent pipeline.

This makes Blackhawk’s vision, mission and values more important as ever. Delivering innovative education options that enrich our communities while ensuring access to flexible education in a supportive environment is at the heart of our work. The future of our community depends on our ability to deliver on these promises. With enrollment trending positive, the immediate future looks promising.

In this issue of The Buzz, you will read about the variety of activities occurring at your community’s college. If we had to put a label on this time in the history of Blackhawk, it would be TRANSFORMATIVE.

From our new state-of-the-art Public Safety & Transportation Center (PSTC) to a new student union, conference center and cafeteria set to open this summer, we are excited about the ways in which the lives of our students and our programs will be enhanced through these new spaces.

The College also continues to be a catalyst for change by focusing on removing barriers to access and success, reducing hurdles to achievement, and proactively identifying and supporting at-risk students. The work of the Blackhawk Technical College Foundation with generous contributions from Dr. Gregg & Helen Dickinson, Wayne & Janet Albertson, Alliant Energy Foundation, Blain’s Farm & Fleet (Mick & Jane Blain Gilbertson), Geraldine Idzerda, Frito-Lay and PepsiCo Foundation, Janesville Foundation, Hendricks Family Foundation, Mercy Health, the Parker family and many others have directly impacted lives, changed family’s destiny, and improved a community through access to education.

We also are expanding our programs. Dental Hygiene (pending CODA approval) and Hospitality Management degrees are set to launch in fall 2022. In addition, our collaboration with UW-Whitewater at Rock County has resulted in a watershed moment in our history. Our new Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees will allow a pathway to a bachelor’s degree more economical and obtainable for our community members by making transfer to UW-Whitewater and other UW institutions easier and more seamless.

For more than 100 years, Blackhawk has helped students achieve their goals and our graduates form the backbone of our community. Even though our roots and focus have been and continue to be workforce training and education that meets the needs of industry – and we are broadly known for this – our team at Blackhawk believes we play a much larger role in our community. I hope you enjoy this issue of the BUZZ and agree that your community’s college is transforming into a new Blackhawk Technical College.



**Tracy Pierner, Ph.D.**  
President, Blackhawk Technical College

## Blackhawk Technical College Summer 2022 Magazine

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# Dual Enrollment Leads to POWERFUL WOMEN IN WELDING

Shelby Ward is a new graduate from Clinton High School. She likes to hang out with her friends, enjoys spending time with her family, and is excited for the next chapter of her life.

All seems typical for an 18-year-old. But Shelby's journey has been anything but. Overcoming dyslexia, she has paved her own path as a woman in welding. She already holds a technical diploma in welding from Blackhawk Technical College and holds a job as a general laborer, working for JP Cullen.

"I was getting bored in high school and started looking for options," she said. Through Wisconsin's Start College Now program, which allows high school juniors and seniors to take postsecondary courses at the state's technical colleges, Shelby started taking courses at Blackhawk as a high school junior.

**"I figured out what I like to do. Most people don't know what they want, but I do think that the Start College Now program is a great way to get a few different skills under your belt."**

*-Shelby Ward*

Shelby, who is the youngest of four, had two older brothers follow similar paths – both enrolling in the Start College Now program and taking classes at Blackhawk.

Shelby's mom, Katie Ward, said more students should take advantage of these dual enrollment programs to get a jump start on their careers. As a parent, it's a good financial decision, and you get to see your children grow immensely, she said.

"They can walk right into a job with no debt," Katie said. "I don't have to worry about their future, and for Shelby, I don't have the fear of her going into the world anymore. I've seen how much she has grown."

Taking college courses as a high school student pulled Ward out of a high school mindset and into a more adult one, as she took on more responsibilities and juggled the demands of both high school work and college work.

Her senior year of high school was split between high school classes and working at various job sites for JP Cullen.

"It has brought me more knowledge about being an adult. Having to go from high school to college and then to the outside world has given me more wisdom," she said.

