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**Unseen Heroes**  
of Health Care

**5 Steps**  
To Build a  
Better Resume

**BTC Alum**  
Hits \$1 Million  
in Sales

**Welding**  
A New Career



**NEW LIFE-CHANGING  
SCHOLARSHIP AT BTC**





**REGISTER  
FOR  
CLASSES  
TODAY!**

**TAKE THE NEXT STEP**

**NEED HELP PAYING FOR CLASSES?**

*Reach out to financial aid to learn more about grants, scholarships, and loan opportunities.*

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**[info@blackhawk.edu](mailto:info@blackhawk.edu)**



I have been looking forward to this message for a very long time. With COVID infections down and vaccinations up, Blackhawk Technical College moved to the final stage of its reopening plan on Monday, June 14. Meaning all BTC campuses are fully open to the public and face masks are no longer required for fully vaccinated individuals. For more information on our COVID-19 response, visit [www.blackhawk.edu/coronavirus](http://www.blackhawk.edu/coronavirus).

We sincerely hope that we have come to the other side of the pandemic and can continue normal operations safely. The safety of our students and employees has been a top priority through this, and we remain steadfast in that commitment.

We continue to live out our mission of offering a flexible education in a supportive environment. Our students, faculty, and staff have risen to the challenges presented by the pandemic, and we have experienced zero community spread of COVID-19 at BTC.

For over 100 years, Blackhawk has provided safe, accessible, hands-on (and virtual) education, and we look forward to serving our communities for years to come. We thank you all for your support, cooperation, and patience during this journey.

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## Tracy Pierner, Ph.D.

President, Blackhawk Technical College



## Blackhawk Technical College Summer 2021 Magazine

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# LIFE-CHANGING OPPORTUNITY

## for First-Generation Student

The Blackhawk Technical College Foundation selected its first IDEAL Opportunity Scholarship recipient for the spring semester 2021. After much deliberation of talented, worthy candidates, the BTC Foundation announced Paola Delgado as the first recipient of this groundbreaking award. This scholarship opportunity will provide Paola (and future recipients) with funds to cover classes and materials, a stipend for living expenses, a faculty

mentor, and an internship in their future career path. This scholarship program is an intentional effort to increase access to education and transform the lives of low-income, first-generation, or students of color entering specific programs:

Industrial Maintenance

Mechanic, Electromechanical Technology, Automation Systems Technology, Nuclear Technology, or Criminal Justice.

This scholarship requires that candidates are nominated by community organizations. Pao, as she prefers to be called, was

nominated by her case manager with Project 16:49. Project 16:49 ensures access to the services and support systems that unaccompanied teens need to remain in school, graduate, and become self-sufficient adults.

As a resident of their transitional living home, Pao's case manager calls her "an excellent example for other residents to follow." Along with being a dedicated student at Blackhawk and a conscientious full-time employee at the Staples Distribution Center, "Paola has a huge heart and will be the first person to comfort [other residents] or use her amazing sense of humor to make them laugh. She has truly become a big sister to all the residents in the house."

"Project 16:49 surrounded me with amazing people. With some of the girls, we are what you call familia, it means family in Spanish. I have so many memories to cherish there and unbreakable bonds that I've built."

Pao's life has been filled with challenges. While born here in the States, her

*"The Criminal Justice program helped me grow into the woman I am right now."*

*-Pao*





Her IDEAL faculty mentor and Criminal Justice instructor Will Walsh said,

*“Pao is academically successful and can always be counted on to contribute intelligently and imaginatively to conversations that cover a wide range of subjects encompassing the Criminal Justice System. She has a maturity beyond her young age and shines with a spark of determination. She will succeed at anything she may put her talents and intelligence towards.”*

parents were Mexican immigrants who spoke Spanish exclusively. Therefore, learning English and doing schoolwork in her second language has always been a challenge. As the eldest of five children, she’s frequently had to put education on the back burner to help care for her younger siblings. With the help of her high school graduation coach and Project 16:49, Pao managed to catch up on her

lagging school work, graduate early, and enroll at Blackhawk.

As the first person in her family to graduate from high school and attend college, she is dedicated to creating a brighter future for herself. As a student in the criminal justice program, Pao plans to become a police officer after graduation. Thanks to the IDEAL Opportunity

Scholarship, she’s interning at the Janesville City Police Department.

***The entire Blackhawk community wishes Pao all the best as she continues on her educational journey!***

## Support the IDEAL OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

The BTC Foundation is grateful to the individuals and organizations who have stepped up to provide financial support to the program’s long-term sustainability, specifically Frito-Lay, SHINE Medical Technologies, Greater Beloit Economic Development Corporation, and BTC employees.

Now, every donation to the IDEAL Opportunity Scholarship will be generously matched by Jim and Sandy Power Schlaudecker - up to \$50,000. Please thoughtfully consider a donation to this matching gift challenge that will help open the doors of education to underrepresented populations in our communities for years to come. Thanks to Jim and Sandy, your gift can go twice as far!

***It’s simple: you give, they match, and the impact of the gift is increased.***

### Ways to Give:

- Donate securely online at [www.tinyurl.com/btcgift](http://www.tinyurl.com/btcgift) (Select: IDEAL Scholarship)
- Mail a check payable to:  
**BTC Foundation** (memo line: IDEAL)  
P.O. Box 5009, Janesville, WI 53547

### Questions:

Lisa Hurda, Director of Advancement & Foundation,  
Blackhawk Technical College

[LHurda@blackhawk.edu](mailto:LHurda@blackhawk.edu) • (608) 757-7704

# 5

## STEPS TO BUILD A BETTER RESUME

Employers spend between six and twenty seconds looking at a resume, so it is important to make a great first impression and keep your resume short and sweet. Make sure it's directly relevant to the job description of the role for which you're applying. It's always good to have several versions on hand.

