

Dr. Richard Bush has a message for potential students.

“We are here for you. Whatever your dream is, we can help you achieve it.”

Black Hawk College helps students who will transfer to four-year colleges, those seeking career education to prepare for jobs, and others needing to build their foundation skills, he said.



In August 2019, Dr. Bush joined the college as the dean of career programs. His duties include supporting faculty with assessment of student learning, faculty development and curriculum development.

A major focus is strengthening courses and programs to provide the best possible education for students while simultaneously addressing the workforce needs of the community.

In addition to assessment, Dr. Bush also has responsibilities involving planning, budgeting, community relations, grants, donations and committee work.

In less than two years at Black Hawk, he has served on two successful grant teams:

- The **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Improvement Grant** will support a new Cybersecurity Associate in Applied Science (AAS) program. Black Hawk

purchased NETLAB+ and associated equipment, which allows instructors to deliver content and virtual labs to students.

- The **Innovative Bridge and Transitions Grant** will support the Expanding Career Pathways project, which is focused on increasing the number of female and minority students entering high-wage, in-demand occupations through the development of an Automotive Technology Career Pathway.

Dr. Bush also said he is very proud of how the college has handled COVID-19. Specifically, the resiliency and tenacity of faculty and students that has ensured student success.

“Being part of a team like that is what I am most proud of,” he said.

## Black Hawk College’s impact

Dr. Bush decided to come to Black Hawk because the college’s mission and positive impact on the community appealed to him.

“We provide an avenue for individuals to affordably learn the skills they need for a changing workplace or acquire the transfer courses they need to further their education,” he said.



Dr. Richard Bush, dean of career programs, addresses Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) graduates and their loved ones at the December 2019 pinning ceremony.

When it comes to career programs specifically, he noted that area employers often refer to BHC graduates as highly prepared and ready to contribute their first day on the job.

Students can earn AAS degrees or certificates depending on what they decide to study. From accounting to welding, Black Hawk College offers a wide range of options, and the offerings will soon expand even more.

“I am excited about the start of our Cybersecurity AAS and Court Reporting AAS programs in Fall 2021,” Dr. Bush said. “Demand for

both careers is very high, and will remain high well into the future.”

Other upcoming changes include updates to the manufacturing curriculum and certificates and the anticipated launch of an Occupational Therapy Assistant AAS program in Fall 2022.

Dr. Bush’s favorite part of his job is interacting with members of the Black Hawk College community – faculty, staff, students and others in District #503.

“Each interaction brings into focus why we are here and what we, as an institution, bring to the larger community,” he said.

## Career path and education

Before joining the BHC team, Dr. Bush worked for Baker College in Michigan as the dean of the College of Information Technology.

His first job in higher education was interim associate dean for learning resources and technology and lecturer for the College of Technology at Eastern Michigan University.

Then, Dr. Bush worked for Lawrence Technological University first as a faculty member and later as the executive director for LTU Online and eLearning Services.

He entered the higher education field after working in information technology for a variety of employers.

Dr. Bush’s IT experience includes working for the military, as well as in the legal, retail, cable, automotive, service and consulting industries.

While serving in the Air Force, Dr. Bush earned credits at the Community College of the Air Force, City Colleges of Chicago and the University of Maryland University Center.



Dr. Richard Bush, dean of career programs, speaks at an English as a Second Language (ESL) Mentors & Mentees Program meeting in

He transferred to Spring Arbor College where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in management and organizational development. Dr. Bush also earned a master's degree in organizational management from Spring Arbor.

January 2020.

He went on to earn his Ph.D. in applied management and decisions sciences from Walden University. His time at Walden also included classes in leadership and organizational change and information management.

Dr. Bush hasn't stopped learning. Currently, he is learning the basics of Spanish, French, Italian, simplified Chinese, Hebrew, Arabic and Hawaiian. While stationed in Germany, he learned German.

***February is Career and Technical Education Month®, or CTE Month®. Learn more about Black Hawk College's [CTE programs](#).***

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