As the welding industry grows – total welder employment in the United States is expected to exceed 452,000 by 2030, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – Ward said she hopes more women will find their fit in the industry. Women make up only about 5 percent of the welding workforce.

Ward wasn't the only female welder, however, to earn her technical diploma from Blackhawk this spring. Kaitlyn Elgin, who just graduated from Monroe High School, also earned her diploma through the Start College Now program. Elgin is now working on an associate degree in Business and an Emergency Medical Technician certificate.

**"I've learned so much about myself and the world through this experience. More high school students should consider taking this opportunity."**

*-Shelby Ward*

## Estimated Program Costs & Potential Earnings

33 Credits

**\$7,567**

Average Wage

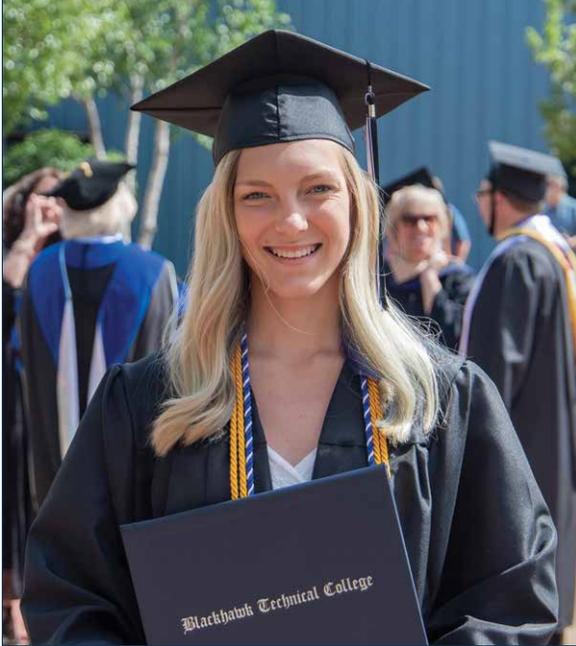
**\$36,504**

*based on EMSI Occupational Employment Statistics*

### Potential Careers

- Production Line Welder
- Welder Tacker
- Fabricator
- Machine Maintenance Helper
- Welder Helper
- Fabrication Helper





Kaitlyn Elgin, who just graduated from Monroe High School, also earned her welding diploma through the Start College Now program.

Both Ward and Elgin have a role model in Bobbi Bishofberger, the only female welding instructor at Blackhawk and the chair of the Manufacturing, Apprenticeship, Technology and Transportation Division. Bishofberger said she is hopeful that more women go into welding.

**"The future of welding needs women, and women belong in welding."**

*-Bobbi Bishofberger,  
BTC Welding Instructor*



# RUHS PUTS *Focus on* ASSOCIATE DEGREES AT BLACKHAWK



The path to a college degree traditionally starts after high school. But for Andrew Hegle, a junior at Rock University High School, his path started last fall. And by the time he graduates from RUHS next spring, Andrew will have earned an associate degree from Blackhawk as well as a high school diploma.

**"It's exciting to think that I'll have an associate degree and be only 18."**

*-Andrew Hegle*

Many of the juniors and seniors at RUHS are on similar paths. Located on Blackhawk's Central campus, RUHS, a tuition-free, charter school through the School District of Janesville, gives students the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. The goal is to have them graduate with both their high school diploma and an associate degree.

Enrollment at RUHS, which currently is 75 students, is expected to grow over the next few years thanks in part to Blackhawk's new transferable Associate of Arts and Associate of Science programs, which are expected to launch this fall. These new degrees, which are in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, make it seamless for students to get their associate degree and transfer to UW-Whitewater or any UW school.

RUHS opened in 2014 at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater at Rock County and moved to Blackhawk in 2016. This education model pairs well with Blackhawk's vision of delivering innovative education to enrich the community.

Students not only are more marketable for jobs after high school through these pathways, but they also are potentially erasing two years of college tuition.