Here are five steps to create your eye-catching resume:

### 1 The Profile Summary

The profile summary has replaced the resume's objective section and is your billboard to highlight the skills you have to offer prospective employers. This summary should use keywords and adjectives in the job posting to demonstrate your attention to detail. Profiles can be three to five bulleted phrases or a two to three sentence paragraph. There's no right or wrong way, but using bullet points makes it easier for an employer to read.

### 2 Education Section

After the profile summary, you want to list your most recent related degree first. In the education section, you can also include training certificates and any completed coursework. If you haven't graduated yet, list an "anticipated graduation date," the GPA, the degree title, and highlight relevant courses you have completed.

### 3 Professional Experience

Instead of saying work history, you want to use the term professional experience. Professional experiences can include volunteer work, clinicals, and internships. For each of your paid or unpaid experiences, you'll want to have the business name, city, state, job title, month and year you started, and the month and year you stopped working there.

List bullet points about what you did or accomplished using action verbs. Words like managed, maintained, increased, sold, made, developed, etc. If you are still at the job, use present tense verbs. If you are no longer in the position, use past tense verbs. Highlight your impact as much as you can for your past work. Provide data - how much time did you save? How many dollars did you sell? How many new clients did you recruit?

### 4 Honors, Awards & Affiliations

Include any honors and awards that you've received. Make sure you order the honors in reverse chronological order and rank them in order of importance to the career objective. If an award has nothing to do with the job you're pursuing, you may not want to include it.

You may want to include professional affiliations and activities you are part of. Emphasize any leadership roles you've had and spell out the organization's name because employers might not know the abbreviations or acronyms.

### 5 Resume Wrap-Up

A resume is your first introduction to a prospective employer. Make sure you take the time to do it professionally and effectively. Blackhawk students and alumni who would like help crafting the perfect resume can set up an appointment with the resume experts of the BTC Career Center at (608) 757-7603 or [careercenter@blackhawk.edu](mailto:careercenter@blackhawk.edu).



# BTC ALUMNI

## HITS ONE MILLION DOLLARS IN SALES

Shaun Budde was a long-time employee at Lear Seating in Janesville when the GM Plant closed, taking Lear with it. Finding himself without a job and an opportunity to go back to school, he took it. Picking BTC for the simple reason it was just down the road from his house, Shaun initially had his eyes set on a health sciences program. He shifted to the business management program because he harbored a secret desire to open his own canoe rental business.

A month and a half after graduation, he did just that. On June 28, 2010, Shaun launched Kickapoo Wild Adventures, a canoe, kayak, and tube rental on the Kickapoo River in Ontario, Wisconsin.

"It was terrifying when I started writing out some massive checks for the equipment I needed to get my business up and running," Shaun recalled. "I had to sell my house in Janesville to help fund my start-up. I cashed in my 401k as well. Then I sold my car and motorcycle to get the remaining capital I needed. I had great banking credit but couldn't find a bank to finance a new start-up, so I just funded it 100% myself. In hindsight, it was probably a good thing, but at the time, it was very scary."

Most small businesses fail in the first five years, and Shaun has had his share of challenges over the past eleven seasons. First of all, this is a seasonal business. While open only six months out of the year, they do most of their business in the four months between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Second, it is a business highly dependent on the weather.

"In recent years, it has been very tough," Shaun explained. From flooding in 2017 and again in 2018, the business took a hit due to weather and the damage it did to equipment and the river itself. "Then in 2019, we were closed so many days due to rain and high river conditions, it's a wonder how we survived financially."

Not only have they survived, they have thrived. In 2020, Kickapoo hit a massive milestone of one million dollars in sales and is closing in on 50,000 rentals.

"A lot of people told me I was making a huge mistake and wasting all my money when I was first starting out," Shaun recalled, "so it feels great to have done what I have in just 11 short summers."

Shaun has learned many lessons he wishes he'd known when launching a business.

"Don't worry about trying to be cheaper than your competitors; if you offer a quality product or service, the customers will gladly pay more for it. I wasted five years trying to undercut my competitors, and all it did was cost me a lot of money."

Through it all, he's carried his experience at BTC into the work. "My favorite things about BTC," Shaun recalled, "was the wide range of ages, work experience, and life experience of the students. It was exciting to learn with these vastly different people. Going on to higher education is a choice, so make the most of it. Take a leap of faith and make your dreams come true!"

For anyone visiting the Ontario area, or looking for an adventure this summer, check out Shaun's website [www.kickapoowild.com](http://www.kickapoowild.com)

**"Take a leap of faith and make your dreams come true."**

**-Shaun**

# New Self-Paced Leadership Development Offering at BTC

Leadership skills are in high demand more than ever. Blackhawk Technical College is responding to the need by offering new, self-paced leadership development options through its Workforce and Community Development (WCD) department. Workshops can be taken individually or participants can take all of them for a more holistic approach to leadership development. All workshops are offered online and take about a week to complete.

“In line with BTC’s mission, students have the flexibility to finish at their own pace with the convenience and ease of meeting their professional development needs anywhere there is internet access,” said Mark Borowicz, Workforce and Community Development Director at BTC. “Learning is flexible, interesting, and geared to the busy, adult learner.”

