

Nursing ended up being the ultimate destination of BHC graduate Ian Hutto's winding career path, and a perfect fit.

"A college education and nursing degree, along with my now two years of nursing experience, have given me more confidence and meaning in my life than I ever thought possible," he said.

His educational journey

Hutto grew up in Chicago and the suburbs, and graduated from St. Laurence High School in Burbank in 2003.

He attended Northern Illinois University for a semester, but felt so unsure of his future, he returned home to attend Moraine Valley Community College.



"I took a variety of courses but was still unsure of my path," Hutto said.

So, he paused college and began working. Throughout his 20s he worked full-time. Then he moved to the Quad-Cities and enrolled at Black Hawk College in 2011.

Course offerings, a reasonable cost and location made Black Hawk College the right choice for Hutto.

"I started back slow and finished my Associate in Science," he said.

Inspired by a love of science, Hutto researched health sciences careers - he thought physical therapist or athletic therapist might be great fits.

He spoke to physical therapists, physicians, and nurses, including his mother-in-law, to learn more about their jobs and thoughts on their careers.

Hutto weighed the opportunities, and nursing came out on top.

"I finally saw a career that I would not only be good at and enjoy, but a career that would help me continue to grow into the person I want to be," he said.

Hutto decided to apply for the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) program. The program accepted him, and he started in the spring of 2015.

Nursing: demanding and rewarding

He loved the amount of clinical and hands-on time allocated for students.

He saw other schools limiting what their students could do, while at Black Hawk College he was able to participate in procedures and every day interventions.



Hutto enjoyed studying on the beautiful campus, especially during fall, but his favorite part about Black Hawk College was the staff, especially Assistant Professor Daniel Garcia.

"He was encouraging and funny all while being upfront and dead serious about what was

required,” Hutto said.

After graduating from the ADN program, Hutto earned his bachelor’s degree in nursing from University of Illinois at Chicago.

Now he works as an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) nurse. Hutto says helping people through some of the worst times they have ever experienced is gratifying.

“The ability to utilize my empathy and compassion on a regular basis is extremely cathartic,” he said. “I need to exercise those characteristics to be happy, and nursing is all about both of them.”

Hutto’s advice for those considering a career in nursing is to know you have to be willing to give a lot of yourself and time since it is so demanding “and the education behind it is no different,” but it is completely worth it.

“If you want to truly learn about and help human beings, nursing is a wonderful profession.”

Hutto appreciates the education and experience he received at Black Hawk College and jumped at the chance to promote the program. You may see him on billboards as you drive around the Quad-Cities area.

Learn more about Black Hawk College’s [nursing programs](#).

The American Nurses Association named May 6-12 National Nurses Week in 1993. The purpose of the week is to celebrate the nursing profession and recognize the contributions and positive of impact of nurses.

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