**"It's an avenue for those who may not have been able to afford college, and it's a way for them to learn about themselves. It's academic growth, but it's also the confidence, knowing they are college-bound."**

*-Kolleen Onsrud, RUHS Principal*

Andrew is working on his associate degree in Criminal Justice at Blackhawk. He plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Platteville after he graduates from RUHS. It will only take him two years to complete his bachelor's degree.

"It saves me time and money. Why wouldn't I want to do this?" he said.

Andrew's classmate, James Mathesius, is pursuing his associate degree in Electro-Mechanical Technology at Blackhawk. He

plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison after he graduates.

The experience of taking classes in both a high school setting and a college one has helped him to grow as a person, he said.

**"I have more things to track, more responsibilities. I've also become more ambitious."**

*-James Mathesius*

RUHS Dean of Students Angela Kerr has seen student after student transformed by the experience of taking college courses while in high school. Many come their first year timid and lacking confidence, she said. "When you have high expectations of kids, they will rise up with the benefits of supporting them both academically but also emotionally," Kerr said.

Thirteen students will graduate from RUHS in June. The school is now accepting applications for grades 9-12.

**"We already are on the path for students to graduate with a high school diploma and an associate degree, but these new degrees really open everything up for us. Students will have more courses to choose from, and it will all be available to them right here."**

*-Kolleen Onsrud, RUHS Principal*



# STUDENTS CAN SOON BEGIN BACHELOR'S DEGREES AT BLACKHAWK

Blackhawk Technical College is one final step away from expanding its undergraduate programs to include transferable Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees.

In April, the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents approved the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees, and the final step to offering these is expected to come in July with approval from the Higher Learning Commission, Blackhawk's accrediting agency. The college has already received approval from the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS).

The degrees, which are made possible through a partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and UW-Whitewater at Rock County, will allow students to earn credits that can be put toward any bachelor's degree at UW-Whitewater or any four-year university or college.

"We are so grateful to UW-Whitewater and UW-Whitewater at Rock County for their partnership. This is a watershed moment for Blackhawk Technical College by enhancing our ability to serve our community," said Dr. Tracy Pierner, President of Blackhawk.

"This partnership and approval will provide more access to bachelor's degrees for all residents in Rock and Green counties. Historically, our region lags both state and national averages for bachelor

attainment. Blackhawk will now be poised to be part of the solution to this workforce gap."

Students will take general requirement courses at Blackhawk and at UW-Whitewater at Rock County that emphasize either arts or sciences based on their individual educational goals. This pathway enables students to receive all the cost savings and convenience of a liberal arts or sciences transfer degree while attending Blackhawk.

"We are thrilled to partner with Blackhawk Technical College in order to provide additional high-quality educational opportunities for students," said Tricia Clasen, dean and assistant vice chancellor of UW-Whitewater at Rock County. "We are enthusiastic about the opportunity for future collaborations made possible by the work on these new pathways."

Blackhawk is one of eight WTCS colleges that received Board of Regents approval in April for Associate of Arts and Associate of Sciences degrees. Of the 16 WTCS institutions, 14 will offer these degrees.

*Editor's Note: This magazine was sent to the printer on May 25. Blackhawk may have received approval for these new degrees after that date. For the latest on these new programs, visit [blackhawk.edu](http://blackhawk.edu).*



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# BLACKHAWK BECOMES Amazon Choice School Partner

Amazon has selected Blackhawk Technical College as a strategic partner to provide educational opportunities to its employees in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois through the Amazon Career Choice program.

The program helps employees to advance their careers by providing degree, certification and upskilling opportunities. Hourly Amazon employees are eligible for full college tuition, industry certifications, GEDs and English language proficiency among other opportunities.

In the U.S., Amazon is investing \$1.2 billion to upskill more than 300,000 employees by 2025 to help move them into higher-paying, in-demand jobs.