The WCD team piloted these workshops this spring to rave reviews. One student commented, “I enjoyed being able to work at my own pace. All the videos and activities broke up some of the reading, which kept me interested in the content. We have just undergone a big change at work, and it was interesting to see some of the things we got right and some of which we got wrong. I am sure I will be able to apply what I learned in the workshop to help lead a successful change initiative.”

Create more career value for yourself and your employer by taking one or more online workshops through BTC. Be ready to meet the high demand for good leaders in today’s workplace!

The workshop offerings include employee engagement, communication strategies, ethics, dealing with difficult people, and more. Registration is now open for summer workshops.



## About the Instructor

Cindy Leverenz, MBA, Ph.D. is all about teaching and learning. As an adult learning specialist, her main gig is teaching leadership skills to all levels of leaders in Rock and Green counties. Mixing fun and practicality in all she does, Cindy provides coaching, consulting, and genuine caring in the success of others. When she is not working, she enjoys gardening, acrylic painting, getting outside with the dogs, and keeping her husband on his toes!

**FLEXIBLE & GEARED  
TO FIT YOUR  
BUSY LIFESTYLE!**

*Elevate your workplace skills  
by choosing from a variety  
of workshop topics to  
finish at your own pace.*

Contact us to learn more!

(608) 757-7623 • [BusinessDevelopment@blackhawk.edu](mailto:BusinessDevelopment@blackhawk.edu)

*“Students can  
take classes when  
it is flexible  
for them.”*

*-Cindy Leverenz*

# SADDLING UP FOR SUCCESS

*"Though it will take time, determination, and hard work, I know through the knowledge and skills I have gained at BTC I will be successful." -Brianna*

Brianna didn't thrive in high school but managed to graduate with the help and support of her family. Instead of taking a break from school, she chose to look at what options were available outside of a four-year university.

"I wish high schools talked more about what an incredible option technical colleges are," she explained. "When I found the agribusiness program at BTC, I knew I could handle trying the one-year certificate program and then go from there. I couldn't be happier I decided to go for it!"

Initially, Brianna started as a student in the agribusiness science/technology program based at the Monroe Campus to learn more about animal science. During her first semester, she discovered how much bigger the industry was than she'd ever thought.

"I can now earn a one-year technical diploma," she noted, "a two-year Associate's Degree, a Commercial Driver's License, a Commercial Applicator's License, a Certified Crop Advisor certification, and find a job that will pay for me to get my Bachelor's Degree. This way," she noted "I save so much money and have many accomplishments to add to my resume."

There have been a few holes in the trail along the way that have caused her to stumble. During her second semester at BTC, Brianna lost a good friend and struggled to focus on school.

"I failed some classes and was so disappointed in myself," she remembered. In an attempt to regain her passion, she took some time off from BTC and pursued work with the Minnesota Horse Training Academy, where she has since become one of their Certified Horse Trainers. "I knew I wanted to go back to BTC, but I needed a little time. I remember getting calls and emails from my

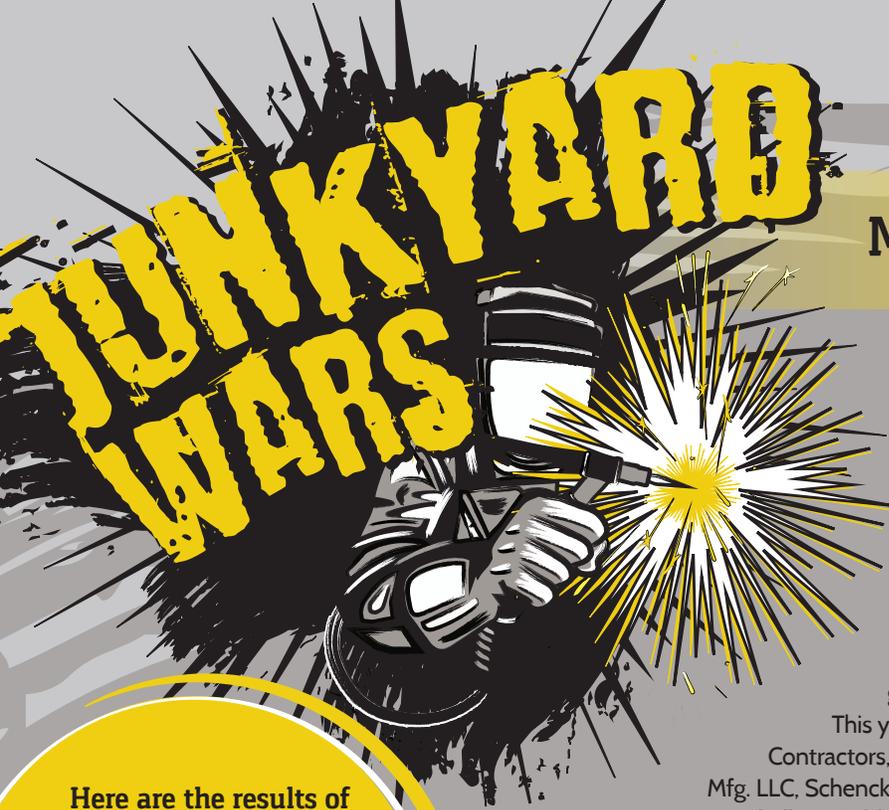
instructor, Dustin Williams. He wanted to see me back at school, and he's the reason I'm here today."

That ability to be flexible in how she achieves her goals is one reason why Brianna appreciates BTC. She can take fewer classes in the fall during harvest time and do more work during the winter.

