

Each donation to Black Hawk College East Foundation takes on a life of its own.

That's one message foundation executive director Danielle Williams wants donors to know.

"If you give, it starts this trajectory of giving for generations and generations to come," she said.



The donations help students, who become alumni, who often become donors themselves. The foundation appreciates any level of support, and every donation has an impact.

"Giving comes in all forms," Williams said. "Whether it is \$5 or \$5,000, we're going to put those dollars to use and you're going to make a difference in someone's life."

The Black Hawk College East Foundation is the primary support partner of the East Campus of Black Hawk College.

Coming to Black Hawk College

Williams started working for the BHC East Foundation in September 2019. Before accepting the Black Hawk College position, she was coordinator of scholarships and donor relations at Carl Sandburg College.



"I was living in Kewanee, driving to Galesburg every day," she said.

"When that popped up, I was like, 'That is what I am doing now, but it is in my backyard.' "

Williams earned a bachelor of science in psychology at Illinois State University and her master of arts in student personnel administration at St. Louis University.

Although she didn't graduate from a community college, she started at Illinois State with 12 college credits she earned in high school as a dual credit student.

In retrospect, Williams said she wishes she had studied at a community college for her first two years of college.

She said attending a community college is a great way to affordably figure out what you what to do and noted, "You still meet incredible people here."

Foundation's lasting impact

The Black Hawk College East Foundation has awarded 107 scholarships totaling more than \$100,000 to 80 students for the 2020-21 school year.

The foundation anticipates awarding \$15,000 to \$20,000 in additional scholarships in Spring 2021.

This year has been challenging with COVID-19 interrupting events, which are a source of income, but Williams noted that fortunately, donors have continued to give.

She loves how connected alumni and donors are and enjoys hearing their stories, as well as students' stories and seeing their gratitude.



The year has brought an increase in crisis fund requests. The foundation's crisis fund can help students with expenses like overdue bills, groceries and tuition assistance.

The foundation also helps make a food pantry at the college possible and awards mini-grants for faculty and staff to enhance programming.

Two grant examples include high-tech microscopes and Studio BHE: One-Button Studio, which allows students to easily record speeches.

Williams wants donors to know that when they invest in Black Hawk College, they also are investing in the community, and for prospective students to know the value of studying at Black Hawk.

"Yes, it is affordable, but you're really getting quality education here," she said. "All of our faculty are highly skilled, they are highly enthusiastic, and they want you to enjoy your time here."

Giving Tuesday, a day encouraging people to do good, is Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020.

Supporting the [Black Hawk College East Foundation](#) is one way to make a difference.

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