

Chicago native and BHC student Chiquita White moved to the Quad-Cities with her family for a fresh start.

White said it felt like home when they visited for her husband's job interview. He got the job, and the Quad-Cities officially became home.

Going back to school



While living in Rock Island, White realized she wanted to take a different career path, which would begin with earning her GED at BHC's Adult Learning Center.

White previously received a high school diploma from a correspondence school in Chicago in 2009.

She was devastated to learn later that the school was not accredited, so accredited colleges would not acknowledge it.

"It initially took me a long time to decide to get a GED, because I was ashamed," White said. "I was under the belief that a GED made me a less desirable employee, college student, or person."

She felt comfortable at the Adult Learning Center, however, noting "the wonderful and helpful staff made it clear that they cared about my success."

College goals

While pursuing her GED, a conversation with a recruiter made her realize Black Hawk College was the right choice for her for college, too.

“When the recruiter explained that Black Hawk College offered the LPN program, I was hooked,” White said, adding she already knew she wanted to pursue a higher education in [nursing](#).

White completed her GED in June 2017 and started college courses at Black Hawk College in August 2017. She was accepted into the BHC Practical Nursing (LPN) program and is excited to begin classes for it in August. She will graduate in May 2020.

She’s not planning on being done with Black Hawk College then, though. She will work as an LPN while taking a few more classes. Then she will apply to the online LPN/LVN to BSN degree program at Indiana State University. Her ultimate career goal is to become a nurse practitioner.

“I love helping people become better versions of themselves,” White said. “I want to help people improve their quality of life and help them stay healthy mentally and physically.”

Finding a balance

When she is not in class, White is busy at home or working in the recruitment office. She enjoys helping students and their families become more familiar with the campus and letting students know about BHC resources.

BHC recruiting manager Gabriella Hurtado said White makes sure people get connected to the information or resources they need and “has shown to not only be a strong and dedicated woman, but also a great leader and team player.”



Balancing work, school and family is a constant in White’s life. She said she’s not sure if the three will ever be perfectly balanced, but she has learned to prioritize what is most important each day.

Her advice for those considering going back to school as nontraditional students is to do it. At Black Hawk College, she noted there are resources available to help you, and the staff wants you to flourish in any educational endeavor you pursue.

“I realized that my fear of failure and not being good enough held me back from going back to school sooner,” White said. “Since I have started at Black Hawk College, I am much happier. I am going to school to learn about a career I love.”

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