"During the first semester, I took a class specifically to help students accomplish their career goals," she recalled. "Before that, I didn't have a specific direction, but through that class and many others, I narrowed down exactly what I wanted to do. I now have a business plan and goals to help me reach success. It's one of the most rewarding feelings to reach each milestone, and I have BTC to thank for that."

Now, three years into her BTC journey, Brianna is an active member of the BTC Student Government Association and Professional Agricultural Students (PAS). Recently, she even served as the president over the Wisconsin PAS. As if that weren't enough to keep her busy, she's excited to be starting her own business this year, taking over ownership of the Minnesota Horse Training Academy.





## Making Art from the Rubble

Each spring, Blackhawk Technical College's welding program hosts Junkyard Wars, an event where high school students create art from junk. Literally. Teams from area high schools compete at BTC's Advanced Manufacturing Training Center in Milton. After going through safety training, teams select pieces of metal from a large junk pile. From what appears to be ruins, the teams create masterpieces, competing for prizes donated by local manufacturers and suppliers.

The event is widely supported by industry partners who generously donate give-a-ways and prizes for the participants.

This year, Junkyard Wars was supported by Airgas, Corporate Contractors, Inc., Endres Manufacturing Co., Lincoln Electric, Miller Electric Mfg. LLC, Schenck Process LLC, Stainless Tank and Equipment, Stoughton Trailers, United Alloy, Welders Supply, and WeldStar.

### Here are the results of the 2021 Junkyard Wars:

- 1st Place - Belleville High School
- 2nd Place - Milton High School
- 3rd Place - Turner High School
- 4th Place - Parker High School
- 5th Place - Craig High School

Mark your calendars for **May 20, 2022** as planning is already underway for next year's event which will be open to the public. If you are interested in learning more, contact AMTC at **(608) 757-7628**.



# WELDING A NEW CAREER

Shawn Babbitt first came to Blackhawk to complete his High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED). As he explained, “The entire time I’ve been a student at Blackhawk, I have been on parole for bad decisions I’ve made in the past and continue to strive away from that time in my life.”

After finishing his HSED at BTC, Shawn was nervous about moving into a college program. “I was skeptical. I made several stops to the school to look at programs without ever registering, and finally, my wife just said it was time to stop putting it off, and I finally registered for welding. It was the best decision I could have made.”

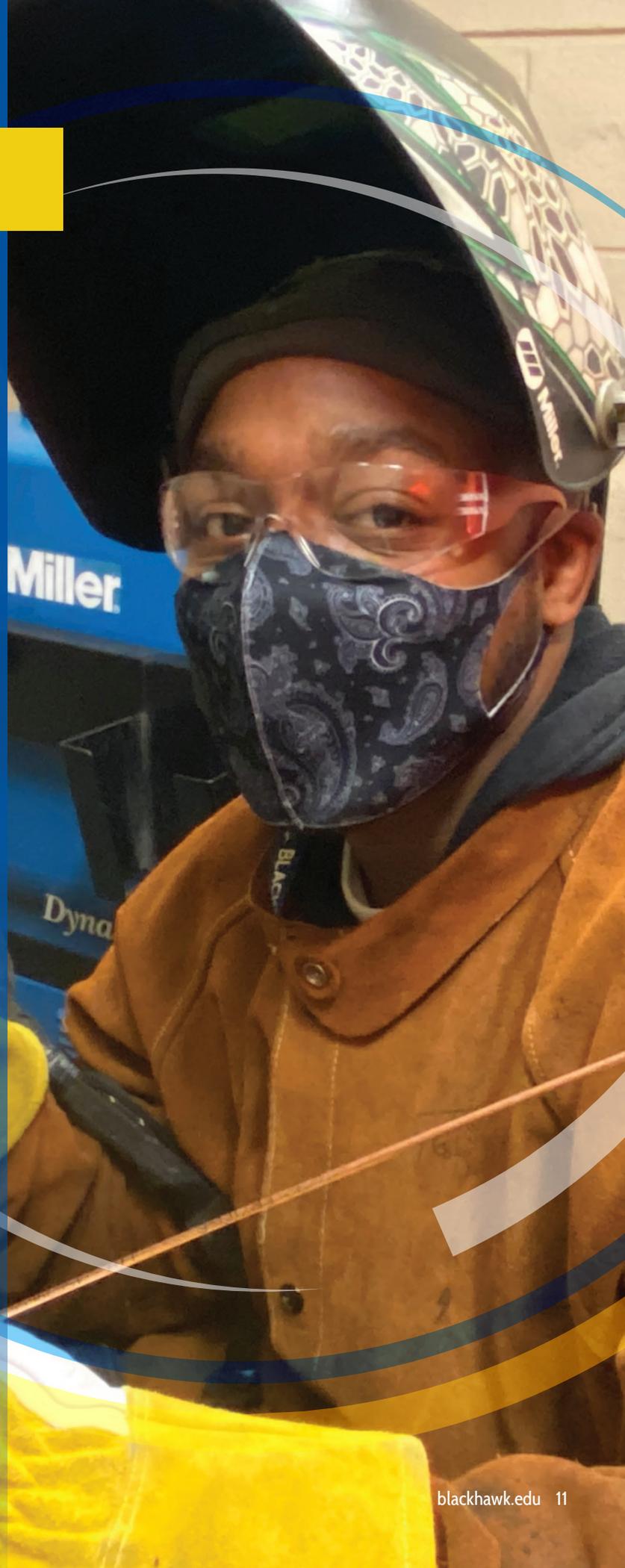
Choosing to join the welding program, he has found both a career path and a purpose. “It’s all been tough,” Shawn said about getting his life back on track. In January, he experienced another blow when he lost his father. “Being able to get in the lab, under my helmet, and lost in my welds has been a big stress-reliever for me.”