"We're looking forward to Blackhawk Technical College coming on board as an education partner for Career Choice, adding

**"We are excited to partner with Amazon. We share a commitment to educate and train the current workforce and provide adult learners the flexibility required to pursue an education to advance their careers."**

*-Dr. Tracy Pierner, President of Blackhawk*

to the hundreds of best-in-class offerings available to our employees," said Tammy Thieman, Global Program Lead of Amazon's Career Choice program. "We're committed to empowering our employees by providing them access to the education and training they need to grow their careers, whether that's with us or elsewhere. We have intentionally

cultivated a partner network of third-party educators and employers committed to providing excellent education, job placement resources, and continuous improvements to the experience. Today, over 50,000 Amazon employees around the world have already participated in Career Choice and we've seen first-hand how it can transform their lives."



## Meet Amy Charles

*Workforce Development & Monroe Campus Coordinator*

Amy Charles has been picked to lead Blackhawk Technical College's Monroe campus and to expand the college's training and educational resources in Green County.

Amy brings more than 20 years of experience in business, community relations, higher education and workforce development. Her professional experience, all in southwest Wisconsin, includes roles with the Wisconsin Technical College System, Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Wisconsin Department of Administration and the Southwest Wisconsin Community Action Program. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Speech Communication from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and is a graduate of the Certified Public Manager (CPM) program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"Amy brings a wealth of experience in working with corporate partners for training and a drive to ensure our Monroe campus is a local resource for current students, prospective students, employers and community members," said Mark Borowicz, Director of Workforce & Community Development at Blackhawk.

Amy and her husband, Adam, have lived in Shullsburg for 22 years with their sons, Oren and Jack, as well as their dog, Colt.





# WE ARE connected.

Our partnerships with industry leaders help ensure that our workforce is prepared for what's next.

## FRITO-LAY Receives Futuremaker Partner Award

Blackhawk Technical College joined the Wisconsin Technical College System Board in recognizing Frito-Lay North American, Inc., with the Futuremaker Partner Award. This award is to recognize the unique, long-standing connections between the state's employers and local technical colleges.

"Frito-Lay's commitment to Blackhawk Technical College through their involvement in employer advisory committees, support of the IDEAL Opportunity Scholarship Program, and their development of the Mentorship Training program for mentors in the apprenticeship program shows consistent strong support for the college, the students and the community," said Rodney Pasch, Wisconsin Technical College System Board President. "The relationship Blackhawk Technical College has forged with Frito-Lay is an exemplary model of how Wisconsin's technical colleges work with local employers to provide the skilled workforce needed to thrive in Wisconsin."

Frito-Lay has placed Blackhawk in the spotlight as a critical catalyst for the region's economic success, said Dr. Tracy Pierner, President of Blackhawk.

"Blackhawk Technical College is very fortunate to have an industry partner, such as Frito-Lay, to understand the actual value of partnership. Frito-Lay and its employees are exceptional

champions of BTC and the value of a technical college education," Pierner said.

In addition, Frito-Lay has partnered with the BTC Workforce and Community Development (WCD) team to offer customized Leadership Development training for their employees. And the company also partnered with BTC to develop the Stateline Manufacturing Alliance (SMA), a new organization that serves as a regional catalyst for talent recruitment and development in advanced manufacturing through collective efforts, initiatives and partnerships.

**"The programs Blackhawk offers provide our employees with the necessary knowledge and skillsets to not only succeed in our environment, but to thrive in their daily lives as well. We truly appreciate the partnership and look forward to collaborating with BTC for years to come."**

*-Dan Washkoviak,  
Beloit Frito-Lay Site Director*



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*Pictured above: L-R: Dr. Tracy Pierner-BTC, Dr. Morna Foy-WTCS, Dan Washkoviak-Frito-Lay and Rob Hendrickson-Frito-Lay.*



# BLACKHAWK *Shining Stars*



It's been a celebratory season for the Blackhawk community as we honored our partners, students and staff through a variety of events and activities.