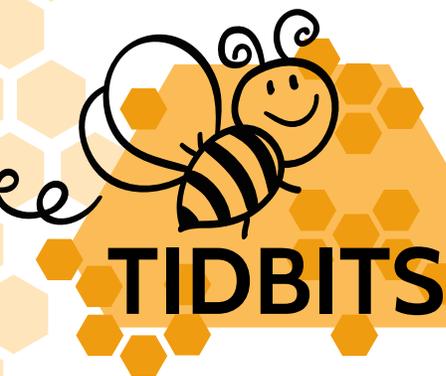
A welder fabricates and joins metal parts through the use of equipment that creates intense heat. Welders must have the ability to study blueprints or project specifications and calculate the dimensions of the parts to be welded. Welders also inspect materials or structures that need welding, monitor the process of welding as a caution for overheating, and maintain welding machinery and equipment. Blackhawk provides skills in eight different types of welding within an advanced manufacturing training facility that is the envy of other colleges in the region and state.

The hands-on aspect of welding was one of the things that drew Shawn to this program. The acceptance and guidance of his instructors has, in his own words, “given me self-discipline, time-management, and motivation in the lab and my personal life.”

“Shawn is an exemplary student who has overcome many obstacles in life and during his time in the welding program. Regardless of the adversities, Shawn remains positive and works hard to achieve his goals in the Welding Lab and in his personal life. We are all very proud of him,” said BTC Welding Instructor Nick Mauer.

Outside of school, Shawn enjoys trying new restaurants and cooking for his wife and three kids. “Grilled salmon with a fresh homemade salsa is my family’s new favorite.” As pandemic restrictions lift, he is eager to go out to eat again. He’s also excited to finally attend that Milwaukee Bucks game he had tickets to in March 2020.





## CULINARY EARNS TOP DESIGNATION

BTC culinary arts recently earned the highest honor from its accrediting body, the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation Accrediting Commission (ACFEFAC). The exemplary status is the highest standard recognized by the Commission. BTC's program was the first in Wisconsin to earn this designation in 2006. There are currently 13 accredited culinary programs in Wisconsin and Illinois, and only four of those have earned this distinction.



## STAFF OF THE YEAR

Congrats to Lacey Rebarchek, Welcome Center Assistant, who was selected by the student body as the 2020-2021 Staff Member of the Year. One student said, "She remembers people by name, runs her area like a boss, and knows more about the college than I think anyone else ever."



## HUMAN SERVICES ACCREDITATION

Congratulations to the human services associate program at Blackhawk Technical College for receiving initial accreditation by the Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE). The program initially launched during the 2018-19 academic year. Students in the human service field are on the front lines of providing help and hope for the most vulnerable people in our communities, and it is one of the most popular BTC programs.

## FACULTY OF THE YEAR

BTC students bestowed the annual honor to a faculty member who has given her talents to BTC for almost three decades, Kay Fratiante. In addition to her role as accounting faculty, she has served in leadership roles such as program faculty chair as well as a chair in our shared governance system.



## STUDENT OF THE YEAR

"It is very rare to have a student achieve so much both in and out of the classroom in two years." This is what one faculty member said about 2020-2021 Student of the Year, Josh Lichtfuss. Josh was president of BTC Student Government Association and BTC's chapter of Business Professionals of America. He graduated this May with his degree in business management.



## SURGICAL TECH ACCREDITATION

The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) awarded initial accreditation to the surgical technology program at BTC. Graduates of the program that launched in 2019 may be employed in a variety of areas such as the operating room, labor and delivery, physicians' offices, catheter labs, and outpatient surgery centers.



## BTC STUDENTS SHINE AT NATIONALS

Blackhawk Technical College business and information technology students competed at the Business Professionals of America (BPA) National Leadership Conference this spring, earning ten top-three finishes. The virtual conference involved workshops, demonstrations, and competitions. The four Blackhawk Technical College students earning top awards included Mallory Worden (Janesville), Natalie Sullivan (Janesville), Josh Lichtfuss (Orfordville), and Dave Jaeckel (Beloit).



### WELCOME NEW BTC FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER

With a rich family history of philanthropy and community service, George Cullen jumped at the opportunity to join the BTC Foundation Board of Directors this spring. George is a strong advocate for technical colleges as he sees the crucial roles they play in providing opportunities for students and the workforce pipeline. As Co-President of JP Cullen, he has the same desire - to find and develop talent within the region as well as their organization.



### CONGRATS TO THE BTC MARKETING TEAM!

The National Council for Marketing and Public Relations has recognized Marketing and Communications with Medallion Awards for their exemplary work. Specifically, they earned a Bronze Medallion for the "You Are Our Superhero" postcard sent on Teacher Appreciation Day. And, they received a Silver Medallion Award for their Crisis Communications in response to COVID-19.



### NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP AWARDED TO BTC DEAN

Congratulations to Moira Lafayette, Dean of Health Sciences and Public Safety at Blackhawk Technical College for her selection as one of 20 nationwide recipients of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) 2021 Postsecondary Leadership Success Program. The program supports current and aspiring leaders in career and technical education (CTE), providing professional and career growth opportunities to leaders at nonprofits and postsecondary institutions offering CTE programs.



## PACK THE PANTRY

A special thank you to the BTC Foundation and Forward Janesville Ambassadors for their recent efforts to Pack the Pantry. This campaign helped collect food and personal hygiene items to benefit BTC students through the Student Cupboard.

# Public Safety + Transportation Center

## THE PSTC WILL BE:



**SAFE.** A dedicated, controlled environment that provides specialized training equipment including a road course for safe, behind-the-wheel practice for future and current fire safety, EMT, law enforcement, busing, and truck driving personnel.



**COMPREHENSIVE.** A multi-purpose, broad-based facility to support public safety and transportation students and regional partners to meet increasingly complex and rigorous training requirements.



**LOCAL.** A centrally located, easily accessible facility to serve students and community partners in Rock and Green counties and beyond for specialized training, recertification, and regional workforce development.



**RESPONSIVE.** A consolidated and dynamic facility that streamlines and supports our mission to provide a flexible education in a supportive environment, consistently responding to the changing needs of our students and regional workforce.



To be designed:

#Education Instructional Building

\*High Bay Public Safety Training Hub

## THE CENTER WILL SERVE STUDENTS IN THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

- Automotive Technician
- CDL/Truck Driver Training
- Diesel & Heavy Equipment Technician
- Electric Power Distribution
- EMS/EMT
- Fire Protection Technician
- Law Enforcement
- Motorcycle Rider Safety
- Ongoing professional training and skills development



## TIMELINE

NOV.  
2020

PSTC Referendum Approved

SPRING  
2021

Design and Construction Underway

FALL  
2021

Emergency Vehicle Operations Course Available for Use; Center for Transportation Studies Complete

WINTER  
2021

Scenario Training Village Available for Use

DEC.  
2023

Celebrate Grand Opening of the Public Safety + Transportation Center!

## NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

All members of the Blackhawk Technical College community are presented with this historic opportunity to enhance the BTC learning experience for decades to come by pledging your support to our cutting edge training facility. Your gift is an investment in a trained and relevant workforce for southern Wisconsin. Become a PSTC donor and:

**DEMONSTRATE** industry and community leadership of the highest level

**RECEIVE** donor recognition in materials, media, and activities related to the training center

**PROVIDE** high-profile name recognition exposure to students, the public, current workers, and public safety & transportation industry affiliates along a main corridor in Rock County.

The BTC Foundation maintains the list of available naming opportunities as some may have already been claimed. Naming opportunity requests are honored in the order they are received and donors will be notified if their choice is not available. Visit [blackhawk.edu/PSTC](https://blackhawk.edu/PSTC) for more information about the project and specific naming opportunities available.



*“We have phenomenal technical expertise in the MLT program.”*

*-Kathi*

When Kathi Winker graduated from high school, she had no idea what she wanted to do. “I sat with this guidance counselor, and he looked at my scores and said, ‘You’re strong in English and science; I don’t know what we’re going to do with you.’ I looked at a long list of possible careers and saw ‘medical technologist’ listed. It was the longest word on the page, and I said that’s what I want to do.”

It turns out Kathi is not the only student who stumbled into the MLT program by accident – many BTC students would say the same thing. Now the practices, procedures, and training of students in the career is Kathi’s passion.

While people don’t see medical lab techs working behind the scenes when they visit the doctor, they provide 70% of the diagnostic information physicians use to treat patients. They collect the samples and operate the analyzers ensuring that physicians get the best numbers. Many technicians start their career as generalists, where they provide all of the testing

## 2021 Alumni of the Year: **Brittany Kelly**

Brittany Kelly was in one of the first cohorts of students who completed the medical lab tech program when it first launched at Blackhawk.

“I liked being a part of something that was beginning. It was new, and we were all figuring it out together.”

She took that knowledge and has now worked in the blood bank for Mercyhealth’s Janesville location since her graduation in 2013. As this year’s Alumni of the Year, she demonstrates her continued appreciation for the program by returning regularly to share her knowledge.

Brittany enjoys the fact that the blood bank is the only lab department certified to put things into patients and take them out. This can include blood and platelets, but also organs and bones waiting for transplant. As she explains, “It’s so much more than just what your blood type is. You have different sugars that are in your blood cells that some people develop antibodies for. So it’s almost like a giant Sudoku puzzle trying to figure it out when people have problems with blood transfusions.”

Kathi Winker, Medical Lab Technician Instructor, remembers Brittany fondly as a student and as an alumna. “Every single

day that Brittany came to class, she was this bubbly, excited person who was so looking forward to her laboratory career. A week after she graduated, I received an email saying, ‘look at the cool pictures I took on the microscope. These are urine crystals.’ And that began our post-graduation relationship.” This continued relationship is only part of the reason why Kathi nominated Brittany for Alumni of the Year.

Each year Brittany returns to the MLT program in Monroe to help students prepare for their clinical training. This is her opportunity to ensure she has quality coworkers in the future. “I think it’s

# UNSEEN HEROES OF HEALTH CARE

services and they typically advance their skills by specializing in a specific area.

“I think that we have an opportunity post-pandemic,” Kathi said, “to raise our hands and say, you know those millions of COVID tests, we did that. The COVID tents are collecting the tests, and we’re running the tests. So we are exposed to the virus regularly because we know that it’s helping people.”

MLT graduates are in high demand, especially now. Kathi is thrilled that every MLT 2021 graduate already has a job in their chosen field. The job market is desperate for qualified technicians. The need, she said, “right now is critical. It became critical in the pandemic. Like many in healthcare careers, we are an aging workforce. Many people have worked in the lab between 30 and 40 years and are hoping to retire soon.”