Blackhawk has also been honored with several awards, recognizing the college's service to its students and the community, as well as its ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

- 2021 Best of the Best - *Janesville Gazette*
- 2021 Large Business of the Year - *Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce*
- 2021 Business of the Year (50+) - *Forward Janesville*
- 2022 Corporate Award of Merit - *YWCA*
- 2022 Friend of the LDA - *Leadership Development Academy*





In April, a recognition event was held to honor and celebrate Blackhawk staff with milestone service anniversaries and retirees from the 2021-2022 year. With 35 years of service, Mike Bennett and Ilene Larson were among those recognized. Blackhawk also recognized high school seniors who plan to attend the college in the fall during its annual Letter of Intent Signing Day.

In May, Blackhawk hosted its annual Student Awards Ceremony. Dusty Williams, agribusiness and farm management instructor, received the Faculty of the Year Award. Casey Bennett, an agribusiness/science and technology student, was named the Student of the Year. Marissa Greuel Hainstock, an academic advisor, was named Staff of the Year, and the Professional Agricultural Students (PAS) won the Student Organization of the year.





## BTC ADOPTS NEW DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Blackhawk Technical College adopted a formal statement this spring that prioritizes diversity at the college and reflects Blackhawk's investment in cultivating an on-campus culture of inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility.

The statement reads: "In an effort to provide flexible education and a supportive environment, Blackhawk Technical College aspires to create a climate in which all students, employees and community members feel welcomed, valued and included. To that end, the College strives to use inclusive and accessible practices to create a community of diverse ideas, abilities, cultures and lifestyles."

The first in the college's history, the diversity statement was crafted by Blackhawk's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Committee, which was formed about three years ago to celebrate and promote equity, diversity, inclusiveness, accessibility, civility and non-discrimination across the college.

"This statement formalizes our commitment to creating a campus community that embraces and responds to an increasingly diverse and globalized world," said Dr. Tracy Pierner, President of Blackhawk. "The work is ongoing, and this statement will serve as a guidepost as we continue to promote a diverse and inclusive environment for all."

*The statement represents only a portion of the work that the committee, college leadership, enrollment staff and others have been engaged in over the past few years. Other initiatives, which are also outlined on a new webpage at [blackhawk.edu/diversity](https://blackhawk.edu/diversity), include:*

- The Blackhawk Equity Access & Motivation (BEAM) program: This program works in partnership with K12 leaders to help close equity gaps in higher education.
- Blackhawk 101: As part of the BEAM program, Blackhawk 101 is a summer readiness and support program for students of color.
- The IDEAL Opportunity Scholarship program: The BTC Foundation awards a full-tuition scholarship to a person of color.
- Addition of "inclusive" to Blackhawk's values: In February 2022, the IDEA Committee and the Executive Council added a sixth value - inclusive - to the college's core values.

In addition, Blackhawk will open a new multicultural student space near its remodeled student commons this summer, and the college has begun work on a land acknowledgment statement to the Indigenous peoples who historically were the stewards of the lands on which Blackhawk now stands.

# Class Flexibility Draws ACCOUNTING STUDENT TO BLACKHAWK

The flexibility of the classes is what drew Tayana Roman to BTC. With the introduction of MyEdChoice, Tayana can choose whether she wants to go to class, watch the course via Zoom from her home or go to work and watch the videos later.

"I started going to every class face-to-face but have fallen back from that and went fully online, and I love it," she said. "I am able to still work my job and have plenty of time to do homework and tests successfully."

Tayana, who is in the accounting program, graduated from Beloit Memorial High School in 2018 and expects to graduate from BTC in 2023. She credits the BTC advisors with helping her decide to go into accounting after she originally wasn't sure what she wanted to do.

"I love math, technology and entering data. Math has been my favorite subject since a kid, and it's fun to me," she said.

Being able to attend school close to home also helped in Tayana's decision. She loves being able to be close to her family and still pursue her degree.

The responsiveness of the instructors is something Tayana considers a huge benefit while taking classes at Blackhawk.

"Staff are always willing to help you, so do not be afraid to ask for it!" she said. "Even if you're not close, teachers will Zoom with you, and they're really good at emailing back fast."

Accounting & Business Instructor Katherine Fuller credits Tayana's success to her persistence, motivation and positive attitude.

**"She juggles working as an aid in special education with taking a heavy course load here at BTC, and the fact that she can do both so well is a real testament to her character."**

*-Katherine Fuller, Accounting & Business Instructor*

Tayana would tell prospective students that if they choose to come to BTC, they most definitely can succeed.

Tayana plans to get a job in her field of accounting after graduation and maintain that job for years to come.

**"Communicate with your teachers, advocate for yourself, and you will do great!"**

**-Tayana Roman**





*“The professors and staff take the time to get to know the students and truly care about their students.”*

*-Ezra Johnson*

# HUMAN SERVICES

## Student Achieves Classroom Success

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When Ezra Johnson came to Blackhawk, he realized he was behind in several areas. Growing up, Ezra was in special education classes through his graduation from Edgerton High School in 2009.

“When I came to Blackhawk, I was way behind in several areas because I wasn’t taught the materials needed to be successful in college because no one thought I would ever go to college,” he said. “I have had to teach myself a lot of things.”

Ezra is in his third semester in the Human Services program, something he picked because of his passion to help others. With plans to graduate in May 2023, he wants to then attend UW-Whitewater at Rock County to work towards achieving a master’s degree in Human Services.

Ezra was led to Blackhawk for many different reasons, including a location close to where he lives as well as all the extra services the school provides to its students. He also has friends who recommended the school.

“I liked the idea of a smaller campus and class sizes,” he said.

“Honestly, I cannot think of a thing that I do not like about Blackhawk,” he said when asked what he likes most about Blackhawk. “The professors and staff take the time to get to know the students and truly care about their students.”

Megan Wisnowski, Student Engagement Specialist, said Ezra is a huge asset to both Student Engagement and the CARE Center. “It seems like no matter what he is facing, Ezra always attacks the day with a positive

attitude that easily spreads to those around him,” said Megan, who has worked with Ezra since last summer. “We are lucky to have him working with us in the CARE Center.”

Ezra says the most important thing he’s learned in his time at Blackhawk is that you’re never too old to go back to school. His advice for prospective students would be to take a tour and ask all the questions you might have.

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***“People actually care and encourage me to grow and also challenge me to think through things in a different way. My advisor does a great job laying out the steps or classes I need to take.”***

*-Ezra Johnson*

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# WTCS Student Ambassador

## Finds Her Career Focus Through On-Campus Jobs



Kearie Pulliam is Blackhawk Technical College's new Student Ambassador to the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), representing Blackhawk at the state-level and participating in several events throughout 2022 and into 2023.

Originally from Charlotte, N.C., and a graduate of Orville Platt High School in Meriden, Conn., Kearie is majoring in Digital Marketing at Blackhawk.

Kearie's journey to Blackhawk started with her husband who attended Blackhawk in 2015 and raved about his experience. That alone was enough to convince Kearie that she should check BTC out, and after she did a little research of her own, she was clear that this was the place for her, too.

"I'd love to work in a college helping students like BTC has helped me," she said.

She is already gaining experience as a student worker in BTC's CARE Center.

Alicia Acker, Career Services and Leadership Development Coordinator, said Kearie has proven to be an instrumental part of the CARE Center team since she started working in the department in Sept. 2021.

"She is driven, reliable, and routinely exceeds expectations for projects. Students can relate to Kearie very easily because she is upbeat and willing to help anyone," Alicia said.

As Blackhawk's WTCS Student Ambassador, Kearie will make special appearances, give presentations and participate in various events on behalf of the WTCS.

Upon graduation, she is planning on attending a four-year college to earn a bachelor's in digital marketing. Eventually, she hopes to work in higher education, and she is gaining work-related experience through on-campus jobs.