Along with Kathi, the MLT program has additional outstanding instructors, including Dan Harrigan and Kevin

Holman. Dan is a molecular biologist and microbiology specialist who started his career in pharmaceutical research developing therapies for brain disorders. Kevin is a biochemist and lead lab manager for flex lab, who brings additional manufacturing focus to the program.

“We have phenomenal technical expertise at the Monroe campus for the MLT program,” Kathi noted. “You can’t say that in many colleges, quite honestly, especially in two-year technical colleges.”

Kathi recommends a chemistry and biology background for those interested in the program. But that is not a deal-breaker; Blackhawk knows how to grow students in those areas.

“We look at each student to see where their strengths are,” Kathi said. “We look at where they land in their admissions test scores and will help develop those skills; that’s our job. We get folks comfortable with chemistry if they’re more biology-minded and get folks comfortable with

biology if they’re chemists. So that’s on us.”

Blackhawk has been doing hybrid courses for years. This wasn’t something that was put together during the pandemic; it was already there. Many classes are hybrid featuring an online portion and a hands-on laboratory portion. Over the past year, the MLT program has refined many simulation products knowing that being hands-on is an integral part of developing good technicians.

*“When students come to the MLT program on the Monroe campus, they’re going to get their hands dirty,” Kathi explained. “You’re going to draw blood samples, get your hands into the analyzer, and you’re going to produce a test result.”*

The MLT program does not have a waitlist and has spots available for the fall cohort. With the great need for qualified technicians, now is the time to consider a career in this exciting field.

essential to support the student base,” she says. “We hear in the news so much about how there’s a nursing shortage. There’s just as much of a lab tech shortage. We have probably 10s of 1,000s of people retiring.”

Many things have changed at BTC since she was a student. “I would like to commend Kathi for how far the program has come. I am seeing graduates of the program that are coming into the workforce much more prepared.”

She hopes to come back and teach in the program someday. But for now, she enjoys returning to see how far the program has come since her graduation.

*“BTC gave me a fantastic starting point. I’m going through a four-year university online, which I wouldn’t be able to do without my MLT degree from BTC!”*  
-Brittany

*Congratulations, Brittany, and thank you for your continued service!*



# Challenges on the road to GRADUATION

Blackhawk recently celebrated the graduation of its GED and HSED students. These programs are critical components of the college's mission to help students build their future with a flexible education in a supportive environment.

Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Karen Schmitt, kicked off the evening congratulating students on their accomplishment during an historic pandemic. "The pandemic has tested the resilience of these students and their instructors," she said, "as they worked together to adjust to the new instructional delivery method. It was a test that they passed with flying colors. In addition to learning new technologies to access their classes, we know that many of our graduates have also had to overcome significant personal obstacles."

Three graduates of the program had the opportunity to share their obstacles and experiences on the road to graduation.

Student speaker Alfredo Hernandez spoke about how his educational journey reminded him of being in a boxing match. Life had knocked him down repeatedly while he faced the choice to get up or stay down. Twelve years ago, he tried to get his diploma but only got as far as the receptionist's desk. As a 36-year-old father of five, he yearned to be a hard-working role model for them but didn't have the support needed to get off the ropes. "At first," he said, "I wanted to get this diploma to show off at work. To say 'I can get a job now.' If your goal is to get a job, don't worry, you'll get a job, but remember that if you stay at school, you'll better yourself."



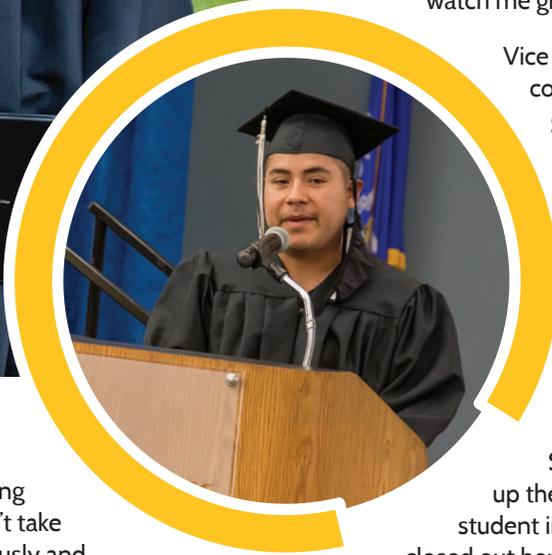
As a mother of two who married young, Martha Fernandez had responsibilities that kept her from finishing her studies. Backed by her family's motto that it's never too late to achieve your goals, Martha expressed her appreciation for the program that "has greatly helped

## CONGRATS CLASS OF 2021





to work and support her daughter full time. This was her second attempt at completing the program. “I knew this time was different,” Stephanie said, “I had to graduate. My mother had fallen ill with Lou Gehrig’s disease. It is a rare disorder, and there’s no cure. Our family has watched her health decline dramatically in months. When her health started declining, I decided it was time to get my HSED. I wanted my mom to be alive to watch me graduate.”



Vice President Schmitt commended the graduates for facing their challenges and arriving at this pivotal milestone in their educational journey, praising all of BTC’s GED/HSED students for their commitment and perseverance.

me improve my reading, writing, and understanding of English.” Now that she’s completed the first step of her goal, she will be entering the criminal justice program here at Blackhawk Tech.

journey to a diploma. While growing up, she didn’t take school seriously and did not think graduating was important. At 18, she became a mother and dropped out of school

Stephanie summed up the experience of every student in the room as she closed out her comments, “it might have taken us longer than we had hoped, but we did it. ***Congratulations to all the students of Class of 2021!***”



# NEW Scholarships

## Harry Sieren Memorial Scholarship

Deemed as a man who could fix anything, Harry Sieren was a business owner who spent his life teaching many young men valuable life and trade skills. To honor his legacy, a new named scholarship has been created for BTC students pursuing the auto technician and diesel and heavy equipment technician programs.