A large, close-up portrait of Kearie Pulliam, smiling warmly. She has long, dark, wavy hair and is wearing a white button-down shirt with black polka dots under a dark grey cardigan. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

**"When coming in person, I got such a huge welcome, with many staff who answered any questions or concerns I may have had before attending Blackhawk - without making me feel overwhelmed. I can't wait to see what the future has in store." -Kearie Pulliam**



**"I wanted to get into the engineering side. I knew it would be tough going to school, working, and raising a family, but I knew this is what I needed to get there. Prent Corporation was supportive of my efforts."**

*-Mike Baker*

## BLACKHAWK ALUM

### *Finds His Fit at Prent*

After graduating from Beloit Memorial High School and working at Woodman's where he met his future wife, Cherie, Mike Baker wasn't sure of his next steps. It was the late 1980s and he wasn't ready to go on to college.

"I really didn't know what I wanted to do," he said. "And I didn't feel like I needed a degree."

Over the next several years, Mike held a variety of jobs. He moved to Madison for a time and worked at Wal-Mart while taking a few classes at Madison College. He later moved to Janesville and started working at Ingersoll Milling Machine Company in Rockford where he continued to work for eight years.

Mike landed a job at Prent Corporation in 2003 as a machine set-up technician. Prent, a global leader in thermoform packaging based in Janesville, felt like the right fit for Mike, who also worked on the production floor and in the maintenance department. In 2007, Mike joined the machine build team as an electrical assembler. "I realized that to get to the next step, I needed that degree," he said.

Seven years later, Mike was ready to go in a different direction to advance his career. In 2014, Mike enrolled in Blackhawk's Electro-Mechanical Technology program, which teaches students the skills to install, maintain, and repair integrated machine systems as well as the knowledge to understand industrial electrical systems, automation controls, and a variety of manufacturing systems.

It became a balancing act and an opportunity to hone his time management skills. Carving time for homework was key. With support from his family and the aid of staff at Blackhawk's Learning Center, Mike made it work.

"It was rough going back to school. Other students were mostly right out of high school," he said. "It was important to be organized. I was taking 11 or 12 credits some semesters."

Mike graduated in 2018 with his associate degree, and a few months later, he landed the job of automation and controls engineer at Prent.

"It was worth it – definitely," he said.

Mike has stayed connected to Blackhawk as part of a growing partnership between Prent and the college. He recently was able to connect with Greg Phillips, Blackhawk's Dean of Manufacturing, Apprenticeship, Technology, and Transportation during a meeting between Blackhawk and Prent.

"Mike was the first graduate that I handed a diploma to on stage. We chatted in the halls before the ceremony. However, I never had him in any classes," Greg said. "But I knew he was a hard-working student, and I ran into him again when we went to the Prent tour where we reminisced about that graduation day and how impactful it was for both of us."

Mike is one of 14 Prent employees who are also Blackhawk alumni. Blackhawk certificates and degrees have been achieved by Prent employees in a variety of fields, including CNC Technician, Business Management, Electro-Mechanical Technology, Accounting, Industrial Engineering and Office Machine Repair.

# 2022 *Golden Brick* AWARDS CEREMONY

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## TICKETS

\$25/person | \$200 reserved table of six (6)

Ticket includes heavy hors d'oeuvres & refreshments

Purchase your tickets at [www.blackhawk.edu/GoldenBrickAwards](http://www.blackhawk.edu/GoldenBrickAwards)

**QUESTIONS:** Contact Lisa Hurda, Director of Advancement & Foundation at [Lhurda@blackhawk.edu](mailto:Lhurda@blackhawk.edu)



*Join us in recognizing this year's winners!*

- **Alumni of the Year Award** – Stephanie Hanson  
*(Elementary Teacher at Powers Elementary in Beloit, WI)*
- **Community Partnership Award** – KANDU Industries
- **Technical Education Champion Award** – Scot Forge
- **Faculty of the Year Award** – Dusty Williams, Lead Agriculture Faculty  
*(Monroe Campus)*
- **Philanthropic Award** – Wayne & Janet Albertson and Dr. Gregg & Helen Dickinson
- **Futuremaker Partner Award** *(once every 4 years)* – Frito-Lay North America, Inc.





## CENTRAL CAMPUS

# Courtyard to Undergo Renovation

At the heart of Blackhawk's Central Campus is an under-utilized courtyard that is about to get a much-needed makeover. The courtyard project is set to begin in late July and will be near completion before the end of the year. In the spring of 2023, final landscaping and planting will be completed.

The design, which was done in collaboration between a team of Blackhawk staff and architecture firm, Angus-Young, includes several seating areas, two fire pits, a water feature, outdoor grills, a stage and open spaces that can be used for a variety of activities, including Blackhawk's fall festival, graduation pinnings and more.

The westside of the courtyard is adjacent to Blackhawk's renovated student union and cafeteria space, which is expected to be open for use later this summer.



# ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AT BLACKHAWK

## LIBERAL ARTS

- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Science

## ASSOCIATE DEGREES

- Accounting
- Administrative Professional
- ▲ Agribusiness/Science Technology
- ▲ Automation Systems Technology
- Behavior Technician
- Business Management
- Criminal Justice Studies
- Culinary Arts
- Dental Hygienist
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography & Vascular Tech
- Digital Marketing
- Early Childhood Education
- ▲ Electro-Mechanical Technology
- Fire Protection Technician
- Foundations of Teacher Education
- Funeral Service
- Hospitality Management
- Human Resources
- Human Services Associate
- ▲ Individualized Technical Studies
- ▲ IT-Network Specialist
- Laboratory Food Science Technician
- Leadership Development
- ▲ Manufacturing Engineering Technology
- Medical Administrative Coder
- Medical Administrative Specialist
- Medical Laboratory Technician
- Nuclear Technology
- Nursing
- Nutrition and Dietetic Technician
- Paramedic Technician
- Physical Therapist Assistant
- Radiography
- Sales Management
- Substance Use Disorder Counseling
- Supply Chain Management
- Surgical Technology
- ▲ Technical Studies - Journeyworker
- Web Software Developer

## TECHNICAL DIPLOMAS

- Administrative Support Professional
- Advanced Emergency Medical Technician
- Agribusiness Specialist
- Automotive Technician
- Business Management Specialist
- Central Service Technician
- ▲ Computer Numeric Control (CNC) Technician
- ▲ Computer Service Technician
- Culinary Production Specialist
- Dental Assistant
- Diesel & Heavy Equipment Technician
- Electric Power Distribution
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Farm Business & Production Management
- ▲ Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Technology
- ▲ Industrial Maintenance Mechanic
- Laboratory Science Technician Assistant
- Law Enforcement Basic Recruit Academy
- Medical Assistant
- Nursing Assistant (Central & Monroe)
- Phlebotomy Technician
- ▲ Welding

## ADULT EDUCATION

- General Education Development (GED)
- High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)
- English Language Learner (ELL)

## APPRENTICESHIPS

- ▲ Electrical Apprenticeship
- ▲ Industrial Electrical Apprenticeship
- ▲ Industrial Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship
- ▲ Machinist Apprenticeship
- ▲ Mechatronics Apprenticeship

## CERTIFICATES

- Computed Tomography
- Human Resource Generalist
- Law Enforcement - Basic Jail (Corrections) Academy
- Patient Service Specialist
- Project Management
- Secure Juvenile Detention Academy
- Supply Chain Management

## EMBEDDED TECHNICAL DIPLOMAS

- Accounting Assistant
- ▲ Entry Maintenance Technician
- ▲ Flux Core Arc Welding
- ▲ Gas Metal Arc Welding
- ▲ Gas Tungsten Arc Welding
- ▲ Residential HVAC
- ▲ Shielded Metal Arc Welding
- Substance Abuse Education



**FLEXIBLE EDUCATION. SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT.**

### KEY

- ▲ Advanced Manufacturing Training Center
- Monroe Campus

All other programs are on Central Campus.



**BLACKHAWK**  
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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SAVE THE DATE

# BLACKHAWK COMMUNITY DAY

THURSDAY, JUNE 30

**BRING YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY FOR  
DEMOS, ACTIVITIES, FOOD & MORE!**

Need more information? Visit: [blackhawk.edu/communityday](https://blackhawk.edu/communityday)

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