Each high school in Rock and Green counties is allotted at least one award for a high school senior committed to attending BTC. Students received this \$500 one-time award during their high school's spring honor ceremony.

## Donna McKearn Memorial Endowed Scholarship



A longtime resident of Beloit, Donna spent her life nurturing children. Therefore, her children chose to celebrate her legacy with a scholarship for education students at BTC. According to her son, Tim McKearn of Beloit, "My mom loved children, and... we wanted to provide support to individuals wishing to pursue careers in childcare or early childhood work."

## Executive Chef Graham Smith Memorial Culinary Endowment Scholarship

Chef Graham, a native of Janesville, known for his work ethic and sense of humor, believed in giving back and valued his role as a mentor. He was the Director of Food and Beverage at the Chula Vista Resort in the Wisconsin Dells when he passed. This new scholarship opportunity will help develop future epicurean talents in the BTC culinary arts program.



Claire Czosnek	Rock County Christian
Julisa Melendrez	Beloit Memorial High School
Isabel Saucedo	Beloit Memorial High School
Savanna Schwartzlow	Brodhead High School
Isabella Gilmour	Edgerton High School
Humberto Casique	Beloit Learning Academy
Cassandra Eggen	Rock University High School
Mariana Tinajero-Espinoza	Evansville High School
Tiana Salinas	Rock River Charter High School
Charley Fortney	Monroe High School
Tess Nafzger	Monroe High School
Isabella Carnes	Juda High School
Ashley Letcher	Albany High School
Sierra Sherman	Monticello
Zoe Buster	Parkview High School
Ivan Ayala	Craig High School
Zyon Phiffer	Craig High School
Logan Dahlke	Parker High School
Brandan Annen	Parker High School
Colby Knox	Milton High School
Emily Davis	Milton High School
Makayla Nimmo	Clinton High School
Tristan Miller	Turner High School
Jack Powell	TAGOS

To learn how easy it is to create a scholarship or provide financial gifts in support of scholarships through the BTC Foundation, contact Lisa Hurda at [LHurda@blackhawk.edu](mailto:LHurda@blackhawk.edu) or make a gift at [www.tinyurl.com/BTCgift](http://www.tinyurl.com/BTCgift)



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*“Do what you want to do. Don’t let others influence your decisions that will shape your future.”*

*-Jace*

## PROGRAMMING A NEW PATH

For Jace Jensen, the journey to BTC has been one of learning about himself and what kind of a career he wanted to pursue. High school started rough for Jace since he struggled with an undiagnosed learning disability. Getting help with the learning issues made the rest of high school a little easier, but he still failed to meet his potential.

“I had a difficult time focusing or finding the motivation to excel educationally,” Jace said. “Toward the end of high school, it was a scramble to find what I wanted to do with my life, and I was pushed toward a four-year university to study business marketing.”

Jace began that degree at a nearby university. “Entering college, I had a fantastic start,” he explained, “and thought I had found my calling. I overcame my learning disability, but at the same time, I realized that business was not what I wanted to study.”

He began to struggle again but realized it was related to his career path and not academics as a whole. “I needed to do what was best for myself and find a new path. This long and difficult process directed me to Blackhawk, where I am happier than ever.”

Now in the manufacturing IT program, Jace is excited about the challenges that come with the field. Since transferring, he’s finding joy in the work and feels like he’s learning new material every day that he can apply directly to his intended job choice.

***“Blackhawk very clearly laid out my educational path as well as potential careers for my future which helped me, since it’s often hard to see what my future holds. Seeing the light at the end of the tunnel pushes me to do well and complete the program.”***

Marissa Greuel Hainstock, Academic Advisor at BTC, noted that “Jace has been a conscientious student from the start. I have been impressed by his willingness to ask questions and advocate for himself. During our Master Academic Plan (MAP) meeting, Jace talked about the challenges he faced with his previous college experience. He found the solutions to those challenges right in his backyard with BTC. Jace is highly motivated, did his research before applying to BTC, and is a champion for the educational setting we provide.”

After BTC, he hopes to find a career that will showcase his skills. His advice to other students is straightforward, “Do what you want to do. Don’t let others such as teachers, parents, or other peers influence your decisions that will shape your future.”

Jace has found BTC to be the perfect college for those who want to try something new, get into the workforce early, or study something they love in a very hands-on learning environment.

### Associate Degrees

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

### Technical Diplomas

- Accounting Assistant
- 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
- Entry Maintenance Technician
- Farm Business & Production Management
- Flux Core Arc Welding
- Gas Metal Arc Welding
- Gas Tungsten Arc Welding
- Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Technology
- Industrial Maintenance Mechanic
- Laboratory Science Technician Assistant
- Law Enforcement Basic Recruit Academy
- Manufacturing Information Technology Specialist
- Medical Assistant
- Nursing Assistant
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Residential HVAC
- Shielded Metal Arc Welding
- Substance Abuse Education
- Truck Driving
- Welding

## COMING FALL 2021

- Air Conditioning, Heating & Refrigeration Technology
- Manufacturing Engineering Technology

### Certificates

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

### Apprenticeships

- Electrical Apprenticeship
- Industrial Electrical Apprenticeship
- Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship
- Mechatronics Apprenticeship

### Adult Education

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

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